



Winemaker: Minco Jordanov
Generation: 1st



JORDANOV

Zilavka

Over the years, Zilavka (pron. "jhee-lahv-kah") from Herzegovina has trekked its way over the mountains of Kosovo and Montenegro to land in the hot, fertile plains of North Macedonia. This intriguing grape variety is high in natural acidity but ripens quickly, so it takes a steady hand and a watchful eye to mine it for all its potential. Here, Jordanov hits on all cylinders: warm citrus, minerality, and Mediterranean blossoms combine with a rich and balanced mouthfeel... at a price that makes the exploration fun and easy!

WINEMAKER BIOGRAPHY

With a highly successful agricultural business under his belt, Minco Jordanov spares no expense when it comes to his real passion - the wines of Jordanov and Macedon. Determined to put his nation of North Macedonia on the map, he is committed to making deeply intelligent, understated (and underpriced) wines for as long as it takes!

ENOLOGIST

Dane Jovanos

TASTING NOTES

Color Pale lemon yellow
Nose Warm citrus and wildflowers
Palate Zippy, balanced acidity with layers of citrus, green peach, and minerality
Finish Pleasant, with just a hint of sweetness at the end



VINEYARD & VINIFICATION

Vineyard Location Tikveš, Povardarie
Vineyard Size 4 ha
Varietals List 100% Zilavka
Farming Practices Sustainably farmed, including dry-farmed; grapes picked by hand
Elevation 200 m
Soils Pale yellow clay
Maturation Summary Bottled for 2 months
Alcohol 13.5 %
Acidity 6.2 g/liter
Residual Sugar 2.2 g/liter
Annual Production 13,333 bottles



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JORDANOV

From the producer of our highly successful Macedon series, Mincio Jordanov, comes this remarkable lineup of stolid, everyday values. Like his mid-tier Pinot Noir, these Old World offerings overdeliver every single year. The reason? A true patriot, Mister Jordanov is committed to putting his country of North Macedonia on the map. He has kept his quality level exceedingly high and his pricing modest until such a day arrives. Dry farmed in Tikveš, one of Europe's most arid zones, these wines hail from the same latitudinal corridor as Tuscany, Bordeaux, and Napa (41 degrees north) with an average vine age of 35 years. A mix of continental and Mediterranean climates provides for long, hot summers, near-constant winds, and less than 12 inches of rainfall per year. Cool clay soils, known locally as *rendzina*, help provide acidic backbones for the wines and keep the overall style taut and fresh.

Although the soil and climate certainly allow for international varietals to flourish, Jordanov's enological heart remains with Vranec (pronounced 'vrah-nahtz'), arguably the Balkans' most important indigenous varietal. Native to North Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, Vranec is an early budding varietal with thick skins, high tannins and medium-high acidity. The word itself translates as 'Black Stallion', owing to its forceful character and rich coloring. Despite all this, it's a fragile beast – very sensitive to cold, prone to shutting down if temperatures become too hot, and susceptible to disease. Fortunately, that makes the high and dry Tikveš region the perfect venue. Grown on its warm plains, Vranec usually has a higher sugar content, richer phenols, and a rounder, fuller body than elsewhere in Eastern Europe (part of why Jordanov's is so approachable, despite the modest regimen in oak). While not fully verified, it has been suggested (by Jancis Robinson, among others) that Vranec is a cross between the Tribidrag varietal (aka Croatia's Crljenak Kaštelanski, which also gave rise to Primitivo) and another, unknown parent.

REGION

POVARDARIE

North Macedonia, once a part of former Yugoslavia and tucked in the heart of the Balkan Peninsula, is surrounded by 5 other countries: Albania, Kosovo, Serbia, and Bulgaria run west to east along its northern borders, and to the south lies Greece. A small but storied nation, it has almost 3500 years of enological history, continued today by 3 distinct wine regions. The most centrally located of these, Povardarie, includes the capital city of Skopje and the best-known subdivision Tikveš, and represents some 85% of the nation's wine. Macedonia's Wine Act – based on the EU's own – came into existence in 2004. The designation of 'Vrvno Vino', or wines of quality and controlled origin, was established, and today a majority of the 80+ participating estates can be found in Povardarie.

As a geographical region, Povardarie is essentially a long, fertile valley, running north-to-south and encompassing all the mountains, canyons, and valleys through which the river Vardar flows. Historically speaking, this region – which also includes the ancient city of Stobi – formed a crossroads between ancient Greece and continental Europe. Therein, it had enormous strategic value and was much sought after by various regional powers. Once the seat of the Kingdom of Macedon, led by Alexander the Great, Povardarie (along with all of North Macedonia) went on to be conquered by both the Roman and Ottoman Empires.

Like the rest of the country, Povardarie focuses its attention rather squarely on the production of red wines, with the local Vranec varietal dominating production. With rich coloring, high tannins and medium-high acidity, this grape (whose name translates as 'Black Stallion') tends to yield ripe, earthy, and forceful wines, especially when grown in areas that sit "high and dry" like Tikveš.

TIKVEŠ

Located in the central, southern part of the country and sharing a border with Greece, Tikveš is North Macedonia's most acclaimed and prolific subdivision, representing approximately one third of the nation's grapes. With more than 280 days of sun per year and relatively hot summers, Tikveš (pron. "tik-vesh") is a land of rolling hills, lakes, rivers and rustic farmland surrounded by high mountains on three sides: the Drenovo and Mariovo ranges to the SE, along with the Konce and Plaush mountains on the NE all flank the region, funneling their alpine winds down to help cool grapes at night. Despite Tikveš having some of the EU's lowest recorded annual rainfall, these wide, diurnal swings in temperature help ensure good acidity and developed polyphenols overall.

Found along roughly the same latitude as Rioja and Ribero del Duero in Spain, Tikveš sits in a land-locked pocket where the southern Mediterranean climate (full of long, warm summers) and the northern continental climate (with its mild and cool winters) combine. The average altitude of vineyards is 300 meters, although some extend as high as 600. The most common terroir in Tikveš revolves around 'rendzina', a cool, calcareous soil type that encourages good acidity and later ripening.

Roughly 20 different grapes varieties are grown in Tikveš, including indigenous red staples like Vranec, Kratosija, and Kadarka, along with internationals such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, and Syrah. Likewise, whites range from East European favorites such as Žilavka, Graševina, and Rkaciteli to familiars like Chardonnay, Riesling, and Sauvignon Blanc.