

# Tokaj without Botrytis



## Dry Tokaji wines

These wines, once referred to as common, ordinárium, wines are now generally named after their respective grape varieties or may be blended to produce a 'cuvée'. Dry white wines are made predominantly from Furmint, Hárslevelű and, to a lesser extent Sárga Muskotály, although many producers will leave a few grams of residual sugar in this latter variety. Zéta, Kabar and Köverszőlő are also permitted varieties in the region, although are less commonly found as varietals. Dry white wine is growing in popularity as the world is losing its sweet tooth and sales of sweet wine are generally in decline, therefore Tokaj is trying to reposition itself as a producer of quality dry wines as well as the luscious Aszú it is renowned for. Furmint yields a relatively neutral wine, with high acidity, typically with flavours of quince, pear, lemon, apple and almond, Hárslevelű a richer, more complex wine with some floral characteristics, whereas Sárga Muskotály has a more floral, grapey profile with perhaps a touch of sweetness. Tokaji dry wines are often marked by a mineral character.

### Furmint

Furmint is grown in over 10,000 acres, approximately 90 per cent of which is in the Tokaj region. Furmint did spread out from Tokaj to other parts of Hungary as well as some neighbouring countries, where it is known by local synonyms including **Mosler** (Austria), **Šipon** (Slovenia and northern Croatia), **Moslavac Bijeli** (Croatia), **Som** in (Transylvania) and **Zapfner** (Germany).



## Village wines

The region consists of 27 named towns and villages, the most important of which include Tokaj itself, the dynamic Mád, Erdőbenye, Sárospatak, Borogkeresztúr, Tarcal, Sátoraljaújhely, Mezőzombor, Rátka, Tolcsva and Tállya. Similar to Burgundy or Beaujolais, wines which are made from grapes grown from vineyards within the boundaries of a single town or village are entitled to bear the name of the settlement on the label in addition to the Tokaji designation. The Mádi Kör (Mád Circle), in particular, has adopted a vineyard classification system akin to that of Burgundy, obliging its members to follow stricter regulations than those enforced in Hungary in general.



## Vineyard-selected wines

Tokaj, with its diversity of volcanic rocks and layers of tuff, clay and loess soil, certainly lends itself well to the production of vineyard-selected wines, enabling wines to derive distinctive character and quality due to the mineral composition of the soil, which can change dramatically from one side of a hill to the other and thus from one vineyard to another. Furmint with its relatively neutral flavour and aroma is believed to be particularly suitable for showcasing the character of the terroir. The historic cru vineyards generally lie at higher altitude where the soils have a higher concentration of trace elements such as potassium and magnesium. Prominent vineyards include Betsek, Birsalmás, Lapis, Szent Tamás, Úrággya, Király, Rány, Határi, Kövágó, Percze, Padihegy, Szilvölgy and Szerelmi.



## Sparkling wines

An increasing number of producers are releasing sparkling wines, often from Furmint, whose high acidity and relative neutrality make it ideally suited for the production of quality traditional method sparkling wine. Hárslevelű is also used.