

2019 Maurer Méthode Traditionnelle

Subotica, Serbia

When we first visited Oszkár Maurer in 2015, he only had a few wines to show. Since then, we've witnessed plans like expanding his production into the Fruška Gora, opening a tasting room/restaurant, and redefining what many of these nearly forgotten grapes taste like, while always keeping a close eye on the traditions of both his grandparents and the region's 2000+ years of documented winemaking history. His aesthetic and philosophy are starting to permeate everything above and beyond the vineyards and cellar. The Maurer family has been producing wine for four generations. They now farm 6 hectares in the wine region of Szabadka directly south of the Hungarian-Serbian border, and another 10 acres in the Fruška Gora mountain district in Syrmia, 40 miles away from Belgrade and bordered by the Danube River to the north.

VINEYARDS

Technically Maurer is in the Subotičko – Horgoškoj region in northern Serbia, but it was formerly a part of Hungary's Csongrád up until 1920. The population is mostly Hungarian and viticulture knows no borders. Names of grapes and places are therefore constantly changing from Serbian to Hungarian and vice-versa. Oszkár farms about 6 hectares here including the oldest known Kadarka vineyard in the world planted in 1880 in addition to other plantings in 1912 and older plots of Kövidinka from 1925. The rest of the plantings include grapes like Olaszrizling, Slankamenka, Ezerjő, Kadarka and Kékfrankos. There's also few international varieties including Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Pinot Noir. Oszkár also has 9 hectares in the Srem region a little further south. Hungarians called this area Szerém, the Croats Srijem (part of it still spills into Croatia), and the Romans Syrmia. The main feature, apart from the Danube River, is the Fruška Gora Mountain. Once an island in the Pannonian Sea, the soil is volcanic with a marine layer. Some call it the "holy mountain" or "Serbian Athos" because at one point there were over 30 monasteries of which 16 still stand today. Needless to say, there is something special about this place and winegrowing is documented back to the 1200s. Planting in broad strokes, the Subotičko is largely defined by sandy soils and old vines, and the Szerémség by volcanic soils heavily influenced by the Danube River. Everything is farmed organically with zero absorbable chemicals. High density stake trained vines are the most typical and cover crops are natural. Everything is worked by hand or with the help of horses. Harvest is managed with local labor and the help of family and friends.

WINE MAKING

Everything is handpicked in small bins and all fermentations are spontaneous (primary and secondary). The use of older oak, small and large format is paramount. There are no additives to any of the wines apart from SO₂ at bottling for select wines. Maurer basically has two tiers: Rege and Maurer. The Rege wines have low SO₂ (25-40ppm) and the Maurer line is zero compromise with zero additions of any kind. Wines are typically only racked once before bottling and everything is bottled unfiltered.

NOTES & PAIRINGS

The back label only serves to make the Serbian authorities happy and gets us the export paperwork we need. The actual wine is a Mézes Fehér fresh base wine – no maceration and simply pressed into tank. This ages for a year until roughly 15% of 6-day skin contact Olaszrizling must is added to start the secondary fermentation. Oszkár decided not to disgorge and leave the fine lees in the bottle. It therefore needs a little TLC before drinking. The best way to do this is to chill it upside down and have all of the lees collect in the neck. It's crown capped, so just put it into a bowl of water upside down, open, blow out the lees, put back upright, and you're ready to go. It's extra brut in terms of sugar (less than 2 g/l), it's got plenty of stuffing and the bubbles are traditional method rather than pét-nat. Once disgorged, it's lost its protection and is best consumed in one go.

ANALYTICS & PRONUNCIATION

APPELLATION: Subotica

GRAPE COMPOSITION: 73% Szerémi Zöld, 12% Tamjanika, 8% Bakator, 7% Mézes Fehér

CLIMATE: Mild and temperate

SOILS: Sand

ALCOHOL: 12.2%

RESIDUAL SUGAR: 7.5 g/l

ACIDITY: 6.6 g/l



DANCH & GRANGER SELECTIONS

PO Box 1270 | Los Altos, California 94023 | USA

www.DanchAndGranger.com

info@DanchAndGranger.com