

2008 Miloš Stagnum

Pelješac Peninsula, Croatia

A man can truly reaffirm himself in his surroundings by continuously evolving and trying to create a better and nicer world." - Frano Miloš, - A short drive from the idyllic Adriatic oystering village of Mali Ston is the home Frano's family has lived and made wine in for over 500 years. Less than a mile away his prized vineyards stretch from Uvala Prapratno (Prapratno cove) overlooking the village of Ponikve. Nowhere in Europe is there such a concentration of coastal vineyards. This proximity to the sea lends the wines their distinctive note of Friškina. This "scent of the sea" makes the rugged often full bodied reds of the Pelješac Peninsula unexpectedly delicious with certain seafoods, even oysters as it is sometimes paired with locally. Plavac Mali (little blue) reigns in Pelješac, and the region is planted nearly exclusively to it. As the progeny of the ancient variety Crljenak Kaštelanski (AKA Zinfandel) it has the genetics to not just withstand the intense coastal summer, but thrive. Compeled by something more artistic than comercial in his wine making, Frano works only with Plavac from his own vines. His wines both clearly reflect his unique sense of aesthetic while also capturing the essence of their place.

VINEYARDS

The vineyards are extremely difficult to farm; steep 45 degrees slopes of ragged head pruned Plavac planted in pure dolomitic limestone. Handmade stone terraces and walls give the vineyards an architectural look that bring to mind a Japanese garden. According to Frano, "To experience, adapt to, and change to such an environment enables a person to understand the exterior climactic influences: the sun, the warmth, the light, the air circulation, the types and the amounts of the rainfall, accumulation of humidity in the soil and in the air. Plavac mali is a tie which puts all of these characteristics together and creates harmony; a very complex one." Due to the extremely favorable conditions there is no need to spray for pests, however in May and June copper and sulfur are often applied. Frano believes that green harvesting unnecessarily traumatizes the vines during a critical point in their growth so vines are heavily pruned in the winter.

WINE MAKING

Frano's children already have their hands in the vineyards, in the cellar, and on the marketing. Hard work and intuition gives the best results. Only autochthonous yeasts is used for fermentation, and from start to finish all wine lives in Slavonian oak barrels, never new. Vinification is oxidative which ultimately enhances the wines ability to age. All wines are unfiltered and only see added sulfur at bottling.



NOTES & PAIRINGS

Planted on incredibly steep 30 year old terraced vineyards on the slopes of the Pelješac peninsula, this is the most long lived Plavac Mali we've yet encountered. Hand picked, fermented with wild yeasts, and aged in old Slavonian oak barrel for three years before bottling. Both 2009 and 2006 were great vintages, but the extra year in barrel when compared to his Plavac bottling adds a remarkable silky texture. Aromas of sage and black tea (they also grow tea on the same slopes) mixed with rich dark fruit have created a cult following in Croatia. Like tasting an older bottle of Ridge Zinfandel from California, this 100% Plavac Mali proves some genetic lineage. Frano likes to pair it with wild game, ripe cheese, pelagic fish and the local favorite - oysters.

ANALYTICS & PRONUNCIATION

PRODUCER: Miloš (Mee-loash)
APPELLATION: Pelješac Peninsula (Pel-yah-shatz)
VINTAGE: 2008
GRAPE COMPOSITION: 100% Plavac Mali (Plah-vatz Molly)
CLIMATE: Mediterranean
SOILS: Sandy soil on dolomite rocks - limestone.
MACERATION & AGING: 3 years in Croatian oak barrel.
ALCOHOL: 15%
RESIDUAL SUGAR: 2.5 g/l
ACIDITY: 5.4 g/l



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