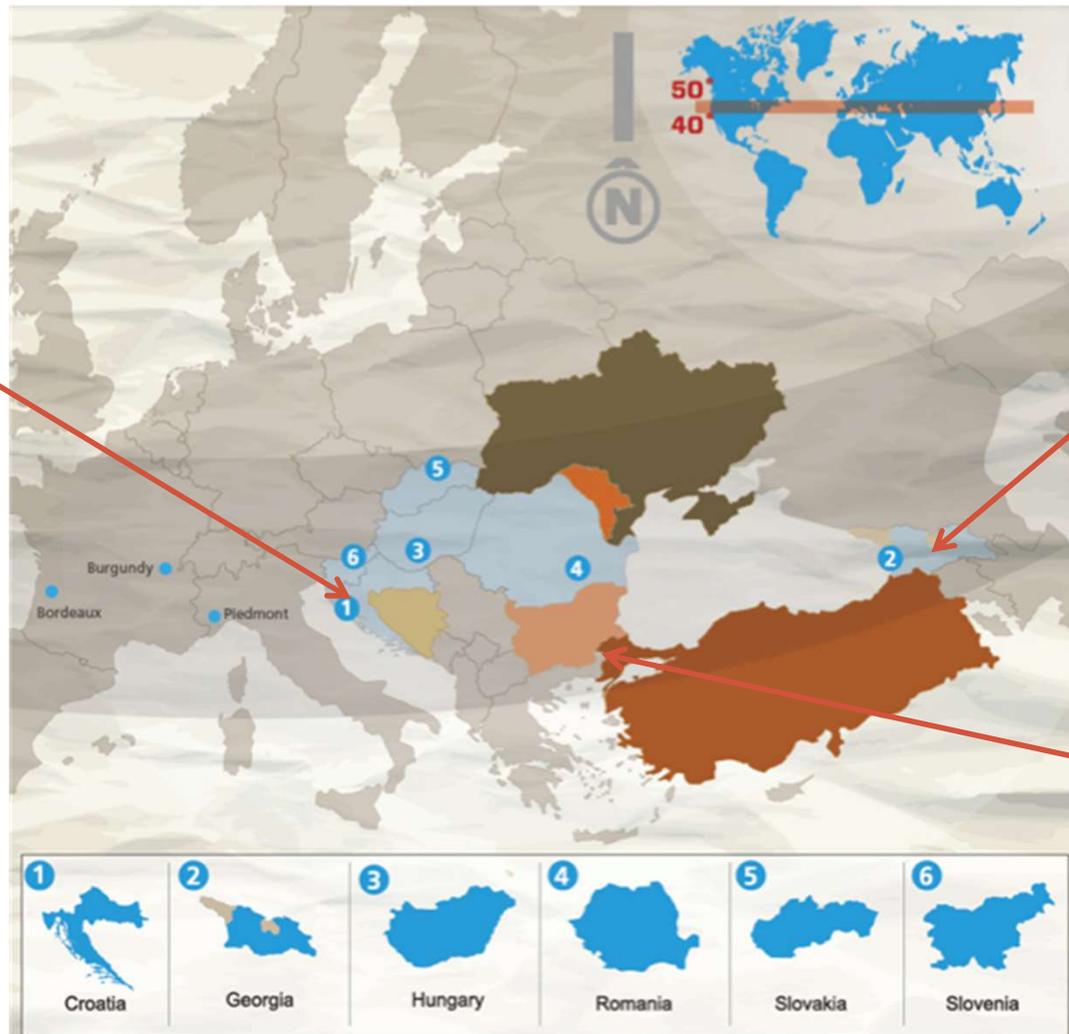




WINES FROM EASTERN EUROPE

By Jorge Claro and Cristian Santelices

Eastern Europe Map



Croacia
Pop: 4.1 M
Cap: Zagreb
Wine Grapes:
Malvazija
Plavac Mali

Georgia
Pop: 3.7 M
Cap: Tbilis:
Wine Grapes:
Saperavi.

Bulgaria
Pop. 7.1
Cap: Sofia
Wine Grapes:
Mavrud

Grapes Varieties

- **Malvazija Istarska**

- Originated in Greece, is one of the oldest grape varieties in Croatia. The vine was introduced to Croatia by Venetian merchants.
- Grown mostly in Istria and the northern section of Croatian coastline. Accounts for the majority of the plantations in Istria and is the predominant white wine of the area.
- Malvazija offers different options to the expert-winemaker, allowing them to macerate it or not, age it in a barrel, stainless steel or bottled.
- The usual alcohol content is between 11.5 and 14%, and the acidity quite low.

- **Mavrud**

- Is a dark-skinned grape variety of Bulgarian origin.
- Its precise provenance is generally accepted to be Asenovgrad, an appellation in the West Thracian Valley of southern Bulgaria.
- The grape has been depicted as a low-yielding, late-ripening, small-berried grape, which is able to produce a spicy, tannic wine, high acidity with plenty of flavors and a capability of ageing.
- According to the Bulgarian legends, all the vineyards were ordered to be destroyed during the supremacy of Bulgarian Khan Krum. A brave man referred to as Mavrud tackled and slayed a lion that terrorized the city. Mavrud's mother replied to the Khan the cause of such bravery was the wine produced with a grape that she has saved secretly. Khan Krum immediately ordered for the re-plantation of vineyards.

Grapes Varieties

- **Saperavi**

- Is an acidic, teinturier-type grape variety native to Georgia. Literally "paint, dye, give color" It is by far the most dominant Georgian red grape in terms of overall production. It is known to have been in production since 1886.
- Saperavi is a hardy variety, known for its ability to handle extremely cold weather and is popular for growing in high altitude and inland regions such as Kakheti.
- The grapes are medium to large, elliptic or round depending on the type, dark bluish, and thin-skinned. Saperavi grapes produce very deep red wines that are suitable for extended aging.
- It is an extractive wine with a characteristic bouquet, a harmonious taste, and pleasant astringency. Its alcoholic strength ranges from 10.5-12.5% and titrated acidity 5-7%.
- Kakhetian wine making centers itself around the **Qvevri** method -an 8,000-year-old uniquely Georgian style that utilizes a huge amphora type that are buried underneath the ground and are used in each stage of the winemaking process. Using Qvevri method allow wine fermentation and aging in an even, naturally cool condition. Clay is the happy medium between stainless steel and oak. Like oak, clay is porous, allowing for an exchange of oxygen.

- **Plavac Mali**

- Is the most planted red grape variety in Croatia (to be precise, on the Dalmatian coast of Croatia) and is probably the best-known Croatian wine.
- The wine plavac mali is a powerful, robust red wine, rich in taste and high in alcohol and tannins.
- Plavac mali has a very interesting history of origin that has caused many wine experts to become obsessed with tracing its origins. For a long time plavac mali was confused with **zinfandel**, the famous Californian wine. Plavac mali has even been subjected to DNA research and has starred in the documentary 'Dossier Zinfandel'. We now know that plavac mali is a cross between Crljenak Kaštelski (ancestral Zinfandel) and Dobričić (an ancient red wine grape variety from the Dalmatian coast) grapes.

**BENVENUTI
MALVAZIJA ANNO
DOMINI 2015**



CROATIA

- The Benvenuti winery is situated in the quiet Istrian village of Kaldir in Croatia, where they grow three grape varieties - **Malvasia Istriana**, Teran and Muscat.
- Nikola and Albert Benvenuti have in recent years become some of the most ambitious and serious Croatian winemakers. Their aspirations and scope is best described by international results: 95 points at Decanter for the 2013 Teran and a gold medal at the International Wine Challenge for the Malvasija Anno Domini 2015.
- Their vineyards are situated 400 meters above sea level planted on sandy soil. The annual production of Malvasia is approx. 70,000 bottles.
- Anno Domini 2015 contains typical varietal, flowery-acacia-almond elements, but also deep tertiary nuances of serious orange, ranging from dried citruses and apricots, to spices such as sumac. The wine is very full in the mouth, with a strong mineral ending.

TRIANGULI, MAVRUD 2015



BULGARIA

- Parallel 43 concentrate on terroir-driven and **boutique wines** that combine the region's wine-making capacity. Their wines are selected from two Bulgarian wine-growing regions – the Thracian Valley in the South and the Danube Plain in the Northwest.
- The 2015 Triangulus Bouquet is an autochthonous variety from **Thracian Mavrud** indigenous Bulgarian that offers up vibrant red and tangy black berry fruit with dried brush and earthy notes that warrant comparison to traditional, with distinguished aromas of blackberry and piquant paper accent.
- This wine is aged for two years in neutral barrel before release and produced in **small quantities**.

NAOTARI SAPERAVI 2015



GEORGIA

- Naotari Family Vineyards & Cellar was founded in 2012 by Koba Kvatchrelishvili and his two sons, they follow the traditions of Kakhetian wine making fermented and aged in Qvevri containers.
- Naotari Vineyard also chooses to do small batch wine production focused on uniqueness and an authentic expression of the Chikaani terroir and Kakhetian traditions. Annually they produce a very limited quantity at around 3,000 bottles, which are unfiltered while no additives or artificial yeast are used in winemaking.
- The wine is a nice interplay of beady tannins, forceful acidity and fruit, with clear red forest berries, cranberries and sweet spices. The finish is dry and its moderate tannins build up and last for quite some time.
- Because it is aged in clay jars and is unfiltered, there is a slightly chalky but not unpleasant feel in the mouth. This wine is a good example of a well-made Saperavi.

Dingač 2013



CROATIA

- The Skaramuča family vineyards was founded in 2012 by Koba Kvatchrelishvili and are situated on Pelješac peninsula. On the Dingač southern slopes the vineyards spread on an area of around 20 ha. They produced 70,000 bottles of placav mali in 2017.
- Today Skaramuča is one of the biggest Croatian private entrepreneurs in winemaking and the owner of the largest vineyard in the Dingač area.
- Dingač vine is grown in a special position in the Dingač valley where the soil composition, slope (30-70%) and many hours of sun result in top quality wine. The wine is technologically processed and, following a period of 2 to 4 years, offered on the market.
- Dingač is a high-quality wine with deeply ruby red color and subtly pronounced varietal aroma. Dingač is a typical Plavac with fruit characteristics and unique by harmonious fullness of flavor.

Good Tasting

Наздраве!

გაუმარჯობს!

Živjeli!