

2018 VáliBor Tabula Rasa

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. 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

This is the first vintage we've imported of this wine. At first we jumped at Péter's Budai Zöld and Kéknyelű due to their rarity and being iconic of the Badacsony region. After a few visits the Tabula Rasa also became difficult to ignore. It's also a wine that clearly elicits happiness in Péter, or as he puts it, "saját örömmre." It's 60% Rhine Riesling fermented in Hungarian barrel and 40% Olaszrizling fermented in tank. Organically cultivated in soils rich in tuff and basalt, there's plenty of salt and acidity, but the marzipan aromatics from the Olaszrizling and stone fruit from the Rizling are a delicious match.

ANALYTICS & PRONUNCIATION

PRODUCER: VáliBor

APPELLATION: Badacsony

VINTAGE: 2018

GRAPE COMPOSITION: 60% Riesling, 40% Olaszrizling

CLIMATE: Sub Mediterranean

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

MACERATION & AGING: Spontaneously fermented Rhine Riesling in acacia blended with Olaszrizling in tank

ALCOHOL: 11.8%

RESIDUAL SUGAR: 1.1 g/l

ACIDITY: 5.5 g/l



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