

2020 Bott Szamorodni Dry

Tokaj, Hungary

The wines of Tokaj are the product of over 1200 years of melting together different cultures, religions, and ethnicities over a truly unique combination of geology and climate. In a way, József and Judit Bodó, both originally from Csallóköz, an ethnic Hungarian region in Slovakia are perpetuating this tradition of cultural exchange. Following her love for wine Judit went to work for a producer in South Tirol who later hired her onto a project in Tokaj managing the affairs of a small artisan winery: Füleky. Heeding the dream of his wife to have their own winery in Tokaj, József took on the labor of actually looking for vineyards. Upon discovering Csontos, Judit said, "he could not sleep at night." After the birth of their son, they focused solely on their own family winery with József in the vineyards and Judit in the cellar. In 2005 they bottled wine from just 1 ha, the first vintage of "Bott," an homage to Judit's maiden name. Today the couple tends about 5 ha spread among various sites mostly near the village of Erdőbénye. Wines are made exclusively from indigenous varieties. According to Judit, "When we succeed it brings joy to others that is generously given back to us. Since wine forms the quality of our lives, we like living this way." There is a maternal touch to the wines she makes, to compare them to children, they are as disciplined as they are loved. Despite making very little wine, Judit and József have made Bott one of Tokaj's most respected new producers, not just in Tokaj, but all of Hungary.



VINEYARDS

Teleki is located near the top of Tokaj Hill's Southern slope. Planted around 70 years ago and cultivated by hand, their plot only totals around 0.5 hectares. 80% is Furmint and the rest is Hárslevelű. The dominant soil is loess, but this surface layer has been heavily eroded, so roots must dig their way into volcanic tuffa in order to survive. Another key attribute is the low occurrence of Botrytis due to more wind at the more exposed higher elevation. Coupled with naturally high acidity and the lower yielding older vines, quality is ensured even in particularly difficult vintages.

WINE MAKING

As is common among some of the best vigneron in Tokaj, Judit and her family personally harvest the fruit ensuring the strictest of sorting. The newly built winery is still small and the equipment consists of relics like an antique wooden press and a medieval looking bladder press from the 60's. Despite looking less than ideal Judit contends that this equipment forces her to be especially attentive, which ultimately benefits her wines. Wines are fermented slowly in mostly used 220 liter oak barrels with native yeast over a period of 6-8 weeks. This protracted fermentation enhances the elegance and texture of Bott wines. Wines remain in barrel between 7-10 months depending on the vineyard and vintage and are topped regularly. Depending on the vintage and character of a particular vineyard, wines may have residual sugar as Judit lets every barrel finish fermentation without intervention.

NOTES & PAIRINGS

This isn't something you can aim to make. Nature either presents itself and you take the risk or not. You need high levels of botrytis (60% minimum), the right amount of headspace in the barrel and the flora and fauna in the cellar to produce a veil of yeast. After that, patience and luck. This 2020 took three years to go dry and they only had three barrels. Thankfully, there was no loss and the three were blended yielding 1300 bottles in total. The 'flor' character is certainly present, but it's bright, fresh, and full of spiced honey energy as well. And since Szamorodni is never fortified or blended, this doesn't have the heat or oxidation of a sherry or Vin Jaune. There are only two dry Szamorodni imported into the US, so in addition to Samuel Tinon, this is the second.

ANALYTICS & PRONUNCIATION

APPELLATION: Tokaj (Toke-Eye)

GRAPE COMPOSITION: Furmint and Hárslevelű

CLIMATE: Cool Continental

SOILS: Red clay (nyirok) and obsidian

EXPOSURE: Southern

MACERATION & AGING: Aged under veil in barrels for 3.5 years without opening them.

ALCOHOL: 14.5%

RESIDUAL SUGAR: 6.9 g/l

ACIDITY: 6.1 g/l



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