

2024 Maurer Bakator Pét Nat

Subotica, Serbia

When we first visited Oszkár Maurer in 2015, he only had a few wines to show. Since then, he expanded his production into the Fruška Gora, opened a tasting room/restaurant, and redefined what many of these nearly forgotten grapes taste like, while always keeping a close eye on the traditions of both his grandparents and the region's 2000+ years of documented winemaking history. His aesthetic and philosophy are starting to permeate everything above and beyond the vineyards and cellar.

VINEYARDS

The Maurer family has been producing wine for four generations. They now farm 6 hectares in the Subotičko-Horgoškoj region in northern Serbia including the oldest known Kadarka vineyard in the world planted in 1880 in addition to other plantings in 1912 and older plots of Kövidinka from 1925. The rest of the plantings include grapes like Olaszrizling, Slankamenka, Ezerjó, Kadarka and Kékfrankos. There's also few international varieties including Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Pinot Noir. The region was formerly a part of Hungary's Csongrád up until 1920 and names of grapes and places are therefore constantly changing from Serbian to Hungarian and vice-versa. Oszkár also has 9 hectares in the Srem region a little further south. The main feature, apart from the Danube River, is the Fruška Gora Mountain. Once an island in the Pannonian Sea, the soil is volcanic with a marine layer. Called the "holy mountain" or "Serbian Athos", there were over 30 monasteries at one point, of which 16 still stand today. Needless to say, there is something special about this place and winegrowing is documented back to the 1200s. The Subotičko is largely defined by sandy soils and old vines, and the Szerémség by volcanic soils heavily influenced by the Danube River. Everything is farmed organically with zero absorbable chemicals. High density stake trained vines are the most typical and cover crops are natural. Everything is worked by hand or with the help of horses. Harvest is managed with local labor and the help of family and friends.

WINE MAKING

Everything is handpicked in small bins and all fermentations are spontaneous. The use of older oak, small and large format is paramount. There are no additives to any of the wines apart from SO2 at bottling for select wines. Maurer basically has two tiers: Rege and Maurer. The Rege wines have low SO2 (25-40ppm) and the Maurer line is zero compromise with zero additions of any kind. Wines are typically only racked once before bottling and everything is bottled unfiltered.

NOTES & PAIRINGS

When Maurer first started making wine from this grape he joked that "I make the best and the worst Bakator" in that no one else was making any post phylloxera at the time. Add to this that his is own-rooted, bush trained, and planted in 1909. Apparently there are 3 Bakator grapes: red, white and blue. To make things easy, they are not genetically related, although they share some flavor profiles here and there when macerated. The white (Fehér) is often planted as a stamen to pollinate the red is another connection. You can find some red (Piros) Bakator along Lake Balaton, but we've not encountered the white. According to Oszkár, there's only one other winery in Ukraine (Transcarpathia area) with the white Bakator as well. Picked from unpruned vines with a range of ripeness before being susceptible to botrytis, it was then partially fermented before being aged for 18 months in the bottle on the fine lees. When you first smell it, there's also another undeniable flavor. He did sneak in some citra hops which were then, along with the lees, disgorged before bottling. This is a super limited, but a rare glimpse of a nearly forgotten grape with a Maurer twist. Remarkably refreshing and fun to drink.

ANALYTICS & PRONUNCIATION

APPELLATION: Subotica

GRAPE COMPOSITION: 100% Bakator

CLIMATE: Mild and temperate

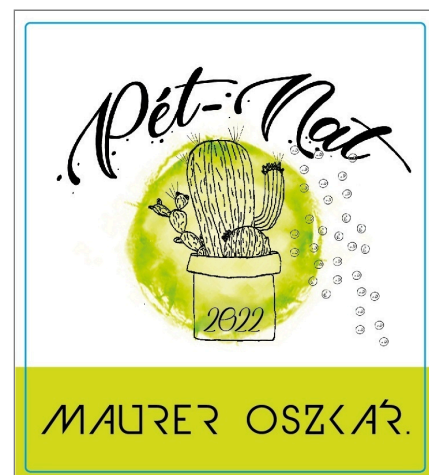
SOILS: Sand

MACERATION & AGING: Partially fermented before being aged for 18 months in the bottle on the fine lees

ALCOHOL: 12.9%

RESIDUAL SUGAR: 1.75 g/l

ACIDITY: 5.38 g/l



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PO Box 1270 | Los Altos, California 94023 | USA

www.DanchAndGranger.com

info@DanchAndGranger.com