

A Cross-Section of Western Europe – Dani Licata

Most often when I am trying wines, my interest is based on the fruit elements and if I enjoy its flavor, I become interested in the backstory of that wine. This experience has been completely flipped because this time, after learning about Loosen, I am hoping to get my hands on a bottle of their 2015 Reserve as soon as possible. This producer interested me the most because of its complex growing region, its fermenting times, and its history in the world of winemaking.

Initially, it was the specific excellence of its topography that made me salivate for a glass of Dr. Loosen's 2015 Reserve. If the Mosel River had not taken 200 million years and carved out this specific valley of the Rhineland to create the perfect slope steepness for sunlight to be absorbed into the soil from 8am to 6pm, we would not have the wines that we have today. Everything had to happen in perfect time, as it is much too cold for grapes to grow up in the hills and their ability to grow is made possible by the steepness of this valley's slopes. They allow the grapes to ripen in a cool environment with plenty of direct sunlight, which creates three microclimates and inevitable unique flavors in the wine. In addition, its soil is fascinating because of its effect on the grapevines' roots. This region's shale stones allow for excellent drainage of the soil and contribute to the survival of the original ungrafted roots, in spite of the phylloxera epidemic in Europe. This element is rare, intriguing, and unique to the area. The complex climate where its grapes are grown, the angle of the slopes, and the shale stones that make up the soil of the vineyard all contribute to the enticing quality of this wine.

Another element that has me searching the internet for a bottle of this wine is the detail in the winemaking process that Loosen uses. They take great care to remove all the botrytis fruit from their dry wine using a three bucket method to separate the millerandage from the partial botrytis and botrytis fruit. Fermentation is a multiple step process as well. They use oak barrels, top the wine with sulfur, and let everything sit and ferment for two years without any battonage, or stirring. Then the wine is bottled, racked, and left for another four years before it is ready to be tasted. This process has been used since the great great grandfather of Ernst Loosen first started using this method in 1880. This fascinates me because the process is meticulous, and when you couple that with the fact that it has withstood the test of time, I can only assume that the profound success of this wine's flavor is the result of the continued use of this method.

The rich history, the harmony of the growing conditions, and the painstaking winemaking process all contribute to my choice of Loosen as the most interesting producer from this seminar.