

Királyudvar

In the Court of the King



Királyudvar's "Percze Path"

When Anthony Hwang loaded his family in the car and drove northeast from Budapest in 1997, he could hardly have imagined where the road would inevitably lead.

The trip was inspired by a Tokaji Aszú that a sommelier recommended the previous evening. The wine made such an impression that Tony felt he *had* to learn more about it. For what Tony craved most in wine, this bottle offered in spades—a profound identity and razor-sharp balance.

Resurrecting a Legend

Tokaj was once one of the world's most prestigious wine regions; its top Aszú and Esszencia dessert wines were among the world's most coveted and expensive. Yet two world wars devastated Tokaji's traditional European markets and the decline continued under Communist rule.

But after the Iron Curtain's fall, a few lone souls struggled to preserve the Tokaji legacy. The most prominent was

THE WINES

PESZGŐ "HENYE"—Inspired by Huët's revered Pétillant, Tony introduced this fascinating sparkling wine in 2007.

FURMINT SEC—Also introduced in '05, this innovative dry wine wonderously balances Furmint's viscous intensity and bright acidity.

"CUVÉE ILONA"—Another Tony Hwang innovation—named for his wife Evelyn—Ilona is a versatile botrytized wine of the highest order.

"CUVÉE PATRÍCIA"—Made only in special years, this stunning dessert wine is made from the locally rare Yellow Muscat and named for Tony's daughter who suggested producing this wine.

ASZÚ 6 PUTTONYOS—The estate's classic Aszú wine shows tremendous richness. Balance is maintained by knife-edged acidity.

ASZÚ 6 PUTTONYOS "LAPIS"—The Lapis vineyard is one of Tokaji's Grand Cru vineyards sites. Its dessert wine, produced only in exceptional years, rivals the greatest Sauternes.

ESSZENCIA—Made solely from the free run juice from the Aszú, Esszencia is the wine of the kings, believed to bestow great longevity on those lucky enough to sip this nectar.

Istvan Szepsy, whom Tony was determined to meet.

Tony was floored by the wines he tasted. He was moved by not only what was in the glass, but by the realization that, with investment and steady purpose, the region could again produce some of the world's most unique and intriguing wines.

Royal Connections

Just a few months after his visit, Tony purchased what was perhaps the region's crown jewel, Királyudvar (Kee-RYE-oohd-var) —which for centuries had supplied Imperial wine to the Hapsburgs. Szepsy became a partner, helping Tony to rehabilitate the vineyards, while the château itself was rebuilt.

But with time, Szepsy departed and Tony assumed the reins full-time. Along the way, he was counseled by Noël Pinguet of the Loire Valley's greatest Vouvray producer, Domaine Huët, of which Tony is also a partner. Noël's collaboration would prove invaluable, particularly his advice to convert the estate to biodynamic viticulture.

Today, Tony is rekindling the legacy of this providential wine region. But he's not stopping there, having recognized, for example, that the local varieties, with their viscous intensity and bright acidity, could produce world-class dry, demi-sec, and sparkling wines.



The Magic of Aszú

Tokaji's historical importance, going back to the 1600s, derives from its legendary Aszú dessert wines. Botrytized grapes are collected individually and pressed gently under their own weight (free run droplets are set aside for Esszencia). The Aszú berries are then crushed and, in most cases, macerated with the juice from ripe, but non-botrytized, grapes before moving to barrel for fermentation and 3+ years of aging. Depending on the producer, the barrels may be topped or not to produce wines with hints of oxidation.

Királyudvar

Tokaj, Hungary

OVERVIEW

Proprietor: Anthony Hwang

Winemaker: Szabolcs Juhasz

Filipino-born, New York businessman Anthony Hwang created Királyudvar in 1997 and completed purchase in 1999. With time and investment, it has become a leader in Tokaji's renaissance.

RECENT VINTAGES

- 2008 – A good year, with relatively approachable wines and excellent Aszú.
2007 – Hot, ripe year with powerful wines.
2006 – A cool summer and ideal harvest conditions led to strong wines across the spectrum.
2005 – A terrific vintage for Aszú wines, and the debut of the estate's Sec wine.
2003 – A great year for botrytized dessert wines. Great intensity of flavor and ripeness.

The Vineyards

Királyudvar has 6 main vineyards located in Tokaji's heartland in the towns of Mád and Bodrogkeresztúr. All are historically important *grand cru* sites; including Henye, Percze, Becsek, and the great Lapis. The soils are clay and rock of volcanic origin (various Rhyolite Tuffs).

The dominant grapes are Furmint and Hárslevelű, with a small amount of Muskotály planted in the Danczka vineyard.

Anthony Hwang's principal ownership of the Loire Valley's Domaine Huët has given him an invaluable viewpoint when crafting his own wines in Tokaj.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

The estate adopted biodynamic viticulture in 2008, and aims for certification by 2012.

The Wines

Pezsgő "Henyé"

Sparkling wine from the acclaimed Henye vineyard.

Avg. Production: 200 cases

Furmint Sec

Trailblazing dry wine from estate vineyards.

Avg. Production: 2,000 cases

Demi-Sec

An off-dry wine from three select plots of the Becsek vineyard.

Avg. Production: 500 cases

"Cuvée Ilona"

A wine produced from late-harvest (many botrytized) berries in the estate's vineyards, but not macerated like the Aszú wines.

Avg. Production: 250 cases

"Cuvée Patricia"

A late-harvest wines produced from rare Muskotály grapes in the Danczka vineyard

Avg. Production: 250 cases

Aszú 6 Puttonyos

Aszú is produced from a mix of estate vineyards and varieties. Heavily botrytized grapes are crushed and fermented with the finest base wine.

Avg. Production: 250 cases

Aszú 6 Puttonyos "Lapis Vineyard"

Aszú from Kiralyudvar's famed Lapis *cru*.

Avg. Production: 250 cases

Esszencia

Drops of wine nectar produced by the weight of fully botrytized, dessicated Aszú berries.

Avg. Production: 50 cases