

2022 Tomcsányi Juhfark

Somló, Hungary

Given our limited and outsider's perspective, there has always seemed to be two major schools of thought on the basalt-riddled hill of Somló. Some pick late and either use long *élevage* or residual sugar to find balance while others pick early and rely on more reductive winemaking. This is of course a gross oversimplification, but what Árpád Tomcsányi is doing is undeniably a third bowl of porridge. We've never tasted wines from Somló like this before. At the same time, he feels responsible for continuing the legacy of Somló and his labels communicate that right off the bat – a fingerprint where the friction ridges stand in for the topography of the appellation. The family also checks off all the major boxes: Certified organic, Demeter in 2022. The wines are handled with the aim of being fresh, clear headed and alive. They are passionate and driven people. They are trying to create the best way of life for themselves and their children. The inaugural vintage was 2016 which also coincided with Árpád's marriage to Nóra just days before harvest. Genuine bonds of love and commitment for family and place were formed simultaneously, a pace of life they want that is reflected in their farming and wines.



VINEYARDS

His father initially purchased the property on the Western slope of Somló with this in mind over a decade ago. As Árpád put it, "Your vineyard needs to help you to live." They currently have 3 hectares with 4 being the eventual goal. High up on the hill, the soils are mostly heavy basalt with patches of clay along with plenty of sun. Cover crops are planted and they manage everything else with copper, sulfur, teas and orange oil. Demeter certification is set for 2022 and he's intent on adding bees, getting more goats and cultivating more diverse green spaces.

WINE MAKING

As for winemaking, it's been a mixed diet of education and experiences. On the intellectual front, he hosts a podcast called "Borivók" where he interviews mentors and icons about natural winemaking. He has also worked harvest down in Badacsony with Ambrus Bakó, in Szent György with István Bencze and Endre Szászi, and made his first vintage in the cellar of István Spiegelberg on Somló. He often gets picked up at the train station by other winemakers from the hill. There's a growing community that he's getting sutured into. On the more technical front, he tends to keep macerations on the lighter side, all spontaneous fermentations are in barrel or amphorae and he's very keen on longer lees aging without stirring. He uses a 100+ year basket press, zero machines in the cellar, and prefers super light toasted Stockinger barrels. The general idea is to have the freedom to experiment and take risks, but only send what really works to the market. All of the wines are bottled unfiltered, and since the 2019 vintage, zero additions including sulfur.

NOTES & PAIRINGS

Árpád and Nóra's wines are somewhat unique on the hill because they are at one of the highest elevations on the western/St. Ilona side. Well above the humidity line with plenty of sun and wind. Biodynamically farmed on basalt and a layer of limestone, this 2023 was picked without botrytis. Whole cluster basket pressed, it was then aged on the lees for 12 months in 500L Hungarian oak. It's then bottled unfiltered and with zero additions but left to age in the bottle. At first glance it appears to be geothermic water pressed through a basalt sieve, but it quickly shows all manner of Somló in terms of salted stone fruit, fresh acidity and impossible length at just 11% alcohol.

ANALYTICS & PRONUNCIATION

APPELLATION: Somló (Shoam-low)

GRAPE COMPOSITION: 100% Juhfark

CLIMATE: Cool Continental

SOILS: Chalk and basalt crumb

MACERATION & AGING: Whole cluster basket pressed then aged on the lees for 12 months in 500L Hungarian oak

ALCOHOL: 11%



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