



TIKVES

Belo Special Selection

Wine from Eastern Europe is on the cusp of being the next big thing. All the elements are there: an ancient grape-growing tradition, great terroirs, indigenous varieties, new investments, and a youthful generation of farmers and winemakers who came of age after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Before this epic event, wine in Eastern Europe was mainly a bulk product from frightfully high yields resulting in quality on par with the Yugo or Trabant.

Founded in 1885, Tikves Winery has witnessed the independence movements in the Balkans, two world wars, and one cold one. Yet, through it all, they have continued to make wines from grapes native to the region: the white Rkaticeli, which originated in the Caucasus, and Kratosija, Vranec, and Plavec, which are all indigenous red varieties to the Balkan peninsula. With the fall of communism and the independence of The Republic of North Macedonia, this historic estate was privatized, and investments updated the vineyard and cellar practices. Sustainable farming has replaced industrial agriculture, yields have been reduced, and indigenous varieties have been preserved and replanted. With guidance from the late Philippe Cambie, Tikves modernized their cellar practices by introducing temperature-controlled stainless steel for fermentations with concrete and French oak barrels for aging.

In recent years, Tikves Winery has embraced a sustainable and eco-conscious approach to winemaking. Collaborating with the International Wineries for Climate Action (IWCA), a leading organization dedicated to reducing the wine industry's carbon footprint, they have implemented several initiatives to minimize their environmental impact. These initiatives include the adoption of sustainable farming practices, the incorporation of renewable energy sources, and the optimization of their production processes to reduce emissions. Tikves Winery recognizes the importance of preserving the natural beauty of the Tikves Valley while ensuring the longevity and sustainability of its operations.

Belo is Macedonian for “white,” which may not sound terribly specific, but it is a valid and easy-to-pronounce name. Valid also because the principal variety in this blend (which includes a little Riesling, Roussanne, and Marsanne) is Smederevka, the most widely planted white grape variety in the region. Smederevka once had a reputation for neutral and acidic wines best served with a touch of sparkling water, but that was due to massive overcropping during the communist era. Now with lower yields, careful pruning, and a shift to organic practices, Tikves can coax out floral aromas with flavors of green apples and white peaches from this formerly maligned variety. Smederevka retains a pronounced acidity with a moderate alcohol level even though it usually gets picked towards the end of harvest – a good indication that this signature variety is perfectly adapted to the warm climate of Macedonia.

ORIGIN

Macedonia

APPELLATION

Tikves Region

SOIL

Alluvial gravel

AGE OF VINES

20-30

ELEVATION

700 meters

VARIETIES

Smederevka, Riesling, Roussanne, Marsanne

FARMING

Sustainable

FERMENTATION

Hand harvested, pre-fermentation cooling, direct press into stainless-steel tanks for fermentation

AGING

3 months in tank

