

# 2021 Edgar Brutler Saito

## Crișana, Romania

Transylvania has always been a bit of white whale for us. This is where horse carts often outnumber cars and self-sufficient agriculture is the norm. Literally translating to "beyond the forest," it also has an unbroken winegrowing tradition going back at least 2000+ years. It's a surreal place where the language is Balkan Romance, the food is Hungarian with some key distinctions, and where the imprints of both the Middle Ages and Communism are frozen in time. Weingut Edgar Brutler is our first Romanian producer. The family was a part of the Swabian migration to Transylvania and arrived in the 1850s from Stuttgart. Edgar originally started down a musical path then studied oenology at Geisenheim because of the Romanian family vineyard. As Edgar puts it, "I was born there, my family lived there, my family worked these vineyards and walked these roads and paths." Music still plays a big part in his life and an image of sound board levels adorn the label of the Grünsptz. Founding Weingut Edgar Brutler in 2018, his focus is on organic farming, native grapes, old vine field blends, and making wines based on smelling, tasting, and feeling rather than numbers and analytics.



### VINEYARDS

The village of Beltiug is in Satu Mare County in the Crișana region. This northwestern corner of Romania has a temperate continental climate, not as much Adriatic influences as Miniș in the south, but surprisingly warm for what we think of as Northern Romania. The soil is really thick loam (20-30 meters) and plantings date back as far as 1926 and as recent as last year. Edgar's grandfather planted their original 4 hectares. The traditional grapes of the area are Fetească Regală/Königliche Mädchentraube, Fetească Albă, Welschriesling, Mustoasa de Măderat, Furmint, Kékfrankos/Blaufränkisch, and their signature grape of Grünsptz. He has new plantings of Baras and Juhfark in the works. There are a number of unidentifiable grapes in the older field blends as well. Farming is without herbicides, chemical-synthetic sprays and mineral fertilizers. Spacing is 1 meter so everything is labor intensive and must be done by hand.

### WINE MAKING

Given his formal education at Geisenheim and working at larger more technical wineries, Edgar has a firm grasp of the science and the predetermined recipes needed for those kinds of wines. It's also incredibly useful information when stripping everything away and has allowed him to open up his mind, take risks, and activate the same part of his brain that brings him joy from music. Except for his pét-nat where he measures density to ensure bottles aren't exploding, he's not picking, pressing or doing anything based on the numbers. All wines are spontaneously fermented in a 200 year old cellar, unfiltered, and the only addition is SO2 (10-20ppm) at bottling and many are without any additions at all. He's also adamant about the control and feedback from using a basket press. Especially for the Grünsptz where a long and high pressure pressing is essential in managing the tannins and extraction. There's no cell phone reception or internet in the cellar. Deep and quiet.

### NOTES & PAIRINGS

This is a field blend from two different sites fermented separately and then blended. Edgar estimates at least 15 different grapes including many that are still unidentified even after DNA analysis, but the biggest players are Fetească Regală and Olaszrizling. Both vineyards are hand picked and spend two days on the skins but one with stems and the other without. Fermented and aged in both amphora, concrete egg and oak, it needs a few minutes to wake up, but occupies that wonderful juicy place with just a subtle touch from the light maceration. The name of the wine is a nod to a "Sajtóház", or press house in the vineyard where his grandparents would both make wine and occasionally sleep. As Edgar puts it, "this wine is pure juice." Bottled unfiltered with 10ppm SO2.



### ANALYTICS & PRONUNCIATION

APPELLATION: Crișana

GRAPE COMPOSITION: White Field Blend

CLIMATE: Continental (hot summers & cold winters)

SOILS: Clay, loam, sand

MACERATION & AGING: Fermented and aged in both amphora, concrete egg and oak.

ALCOHOL: 11.4%

RESIDUAL SUGAR: 0.94 g/l

ACIDITY: 6.6 g/l

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