FROM SEAHORSE WINERY - ISRAEL

Captain Cork recommends Seahorse wine

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The subject line alone is always an eye-catcher. As well as…

> *I am a servant of my grapes*

That was the subject of his December 11th newsletter, in which he reported on tasting the wines of our friend Ze'ev Dunie from Israel. But read for yourself….

"The captain is one of those people who believe that as a German or Austrian you shouldn't criticize anything that Israel is doing in the next 800 years. ***Criticism of Israel: forbidden!*** *This is not satire, but bitter seriousness.*

Germans and Austrians just have to shut up if something happens in Israel that we don't like. With this position, the captain is of course offending. Especially on the left and right, so everywhere, and that's a good thing. ***Do I have your attention now? Thanks.***

Likewise, a Captain's newsletter on wine from Israel began 18 months ago and will continue to do so in the future.

There are people who want to convince the captain that wine from Israel is not allowed to be drunk. Because of the "occupied territories" and such. This is mostly said by people with a world view in the red-green spectrum of the ideological color theory.

Can one criticize wine from Israel? Of course, but not because it's from Israel, only if it tastes BORING. Most wines taste boring and have no place in my newsletter anyway.

The other day it was that time again: There was wine from Israel. The former VDP managing director Eva Raps, wife of the Rheingau winemaker Urban Kaufmann, invited the captain to attend an exciting comparison test: Israel vs. Châteauneuf-du-Pape. huh

That sounded weird.

But then the captain understood.

in his uncle's cigarette factory before he escaped the Holocaust in 1936 by sheer coincidence.

His mother in Israel didn't want to be alone anymore and annoyed the son until he packed his bags and went to the promised land. A little later the borders were closed for German Jews and almost no one could get out.

Ze'ev repeatedly embarks on a spiritual journey to the city where his father and his family lived because he thinks he is closer to himself here.

The duo-Kaufmann-Raps sells Ze'ev's wines in the winery's → online shop because they are linked to Ze'ev's Seahorse Winery through the laudable Twin Wineries initiative. More about that below.

One of these wines is made from the classic Châteauneuf-du-Pape varietals of Syrah, Grenache, Mourvedre (and a bit of Counoise and Cinsault) and also tastes like Châteauneuf-du-Pape because Ze'ev loves that type of wine so much.

This is my lunchtime wine → Cuvée Antoine from Seahorse Winery. A delicious drink that, on top of that, only costs half as much as a good Châteauneuf-du-Pape: 30 euros.

This number isn't exactly cheap either, but it's the cheapest way to get really good Châteauneuf-du-Pape (which actually isn't one) in a glass.

That was also the opinion of the tasters of the comparison test, which took place in the room of the Berlin wine dealer and sommelier Frank Krüger, who runs a wine training center here with the wonderful name Edel & Faul.

Ze'ev is not a blank slate. The German-British wine journalist Stuart Pigott created a touching report about → his visit to Ze'ev Dunies Seahorse Winery, which is only 3 hectares in size.

The Captain likes the writing of Stuart, who has a German and British passport and is the only wine journalist in Germany who has managed to gain public notoriety beyond the small wine bubble, thanks to a whole series of excellent books.

> *Ze'ev says: "I am a servant of my grapes."*

Wine growing in Israel is not an easy task. Ze'ev's 2021 harvest yielded only 50% of the usual

dusty berries and lo and behold: no damage.

> *Ze'ev to Captain: "Sometimes you worry unnecessarily."*

When dealing with Israeli wines, one must largely say goodbye to the classic concept of terroir. The industry beyond the small specialty manufacturers relies primarily on high-tech, from irrigation to bottling.

Global trends are also in focus when it comes to grape varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Shiraz and Chardonnay dominate cultivation and, with their international style, hardly differ from products from other countries in the new wine world. Only the red grape variety Argaman, which was created in 1970 from a cross between Carignan and Sousao and is particularly heat-resistant, is important as an autochthonous grape in Israel. Apart from the boring products of some large wineries, Israeli wines are little known in Germany.

Take a look at the Kaufmann online shop to see what other wines Ze'ev makes. They're all good. A great Chenin Blanc is also included, which made it into the latest book by wine journalist Carsten Henn. Title: "111 Must-Drink Wines from Around the World". You can also order this together with the wine in → Kaufmanns Shop.

Importing wine from Israel to Germany is anything but easy because EU authorities, inspired by anti-Israeli forces, are not removing pesky import restrictions on wine.

> *Eva Raps: "I could write a book about this bureaucracy."*

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