

2018 Kikelet Late Harvest

Tokaj, Hungary

Like her compatriot Samuel Tinon, Stéphanie Berecz is a French enologist who initially came to Hungary to work at the Disznoko estate, a property owned by the French insurance company AXA. In 2002, she and her husband Zsolt founded Kikelet Pince in Tarcal near the town of Tokaj, a village where Zsolt's family has been living for over two hundred years. Regarding the winery's name, the story is that Stéphanie didn't want a name containing any of the "funny" Hungarian letters like *ű*, *ü*, *ő*, *ó*. So they chose Kikelet, which means springtime in Hungarian. Year after year, they gradually acquired different lots around Tarcal (Lónyai, Vati, Farkas, Lestas, Kassai) and today, they farm 5 hectares of south/south-west facing vineyards planted half with Furmint, half with Hárslevelű.



VINEYARDS

The soil in Tarcal is volcanic covered with a layer of loess. While aszú wines from Tarcal's loess terroir get the right amount of moisture and are known to be particularly elegant, nobody before them had tried to make dry wines in Tarcal. But with limited yield and carefully selected grapes, Stéphanie and Zsolt have shown that they could produce dry Furmint and Hárslevelű that are elegant, balanced, and full-bodied.

WINE MAKING

The Berecz family house has a two centuries old cellar partially carved into the rock where the wines ferment and mature in oak casks. The winery produces around 11,000 bottles annually, including dry and semi-dry Furmint and Hárslevelű, some from single vineyards or late harvest wines, Szamorodni, and hand-picked aszú wines. The grapes are whole cluster pressed. Fermentation occurs with native yeast without going through the secondary malolactic fermentation. The must is then racked and put into French and Hungarian oak barrels. Aging is on the lees. Most of the barrels are about 4 to 10 years old with a few new Hungarian for the Furmint. The Hárslevelű has no new oak to preserve the fruity flavors of the grape without being overwhelmed by oak. In 2014, Stéphanie has been awarded by her fellow winemakers the prestigious title of „winemaker of the winemakers”.

NOTES & PAIRINGS

This is something that will bring us equal parts joy and frustration. Stéphanie's style isn't towards just making a dessert wine pairing, but to instead make a delicious naturally sweet wine. It's not aiming to shatter records for residual sugar, it has the same alcohol as most of her dry wines, and it's something that can be enjoyed in almost all circumstances. 2018 was a relatively hot vintage, so while there's not too much botrytis, there is extreme ripening under healthy conditions coupled with the naturally high acidity of both Furmint and Hárslevelű. Put together over 14 months in barrel and a couple years in bottle, this is exceptional bang for the Tokaj buck and a great foil for those skeptical or unaware of the joys of sweet wine.

ANALYTICS & PRONUNCIATION

APPELLATION: Tokaj (Tokeye)

GRAPE COMPOSITION: Hárslevelű 35%, Furmint 20%, Zéta 20%, Yellow Muscat 15%.

CLIMATE: Continental (hot summers & cold winters)

SOILS: Volcanic covered with a layer of loess

MACERATION & AGING: Fermentation and aging in oak barrels for six months

ALCOHOL: 12.6%

RESIDUAL SUGAR: 98.7 g/l

ACIDITY: 6.09 g/l



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