

## Strekov 'Rozalia' 2018

**Producer:** Zsolt Suto

**Provenance:** Pohronska Pahorkatina, Slovakia

**Farming:** hyper traditional (organic)

**Grape(s):** 100% early harvest St. Laurent

**Vineyard(s):** A single, traditional 'single-stick' vineyard planted into loamy soils. Young vines

**Vintage:** 2018 was a challenging vintage with high pH grapes resulting in the need to harvest earlier to preserve acidity starting in the third week of August.

**Fermentation:** Directly pressed into 300L Hungarian oak barrel for spontaneous fermentation. Bottled with some additional fresh St. Laurent must to induce a refermentation in bottle.

**Fining/ Filtration:** none

**Sulfur:** none added.



### The Producer:

As pioneering natural wine importers delve deeper and deeper into the forgotten corners of Europe, the fog of obscurity is parting around fascinating places like Slovakia, revealing distinct wine traditions and wondrous possibility. Neo-traditionalist Zsolt Suto is located in the undulating hills of Pohronska Pahorkatina at the lower reaches of the Hron River in Slovakia's South West near the Hungarian border. In the town of Strekov, for which the winery is named, the tradition of handmade, local wine without additives is deeply embedded in village life. Conversations about one's backyard vineyards, passing on news of a spotted illness among the vines and a custom of inviting neighbors in for a taste have always been central to Zsolt's experience of community.

Zsolt essentially makes modern renditions of what is more or less medieval wine: these are raw, tingling animals that have tons of personality and energy. This isn't a modern, hyper scientific situation but one of old school practices and deep intuition. As Zsolt says: "there are certain things that can only be achieved through faith."

### The Vineyard

Zsolt cares for a total of 12 hectares of vines broken up across as many loam-rich parcels with half of that in a semi wild state trained up on stakes. The garden-sized plots are interspersed among the old-growth deciduous forests, garnished with a few

ponds and framed by a stream so the terroir lends itself towards botrytis development, what Zsolt calls 'a gift of the terroir.'

The grapes for 'Rozalia' come from a young vineyard trained to the 'single-stick' training traditional to Middle Europe. Of this method Zsolt says "In this style of vineyard, the grapes are closer to the soil, the juice is more "soily" and the microbiology is more alive. I believe, that this pruning system brings more structure and terroir attributes to the wine. There is also not wires in the vineyard, so it is more open to the spherical energy."

### **The Cellar**

The hand harvested, early-season St. Laurent is directly pressed into Hungarian oak barrels for spontaneous fermentation. Zsolt ferments his white wines (and in this case, pink) in 300L barrels made from wood cut from Zemplen forest in East Hungary. He dries the staves in his fields for three years and then brings the conditioned wood to a cooper to produce a less toasted barrel. Just before bottling, a portion of fresh St. Laurent must is added to induce a refermentation that will take place in bottle, giving the wines the 'pet nat' fizziness. No fining, filtration or added sulfite.

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