

Keltis 'Pinot Gris' 2015

Producer - Miha and Marijan Keltis

Provenance: Bizeljsko, Slovenia

Farming: organic

Grape(s): 100% Pinot Gris (Sivi Pinot)

Vineyard(s): Patchwork 30 year old vineyards that wrap the upper part of the hill growing in Ponca - a limestone rich marl with other deposits of sandstone and clay.

Fermentation/ Aging: Destemmed pinot gris was fermented on its skins in fiberglass for 30 days before pressing into barrels for 3 years of barrel aging.

Fining/ Filtration: none.

Sulfur: none added.

Misc: Kreso describes this wine as a more serious 'Alsatian style' of Pinot Gris



The Producer:

Father and son Marijan and Miha Kelhar are custodians of a centuries old family tradition of farming that began in 1776 when their ancestors built the oak wine cellar on the hill of Bizeljsko. Disrupted by communist rule and reborn 30 years ago, they began forays into natural winemaking, organic and biodynamic practices in the aughts when Miha started to take a more active role. Today, the family produces about 20,000 bottles, most of which they sell to the US with the assistance of Zev Rovine's former Yugoslav correspondent and winemaker Kreso Petrekovic. With each passing vintage they continue to experiment: "every year we try something new," Miha says "we are still learning, it's a long process."

The Vineyard:

Like many former communist viticultural areas, collectivization and post-communist redistribution has resulted in a patchwork of holdings rather than a contiguous vineyard. The Keltis family's 4-5 hectares are spread across the face of the hill at the peak of the Bizeljsko appellation in Slovenian Styria on Croatia's border. Vineyards wrap the hill and are designated not by heritage name but by little landmarks: "today we'll pick the chardonnay next to the old church" and so on. The soils here are the famed Ponca, a dense marl laced through with marine sediments with other deposits of clay, slate and sandstone scattered throughout.

Despite the rainy conditions and the persensity for hail, farming is organic, timed in accordance to lunar cycles and bolstered by their own cows' contribution to organic hummus and biodynamic preparation 500 (cow horn manure). Western winds help to combat disease among the plants.

The Winery:

Hand-harvested Pinot Gris was destemmed and spontaneously fermented in fiberglass tanks. After 30 days of maceration, the wine was pressed into a mix of 225L and 500L barrels primarily from Slovenian coopers with a few French barrels peppered in. For the first 30 days, the barrels are stirred first 2-3 times a day and then progressively less frequently. Aged for 3 years on fine lees. No fining, filtration or sulfite addition.

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