

INTRODUCTION

LADIES & GENTLEMEN: Holgyeim es Uraim

TONIGHT WE HAVE CHOSEN COUNTRIES OF EASTERN EUROPE FOR OUR WINE PRESENTATION.

OUR STARTER WINE IS A GRUNER VELTLINER 2005 FROM AUSTRIA. WE DECIDED NOT TO INCLUDE THIS IN OUR TASTING SINCE IT WAS PRESENTED LAST MONTH.

STARTING FROM FAR EAST AND MAKING A HALT IN ANCIENT GREECE, THE GRAPEVINE SETTLED DOWN IN THE LAND OF ANCIENT DACIA (THE OLD NAME FOR TERRITORIES NOW KNOWN AS ROMANIA).

FOSSIL VINES, 60 MILLION YEARS OLD ARE THE EARLIEST SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE OF GRAPES. THE EARLIEST WRITTEN ACCOUNT OF VINICULTURE IS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT OF THE BIBLE, WHICH TELLS US THAT NOAH PLANTED A VINEYARD AND MADE WINE!

WINE CAME TO EUROPE WITH THE SPREAD OF GREEK CIVILIZATION AROUND 1600 BC. HOMER'S ODYSSEY AND ILIAD BOTH CONTAIN EXCELLENT AND DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF WINE. WINE WAS AN IMPORTANT ARTICLE OF GREEK COMMERCE AND GREEK PHYSICIANS, INCLUDING HIPPOCRATES, WAS AMONG THE FIRST TO PRESCRIBE IT.

DURING THE TIME BEHIND THE "IRON CURTAIN", WINEMAKING WAS CONSOLIDATED, MONOPOLIZED AND TURNED INTO A STATE INDUSTRY IN THE "EASTERN BLOCK" OF THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES, AND STANDARDS REMAINED LOW. SINCE THE FALL OF COMMUNISM,

PRIVATIZATION HAS TAKEN OVER AND THE WINE INDUSTRY HAS BEEN GROWING BY LEAPS AND BOUNDS.

AN ANCIENT PERSIAN FABLE CREDIT'S A LADY OF THE COURT WITH THE DISCOVERY OF WINE. THIS PRINCESS, HAVING LOST FAVOR WITH THE KING, ATTEMPTED TO POISON HERSELF BY EATING SOME TABLE GRAPES THAT HAD SPOILED IN A JAR. SHE BECAME INTOXICATED AND GIDDY AND FELL ASLEEP. WHEN SHE AWOKE, SHE FOUND THE STRESSES THAT HAD MADE HER LIFE INTOLERABLE HAD DISPERSED. RETURNING TO THE SOURCE OF HER RELIEF, HER CONDUCT CHANGED SO REMARKABLY THAT SHE REGAINED THE KING'S FAVOR. HE SHARED HIS DAUGHTER'S DISCOVERY WITH HIS COURT AND THE REST IS HISTORY.

CERTAINLY WINE, AS A NATURAL PHASE OF GRAPE SPOILAGE, WAS DISCOVERED BY ACCIDENT AND IS NOT AN INVENTION OF MAN. IT IS ESTABLISHED THAT GRAPE CULTIVATION AND WINE DRINKING HAD STARTED BY ABOUT 4000 BC AND POSSIBLY AS EARLY AS 6000 BC. PRIESTS AND ROYALTY WERE USING WINE, WHILE BEER WAS DRUNK BY THE WORKERS. THE EGYPTIANS DEVELOPED THE FIRST ARBORS AND PRUNING METHODS. ARCHEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS HAVE UNCOVERED MANY SITES WITH SUNKEN JARS, SO THE EFFECTS OF TEMPERATURE ON STORED WINE WERE PROBABLY KNOWN.

BULGARIAN WHITE WINE

ON THE EASTERN SHORES OF THE BLACK SEA LIES ONE OF THE OLDEST

**WINEMAKING REGIONS IN THE WORLD....
BULGARIA!**

WINEMAKING IN BULGARIA HAS BEEN TRACED BACK NEARLY 2500 YEARS WHEN GRAPES FIRST ARRIVED THERE FROM ARMENIAN GEORGIA. THE BULGARIAN WINE INDUSTRY, FOR THE MOST PART, WAS STATE-CONTROLLED UNTIL THE IRON CURTAIN FELL IN 1990, AND NOW PREMIUM WINES ARE BEGINNING TO EMERGE IN THE WORLD MARKET.

OUR FIRST WINE IS A BULGARIAN WHITE WINE, CHATEAU SLAVYANSTI MUSCAT SPECIAL RESERVE 2003, PICKED BY HAND FROM 20-YEAR OLD VINES IN THE SUNGURLARE VALLEY.

THIS SPECIAL RESERVE MATURED IN SMALL AMERICAN OAK CASKS, HAS A BEAUTIFUL COLOR AND CLARITY WITH AN ACCENTUATED AROMATIC COMPOSITION. ITS FLAVOR IS EXCEPTIONALLY PLEASANT, FRESH WITH TONES OF HONEY RESEMBLING AN APPLE, NUANCES OF PEACH AND CITRUS WITH AN ACCENT OF A NOBLE OAK, IN A LONG FINISH OF PLEASANT EMOTIONS.

Tasting Time *Ital Mindenki*

PRICE: \$8.49 BULGARIAN MASTER VINTNERS, L.L.C.,SONOMA CALIFORNIA.

ROMANIAN WHITE WINE

THIS ANCIENT LAND HAS CULTIVATED SOME OF THE WORLD'S FINEST GRAPES SINCE THE 5TH CENTURY B.C.

FOLKLORE TELLS OF BACCHUS, THE GOD OF WINE BEING BORN HERE. THE ROMAN GOD OF WINE AND INTOXICATION, BACCHUS IS EQUATED WITH THE GREEK DIONYSUS. HIS FESTIVAL IS CELEBRATED ON MARCH 16 AND 17. THE BACCHANALIAN ORGIES, IN HONOR OF DIONYSUS, WERE INTRODUCED IN ROME AROUND 200 B.C. THESE INFAMOUS CELEBRATIONS, NOTORIOUS FOR THEIR SEXUAL AND CRIMINAL CHARACTER GOT SO OUT OF HAND THAT THEY WERE FORBIDDEN BY THE ROMAN SENATE IN 186 B.C. BACCHUS IS ALSO IDENTIFIED WITH THE OLD ITALIAN GOD LIBER.

OUR SECOND WHITE WINE IS THE TRANSYLVANIA FETEASCA REGALA 2005. THIS UNIQUE ROMANIAN VARIETY SHOWS A COMPLEX FLORAL AROMA OF WILD FLOWERS AND APRICOT WITH FINE FRUIT FLAVORS. TASTE THIS WONDERFUL WINE FROM TRANSYLVANIA AND BE TRANSPORTED BACK TO A TIME OF MYTH AND LEGEND.

Tasting Time *Ital Mindenki*

PRICE: \$6.99 TOTAL WINE

ROMANIAN RED WINES

AS WE MENTIONED EARLIER, BACCHUS, THE GOD OF WINE, WAS BORN IN ROMANIA. WINES HAVE BEEN CULTIVATED HERE SINCE THE 7TH CENTURY B.C. AND WERE FAMOUS THROUGHOUT THE ANCIENT WORLD. SO MUCH SO, THAT WHEN THE ROMANS CONQUERED THE REGION IN 106 A.D., COINS WERE MINTED WITH THE SYMBOL OF CHILDREN OFFERING GRAPES TO THE GODS.

OUR FIRST ROMANIAN RED WINE IS TRANSYLVANIA PINOT NOIR 2005. AN EXQUISITE WINE BURSTING WITH SOFT BERRY FRUIT AND AN ELEGANT FRAGRANCE OF WILD STRAWBERRIES. DARE TO SAVOR THIS UNEXPECTED PLEASURE FROM TRANSYLVANIA!

Tasting Time *Ital Mindenki*

PRICE: \$6.99 TOTAL WINE

OUR NEXT ROMANIAN RED IS TRANSYLVANIA MERLOT 2005. A FULL BODIED WINE WITH PLUMS AND BLACKBERRY FRUIT AROMAS COMBINED WITH HINTS OF VANILLA OAK.

Tasting Time *Ital Mindenki*

PRICE: \$6.99 TOTAL WINE

BULGARIAN RED WINES

WINE MAKING TRADITIONS HAVE ENDURED DURING THE MIDDLE AGES AND THE OTTOMAN RULE IN BULGARIA. AFTER THE LIBERATION FROM THE OTTOMAN YOKE, WINE MAKING PROSPERED. THE ECONOMIC PROGRESS AFTER THE LIBERATION, LAID THE FOUNDATIONS OF BULGARIAN VINOLOGY.

OUR FIRST BULGARIAN RED WINE IS VINI CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2004 FROM THE THRACIAN VALLEY. A GARNET BLACK COLOR. BROWN BUTTER, TOASTED COCONUT AND BERRY AROMAS. A SOFT ENTRY LEADS TO A DRY-YET-FRUITY MEDIUM BODY OF RIPE CURRANT AND SWEET SPICE FLAVORS. FINISHES WITH A DRY, MODERATELY TANNIC, CASSIS (BLACK CURRANT) SKIN FADE.

Tasting Time

Ital Mindenki

PRICE: \$7.49 BULGARIAN MASTER
VINTNERS, LLC

OUR NEXT BULGARIAN RED IS CHATEAU SLAVYANTSTI MERLOT 2002 SPECIAL RESERVE. RED WINE MATURED IN SMALL OAK CASKS FOR MINIMUM OF ONE YEAR. A RESERVE YOU WOULD PREFER FOR YOUR CELEBRATION DINNER IN FRONT OF THE FIREPLACE. WINE WITH A NICE RED COLOR AND CRYSTAL LIMPIDITY. THE BOUQUET IS TYPICAL WITH NUANCES OF RIPE WILD BERRIES--BLACK CURRENT, STRAWBERRY, BLUEBERRY MIXED WITH CINNAMON TONES OF SPICES. THE FLAVOR IS LARGE-RANGED, SOFT, AND HARMONIOUS WITH ACCENTS OF A NOBLE OAK AND MEMORABLE PLEASANT FINAL.

Tasting Time

Ital Mindenki

PRICE: \$8.49 BULGARIAN MASTER
VINTNERS, LLC

HUNGARIAN RED

THE HUNGARIAN STORY OF WINE CAN BE TRACED BACK TO THE ROMANS WHO ARRIVED IN THE 1ST CENTURY A.D. FROM THE SLOPES OF THE NORTHERLY RIVER RHINE TO SUNNY HISPANIA. THEY BUILT ROADS AND TOWNS AND PLANTED THEIR VINES. THEY FOUND FAVORABLE WINE GROWING CONDITIONS IN PANNONIA, WHICH IS TODAY, TRANSDANUBIA, WEST OF THE DANUBE. VINOUS TRADITIONS WERE CARRIED ON DURING THE CENTURIES OF COMMOTION THAT SEPARATED THE MIGHTY ROMAN EMPIRE FROM THE ARRIVAL OF THE MAGYARS IN THE 9TH CENTURY. THE FOUNDING OF THE HUNGARIAN KINGDOM BY SAINT STEPHEN IN 1000 A.D. WAS FOLLOWED BY THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY. THE MONKS OF THE NEWLY ESTABLISHED MONASTERIES DISSEMINATED THE CULTURE OF WINE AND THE KINGDOM OF HUNGARY BECAME ONE OF THE CENTERS OF WINE PRODUCTION FOR THE NEXT 900 YEARS, PROVIDING WINE TO THE COUNTIES AND PEOPLES OF THE HABSBURG EMPIRE AND BEYOND.

And Now The Legend Continues...

AS THE STORY GOES, BACK IN 1552, THE EGER FORTRESS WAS UNDER ATTACK AND THE DEFENDERS WERE BADLY OUTNUMBERED. TO FORTIFY THEMSELVES AND GIVE THEMSELVES

COURAGE, THEY DRANK THE LOCAL RED WINE IN LARGE AMOUNTS, AND THE WINE SPILLED ON THEM WHILE THEY DRANK SO. WHEN THE ATTACKERS SAW THE MEN RUNNING TOWARDS THEM WITH RED LIQUID ALL DOWN THEIR CHESTS, THEY THOUGHT THE LOCALS HAD BEEN DRINKING BULL'S BLOOD AND THEY FLED IN TERROR.

OUR FINALE OF THE TASTINGS OF EASTERN EUROPEAN WINES IS EGRİ BIKAVER'S BULLS BLOOD FROM THE EGER REGION. WHEN WINE DRINKERS THINK OF "EASTERN EUROPEAN" WINE, THE WINE THEY THINK OF HUNGARY'S TOKAJI. BULLS BLOOD IS NOT A COMPLEX EXPENSIVE WINE, BUT IT IS FUN TO DRINK. IT'S A BLENDED WINE MADE FROM THE KADARKA, KEKFRANKOS, CABERNET SAUVIGNON, MERLOT AND KEKOPORTO GRAPES, AND IT IS OUR FAVORITE!

Tasting Time

Ital Mindenki

PRICE: \$6.99

TOTAL WINE

CONCLUSION

THIS CONCLUDES OUR PRESENTATION OF WINES OF EASTERN EUROPE. THANK YOU FOR HELPING US. THANKS TO RAY

**AND CATHERINE FOR PROVIDING US WITH
A PLACE TO ENJOY OURSELVES, AND,**

Thanks to Sir W Temple who said:

The first glass for myself...

The second glass for my friends

The third glass to good behavior

The fourth glass for mine enemies

EGER SHEGGARA!