2023 Edgar Brutler Sefu Red

Crișana, Romania

Transylvania has always been a bit of white whale for us. This is where horse carts often outnumber cars and self-sufficient agriculture is the norm. Literally translating to "beyond the forest," it also has an unbroken winegrowing tradition going back at least 2000+ years. It's a surreal place where the language is Balkan Romance, the food is Hungarian with some key distinctions, and where the imprints of both the Middle Ages and Communism are frozen in time. Edgar Brutler's family was a part of the Swabian migration to Transylvania and arrived in the 1850s from Stuttgart. Edgar originally started down a musical path then studied oenology at Geisenheim. As Edgar puts it, "I was born there, my family lived there, my family worked these vineyards and walked this roads and paths." Working old vine field blends, and making wines based on smelling, tasting, and feeling rather than numbers and analytics are Edgar's focus. Music still plays a big part in his life and an image of sound board levels adorn the label of the Grünspitz.

VINEYARDS

The village of Beltiug is in Satu Mare County in the Crișana region. This northwestern corner of Romania has a temperate continental climate, surprisingly warm for what we think of as Northern Romania. The soil is really thick loam (20-30 meters) and plantings date back as far as 1926 and as recent as last year. Edgar's grandfather planted their original 4 hectares. The traditional grapes of the area are Fetească Regală/Königliche Mädchentraube, Fetească Albă, Welschriesling, Mustoasa de Măderat, Furmint, Kékfrankos/Blaufränkisch, and their signature grape of Grünspitz. He has new plantings of Baras and Juhfark in the works. There are a number of unidentifiable grapes in the older field blends as well. Farming is without herbicides, chemical-synthetic sprays and mineral fertilizers. Spacing is 1 meter so everything is labor intensive and must be done by hand.

WINE MAKING

Given his formal education at Geisenheim and working at larger more technical wineries, Edgar has a firm grasp of the science and the predetermined recipes needed for those kinds of wines. It's also incredibly useful information when stripping everything away and has allowed him to open up his mind, take risks, and activate the same part of his brain that brings him joy from music. Except for his pét-nat where he measures density to ensure bottles aren't exploding, he's not picking, pressing or doing anything based on the numbers. All wines are spontaneously fermented in a 200 year old cellar, unfiltered, and the only addition is SO2 (10-20ppm) at bottling and many are without any additions at all. He's also adamant about the control and feedback from using a basket press. Especially for the Grünspitz where a long and high pressure pressing is essential in managing the tannins and extraction. There's no cell phone reception or internet in the cellar. Deep and quiet.

NOTES & PAIRINGS

The Sefu Red is a blend of Pinot Noir and Syrah. The Pinot Noir is treated much like the Sefu white – pressed hard to avoid solids, bad tannins and reduction, and then settled out for 24 hours. It's then fermented in one 3000L stainless steel tank and six 500L oak barrels. The Syrah is whole bunch pressed into open vats, macerated for three days, and right as fermentation starts to kick off, it's pressed and fermented in four 500L oak barrels and three 225L oak barrels. Bottled unfined and unfiltered with the only addition being 15ppm of total SO2.

ANALYTICS & PRONUNCIATION

APPELLATION: Crișana
GRAPE COMPOSITION: Pinot Noir and Syrah
CLIMATE: Continental (hot summers & cold winters)
SOILS: Clay, loam, sand
MACERATION & AGING: Direct pressed Pinot noir aged in a 3000L stainless steel tank. Syrah is kept on the skins with stems for 3 days, then matured in 4 x 500L oak barrels.
ALCOHOL: 13%
RESIDUAL SUGAR: 0.33 g/l
ACIDITY: 6.01 g/l

DANCH & GRANGER SELECTIONS

PO Box 1270 | Los Altos, California 94023 | USA
www.DanchAndGranger.com
info@DanchAndGranger.com