

Grand Cru wines from South Moravia - fiction or reality?

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Abstract

Motivation for choosing this topic

During my study of Diploma WSET and during my several trips to wine regions abroad I was often asked the question if it were possible to produce wine of top category Grand Cru in Czech republic. In fact this tricky question had remained always unanswered, mainly because I did not know the true answer. I tried hard to find out whether anyone had made any research dealing with this topic ever before, but I always failed. And so the main motivation for this topic was the effort to find finally the true answer to this question. I am sure that all the information I have gathered will for sure be helpful for both the wine producers and buyers and will serve as the first swallow in grading the vineyards and wine in The Czech Republic. This seems to be the inevitable future for the wine trade development in The Czech Republic.

Problem / Objective

South Moravia as a main source of Czech wine finds itself in completely unmapped situation. There is no vineyard classification that would help to sort out wine. Neither the producers themselves nor the wine experts are able to give the relevant answer if any high quality vineyards exist. But the answer is important for the wine trade to bring the reasons for different wine prices and their reputation.

The objective of my work is to analyse the main wine subregions in The Czech Republic and to select the places with the unique terroir. Furthermore, I want to prove though systematic tasting that the existence of Grand Cru wines from the unique terroir is possible and the wines are highly competitive.

Methodology

I tracked down the needed information about the best wine regions both from history and the Guide book of the best wines. I asked also old native people living in the villages of interest to find the most iconic places in their regions. I finally decided to visit twelve of the best terroir to get the personal feel for them.

I analyzed these twelve terroir wines to detect the unique and specific terroir traces which then led to the creation of wine lines.

Selected wines were carefully tasted through the tasting panel by following the modified Australian wine show system of tasting.

A limited number of well-educated consumers had an opportunity to taste and discuss the selected wines.

Content

At section no.1 - **Introduction** the objective of this Thesis was defined. Then I described the Czech wine area, climate, classification and history. The detailed description of four main subregions and Grand Cru category with its impact on the market followed.

At section no.2 - **Research** I described the ways of finding the right terroir with the detailed description of the final list of eleven top vineyards. In this section I showed the ways how the lines of the wines for tasting were prepared. The stress was put on the nomination of independent and experienced tasters into the tasting panel. The very detailed description of how the tasting in two rounds was organised and the results were reached can be found in this section too. Finally the Grand Cru terroir were named from the wines selected as Grand Cru wines in the tasting. These wines were then confronted with a group of educated consumers to see their opinion.

Conclusion

The most positive result of my research is that I have found three vineyards that meet all the highest criteria to become GC terroir – consistence in quality throughout different vintages and unique hi-rated terroir traces detectable in each wine. A really big surprise for me is that one of these three GC terroir is giving red wines. And the winners are:

Železná – producing top quality Welschriesling with strong salty mineral trace and long ageing potential

Sonberk – fruity Riesling with consistent quality through vintages and developing very well in time

Skale – 1 ha of land in the warmest Czech wine region giving the most iconic blends of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot in oak with huge ageing potential.

The Champion of all the tasted wines has become Welschriesling, Terroir Železná, vintage 2007 with 2x95 + 3x96 points.