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Hungary & Wine

Wine has long been an integral part of Hungarian daily life and culture. Winemaking can be traced back to before the year 1000 in Hungary and for many of the centuries that followed Hungary was revered as a winemaking powerhouse in Central Europe; producing everything from the glorious sweet wines of Tokaj to the deep sensuous reds of the Pannon region in the southwest portion of the country. Unfortunately for Hungary and the world their wines would all but be lost to the world for over a century.

It is a common misconception that it was Soviet rule that led to the demise of the great wines of Hungary, although the Soviet Union certainly played an important role it was in fact a long and slow demise. The first blow to Hungary would be the introduction of phylloxera in 1875 which had devastating consequences for the country's vineyards. Next came World War I, which saw the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and resulted in Hungary losing large amounts of its best vineyard lands to its surrounding neighbours. Just as the country was finally starting to rebuild itself from World War I the second World War broke out. The devastation in lives lost and the subsequent loss of freedom to the Soviet Union was the final nail in the coffin for the 'classic' Hungarian wine industry. Under the Soviets Hungarian winemakers were forced to abandon their beloved native grapes and focus on the popular international varietals. Quality wines became non-existent under the Soviet program of high yields and large productions, thus destroying Hungary's reputation in the world markets.

All is not lost however, today the Soviet Union is gone, Hungary is free to choose its own path and rediscover its glorious winemaking past. With a returned focus on native varietals and a movement towards more natural terroir driven wines this is exactly what is happening. With an ever-growing number of quality winemakers hellbent on bringing Hungary's unique and delicious wines back to the world's stage the future is once again looking bright for Hungary and its wines.



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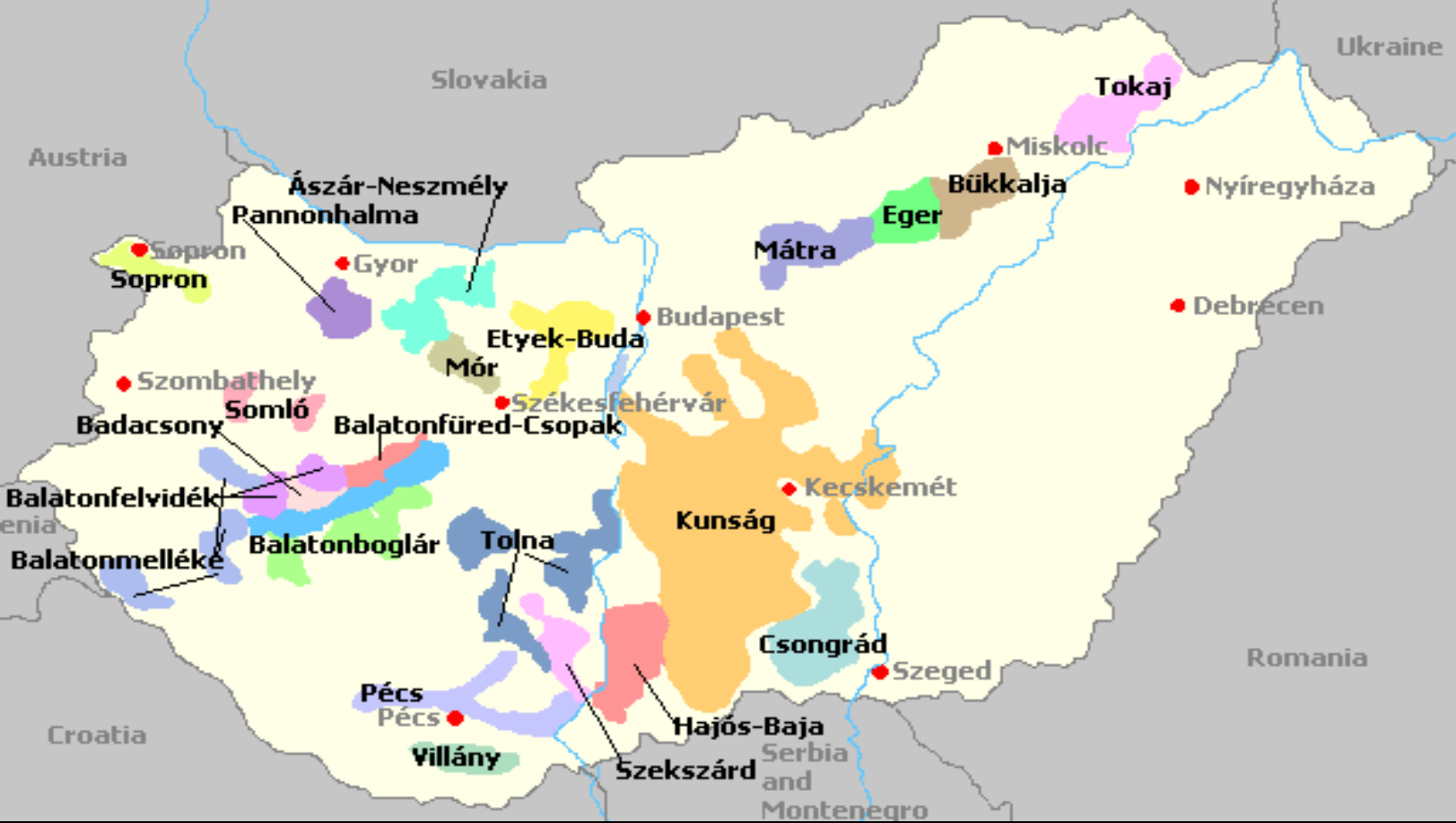
Hungarian Wine Timeline

- **896:** Magyars settle in the Carpathian Basin, bringing winemaking experience.
- **1000:** Hungary becomes a Christian nation, with the church becoming a key player in winemaking development
- **1526:** Ottoman victory at Mohács results in Turkish occupation (1541-1699) of central and southern Hungary. Wine production is reduced, but Tokaj thrives due to it being ruled by the independent Transylvania.
- **1699:** Ottomans are expelled and Austria becomes the rulers of Hungary
- **1700s:** Swabian settlers bring viticulture and winemaking skills to the regions of Etyek, Szekszárd and Villány.
- **1730:** Classification of first and second class Tokaj Vineyards.
- **1737:** Tokaj is delimited by royal decree.
- **1772:** Official classification of the vineyards of Tokaj is carried out, arguably the world's first such system.
- **1875:** Phylloxera destroys Hungarian Vineyards.
- **1920:** Treaty of Trianon as a result of World War I Hungary is stripped of 2/3 of its land including some of its best vineyards.
- **1950:** Collectivisation
- **1989:** Fall of Communism, with a privatisation wave following in the early 1990's.
- **2004:** Hungary Joins the European Union.



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Hungarian Wine Regions

North Transdanubia:

- Etyek-Buda
- Mór
- Neszmély
- Pannonhalma

Sopron

- Sopron

The Balaton Region:

- Badacsony
- Balatonfelvidék

- Balatonmelléke
- Balatonfüred-Csopak
- Balatonboglár
- Somló

The Pannon Region

- Szekszárd
- Tolna
- Villány
- Pécs

The Eger Region

- Mátra
- Eger
- Bükkalja

The Great Plain

- Kunság
 - Csongrád
 - Hajós-Baja
- ### Tokaj
- Tokaj-Hegyalja



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Major Grape Varietals

White Varietals:

- Cerszegi Fűszeres
 - Ezerjó
 - Furmint
 - Hárslevelű
 - Irsai Olivér
 - Juhfark
 - Kéknyelű
- Királyeánya
 - Leánya
- Olaszrizling

- Zöldvelteleni (Gruner Veltliner)

Red Varieties:

- Kadarka
- Kékfrankos (Blaufränkisch)
 - Medina
 - Turán
- Zweigelt

International White

- Chardonnay

- Pinot Gris
- Muscat

- Riesling

- Sauvignon Blanc

International Red

- Cabernet Franc
- Cabernet Sauvignon
 - Merlot
 - Pinot Noir
- Syrah



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Useful Hungarian Wine Words

Bor-*Wine*

Fehér-*White*

Vörös-*Red*

Rozé-*Rosé*

Száraz-*Dry*

Édes-*Sweet*

Félédes-*Semi-Sweet*

Félszáraz-*Off-Dry*

Peszgő-*Method
Champenoise*

Habzó-*Sparkling*

Gyöngyöző-*Sparkling*

Hordó-*Barrel*

Szőlő-*Grape*

Pince-*Cellar*

Pincészet-*Winery*

Borászat-*Winery*

Birtok-*Estate*

Hegy-*Hill*

Dűlő-*Vineyard*

Völgy-*Valley*



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Hungarian Pronunciation Guide

a: *Similar to the 'o' in hot*

á: *Similar to the 'a' in madness*

c: *Like the 'ts' in lots*

cs: *Like the 'ch' in church*

é: *Similar to the 'a' in baby*

gy: *Like the 'du' in duress*

j: *Like the 'y' in yes*

ö: *'Euh' as in bird*

ó: *The same as above, but hold it for longer*

s: *Like the 'sh' in shout*

sz: *Like the 's' in sound*

ü: *Like the 'u' in the French 'tu'*

ú: *The same as above, but hold it for longer*

zs: *'zh' like the 'ge' in beige*



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