

Strekov 'Fred #4'

Producer: Zsolt Suto

Provenance: Pahronska Pahorkatina,
Slovakia

Farming: hyper traditional (organic)

Grape(s):

~33% Alibernet (cross of Alicante Bouschet and Cabernet Sauvignon) from the 2017 harvest

~33% Dunaj (cross of Muscat Bouschet x Oporto and St. Laurent) from the 2018 harvest

~ 33% Portugal from the 2018 harvest

Vineyard: The middle of the slope of the Maria Valley, 11-13 year old vines in loamy soil

Vintage: 2018 was a challenging vintage with high pH grapes resulting in the need to harvest earlier to preserve acidity starting in the third week of August.

Fermentation/ Aging: destemmed and fermented for two weeks in 750L old barrels with manual punchdowns. Dunaj ages in 500 L barrel, the other two in 220 L barrels and blended in January of 2019 shortly before bottling.

Fining/ Filtration: none

Sulfite: none added

Misc: Zsolt on the name of the wine: "I thought about name for my reds. So Alibernet red, Alired, Alred, Alfred Fred. Friendly red... Thats all. Done."



The Producer:

As pioneering natural wine importers delve deeper and deeper into the forgotten corners of Europe, the fog of obscurity is parting around fascinating places like Slovakia, revealing distinct wine traditions and wondrous possibility. Neo-traditionalist Zsolt Suto is located in the undulating hills of Pohronska Pahorkatina at the lower reaches of the Hron River in Slovakia's South West near the Hungarian border. In the town of Strekov, for which the winery is named, the tradition of handmade, local wine without additives is deeply embedded in village life. Conversations about one's backyard vineyards, passing on news of a spotted illness among the vines and a custom of inviting neighbors in for a taste have always been central to Zsolt's experience of community.

Zsolt essentially makes modern renditions of what is more or less medieval wine: these are raw, tingling animals that have tons of personality and energy. This isn't a modern,

hyper scientific situation but one of old school practices and deep intuition. As Zsolt says: “there are certain things that can only be achieved through faith.”

The Vineyard

Zsolt cares for a total of 12 hectares of vines broken up across as many loam-rich parcels with half of that in a semi wild state trained up on stakes. The garden-sized plots are interspersed among the old-growth deciduous forests, garnished with a few ponds and framed by a stream so the terroir lends itself towards botrytis development, what Zsolt calls ‘a gift of the terroir.’

‘Fred’ comes from their own vines planted in the Middle Hill of the Maria Valley. This wine is a quirky non vintage creature that is labeled in an iterative fashion:

Fred#4 - - bottled in May 2019

- 33% - Dunaj 2018
- 33% - Alibernet 2017
- 33% - Portugal 2018

Fred#3 - bottled in January 2019

- 25% - Dunaj 2017
- 25% - Alibernet 2017
- 50% - Portugal 2018

Fred#2 - - bottled in August 2018

- 50% Dunaj 2017
- 50% Alibernet2017

The Cellar

The wine is split roughly in thirds across Dunaj, Alibernet and Portugal. Harvest is conducted by hand with a team composed of grey haired villagers. All three varieties are fermented identically: destemmed and loaded into 750L open top barrels for 2 weeks of fermentation with manual punch downs. The Dunaj is aged in 500 L barrel where the other two are in smaller 220 L barrels, blended together in April 2019 and bottled the next month without fining, filtration or sulfite addition.

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