

2008 Tinon Sweet Szamorodni

Tokaj, Hungary

Although born in the sweet wine appellation of Sainte-Croix-du-Mont in France, Samuel Tinon has chosen Tokaj as the best place to grow wine and raise his three children. He's also quick to remind us all that Tokaj was the favored drink and muse for Leo Tolstói, Pablo Néruda, Honoré de Balzac, Gustave Flaubert, Diderot, and Voltaire, so he's already in good company. As the first Frenchman to settle in Tokaj in the modern privatization era, he's also convinced that Tokaj possesses all the same greatness as Bordeaux, Champagne and Burgundy. For the past 500 years Tokaj has demonstrated distinctive terroirs, ideally suited grapes, and unique winemaking styles that according to Samuel, feels "privileged to be part of the active reconstruction of such a Great Wine area...the backbone of a very rich life." After consulting in Australia, Texas, Chile, Italy, traveling to the Jura and Jerez, and an additional 15 years just in Tokaj did he finally start his own production in 2000. What's so compelling about his approach to farming, winemaking and representing Tokaj as a whole is that according to Samuel, "it's hard to find a good balance between paradoxical parameters, like conservatism and modernity, action and inaction, convictions and doubts, choices with short/medium/long term, national and international. It is a permanent challenge with Nature and human relations. And it's full of discoveries." Keeping these sentiments in mind, his wines are among the most transportative, delicious and intellectual we've encountered. He also covers the entire range of traditional Tokaj from Dry Szamorodni, Sweet Szamorodni, Tokaji Aszú, and finally Eszencia. That said, what he makes in a given vintage is determined more by the conditions in the vineyard and the cellar than what the market wants. As Samuel says, "It is not I who is driving the wines, the wines are driving me!"

VINEYARDS

Setting up shop in the village of Olaszliska just north of the village of Tokaj near the banks of the famous Bodrog River, Samuel farms roughly 5 hectares in this area (Határi vineyard) and an additional couple of hectares on the slopes of Mt. Tokaj. The soils on Határi have a 15 million year old volcanic base (tuffa, obsidian), broken up limestone and clay. With 10,000 plants per hectare (90% Furmint, 10 % Hárslevelű), and some as old as 90 years, no herbicides or pesticides are used and no tractor usage. Everything is done by hand. As arguably the first classified vineyard appellation system in the world, there is over 500 years of trial and error at work in the region.



NOTES & PAIRINGS

Originally called Ordinárium (ordinary wine) in the 1600's, Főbor (prime wine) after that, and later, due to the immense popularity in the Polish market, Szamorodni (as comes off the vine) became the official name (itself a Polish word) in the early 1800's. In short, this refers to healthy, shriveled and botrytized grapes all being harvested and fermented together. After some short skin contact the grapes are pressed into barrel for a minimum of two years. The resulting wine is less oxidative than a traditional Aszú and much less than a dry Szamorodni, and yet extremely concentrated given its naturally high dry extract. Where as the Aszú wines take the hand selected single botrytized grapes and macerate them as a paste in fermenting or dry wine, Szamorodni (as it comes) is made by harvesting whole bunches of everything at once – the ripe, botrytized and shriveled. Think of sweet Szamorodni like a light Aszú in terms of winemaking, but not at all watered down. After a brief time on the skins the grapes are pressed into barrel for a minimum of two years. Residual sugar wise, this is akin to making a theoretical 2 Puttonyos with a rich nuttiness and almost Recioto like aromatics. Samuel recommends pairing it with melon and prosciutto, smoked salmon, dried fruit, nuts, blue cheese and anything heavy with ginger. This is a perfect introduction into the world of sweet Tokaj.

ANALYTICS & PRONUNCIATION

PRODUCER: Tinon
APPELLATION: Tokaj
VINTAGE: 2008
GRAPE COMPOSITION: Furmint and Hárslevelű
CLIMATE: Cool Continental
SOILS: Volcanic base (Tuffa, obsidian) and clay



To order or get more information call or fax +1 (650) 941-4699.
Blue Danube Wine Company
PO Box 1011 | Los Altos, California 94023 | USA
www.bluedanubewine.com

**BLUE DANUBE
WINE COMPANY**