

## Molly's BOTTLE CLUB - May 2021

### Georgian wine (the country not the state)

#### **Artana Wines Rkatsiteli**

from: Kakheti, Georgia

winemaker/ farmer: Taso & Anastasia Akhvlediani

grape: Rkatsiteli

facts & random info: one of Georgia's oldest grape varieties dating back to 3000 BC (whoa!)

all vineyards are dry farmed with hand-harvesting taking place in late September

grapes are pressed in the Qvevri without stems

fermentation starts about 24 hours later and is stirred 3-5 times a day by hand: this fermentation lasts about 3 to 4 weeks until no residual sugar remains: the wine is then removed from the pomace (skins & seeds) and the Qvevri is sealed until winter.

Then just after the Christmas holiday but before the new year, the wine is transferred from one Qvevri to another allowing it to be clarified (removed from sediment naturally) naturally.

The wine is sealed until spring and the same process is carried out in the spring allowing further clarification.

AGE THIS WINE if you can find more bottles!! I truly believe this wine will blow minds with 10-years ageing.

tasting notes: grapefruit zest, tangerine, spice and minerality from clay great balance of fruit and spice flavors, including dried pineapple, passion fruit and spice, with notes of dried apricot & orange peel. Some honey notes that strangely are not sweet

pairing ideas: strong soft cheeses - aged triple creme's for sure herb marinated then grilled lamb! with roasted potato's - oh yes!!

## Oda Family Winery 'Orbeluri Ojaleshi'

from: northwestern Semegrelo Region of Georgia, in the foothills of the Caucasus Mountains

winemaker/ farmer: Keto Ninidze - a strong advocate for women in winemaking and against domestic violence.

She is really quite amazing so when i found this interview Wine Ethusiast did with Keto I had to share this part with you:

Wine Ethusiast: *"what is your advice to someone interested in entering the wine business?"*

Keto: *"I would tell them to listen to nature. There's no greater value in wine than nature, and at the opposition between nature and culture, the latter will always fail. Thus, we have to turn this relationship into cooperation and not consumption. The most difficult thing is to find the border between these two, but the main purpose of every grower has to be finding that very point."*

for the rest of the interview:

<https://www.winemag.com/2020/02/09/women-winemakers-keto-ninidze/>

grape: Orbeluri Ojaleshi

facts & random info: Orbeluri Ojaleshi was almost extinct during the Russian occupation of Georgia. Thankfully, a few brave souls did not tear their grapes out and this indigenous varietal survived

Oda is the name of a traditional house in western Georgia : Keto & her family live in such a century-old house near which they have a small vineyard.

directly pressed into Qveri with 6 months fermentation and ageing in the same Qveri

Not gonna lie - this wine surprised me and I'm still processing it. Keto is an amazing lady whom I will always support but this wine stretched me. I liked it a lot in certain sips but there were also sips that made me scratch my head. So great to stretch oneself - don't you think?

tasting notes: very bright & lively with loads of red fruits - think red currants & cranberries with some slightly unripe forest raspberries. Wild strawberries with subtle smokiness. Tannic structure with a wildness that is new to me - such savory characteristics

pairing ideas: sausage! garlic salami, rich cheese - salty pecorino and even smoked tofu. This wine definitely craves salty, rich foods so while it looks like a rose, I would suggest treating it more like a wine to drink with food!!

## Oda Family Winery 'Tsolikouri /Orbeluri Ojaleshi'

from: northwestern Semegrelo Region of Georgia, in the foothills of the Caucasus Mountains

winemaker/ farmer: Keto Ninidze

grape: Tsolikouri & Orbeluri Ojaleshi

facts & random info: Tsolikouri is widely planted all over Georgia and was primarily used for making sweeter wines. Nowadays, young winemakers are using it to make dry wines and as a blending grape to add citrus, herbal notes

as we learned above, Orbeluri Ojaleshi was almost extinct. Keto has been planting indigenous Georgian varieties and reviving ancient winemaking practices. She is instrumental in the revival of so much Georgian wine culture and I am so grateful!

Note the political message on this bottle: Keto (and her husband Zaza who also makes wine under his own label) are both campaigning to stop Russia's attempted land grab as it advances metre by metre on Georgia's borders!

tasting notes: smoky honey notes balanced by citrus & savory notes on the nose & palate. So much ripe melon and stone fruit are playing perfectly with delicate tannins and creamy, leesy character and kiwi/lime acidity - the texture is amazing!! everything about this wine is so exotic and delicious! endless finish and definitely ageable

pairing ideas: yellow curry with grilled chicken and brown rice! couscous with grilled pork sausage from Beast & Cleaver - grilled eggplant from my garden with a little apricot compote was pretty awesome too!

## **Kortavebis Marani 'Tamuna's Wine' Chinuri/ Saperavi**

from: Gremi, Kvareli Municipality, Kakheti in eastern Georgia in Kakheti (close to the Gremi Fortress)

winemaker(s)/ farmer(s): Tamuna Bidzinashvili

grape: Chinuri/ Saperavi

facts & random info: Tamuna is a pretty revolutionary winemaker - not only is she a woman making wine in Georgia (RARE!) but she is also making wine in the traditional way from estate grown

35 indigenous grape varietals growing as a way to preserve & honor the tradition of wine growing and winemaking in Georgia

stony, alluvial soil

7 days skin contact in Qveri followed by 9-months ageing in Qveri before bottling

unfined & unfiltered so sediment may be present in the bottle

tasting notes: deep, dark, ripe fruits - blackberry, mulberry and those big, fat blueberries that you get at the farmer's market

as is typical in a lot of Georgian wines, these are some intense tannins

pairing ideas: Wild game, lamb or king salmon - roasted or grilled pecorino or other hard cheeses served with blackberry jam or blueberry preserve