

CHERTOK

SHEKHINA 2022

A pink-hued co-ferment of 50% red and white grapes macerated with 50% farmstead apples, aged 6 months in polypropylene egg.

The grapes: Predominantly Muscat Valvin with some Noiret from the Folts Family Vineyard (Vineyard View Winery). East facing slope with silty, loamy soils, conventional farming.

The apples: No-spray farmstead Empires and Maccouns from 50 year old trees grown on an east facing slope of calcareous clay.

Winemaking: Grapes were foot crushed in whole clusters. After 3-4 weeks of maceration with daily punchdowns, lots were split in two and filled back up with apple millings. 1-2 weeks additional maceration with apples before pressing to Flextank egg for 6 months aging on gross lees. Racked once before bottling without fining or filtration. Sulfite was added during fermentation due to a vintage specific condition, negligible amounts remain at bottling.



what's the name?

Shekhina is an abstract Talmudic and Kabbalistic concept. Translating literally to 'dwelling' or 'eminence,' Shekhina has many meanings to many different people but we like to think of it as representing the encompassing, queenly aspect of the divine that enfolds the mortal world. Mystic bad bitch energy for a pink wine with attitude!

the farms?

After more than half a decade of hunting for growing partners in New England we came to the conclusion that we needed to look to New York in order to hit our production thresholds to get the farm humming along. For Shekhina, we sourced

Muscat Valvin and Noiret from Folts Family Vineyard overlooking the Western banks of Keuka lake in FLX. Adam is a 5th generation farmer that decided to shift his family's business towards grapes. Thanks partly to the influence of Cornell's impressive and IPM oriented extension school, farmers in FLX lean heavily towards data-oriented conventional farming practices. Adam's childhood on a farm left him with the impression that things like bugs and weeds are actually a good thing; necessary components of a happy farm when in balance. As a result his attitude is more ecological even though it could not be called organic.

We farm our own vineyards organically but they're quite young and while we wait for them to mature we are obliged to work with farmers that have different philosophies than we do.

The apples all come from our farm in the Champlain Valley less than a mile from the lake. This region is defined by the influence of Lake Champlain and its prevalent calcareous clay soils. While New York has long been able to outproduce us, Champlain Valley terroir has earned the region's apples and ciders a reputation for excellent quality.

the winemaking?

We applied our tried and true approach to co-fermenting apples and grapes. We started developing this technique in 2018, when we began exploring how to work with the two crops in conjunction, and every year we have refined the method. The process begins with whole-cluster, foot tread grapes treated as gently as we can. We only crush a portion of the fruit to start, slowly breaking more berries as the 3-4 week, open-topped fermentation progresses.

As the grape ferment starts to wind down, we begin to mill apples into the bins and fold the material into the wine by hand. It takes days to get the vats somewhat homogenized and it's hard work besides. After fermentation, we press into Flextank eggs for 6 months of aging on gross lees. The final wine ends up being a pretty even ratio of apples to grapes and the two crops are truly



co-fermented and integrated with each other to produce a wine that feels unlike either a typical hybrid grape wine, or a cider.

The grapes in Shekhina are mostly Muscat Valvin, a Cornell bred, interspecific hybrid of Muscat Ottonel that is more winter hardy. Muscat Valvin ripens less extensively than Vinifera but shares many of the same qualities while yielding a lighter wine. A smaller ratio is Noiret, another Cornell hybrid and the inkiest, most pigmented variety we have ever seen in our winery. As a result the wine is blessed with a charming pink hue! The apples are entirely farmstead Empires and Maccouns.

While we strive to work without sulfite additions, a truly unfortunate trucking issue resulted in a late pickup of our first round of grapes leading to a bacterial issue on arrival. We have been making wine for 6 years without the need to add sulfite at any stage, but 2022 was the harvest it became needful. This moment of sulfite addition saved the rest of the harvest and by the time of bottling only a negligible amount of sulfite remains in the wine.

