

A Grand Slam For Our Grand Crus

TASTING HIGHLIGHTS: TOKAJI 15 extraordinary sweet wines from Hungary

Excerpts from an article by Bruce Sanderson, Friday, May 9, 2008

Hungarian Tokaji is one of the world's unique dessert wines, typically made from a blend of Furmint and Hárslevelü grapes.

The sweetness level increases with the quantity of botrytis-affected, or aszú grapes added to the dry white wine. The amount of aszú added are measured in puttonyos, with the increasing numbers, up to six, being sweeter.

Eszencia, the rarest and sweetest style, comes only from the free-run juice and takes years to attain a few degrees of alcohol.

The soils of the region are volcanic in origin and the wines often show a strong mineral flavor and bracing acidity to go with their panoply of sweet flavors. The best recent vintages are 2003, 2000 and 1999.

95 POINTS: 1999 MÉZES MÁLY (6 Puttonyos)
A touch of new oak rounds this out and attractive grassy, herbal notes add an edge to the apricot, marmalade and stone flavors. It's beautifully balanced and succulent, with a light weight and a long, saturated finish...Drink now through 2035.

94 POINTS: 1999 BETSEK (6 Puttonyos)
Dried apricot, herbs and orange peel aromas and flavors abound, while the crisp structure keeps this racy. It's concentrated, despite its ethereal profile, with a lingering finish...Drink now through 2032.

93 POINTS: 1999 NYULÁSZÓ (6 Puttonyos)
A broader style, showing fresh peach, apricot, mango and kumquat notes. There's good underlying acidity, but sweetness and flesh to match it. Fine, refreshing finish...Drink now through 2030.

Wine Spectator online



95 POINTS: 1999 SZT. TAMÁS (6 Puttonyos)
"Positively electric. The racy style of the vintage shows in this laserlike Tokaji. The searing acidity is matched by intense flavors of apricot, orange peel, juniper, cedar and mineral. Has fine length. Drink now through 2030."

Wine Spectator online

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