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Wines from the Heart of Zagreb
History

As part of the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Agriculture, the Jazbina Experimental Station has been in operation for more than 70 years. Indeed, the need for having such a facility established, and for introducing a practical, hands-on approach to education in agronomy, was deeply felt much earlier, by the founders of the school, which at the time was called the Faculty of Husbandry and Forestry. With this goal in mind, a farm was acquired at Maksimir, which today encompasses faculty buildings and experimental fields for conducting research in crop-farming, and the growing of vegetables and fodder crops. With the development of fruit-growing and viticulture, it became necessary for the Faculty to further expand its scientific research programs, to also provide agriculture department students with the benefit of a practical education. Since the Faculty farm in Maksimir, due to its location, could not provide adequate land, additional property at Jazbina was purchased in 1939, about 3.5 km from the Faculty buildings. Situated in the foothills of Mount Medvednica (also known as Zagrebacka Gora), with a southern and southwestern exposure, and with a maximum elevation of 302 m above sea level, the Jazbina Station is ideal for fruit and grape growing. From its beginnings until 1960, the Station was being developed, first and foremost, as an educational and experimental facility. For that purpose, orchards containing a variety of fruit-trees, and vineyards with a number of different varieties, under different trellis systems, were established. But due to the lack of financial resources, no significant investments were made in the ensuing years, and the Jazbina orchards and vineyards began to gradually decline. In 1995, a systematic approach to revitalize the entire facility was adopted, new vineyards were planted, farm buildings restored and modernized, and the experimental station assumed its present form.
Today, Jazbina is, above all, a training ground for science and education with its primary mission being in educating students and future experts, and in promoting scientific research in the fields of viticulture and enology. The Station provides students with a unique opportunity for acquiring hands-on knowledge and experience. This practical teaching in the vineyard and in the cellar is a welcome change of pace, by providing an opportunity for students to leave the classroom, and enjoy nature and informal socializing while tending the land. It is no wonder that generations of the Faculty of Agriculture graduates have fond memories of their Jazbina experience. Here, the students can
familiarize themselves with a number of different grape genotypes. One section of the vineyard has been planted with grape varieties that are typical, and commercially viable for this region, also with some table grape varieties, some cross-breeds, and there is also a smaller rootstock plantation. The National Collection of Autochthonous Grape Varieties has also been established here, with 120 genotypes, in order to protect and preserve all of the remaining Croatian grape varieties, with special attention and care given to those that are the most endangered.

The Station also houses a well-equipped wine cellar, a grape-to-bottle processing facility, stainless steel fermentation tanks, storage tanks and oak barrels for wine aging.

A small scale experimental wine cellar, with a modern micro- and mini-vinification system, serves scientific research needs and ensures controlled and standardized conditions for making experimental wines, thus making it suitable for enological evaluation of grape varieties and clones, and for conducting various technological experiments. While the Experimental Station is run by the Institute of Viticulture and Enology, whose staff members use it for conducting most of their research, it is open to all members of the Faculty of Agriculture and, in fact, successful interdisciplinary research has been conducted here in cooperation with experts in the fields of plant protection, genetics and plant selection, breeding and advances, microbiology, and various other fields associated with vine and wine.

The courtyard building has a classroom for teaching and training sessions, various workshops and tasting room. Since Jazbina Station is part of the “Zagreb Wine Roads,” tastings are available, with prior arrangement, to anyone interested. Two traditional wooden cottages, with an old Croatian wine press adjacent, are used by the Faculty for aesthetic purposes.
Jazbina Wines

The picturesque hillsides of Mount Medvednica are an ideal site for grape growing, and some truly great wines have been produced at Jazbina. Close to 10 ha (about 25 acres) are planted with vines, mostly with Traminer, which here produces wine of exceptional quality, and with Graševina (Welschriesling) and Chardonnay. More recently, and in accordance with a growing demand for red wines, Pinot noir, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Zweigelt have also been planted. These varieties provide the basis for production of several types of wine, most of which are named either after historical novels written by two famous Zagreb writers – August Šenoa and Marija Jurić Zagorka, or after characters in their novels. For instance, for its golden yellow color, Traminer has been named Zlatarovo zlato (Goldsmith’s Gold, Šenoa); Graševina – Dora Krupićeva (after goldsmith’s daughter), and for red wines Crni vitez (Black Knight, Juric-Zagorka) and Kontesa Nera (Countess Nera, Juric-Zagorka). In special years, late and select harvest wines are produced, as well as ice wine, and in recent years two types of sparkling wine - “Bela” and “Crvena Katarina”. The love and commitment that students, their teachers and all of the employees at Jazbina Station put into producing and caring for the wines is reflected in their quality and, as a result, everyone who has an opportunity to taste them quickly learns to appreciate them and becomes a regular visitor of Jazbina Station. Further, our “Wines From the Heart of Zagreb”, as we like to call them, are served on special occasions and celebrations of our Faculty and other faculties of the University of Zagreb. These wines are also available to all wine connoisseurs outside the University community, either at Jazbina Station or in leading wine shops and better restaurants of Zagreb.

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Dora Krupićeva, the name given to Jazbina Grasevina, most often made as a dry wine, of golden yellow color, with greenish notes. Discreet but with an instantly recognizable bouquet, and a nice floral character. A medium-bodied wine, crisp, fresh and well-balanced, with pleasant varietal bitterness on the palate. It makes a perfect accompaniment to a wide range of continental and Mediterranean dishes, especially chicken and turkey and white fish (such as cod, haddock, hake).
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Chardonnay

Chardonnay, one of the most widely planted and recognized grapes in the world, it displays its wonderful malleability and versatility here, as well, at the Jazbina vineyard and cellar. A generous variety that lends itself to so many different styles of wine. Our Chardonnay is rich and full-bodied, with high alcohol levels and a rather intense yellow color, a well defined wine, with evident varietal character, floral and fruity aromas, smooth and soft, well-balanced, with a long finish, a pleasure to drink. It pairs well with many meat and seafood entrees but also complements game and is friendly to smoked meats.
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Chardonnay barrique

Chardonnay barrique spends six months in small new oak barrels (barrique) which to this intensely colored wine, filled with aromas of ripe and dried fruit, imparts the aromas of vanilla and toasted oak and gives this full-bodied wine soft, round notes, underpinning a rich, almost oily texture. This wine has a great mouth feel with a long finish which lingers on your palate. Perfect accompaniment to various meats, cold appetizers and cheeses.
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Zlatarovo zlato is the best proof that Jazbina has an extraordinary terroir for Traminer, a variety traditionally grown here, and still one of the leading varieties. Straw to light gold in color, with a pronounced varietal aroma, and intense floral scents, this full-bodied, rich wine, with a long finish, is most often made in off-dry style and pairs very well with fish and crabs, lobster or other shellfish, sweet sauces and desserts. Since Traminer is a multi-purpose variety, used for making a range of table wines, its wine can also serve as an excellent apéritif.
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Kontesa Nera, *cuvée*, is an interesting wine, a blend of five quality continental red varieties, with a significant portion of Pinot Noir. A wine of lively, ruby red color, and pronounced fruity aromas and flavors, soft and agreeable on the palate. Flavor and bouquet are nicely balanced by oak aging. This wine, full in flavor, with the aroma of dried fruit and vanilla, is a nice complement to both simple and more elaborate meat dishes, fried or baked fish, and different types of cheeses.
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Crni vitez

cuvée, a powerful wine of
an intensely ruby red color, and
with a pleasant fruity aroma, with
subtle notes of dried fruit, vanilla and
spice. It is a beautiful manifestation of the
high potential of the varieties used and the
positions chosen for the growing of the grapes.
Two prominently featured, both in terms of
percentages and lending their characteristics to
the wine, are Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot.
Aging and maturation in barriques ensures
soft tannins, supple acidity, and a wine rich in
extract; well balanced, mouth-filling, with
intense flavors. An ideal accompaniment
for red meat and game dishes, smoked
meats and ripe cheeses.
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Traminer
Select harvest of dried berries
A dessert wine produced from shrivelled, overripe grapes, belonging to top predicate wines. It is graced by an intense golden yellow to amber color, and an exuberant dried fruit, raisins, honey and noble rot aroma. This rich, complex, full-bodied wine, of typical sweetness, with a long finish, is an ideal complement to desserts, and can also serve as an apéritif.

Traminer
Ice wine
This special predicate wine is made from grapes harvested and processed at temperatures below -7 °C. A striking golden yellow to amber color, a luxurious bouquet and flavor, this wine is a perfect blend of varietal aromas, overripe grapes and noble rot, which in the best possible way combine with the richness of flavor, making it a dense, full, aromatic and seductive sweet wine that leaves no one indifferent. It can be enjoyed as an apéritif, a wine worth toasting with, and as an ideal complement to desserts, but the total expression of its characteristics is so powerful and long lasting that it is best appreciated after the meal, as the very last wine consumed.
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In certain years, *Wines From the Heart of Zagreb* include wines produced from less represented grape varieties, such as Sauvignon, Manzoni, white Muscat, and Rhine Riesling. As a rule, these wines are dry, light and airy, but harmonious, result of separate vinification of the above mentioned varieties. Characterized by lively, greenish yellow to yellow color, typical varietal aroma and well balanced, full-flavored, they beautifully represent each variety and the excellence of the Jazbina vineyard sites. They pair well with many dishes of continental and Mediterranean cuisines.
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