

## WINE MAP OF FRUSKA GORA

Mt. Fruska Gora has one of the oldest vine-growing traditions in Europe. In this region vines were being massively planted during the reign of Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius Probus (276-282 AD). Emperor Probus made his soldiers clear forests and plant



vines in their free time. According to historical records, that is exactly the reason why the soldiers dethroned him.

The Fruska Gora region proved to be a god-given land for vine-growing both in terms of pedology and climate. The closeness of the Danube River is a contributing factor as well. Seasoned wine connoisseurs know that you need high quality grapes to make high quality wine. Thanks to favorable natural conditions the residents of Fruska Gora have become excellent vine-growers and wine-makers, rendering the entire region a hub of vine-growing and viticulture.

Throughout the Middle Ages renowned wine-drinkers visiting Srem had nothing but praise for wines from Fruska Gora, especially from Karlovac. A librarian of King Matthias Corvinus in the first half of the 15th century has recorded that it would have been very difficult to find wines of similar quality anywhere else. Wines from Fruska Gora have been exported as early as the 15 century to the Czech Republic and Poland. Antun Vrancic, a courier of the Austrian Emperor, has tasted many Srem wines in 1553 but his favorite was from Karlovac. An adjoint to the Prince of Liechtenstein wrote in 1584 that these were the best wines and that Hungarian wines can hardly measure up to those from Karlovac. A German traveloguer Wilhelm Taube who rated wines wrote that the wines from Karlovac are of no less quality than the best Italian wines.



The Karlovac wines were also held in high regard by our own Dositej and Vuk Karadzic and Branko Radicevic, Bogoljub Atanackovic and Jovan Jovanovic Zmaj who thanked a friend for bringing this wine with these words:“ Thank you for showing me the way to the Karlovac wine cellars and underground storages“.

A man of letters and a member of the Vienna Academy of Science, Zaharije Orfelin printed a book in 1783 in Vienna with practical advice, under the title “Experienced Winemaker“. Prokopije Bolic, an archimandrite of the Rakovac Monastery on Fruska Gora, printed the first vine-growing manual in 1816 in Buda, whose title was “The Perfect Vintner“.



As early as in the 18th century, the vine-growing and wine-making has become a major agricultural branch in the entire Srem.

### **Experienced wine-makers**

Today, vine-growing and wine-making is not the predominant occupation for the people from Fruska Gora. Still, the number of vine-growers and "experienced wine-makers" is on the increase. Strong brandy and clear wine can be bought today in many households whose owners maintain their cellars in excellent order and store wine and brandy at proper temperatures. Many winemakers instead of cellars use underground storages (*lagumi*), specially built underground chambers with appropriate temperature and good ventilation.



## The Wines of the Fruška Gora region

Italian Riesling is the most typical wine of the region. Other varieties include: Traminac, Sauvignon, Župljanka, and to a lesser extent Neoplanta, Sila, Rhine Riesling and other white wine varieties.

Naturally, there are also red wines varieties like Frankovka, Portugiser, Merlot, Probus and others.

*Italian Riesling (Rizling talijanski)* - this is the most common variety grown in Fruška gora vineyards. Italian Riesling or “talijanski rizling” as it is called locally is the most common dry wine, rarely semi-dry or semi-sweet. The color of Riesling is green to yellow. It has a clear aroma and balanced, graceful and fresh flavor with characteristic bitter tinges. On average, it has 12.5 % of alcohol and 5.9 g/l of overall acid count.



*Traminac* - this variety originates from Northern Italy. Traminac is a superb high-quality wine. It comes as dry, semi-dry or semi-sweet with intense aroma. The color of wine is yellow to green, with a characteristic aroma, intense and sophisticated. Traminac is held in high regard both in our country and elsewhere in the world.

*Župljanka* – a variety created by blending Prokupac and Red Burgundy (by Professor Dragoslav Milosavljević). Župljanka wine is of high quality, yellow to green color, with beautiful and pleasant aroma. Due to a high acid content it sometimes has a crisp albeit refreshing bouquet.

*Neoplanta* – this grape variety was named after the Latin name of Novi Sad. It was created by Professor Dragoslav Milosavljević, by blending Smederevka and Traminac. This is a high-quality wine with rich, full-bodied flavor and intense and sophisticated scent. Dessert wines made of this variety can be very attractive.

*Sila* – is a new variety created by blending Kevedinka and Chardonnay. This wine, recognized in 1988, was created by Professor Sima Lazić. It has green/yellow color and light, balanced flavor and pleasant and discreet scent.

*Slankamenka* – is a new variety of table wines originating from the Balkans. It is smooth and light, of yellowish color with red undertones. It is neutral on the palate and delicately scented.

*Sila* - is a cross between Kevidinka and Chardonnay. It has been recognized in 1988. Its name is a combination of the initial letters of its creator Sima Lazić. So far, it has been widely cultivated in the vineyards of Fruška gora. This is a light wine with balanced and delicate pleasant Chardonnay aroma.



*Sauvignon* – this variety of Fruška gora wine also goes by the name of Muscat silvanac. It has been grown on Fruška gora for forty years now. Sauvignon variety is very good for dessert wines production. This wine is of invariably high quality, color yellow to green, full-bodied and rich with a characteristic sophisticated and pleasant aroma and flavor. It may be fairly strong, with up to 13 per cent alcohol content.

*Cabernet Sauvignon* – this variety originates from France and is often called “The King of Red Wines”. This is a high-quality wine with characteristic sharp scent, of intensive red color and full fruity flavor.

*Cabernet Franc* - the origin of this outstanding and important wine grape variety goes far back in the history of wine-making traditions way back to the ancient Rome. Cabernet Franc usually has a fruity flavor with distinct floral bouquet, with less tannin and a low acid content. Cabernet Franc aroma vary in style according to the region of origin and winemaker’s treatment.

*Merlot* – its name originates from the French „merle“ which means „a young blackbird“ probably to do with a beautiful dark blue grape color. Merlot variety has many variations in terms of aroma and taste. Maturity is of crucial importance for this

wine. Due to its natural low acid content and generally less astringent flavor, it leaves you with a rich after-taste.

*Probus* - a cross between Skadarka and Cabernet Sauvignon grape. It has been recognized in 1983. It owes its name to Roman Probus who revived vine-growing traditions in Fruška Gora in the third century A.D. So far, it is cultivated only on Fruška gora. Probus wine has intense color and rich balanced flavor with pleasant scent.

### **Bermet**

The only original dessert wine - Bermet, can be found in Serbia in the wine cellars of Fruška gora, mostly in Sremski Karlovci. This is sweet, fragrant, aromatic, Italian vermouth-like wine produced by different wine-making techniques, by macerating

more than 20 herbs and spices. Bermet can be served cold as digestif or at room temperature as dessert wine with coffee and cookies. After several decades, Bermet is again being grown in Sremski Karlovci - white and red. This wine from Karlovac used to be served on the Austrian court and was well-liked by Marie Therese of Austria.

No Bermet maker is willing to disclose the recipe for this wine which is closely guarded as a family secret. This alone proves that its production requires exceptional wine-making skills to acquire required aromatic flavor.

