

2023 VáliBor Badacsonyi Szürkebarát

Badacsony, Hungary

Along the northern shore of Lake Balaton, and nestled in a valley in between the basalt cones of Őrsi, Gulácsi, and Tóti we find the wine and food world of Péter Váli. I'm convinced that Péter runs on a small fusion reactor. As we race through the cellar and open countless bottles, he's also playing with his 4 children, bringing out platters of his wife's cheese, brother's deer sausage, his own homemade cured meats, and then cooks from scratch a stand alone amazing meal over an open fire. He doesn't appear to break a sweat or show any signs of distraction. His wines show an equal measure of focus and joy. He dreamed of being a chef since he was 10. As a teenager in the mid 1980s during Communism, he was able to attend the Gundel Károly Catering School and tasted French and Italian wine and cheese for the first time. He then decided that in addition to being a chef, we would also make his own wine. Founded in 2000, he more than achieved both goals. 4.5 of his 9 hectares surround his home along with herb/vegetable gardens, a typical buried cellar, and endless ovens and fire pits strewn about. Everything is certified organic. Although only an hour away from Somló, the effect of the lake brings wind, protects against frost, and allows for more ripeness. The acids here are intense, but rounded out with aromatics, fruit and salt. You need wines like this in order to survive the over the top hospitality of this man.



VINEYARDS

Along the western end of the north shore of Lake Balaton, Badacsonyörs is one of the smallest villages in the Badacsony region. It's about 2 kilometers from the center of Káli Basin and 2 kilometers from the village of Badacsonytom – a good balance between the lake and inland volcanic valleys. The vineyards are south facing, on average 150 meters high, and the soils are predominantly Pannonian sand with high sediment content, volcanic lava stones (mostly basalt) and then covered with thick brown forest soil. All sites are farmed organically with natural cover crops, light tilling when needed, and worked by hand.

WINE MAKING

The most important thing to know is that Péter almost always blends reductive tank and barrel fermented wines from the same grape and harvest. Depending on what the vintage allows, all his whites spend 6-48 hours on the skins. He likes the texture, structure, and given his relatively cold cellar, helps promote a strong native fermentation. No additions are made other than a little SO2 at bottling.

NOTES & PAIRINGS

Szürkebarát (aka Pinot Gris) is no stranger to Lake Balaton and has been well documented here since the 13th century due to the Monastic tradition along the north shore. Organically grown in the volcanic soils just 1/3 of a mile from the shore, it's super creamy without being overly leesy, refreshingly acidic, barely oxidative, and with just a little grip from the 2 days of maceration in both barrel and tank along with an added 500L barrel of 10 day skin contact juice as well. The flavors are ripe along with the salted rim typical of Péter's wines. No other wine in the portfolio blurs the line between rosé and a light skin contact more than this one.

ANALYTICS & PRONUNCIATION

APPELLATION: Badacsony

GRAPE COMPOSITION: 100% Pinot Gris

CLIMATE: Sub Mediterranean

SOILS: Basalt rocks and sand covered by thick brown forest soil.

MACERATION & AGING: 2 days of maceration in both barrel and tank along with an added 500L barrel of 10 day skin contact juice.

ALCOHOL: 12.2%

RESIDUAL SUGAR: 1.1 g/l

ACIDITY: 5.7 g/l



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