

ROYAL TOKAJI 2007 BETSEK

SINGLE-VINEYARD

FIRST GROWTH, 6 PUTTONYOS

Winemaker:	Károly Áts
Varietal Composition:	Furmint, Hárslevelü and Muscat
Vineyard Size:	15 hectares (37 acres), 1 hectare (2.47 acres) fallow
Vine Age:	Planted 1972-1977
Elevation:	Average of 140 meters (460 feet)
Density:	3,000 vines/hectare (1,215 vines/acre)
Barrel Aging:	30 months in old Hungarian oak from the Zemplen forest (mostly 500-liter/132-gallon barrels with some 350-liter/92-gallon barrels). When new, the barrels were used to age the Royal Tokaji Furmint.
Bottled:	July 7, 2010
Production:	398 cases (6/500ml)
Alcohol:	11%
Total Acidity:	8.5g/L
Residual Sugar:	183.5g/L



THE BETSEK VINEYARD

The largest of Royal Tokaji's first growth vineyards, Betsek (bet-SHEK) is named after an old Magyar family. Shaped like a crescent moon and facing southeast, it is situated to the east of the Nyúlászó and Szt. Tamás vineyards in what is known as the basin of the first growths. The Betsek terroir totals 89 hectares (219.9 acres), of which Royal Tokaji owns 15 hectares (37 acres), all of which are planted to vines except 1 hectare (2.47 acres) which lies fallow. The area where the vineyard is located is typically cold — lower portions of the vineyard have been known to freeze in the spring. The black volcanic topsoil contributes to the mineral and lovely black pepper characters in the wine. Being at the bottom of the valley, the vineyard imparts a much more earthy character to the wine than the other first growths.

THE 2007 VINTAGE

2007 started dry and mild with no frost. Spring continued to be dry and warm until the end of May, when there was plenty of rain. Flowering took place slowly in June amid cold, wet conditions; however, summer followed hot and dry with hardly any rain in August. Véraison was early, and subsequently an early harvest was expected, but because September was rainy, the sugar levels hardly increased in the first three weeks. Autumn was rainy and cold, with windy periods that would allow the berries to dry and sugar levels to rise. The aszú berries that were harvested early were of good quality, but berries harvested later were of extremely high quality because the alternating days of rain and dry wind resulting in desirable botrytis.

TASTING NOTES

Betsek is the largest and one of the most beautiful vineyards of Mád with a stony, heavy, black-clay soil. The nose is honeyed with black pepper and mint providing freshness. The palate is vibrant with grapefruit, orange zest and black pepper with an extremely long finish.

SERVING SUGGESTIONS

Royal Tokaji's Aszú wines are wonderful as an apéritif or digestif, with cigars and petits fours. Given their bright acidity, these wines also pair well with a wide variety of foods, including foie gras, fruit tarts, chocolate desserts and a variety of cheeses. Serve slightly chilled at 12 to 15 degrees Celsius (54 to 59 degrees Fahrenheit) in a small port glass or a glass of similar size.

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