

ROYAL TOKAJI 2008 BETSEK

SINGLE-VINEYARD

FIRST GROWTH, 6 PUTTONYOS

Varietal Composition:	Furmint, Hárslevelü and Muscat
Vineyard Size:	15 hectares (37 acres), 1 hectare (2.47 acres) fallow
Vine Age:	Planted 1972-1977
Elevation:	Average of 140 meters (460 feet)
Density:	3,000 vines/hectare (1,215 vines/acre)
Barrel Aging:	24 months in old Hungarian oak
Production:	788 cases (6/500ml)
Alcohol:	11%
Total Acidity:	10.5g/L
Residual Sugar:	185g/L



THE BETSEK VINEYARD

The largest of Royal Tokaji's first growth vineyards, Betsek (bet-CHEK) is named after an old Magyar family. Shaped like a crescent moon and facing southeast, it is situated to the east of the Nyúlászó and Szt. Tamás vineyards in what is known as "the basin of the first growths." Betsek faces Király — the old royal vineyard — and the town of Kővágó. Its terroir totals 89 hectares (219.9 acres); Royal Tokaji owns 15 hectares (37 acres), all of which are planted to vines except 1 hectare (2.47 acres) which lies fallow. The area where the vineyard is located is typically cold — lower portions of the vineyard have been known to freeze in the spring. The black volcanic topsoil contributes to the mineral and lovely black pepper characters in the wine. Being at the bottom of the valley, the vineyard imparts a much more earthy character to the wine than the other first growths.

THE 2008 VINTAGE

A very mild winter was followed by rain from spring until early summer. In August, the weather changed dramatically. September was cool and wet again, delaying ripening. A lovely and very long Indian summer from early October turned a good vintage into a great one. The miraculous weather provided perfect conditions for developing aszú berries and the harvest was of unmatched quality.

TASTING NOTES

Almond, marzipan, red-currant and ripe greengage on the nose. The almond and ripe greengage continue on the palate with great acidity for the acid structure, which is typical of young Betsek. The finish is very clean and long with lovely vivid acidity.

SERVING SUGGESTIONS

Royal Tokaji's Aszú wines are wonderful as an apéritif or digestif, with cigars and petits fours. Given their bright acidity, these wines also pair well with a wide variety of foods, including foie gras, fruit tarts, chocolate desserts and a variety of cheeses. Serve slightly chilled at 12 to 15 degrees Celsius (54 to 59 degrees Fahrenheit) in a small port glass or a glass of similar size.