

# ROYAL TOKAJI 2009 MÁD CUVÉE

Winemaker:	Károly Áts
Varietal Composition:	75% Furmint, 15% Muscat, 10% Hárslevelü
Vineyard Size:	107 hectares (264 acres)
Vine Age:	10-36 years
Harvest Dates:	October
Fermentation:	In stainless steel with own selected yeast
Barrel Aging:	7 months in Hungarian oak
Bottled:	August 24, 2010
Production:	2,014 cases (12/375ml)
Alcohol:	9.5%
Total Acidity:	6.4g/L
Residual Sugar:	138.8g/L

Were we “mad” to invest in Mád? Absolutely not! Mád is a beautiful town located in the heart of Hungary’s finest wine region where noble wine producers have gathered to conduct business and merry-making for centuries. And Mád Cuvée is a luscious wine with honey-like flavors that can only be made in a place called Mád.

## THE 2009 VINTAGE

The best way to describe the weather during the 2009 growing season is “extreme.” There was a lot of everything, but none of it at the right time. Winter and spring temperatures were typical. Although budding started perfectly at the end of March with lovely sunny days and high temperatures, by mid-May we were enduring a serious drought. Rainfall barely exceeded 200mm (7.9 inches) for the first five months of the year. Nonetheless, the relative humidity of the air was perfect for the vines, resulting in early flowering. So early in fact, no one can remember flowering occurring in May in the Tokaj region. While we needed dry, hot, sunny days during flowering in June, we instead experienced the coldest June of the last 10 years with 170mm (6.7 inches) of rain. This dramatically influenced berry set, which overall was not ideal. This type of weather usually generates uneven ripening and a long, costly harvest, which we were able to avoid because of hot temperatures July to September. But this hot weather brought its own challenges, affecting the typically high acid ratio of the fruit. And despite a relatively low rainfall — only 143mm (5.6 inches) — the humidity never dropped below 65 percent, resulting in the necessity for serious attention to the grapes by the vineyard managers.

All late-ripening varieties like Furmint and Hárslevelü were fully ripe by the end of September. At that point, we waited for shrivelling to develop in the aszú berries, but the low precipitation hampered it. And then on October 10, the rain arrived and stayed all through harvest. We received over 200mm (7.9 inches) of rain. This made harvesting impossible and instead of lovely aszú berries developing in the vineyards, bad rot and other diseases spread over the region. By the time the rain stopped, the quality of the grapes was so terrible it didn’t make sense to pick them. Fortunately, because harvest had begun so early we were able to salvage the vintage with the grapes and aszú berries we had already picked. The quality of this limited crop is very promising. Wines made by grapes harvested before the rain started have a lovely elegance and fresh fruitiness.

## TASTING NOTES

The Mád Cuvée is a pale green color, with a delicate flowery nose showing hints of white peach. On the palate it is of medium weight — sweet but with a good acid balance. This wine has exotic fruit flavors and a clean finish of medium length. This late harvest wine can be enjoyed chilled as an aperitif with canapés. It also pairs well with spicy Asian cuisine given its fresh acidity.



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