

THE MASTER'S NOSE CLUB

"Tokaj's new Golden Age!"



MAD
WINE



SZENT TAMÁS
VINEYARDS & WINERY

MÁD

MAD wine and Szent Tamas, Tokaj, Hungary

HUNGARY'S GOLDEN WINEMAKING PAST

For more than 200 years leading up to the start of the first World War, Hungary's sweet Tokaji wines went through a Golden Age and were once described by French King Louis XIV as being the "wine of kings and the king of wines"! In fact the Tokaj wine region – a small region of only around 5,500 hectares of vines in the north east of Hungary – was the first formally classified wine appellation in the world (in 1737!) The good news is that since the end of the stifling era of post war communism in the country, the Tokaj region is now rapidly returning to its former winemaking glory! The MAD/Szent Tamas winery is at the forefront of this quality revolution. Based in the village of Mad in the heart of Tokaj, the company's goal is to produce great quality, terroir-driven, dry white wines from the local Furmint grape which reflect the unique volcanic soils of this classic wine region. And of course some of the world's very finest dessert wines!

THE VINEYARDS



The Tokaj vineyards lie in the foothills of the Zemplen mountains at the edge of the Great Hungarian Plain, which provides plenty of heat for the vines in the summer. The humidity which is essential for their noble-rot infected sweet "Aszu" wines drifts up from the rivers Bodrog and Tisza. By far the most important premium quality grape variety of the region is the white Furmint, which plays a similar role to that of Chardonnay in Burgundy, in that it perfectly expresses the minerality of the region's ancient and varied volcanic soils. It is fairly restrained in its fruit flavours, and combines well with the very gentle use of oak to provide some of the longest-lived and most complex dry, terroir-driven white wines outside of Burgundy.

THE WINERY AND WINEMAKING

All the grapes for the wines in this selection were hand-picked, gently crushed and then fermented using wild, indigenous yeasts. The Mad Dry Furmint was fermented in temperature controlled steel tanks to retain its fruity freshness and gentle minerality. The two single vineyard dry whites and the sweet wine were fermented in large (3,000 litres) Hungarian oak casks, made from oak trees grown in the local mountain forests. The dry wines were bottled after 8 – 10 months in cask, while the job of making the sweet Tokaji Aszu is more complex! This is made from a blend of mainly Furmint with some Harslevelu grapes. As these are fermenting, 6 “butts” (“puttonyos”) of extremely shrivelled, noble-rot-infected “aszu” berries are added to the fermenting must. The resulting, intensely sweet wine is then matured for 3 years in large Hungarian oak barrels before bottling.



All the wines were made by Istvan Szepsy Junior. The Szepsy family have been making wine in the Tokaj region since the late 16th century and are widely regarded as being Hungary’s most famous winemaking family, similar to the Leflaives of Burgundy. As from 2017, Istvan left Mad/Szent Tamas to concentrate on making the wines for his family domaine, whose wines are far more expensive than these! So, in this wine selection, we have the perfect combination of grapes grown on some of Hungary’s best “grand cru” vineyards and vinified by the region’s most famous winemaker. And all this at prices which are amazingly fair for the extreme high quality and long term drinking potential of the wines!



AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Mad/Szent Tamas wines are now sold in many top hotels and eating establishments around the world, including Gordon Ramsay’s restaurant chain. They have been gaining superb reviews from the world’s most respected wine press in recent years including Jancis Robinson MW, the UK’s Decanter Magazine and Mundus Vini International Wine Competition.

ABOUT THE WINES



MAD Furmint 2016 (2 bottles)

This unoaked, dry white wine comes from Furmint grapes grown on some of the best vineyards around the village of Mad, which is situated in the heart of the Tokaj wine region. It is fresh and lively with hints of honey, petrol and gentle citrus fruits, and has an impressively long, mineral finish reflecting its volcanic terroirs.

Serve with seafood , specifically mussels, clams and oysters, or poultry dishes.
Drink 2020 – 2024.



Szent Tamas Furmint Dongo 2016 (1 bottle)

This intensely mineral, dry white wine comes from 40-50 year old vines on one of the region's "grand cru" rated single vineyards, which has deep, mineral-rich, volcanic soils. It has taut, zingy acidity and gentle notes of honey and stone fruits. Its 10 months' ageing in Hungarian oak barrels have added gentle vanilla flavours and an extra layer of complexity. Only 5,000 bottles were produced.

Serve with lamb, veal and game.
Drink 2020 – 2030.



Szent Tamas Furmint 2015 (2 bottles)

This dry white wine comes from Furmint grapes grown on 50 – 60 year old vines on the Szent Tamas vineyard, one of the Tokaj region's oldest and most famous vineyards and classified as a "first growth" back in 1732! It is rich and full bodied yet intense and crisp at the same time, rather like a cross between a steely Chablis and a powerful Marsanne from the Northern Rhone. It has gentle, honeysuckle and stone fruit flavours combined with subtle vanilla notes. Only 4,000 bottles were produced.

Serve with lamb, roast duck or game.
Drink 2020 – 2030.



Szent Tamas Tokaji Aszu 6 Puttonyos 2013 (1 bottle – 50cl)

This delicious sweet Tokaji is only made in the very best years – 2013 was the last great vintage to be bottled. It has a unique mix of sweet, honeyed marmalade and lemon peel flavours and beautifully fresh, zingy acidity and is a perfect example of Hungary's most famous sweet nectar! Only 5,000 bottles were produced.

Serve with sweet, caramelised orange or lemon flavoured desserts, blue cheeses or foie gras.
Drink 2020 – 2050.