HUNGARY

SPECIFICATIONS (What you have to know)	**DISTRICTS, COMMUNES AND VINEYARDS** **Northern Massif:** Eger, Tokaji **Transdanubia:** North and South Balaton, Villány **The Great Plain** **KEY LIGHT WINES** White Tokaji Aszú Modern varietal wine (eg Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Irsai Oliver or Pinot Gris) **KEY FACTORS** **Grape varieties**: Furmint, Harslevelu, Muscat blanc à petits grains, Zéta, Welschriesling, Kékfrankos, Kadarka, Portugieser, Irsay Oliver, international grape varieties **Vinification**: Film-forming yeast **Producers**: Johnson Hugh, AXA **Wine styles**: Bull's Blood
HISTORY	- 400BC: first vines planted - Late 15th: 1st mention of Tokaji as a dry wine - 16th: Muslim ruling -> wine production maintained but not developed - Late 16th-17th: emergence of rich Tokay Aszú - 1700 Laws for Aszú formulated=1st wine classification in the world - 1870s: Phylloxera hit -> development of vineyards in the sandy Great plain - 1947-80s: communist monopoly took control -> stagnation - Post-communism: most Hungarian vineyards still in private hands so quicker adaptation to western standards and recovery from fall of ex-USSR export market
CLIMATE & WEATHER	Continental climate with short cold winters and long warm summers & mild autumns -> late ripening Avg rainfall 600mm/yr and 2,000hours of sunshine on average Manifestation of noble rot if sufficient humidity in autumn
SOILS & TOPOGRAPHY	Northerly latitude (on par with Burgundy) + climate -> great for aromatic varieties Danube crosses the country North-South Flat with hillier areas along the Slovakian border Limestone + volcanic soils Lake Balaton is one of the largest lake in Europe (west side of the country).
GRAPE VARIETIES	Most wines are varietal in Hungary. International varieties of importance are Chardonnay, Pinot Gris, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. Hungarian varieties are: <u>Reds (30%)</u> **1. Kadarka** Productive black grape that ripens v late Famous for being Bull's blood main grape but now almost entirely replaced by international varieties excl. in the Great Plain. Fully ripened -> soft, full bodied, ageworthy wines **2. Kékfrankos (Blaufränkisch)** Buds early, ripens late Light purple colour, Med tannins, hi acidity + sour cherry flavours Suited for oak ageing Mostly in Sopron andn Villany **3. Kékoportó (Portugieser)** Needs warmth Productive Blended to add soft tannins & acids In Bull's blood + villany + great plain **4. Zweigelt** Blaufrankisch x St Laurent crossing Bite of Blaufrankisch + weight & body from St Laurent Widely planted; Often produces hi yields <u>Whites (70% of production)</u> **1. Furmint** Hi acidity, hi sugar levels Susceptible to noble rot Produces dry and sweet wines w apple character when young and complex honey, nutty notes w age Grown mainly in Tokaji and Somló **2. Hárslevelú (linden leaf)** Late ripening Prone to botrytis Furmint partner **3. Sarga Muskotály (Muscat blanc a petits grains)** Aromatic orange blossom character Use for Tokaji **4. Olazszrizling (Welschriesling)** Needs warm, nutrient-rich soils; ripens late Produces crisp, light wines w notes of bitter almonds Grown around Balaton lake **5. Zéta** Crossing of Furmint x Bouvier permitted in Tokaji **6. Irsai Olivér** Crossing Pozsony x Pearl of Csaba Ripens extremely early and reliably for heavy, aromatic wines similar to Muscat

VITICULTURE	**65,000ha** of vines
WINE LAWS & CLASIIFICATION	Based on French appellation system with 3 zones and 22 regions 3 categories: 1. Asztali Bor - Table wine 2. Minósegi Bor – quality wine 3. Kúnlonegés Minósegi Bor – Special Quality wines w official state seal New governing body since 1995 with: - National council w overall supervisory role - Regional councils w a representative from each commune - Local council for each wine commune The council is responsible for grape quality, harvest date and vinification methods but not final results All growers must register to be able to sell on domestic or export markets
KEY REGIONS & CHARACTERISTICS Amber + high acid + very sweet = Tokaj Honey, mushroom, orange peel, marmalade, dust > **botrytis**.	**1. <u>Northern Massif</u>** (North-East Hills) - Hilly - Volcanic soils - Continental climate 2 key regions: ***> Tokaji – 5,800ha*** - Eldest classified wine region in the world - Unesco World Heritage Site - World's 1st noble rot wine (long before Sauternes) - Far north east of Hungary - 28 villages including the village of Tokaj - Soils: Volcanic clay soils, particularly thin & poor on the steepest slopes, with loess & sedimentary clay on the hills - Microclimate: Carpathian mountains + Tisza and Bodrog rivers > humid nights, long, warm autumns > Botrytis - Grapes: 6 native varieties Furmint, Hárslevelü, Kabar, Kövérszölö, Zéta, Sárgamuskotály - 1 puttonyos = number of 20-kilo baskets of noble rot grapes added to 137 litres of base wine for production - Foreign investment in Tokaji: French (Axa), Italian (Antinori), Dutch and Spanish (Vega Sicilia) **- Key types of wines:** * **Dry wines**: fresh, briefly matured or matured in wood. Non-botrytised grapes from higher altitude ***COURSE TASTING NOTES**: **Tokaj Furmint** – Pale lemon green colour. Pronounced aromas of white flowers, chamomile, grass, poached pear, barley water. Off dry palate with medium + acidity, medium alcohol, medium body, medium + finish.* * **Szamorodni**: made without separating nobble rot grapes from others Szamorodni Szaraz: <9g/l. Maturation underflor Szamorodni Edes: >45g/l, lightly oxydative * **Aszú** Made by blending noble rot grapes + standard grape must/base wine 120g/l residual sugar Min 18 months oak ageing 10% potential alcohol * **Aszú 6 puttonyos** Min 150g/l residual sugar * **Eszencia** Made from free run juice of noble rot grapes 450+g/l residual sugar Minimum 5 years in casks Rarely reaches above 3% ABV Made only in best years from best vineyards Hi flavour concentration Will age 200+ years Prices on par with Ch. d'Yquem **- Tokaji Aszú winemaking** - Botrytis-affected grapes selected on the vine, 3-4 times in good autumn.

NB: if Aszú berries on bunch less than 50% -> bunch used for Szamorodni ('as it comes')
- Aszú berries blended in base wine (from healthy grapes) for 24-36 hours
- Modest pressing and very long fermentation in Hungarian oak casks
- Legally Min 2 yrs in oak + 1 yr in bottle ageing before release. Usually 3-6 years.
- Oxidation during ageing less common.

***COURSE TASTING NOTES**: **Tokaj 5 puttonyos** - Medium amber color, a very fresh pronounced nose of orange peel, marmalade (>botrytis), honey, ginger, marzipan. Sweet palate, (very) high acidity, medium alcohol (11.5–13.5% ABV), full bodied, mouthcoating, waxy, long.*

> *Eger*
Soils: Brown forest topsoils cover volcanic rhyolite tuff with limestone and broken rock.
Egry Bikaver = **Bull's blood:**
- Famous in the 70s
- Blend: at least 3 grapes and at least 50% native (Kékfrankos or Kadarka) + Bordeaux varieties
- Vinification**:** Long maceration + ageing
Also produces whites: Egri Csillag = "the Star of Eger"

2. <u>Transdanubia (</u>West of Danube)
- Hilly, strong influence of the Balaton lake (//Neusiedlersee in Austria) & the Danube.

Key areas:
> Around Lake Balaton
Area protected from winds with ideal climate for wine production
Volcanic, iron rich soils > more body
Wide range of varieties: Pinot Grigio, Irsai Oliver, Kiralyleanyka

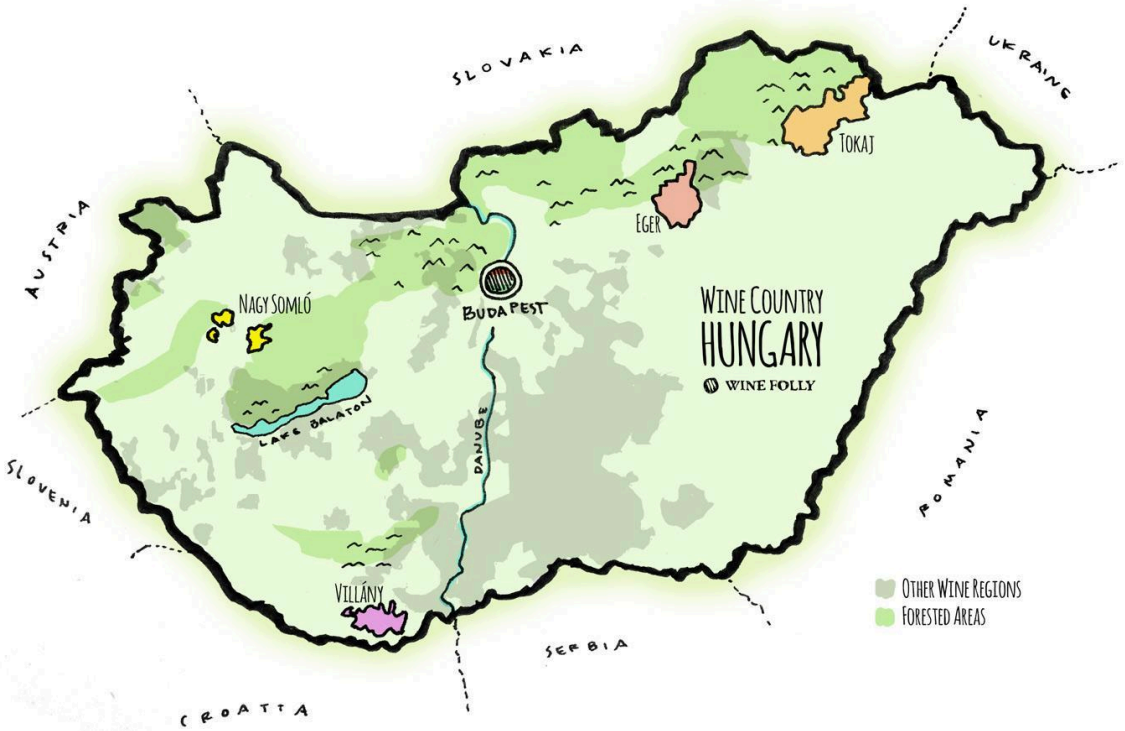
> *Szekszárd*: Bull's Blood, like Eger
Deep less soil
Low acid high alcohol wines, not ageworthy

> *Villany*: Bull's Blood, like Eger
South+East-facing slopes > Sub-mediterranean mesoclimate
Soils high in calcium
Bordeaux blends
Low acid high alcohol wines, not ageworthy

3. <u>The Great plain</u> (East of Danube)
- Flat & sandy > low quality potential
- Large volumes and bulk wines for local market

Minor wine producing country & exporter
15th biggest producer in volume with around 4million hl/yr
Export markets: Germany Russia, Tokaj to US, Japan, UK, Scandinavia
Large local market w 88% of production going for local consumption

Key producers:
- **Royal Tokaji – Northern Massif:** Owned by 100 shareholders incl. Hugh Johnson; only produces Aszú wines. Rare and expensive
- **József Bock –Transdanubia:** One of Villany's leading lights; produces v good Hárslevelú whites and top Kékoportó and Bdx blend ('Bock Grand selection')
- **Disnoko** – Tokaj: property of Axa Millésimes since 1992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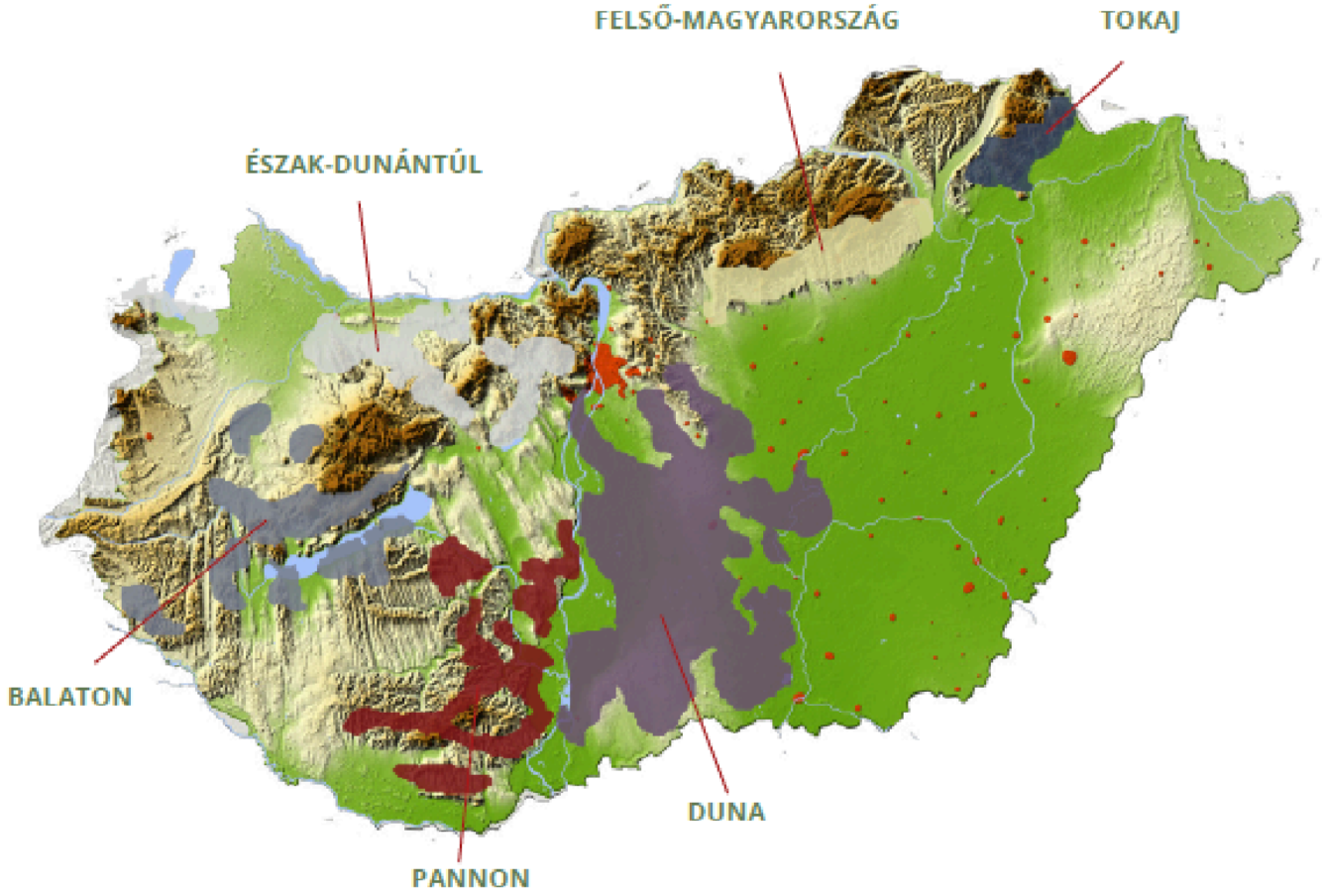
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TOKAJ
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BALATON
DUNA
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