

A weekend of bor in Budapest

22 Mar 2010 by Robinson Jancis

See also [this thread](#) in the forum

I had a great time in Buda and Pest last weekend. The picture shows Pest viewed across the Danube from Buda at night, the famous bridge connecting these twin cities being modelled on the Hammersmith bridge in London.

I was there for Budapest's first major consumer wine fair, VinCE, organised with great aplomb by the Hungarian edition of *Decanter* magazine and its earthly embodiment Ágnes Németh or, as Hungarians are known, Németh Ágnes. This, regrettably, was the first time I had been back to Hungary since two visits in the 1970s. Although I have tried to keep up with progress in vineyards and cellars there as best I could from London (click on the Hungary tag below), this weekend provided a great chance to update myself on some of Hungary's best wines.

It's so sad that, in the UK at least, virtually the only Hungarian wines we see are basic international varieties that the supermarkets somewhat unwillingly stock at bargain basement prices. I did meet, however, the people behind [Mephisto Wines](#), who are specialising in importing some of the better stuff into the UK. I also met Nimród Kovács, a US resident who has invested heavily in the Hungarian wine scene, establishing the Monarchia label and an eponymous winery called, of course, [Kovács Nimród](#) in Eger. He is determined to make more Americans conscious of the fact that Hungary is now producing very serious wine.

I will of course be reporting in much more detail on what I learnt and tasted – not just at VinCE but at a much calmer tasting yesterday morning organised by Dr Gabriella Mészáros, whose Borkollégium (college of wine, or *bor*), run with her husband Gábor, is the most respected independent source of wine knowledge and education in Hungary.

Meanwhile, I am sifting through my notes, dealing with a thicket of accents, hesitating over forenames and surnames, and revelling in how I found myself described, much to the amusement of my children, in the Hungarian edition of *Time Out*. Would you believe 'the Madonna of wine'? Yes, truly.