



Zorah Karasi, an interesting wine from Armenia



This is an interesting wine, the brainchild of an Italian-based Armenian, Zorik Gharibian. After extensive research he purchased some land in Vayotz Dzor, which is historically the key Armenian wine region. With help from winemaker Alberto Antonini and viticulturist Stefano Bartolomei, he has developed a wine that spans the traditional and modern very successfully.

15 hectares of vineyards have been planted here at 1400 m altitude. Soils are rocky and limestone-rich, and because there is no phylloxera in the region the vines are non-grafted. Grapes were hand-harvested, destemmed and lightly crushed, before fermentation in tank for 10 days. A post-ferment maceration of 24 days was followed by malo in barrel. Ageing? 20% in French oak, 10% in Armenian oak, 40% in stainless steel and 30% in 130 litre Armenian amphorae.

Zorah Karasi 2010 Armenia

A varietal Areni Noir, 13.5% alcohol. Supple, fresh, pure and quite elegant with attractive mid-weight cherry and plum fruit, backed up by some grippy tannins. Very natural tasting and not at all spoofy, yet modern and fruit driven at the same time. There's an attractive sappy green edge with some grip on the finish, and I find it like a cross between ripe Pinot Noir and a fresh Grenache, with some subtle peppery notes. Very interesting wine and beautifully packaged...delicious. 90/100 (c £22 UK agent Liberty Wines)

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