

2015 Csendes Dűlő Hárslevelű

Badacsony, Hungary

We are finally venturing into the giant Balaton region for the first time. Lake Balaton is more like a small ocean (48 miles long, 8.7 miles wide) southwest of Budapest and about an hour south of Somló. It has been covered in vines since the 1st Century. It's also checkered with Volcanic Buttes that are often referred to "organ pipes." Imagine Monument Valley or Devils Postpile covered in grapes overlooking a massive lake. It's a stunning place to make wine and it makes sense. The lake prevents extreme weather, reflects light and heat, and provides the fish that go with the wines. The North Shore is the where the water is deepest and the volcanic buttes dominate the landscape. Quality wine has been recognized here since the Romans. The south shore is flatter, shallower water and more of a vacation retreat for Hungarians. This is where you go to party. Back on the north shore there are six major appellations: Badacsony, Balatonboglár, Balaton-felvidék, Balatonfüred-Csopak, Nagy-Somló and Zala. Csendes Dűlő Szőlőbirtok sits right at the base of the flattened 438 meter high volcanic butte of Badacsony. Beáta's parents bought the property in the 1970s and her daughter Dóra came to the property during summers and vacations. Originally opting for Budapest, Dóra came back in 2012 to help with harvest and everything changed. Now as co-owners, their aim isn't to expand the vineyard, but instead make it a jewel and part of the larger revival of quality wines from the Balaton. Like much of Hungary, very old appellations and traditions coupled with young and hopeful winemakers with much to relearn. The start is very promising here.

VINEYARDS

One of the 6 appellations of Balaton is called Badacsony and also the only place where the white Kéknyelű grape is grown. Roughly translated to "blue stalk," Kéknyelű only has female flowers and needs to be co-planted to help ensure proper yields (usually with Budai Zöld). It's also not prone to botrytis. Along with Olaszrizling, Szürkebarát (Pinot Gris), and Hárslevelű, Beáta and Dóra (mother and daughter) farm their 3 hectares without herbicides or pesticides. The soils are mainly loess and clay on top of a basalt base. The vineyards overlook the lake and are protected from the easterly winds while the basalt heavy soils retain heat. The climate is sub-Mediterranean.

WINE MAKING

Grapes are hand harvested and fermented and aged in temperature controlled stainless steel tanks. Given the lake's sub-Mediterranean climate, their style is geared toward fresher wines and therefore most Botrytis is avoided (if present at all) and there is no extended skin contact. Due to the high acidity, the Kéknyelű in particular needs at least one year bottle age before release while the Hárslevelű only needs 6 months.



NOTES & PAIRINGS

Hárslevelű (linden leaf) has large loose clusters of long, cylindrical, medium sized, and thin-skinned grapes. Not as susceptible to Botrytis as Furmint and Olaszrizling, the aromatics tend to be more pronounced and there's characteristic honeyed note where the Kéknyelű highlights spice. Often times the acidity can dominate the wines of Badacsony, but fully ripened and leaving a kiss of RS, the wines can still appear fully dry but lend some creaminess. This is a great example of this balance.

ANALYTICS & PRONUNCIATION

PRODUCER: Csendes Dűlő
APPELLATION: Badacsony
VINTAGE: 2015
GRAPE COMPOSITION: %100 Hárslevelű (HARSHlehveh-LOO)
CLIMATE: Sub-Mediterranean
SOILS: Loess and clay on top of a basalt base
MACERATION & AGING: Stainless Steel
ALCOHOL: 12.5%
RESIDUAL SUGAR: 2.1 g/l
ACIDITY: 5.4 g/l



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