

Movia — Wine Made Without Compromise & A Crash ‘Course’ In The Vineyard

September 14, 2018/in Europe, Slovenia, Travelogue /by allan



My timing for visiting Goriska Brda, the Slovenian wine region deserving much more worldwide recognition, is both good and bad. The good part is that the place is busy and bustling because it's harvest time. And the bad part? The place is busy and bustling.

My goal here is to gain a better understanding of the wine and the place. To do this, I plan to meet and interview several of the top winemakers here. Yesterday I was lucky to get so much time with Tomaz Scurek and an incredible indoctrination into the wine, the challenges, and the spirit of Goriska Brda and the wine business here.

Yet because we're in the middle of harvest and everybody is busy, I'm tempting fate by scheduling meetings during this busy time. The energy in the air jams the roads with slow-moving trucks carrying tons of grapes. The buzz of harvest in the vineyards and the smell of crushing grapes is sensual and excites me. Yeah, it's a good time.

Today I'm scheduled to meet with Aleš Kristančič, the winemaker and genius behind **Movia**, perhaps the most widely recognized and critically acclaimed wineries in Slovenia. He's earned near rockstar status—or a celebrity chef kind of fame. Other winemakers I'm met call him a 'genius,' "the guru," or "wild." Not only is Aleš an incredibly creative winemaker, but he also has a knack for marketing and showmanship, something I look forward to seeing in action.



The Movia Estate in Ceglo, Brda Slovenia dates back to 1700, and after a wedding in 1820, it passed into the hands of the Kristančič family. Spanning over 22 hectares about half on either side of the border in Slovenia (Brda) and Italy (Collio).



Vineyards surrounding Movia are like a geometric art design expressed through grapevines. Beautiful.

I show up for my appointment at Movia just before one o'clock. The estate sits on a steep southwest facing hillside. Several multistory buildings span the property including a residence that sits above the cellar and winemaking facility. Another larger building perched on that hillside houses the business offices, a kitchen, and a large tasting room with a drumset, guitar, and grand piano tucked in one corner and a bar lined up with several wildly designed decanters. Beyond large open windows is a large patio which offers one-hundred and eighty-degree views of the Movia vineyards and beyond to Italy.



Doc safely parked on the grounds of the Movia Estate.

It's breathtaking because the vineyards planted by Aleš differ from any I've ever seen. Instead of planting vines linearly or terraced horizontally on hillsides, he plans the in a seemingly random serpentine or curvilinear pattern, or vertically down slopes. While I'm sure Ales approaches his planting with purpose and reason, but looking down at them from the patio of the Movia estate is like pondering a geometric art sculpture expressed through grapevines.

A group of four people sits around a large round table on the patio. Aleš is not here, but his wife, Vesna introduces herself and the others. On the table is a board with cheese, walnuts, and charcuterie, next to it a bottle of Movia wine. Vesna fetches a wineglass and pours me a glass of Pinot Grigio, a wine they call "Ambra." The golden amber juice fills my glass, I am surprised at the beautiful color.



I join Vesna, the wife of Movia winemaker Aleš Kristancic, for lunch and wine on the winery's outdoor terrace looking over the beautiful vineyards.

As much as I love wine, I must admit that I never order a glass of Pinot Grigio, and I never buy any bottle of Pinot Grigio. For me, it's a last resort wine. That's because most Pinot Grigio found in the US is mass produced, and to my palate, it lacks character and flavor and is thin and uninteresting. It's the Coors Lite of wine. Sure, I may generalize here, but given all the other wine varietals I prefer to explore, I avoid from Pinot Grigio.

As I swirl the glass around, the golden amber wine coats and gently drips down the sides. Then I take a sip and swoosh it around my mouth. It doesn't taste like the Pinot Grigio I am familiar with. "Wow, this is unlike any Pinot Grigio, I've tasted."

"Of course, no," says Vesna.

"We will have lunch now," she explains as a hostess brings several bowls of soup with pasta to the table.

"My husband, I don't know where he is," Vesna explains. "They have some problem they need to fix first," she says. "When he comes we will open a bottle of Puro, ok?" She says referring to the unique sparkling wine made by her husband in the classic traditional style—but with a twist.

After we finish our soup, the hostess brings plates with grilled chicken, vegetables and grilled polenta. "When you visit Movia, and it is not harvest time, I will cook. But today, you must accept the situation," she says. The food is tasty, but I sense she would prefer creating something special in her kitchen. The crispy polenta delicious, nice texture.



Vesna reveals more about her relationship with Aleš. For the past five years, she tells me, there are many times when she never sees her husband. This once frustrated her, but now she has a better understanding of what drives him.



“I was alone for a lot of time, doing everything myself. He was all the time in the cellar,” she confesses. When she expressed this frustration, Aleš was honest, and tried to explain how he is not like others, that he is not a “classic wine producer.”

“I must feel the grapes,” he explained. “I must be with them. I cannot just put on sulfur and walk away to do something else.”

From that time Vesna understood, “He needs a challenge—always a challenge.” Driven to solve problems and find possibilities, Aleš does not let go until it satisfies him.

After we clear our lunch plates, Vesna says we will not wait for Aleš. She will open the bottle of Puro.

They make the [Movia Puro sparkling wine](#) in the traditional style or méthode champenoise with one significant difference. As Vesna explains, because of its northern location, in the Champagne region of France the grapes never achieve sufficient ripeness to bring sugar levels higher than about eight percent. So winemakers add sugar to bring alcohol levels above ten or eleven percent. Plus, to trigger secondary fermentation in the bottle, which gives champagne its fizz or bubbles, producers introduce a liquor de triage—a blend of yeasts, sugar, liquor, or wine must and sometimes sulfur to the wine.

During fermentation, the sugar eats the yeast which produces carbon dioxide. Then they riddle or turn the wine bottles so that the yeast mixture breaks up and floats to the neck of the bottle. Alcohol levels rise, and the remaining yeast collects at the top of the bottle.

Once the riddling and the secondary fermentation is complete, they remove the remains of the yeast or sediment from the bottle by a process called disgorgement. They remove the temporary crown-cap closure, and the pressure of the carbon dioxide pushes the residue out—along with it comes some wine. So producers top off the bottles with another mixture, made from sugar, liquor, must, and sulfur, though each producer uses its own formula.

This is where **Movia Puro** is different. Aleš does not believe in adding sugar, sulfur and other non-pure ingredients. Instead, he bypasses discouragement at the winery and leaves this task to the buyer, sommelier, or the end drinker. This way he offers a bottle of sparkling wine that is purer—hence the name Puro—that retains the full flavors and complexity of the wine.

The concept or idea of selling a purer sparkling wine with yeast and sediment floating about the liquid brought upon another challenge Aleš eagerly accepted. For the most part, the wine buying public doesn’t like sediment in their wine—let alone hard chunks of yeast. The Puro story is compelling and perhaps even makes sense. But nobody wants a beautiful glass of bubbly with floaties. Right?

Vesna tells me this challenge battled Aleš for months—maybe years. Until one late night at about two o’clock in the morning when he jumps out of bed, grabs a paper and a pen and sketches out a design for a new device that would allow people to disgorge their own bottles of Puro. Finally, he could give customers a pure sparkling wine experience.

With Aleš still somewhere else, Vesna passes the bottle to Nina, her son’s girlfriend who just joined us. She will disgorge our bottle of Puro.

“She’s good!” Vesna declares, telling us that before disgorgement it’s best to store a bottle of Puro upside down for two days. This ensures all the sediment collects at the top of the neck.

Nina submerges the top and neck of the bottle into a bucket of water. Then with a tool that looks like a right-angled lug wrench, she seats the cork into the tool and then submerges the bottle and tool under the water. Holding the bottle in one hand, she then pushes on the other end of the tool while giving it twist. The cork, under pressure, releases and the yeast and sediment escape the bottle into the water. At that moment, Nina pulls the bottle out of the water and pours each of us a glass.



The Movia Puro Sparkling Wine Glass

Oh, the glass? It's not an ordinary champagne flute. No, it's a unique Aleš-designed glass explicitly made for sparkling wine—especially Puro. Based on the classic design of early champagne glasses, Vesna explains that they went through four prototypes until Ales felt he had the perfect design for his perfect glass of Puro.

It's an extraordinary and somewhat complicated process for the ordinary wine drinker to endure when cracking open a bottle of "champagne." The wine is good—excellent. And the stemware is intriguing and classy. But is this process worth the extra effort? Aleš knows it is, and that's why he spent years tackling this challenge, solving the problem, and bringing the sparkling wine to market.

Check out the video: The Magic of Movia Puro Sparkling Wine

We enjoy the bubbly while waiting for "the genius" to show up. Vesna explains that once he solves today's problem, he will join us. He will have lunch while we talk and then take me to the cellar. After that, she insists, he must get back to work. I agree, and that's perfect.

As we're talking a young couple from Finland shows up to taste Movia wine. At the same time Aleš storms into the room. His presence changes the energy on the patio. I stand up. With big eyes, a bald head like mine, and a huge smile, he turns, and we talk. He asks me about my motorcycle, where I've been, and if it's always the same bike. The notion of sixty-five countries on the same motorcycle puzzles him while intrigues him at the same time.

Vesna offers the Finland couple a taste of wine. The young man declines, explaining he's already had one glass, and he's driving. At that moment, Aleš addresses him, "No, sir, you must have a glass of wine. Please. Good wine only goes to your soul, not your body. This is good wine, and it will help you drive," he laughs, but the Finnish guy is deadpan.



Aleš pulls out a small pack of cigarettes, they are skinny. He bangs the bottom of the box and points it at me. I decline. "No, try, try, come on. Take

one.” He has a commanding presence and convincing demeanor. He makes a good pusher—sales guy.



Obliged, I smoke my first cigarette in years.

I need these, he tells me. For the past two days and nights, Aleš has not slept. Yet here is hanging out with us. He’s committed. He is a farmer, father, and husband—but most of all, he has an insatiable curiosity, is maniacally obsessed with wine, and a hunger to create without compromise.

We talk about the wine in my glass. It’s a **2012 Movia Pinot Noir**. Aged four and a half years in French oak barrique barrels. It’s layered, velvet, with good acidity and spice. Not a hint of oak. “We age in used barrels, you get the flavor of wine, not wood.” He’s right.

He asks about my recorder, camera, and then suggests we take a photo. He still hasn’t sat down at the table. Walking over to the Finnish couple, he engages them in a conversation about Finland, then pulls out the pack of cigarettes and offers one to the guy who declines.

“Come on, try these are good for you.” I laugh. The guy is a complete character, and I joke back at him when he asks how the motorcycle got to Europe. I tell him it’s also a boat.

Like Scurek, Movia owns vineyards in both Slovenia and Italy. He points across the valley below to a vineyard in the distance near the top of a hill. “That’s my new vineyard,” he tells me. It’s easy to spot as it’s brown, surrounded by lush green vineyards on all four sides.

He tells me he is working with a horticultural institute in France to cross two grape varieties, Tocai Friuliano with Merlot, to create a new more resistant wine grape. He tells me that to do this and then get approval to sell ordinarily takes years. But because this institute did it before, he can use and sell it as the vines develop and bear fruit.

He looks at me, his eyes beam serious, but his smile reveals playfulness. “You want to go?” Aleš is spontaneous too.

“We must go,” he tells me. “I ride my bike, and you ride yours. It’s not too far, we will go now.” My bike is fully loaded. I look over the valley at the vineyard, it seems steep. Thinking of the loose rock and shale from the vineyard at Scurek yesterday, I suggest we should not go too deep into the vineyard.

“No problem, we go just a little to the top, it’s okay.” He tells me to grab my camera. In a minute, we’re out the door. He hops on and fires up a lightweight Honda 250cc dirt bike—a two-stroke—and takes off. I ride behind in close pursuit.



Add a little oil to the nimble Honda two-stroke before heading to the vineyard.

Aleš is not wearing a helmet, nor anything protective—just a tank top shirt, jeans, and work boots stained with wine must. We buzz down and around the country roads, passing tractors hauling grapes and zipping by acres and acres of vineyards. We climb up another way and then pull into his new vineyard. He stops where it's flat. There are young vines planted in rows stretching down the hill. He looks around, down, and then back at me. He waves his hand to follow—and motors down the mountain.

We ride down a rutted and rocky path between two rows of vines. My bike feels heavy. It's okay, and I feel comfortable, if not a little tense. The vineyard is steep and arranged in two blocks. One begins at the top next to the road where we entered. It then flattens and the second block drops lower ore vines to a street below, still steep but not as much as the top.

Because this vineyard is young with newly planted vines, he must irrigate it with more water than usual. The soil is porous and loose, and there are large ruts, gullies, and scars created by water erosion. It's dry but doesn't look pretty.

I make my way to the bottom of the first block. No problem. Aleš stops about twenty meters in front of me. I assume we'll dismount the bikes here, but he waves me on. I roll the throttle and move forward, slowly. At that moment I notice a deep and wide crevice in the soil. As I cross it, I twist the throttle, but I am off balance due to the hill. Before I can correct, the bike falls and throws me into the dirt. Shit.

I'm okay. The bike seems okay, too.

Aleš runs over. Together we lift the bike.

"Okay. Let's walk down there." Off the bikes now, we explore the vineyard. It's hot, and my adrenaline is high and heart pumping. We find a water spigot and hose. Taking the hose, we drink and run the water over our bald heads—hydrating and cooling. I laugh.

At a high point on the lower block, Aleš shows me how far the vineyard stretches. On another hill, in the distance, I see the Movia Estate where this adventure started some twenty minutes ago.

Further down the vineyard, we hike and climb up a berm where we have expansive views of the full vineyard. I take photos, we laugh as we snap a bunch of selfies. I sense his excitement. Here on this land, Aleš will grow a new type of grape, and from it, he will make an exciting new wine. I reflect this moment. This vineyard and its soil, the climate, and the man next to me—the caretaker. All of this combined will incubate positive change—and more.



We wander the new vineyard and gaze upon more mature vineyards.



Off the bikes we hike the new vineyard.



The sun is intense, the heat even more. We cool off and hydrate.



Ales' approach to planting, vineyard management and trellising is different, and he explains why.



I'm thrilled to have this one-on-one time with the guru of Movia. It is harvest, and I know Aleš hasn't slept in two days. Though I would never guess. His energy is addicting.

When we leave, Aleš wants to ride to the lower road, through the second vineyard block. I look down. More ruts, gullies, and scars in the soil. Then I look up. I came down that way, I feel I should ride back up the same path.

“No, no,” he says, “we can ride down. It’s easy. Just this part, is a little rough,” he says pointing to the terrain making me apprehensive.

“If I had a smaller bike, no problem,” I explain while pointing at his nimble 250cc thumper. Pointing at my bike I remind him, “This is heavy.” He walks toward the rough terrain, then circles around. It’s a clue that he’s thinking about the challenge.

“Wait, how about I ride your bike then,” he proposes a solution. With his six-foot-plus frame, I know he can straddle my bike and plant both of his feet flat on the ground. At five foot eight, I cannot sit on my bike with both feet on the ground. I never have a problem. But when loaded, my bike handles more like a beast than a dirt bike.

“Are you sure?” I ask him. “This is much heavier than yours.” He has the added advantage of height. If he needs to, he can paddle with his feet. So I agree and let him ride my bike.

He declines to wear my helmet. And when he first mounts Doc, fires up the engine, and let’s go of the clutch, he dumps the bike. Shit, poor Doc smashes into the rocks again. Aleš is okay. We lift the bike, and he cranks the engine again.

I run down to the steep and rocky part of the hill and pull out my iPhone to capture his ride on video. Moving slowly, he hops over the first couple ruts, paddles with his feet and cruises through the rough section and heads down the hill. The tough part now behind him.

Just as he disappears around the corner, I hear a loud crash and thump. He yells out. I clench the iPhone in my hand and run down the hill, he’s okay. But the motorcycle is upside down, wedged in a deep ditch on the side of the road. It doesn’t look good. It’s the first time I get a good look at my Avon Trekrider tires on the bike, but that’s not something I ever wished to do.

We hug. I’m relieved. The most famous winemaker—the rock star of wine— in Slovenia is okay. I imagined the headlines had things gone worse. We gather our thoughts. There’s no way we can pull the bike out of this ditch. We need help.



If Aleš needs a challenge to remain engaged and stimulated, the predicament we're in now is perfect. He scratches his head, paces past the bike.

"The tractor, we can use the tractor. This will work," Aleš tells me. But when we try to call the house and his son's mobile number nobody answers. We dial again. And again. No answer. He lives a message. We wait. I pull a bottle of water from the upside down bike and hand it to him. The sun is intense, we're sweating.

After more attempts at reaching someone, Aleš decides he must walk — or hitchhike back to the winery. I stay with the bike. Security. I'm worried. Even with a tractor, we can't just drag the bike out of the ditch. To make sure we don't further damage it, we must hoist it up, over and onto the track. I scan the bike and the ground around it looking to see if it's leaking gas or coolant. There's no sign of anything. That's good news.

About an hour later, I see this old tractor turn off the road and head up the track. I notice an arm extending from just in front of the cab. Aleš tells me he uses this to plant and pound posts into the vineyard. At the bottom of the hill Ales' son and a Rok, one of Movia's cellar masters park their car and walk up to meet us.

After a short discussion, we have a plan. I should say they have a plan. I watch and capture the action on video with my iPhone. Except as they hoist the bike up, it spins. Panicked, they shout. I dump the phone to steady the bike. In a few moments, Doc is "rubber side down."

"What about your camera?" He is concerned some of my things were damaged in the crash. We pull the camera out of the top case. It's good.



Ales, Lan, and Rok celebrate pulling Doc out of the ditch.



Lan takes Doc for a casual spin back the winery!

After a quick examination, I start the bike. The right side mirror snapped in the accident, and the foot peg on the same side is tweaked and bent backward. Aleš tells me his cellar hand can weld the mirror and straighten the peg. All good, and all in the spirit of a good story. I let Lan ride Doc back to the winery.

Back at Movia Rok attacks my mirror with his welder, but where's Aleš? Moments later he zooms into the cellar on a hoverboard. He then gets busy with more grapes just brought in from harvest. A tractor towing a de-stemming machine backs up to an opening in the floor. They activate the de-stemmer and grapes fall into a tank below.



Rok takes care of my mirror and the footpeg and I'm ready to go!



Ales swings into the cellar while weaving and swerving on his hoverboard.

"I had to tell my wife and my son I will not go to dinner tonight," Aleš reveals. The dinner was to be a going away "last supper" with Lan's girlfriend, Nina. Tomorrow she goes to Paris to study, to university. She'll be gone until Christmas.

"There's always something to do, something more important," he tells me. "And that's the thing that makes me a little upset."

He takes a deep breath, exhales. "You see my son?" he says making more of a statement than a question. "He's taller than me, and I think how many times over the years I've been with him. Not a lot. And I'm not proud of that."

He says that over the years he always puts something before family and friends. His father taught him there is nothing more important than wine. The memory of his father instilling him with a strong work ethic is vivid. "He was my great teacher. He was tough, very precise, and everything he did without compromise." At the time the elder Kristančič would tell Aleš that nothing was as important as wine. This includes school, friends, and family. "This is how I was taught. This is the only way I know how." Wine, he explains, is the alter in which he is devoted.

"So I must miss dinner tonight," he reflects. "We have a lot of work. Sure we can do this tomorrow or after tomorrow. We can do this if we use a little sulfur," taking another deep breath. Long exhale. His voice is now more resonant. "But that's it! Is that really the best? Is that the best we can do for this wine?" Commanding attention, he puts his hand on my shoulder.

"That is not the best!" He speaks louder, in a tone resonating with passion, belief, and love.

"If you have something in your mind telling you can do better, that you can make it better, you are not free, not calm until you do that." It's this desire to come as close to perfect without shortcuts or compromise that earned him his reputation of a guru and garnered him accolades among wine professionals and lovers worldwide.

He shares with me a poignant allegory. "Say I come to San Diego to present my wine, and someone doesn't like it. That's okay. I'm fine with that. We are all different, and that's what creates attraction. Difference and nature. But if somebody tells me, there's something wrong with the wine, I will argue. There is nothing wrong with the wine. I work to make sure."



Merlot grapes from today's harvest.

"If I do my part, to give the wine all that is possible, there is no problem, nothing wrong. And if you like it? Great, I'm happy. If you don't? That's okay. We are different, and we have lots of wine in the world, and you will find a wine to like or love. This is beautiful."

"But if I give my all, everything to a wine, to do what I can to make all that's possible, then I'm free. And it's this wine you can really drink, and you can drive. Because it goes to your soul, not your body. You drive with your body. And the wine is your soul." This is the difference between wine and alcoholic beverages also called wine, he tells me.



The noise in the cellar gets louder, tractor and machines. We walk past a long line of stainless steel tanks towering above us.

We talk briefly about the new vineyard and the accident earlier today. He feels terrible about the bike, but it's okay. He wished for me to see just how he plants the vines, in vertical rows instead of horizontal. And others in a serpentine manner. All this attention to providing the best for the grapes—and the wine.

But planting rows of vines on a steep hillside this way subjects the soil to erosion. So Aleš plants barley between the rows. This helps hold the soil together. He also plants two vines next to each other—in pairs—where each pair shares a single post. This develops a stronger root system, forcing the vines to compete against each other. Everything Aleš does is with purpose, rationale, and passion. And you can taste that in Movia wine.



Ales makes his vines compete using a unique pairing when planting the wines. The roots are stronger and better, he tells me.

“We are okay. The motorcycle is okay. The rest is up to interpretation,” he reflects.

“After a bottle of wine we are different, but not drunk,” he reasons. “Alcohol comes from the fermentation of sugar, sugar comes from the sky—sunshine. But the sun and the sugar—this is the less important thing. It’s the most stupid thing. and the cheapest thing which we have in the wine.”

He explains that we need not measure wine in terms of strength of alcohol—that’s not wine. “So if a wine is thirteen percent alcohol, okay,” he explains, “but that’s not important—it doesn’t determine if a wine is good or bad. What determines the quality of the wine is the other eighty-seven percent.”



Meticulous about cleanliness and order in his cellar, Ales tend to another challenge.

“What is in there, the other 87%?” he asks. “That’s what is important. There are stones and minerals coming from the deepest part of the soil. We grow vines with strong roots which never get enough water. They must fight and go deep to find water. And that’s the point.”

Viticulture, he explains, should not involve the use of herbicides, fertilizer, or irrigation. “If you tame a wolf, feed it, domesticate it, it will become a dog. Once you do this, it can never be a wolf again.” Vines should be wild, he says. They need to fight to survive. Once you interfere they become dependent. If we stop, the vines will die. So, if we feed the vines like that, then what do we get? Is that still wine?”

We walk into another room in the cellar where barrels stretch down a long corridor. I ask about the use of oak. Remarking on how the 2012 Pinot Noir rested in barrels for over four years, yet when I tasted it, I didn’t taste the oak.

“Wood is the material in which the wine breathes,” he explains. “Today people use new oak. Double toast, heavy toast, other toast. They are trying to impart flavors from barrels into the wine. Why?”

“If I taste or smell the barrel or the tank, I feel that’s a mistake. The tannins in oak work like an antioxidant for the wine. But the more a barrel is toasted, the less it breathes, and the more closed it is. Then you have something like a stainless steel tank, and that’s not what you want when you use barrels.”

We return the core conversation and that of his philosophy. “Winemakers can have different ideas, try different things. But in the end, it’s just one decision.” We talk as we walk into another dark room. He fumbles for the lights.

“Just one decision. You either want the taste of your wine to be the taste of your soil, the taste of your special place where you grow. Or you want to add something. If you want to add something, I don’t agree with that, I cannot speak about that—I do not know that. You can use oak, but the wine has to be so powerful and strong that it must win over the oak.”



We look into a barrel full of whole berries—grapes. After hand sorting, they place the whole grapes into the barrel. Called [Lunar](#), he bottles the wine directly from this barrel, skins and all. “We never use sulfur, not even in the bottle. There are few wines in the world made completely without adding sulfur. And they are ok, they are good, it does not damage them because of that. But this process of making Lunar is my way—I invented this.”

“If the berry is good, it’s a completely invisible and wild world with yeast and bacteria. We leave all the berries in here and in eight or nine months we come back and find wine. Can you imagine this? That’s incredible. Or you can work, bam, bam, bam.—over pumping, decanting, racking and everything and you get wine, sure. Or you just leave it. Of course, this system takes balls. It’s a lot of risk because many times you find vinegar.”



We laugh, but he is serious. Winemakers use sulfur in wine production to stop fermentation and reduce oxidization.

“When this happens, it will be a fantastic vinegar, even maybe a bit expensive vinegar.”

Ultimately Aleš bottles the wine directly into the bottle using just a tube and gravity. There’s no fining, filtering, or invasive machines.

“We touch the wine only twice, that’s it. Two times,” Aleš proudly reminds me.

At the other end of the barrel room, his voice drops to a whisper. “You hear that?” It’s the sound of bubbles, like water boiling. One barrel is overflowing, Aleš moves into action, pulls the top off, making adjustments. A temporary fix.

We walk past several large open storage closets with hundreds of bottles of wine. “This is history,” he tells me. “We can learn a lot from these bottles.” Wines date back to the 1943 vintage. They are stacked on top of each other, no shelving. We can blindly pick any bottle and slip it out. He grabs a one, about ten bottles deep. With a twist, turn and pull, he yanks the bottle out. For a moment, my heart skipped. But it worked.

We’ve talked and wandered through the cellar for nearly an hour now. He’s got work to do, but he invites me to stay, around—to watch, wander, and wonder. I cruise around and record a quick podcast. After some time, I hop on my bike and head back to my guesthouse.

Once again, I am like that barrel of fermenting wine, my brain overflowing with newfound knowledge and a greater understanding of why and how uncompromising passion and dedication to is perhaps the most critical ingredient for making great wine—and food.

That’s what you’ll find at Movia, and that’s what you’ll taste in Movia wines.

WINERY

KRISTANČIČ – MOVIA

ALEŠ IN VESNA KRISTANČIČ

Ceglo 18, 5212 Dobrovo v Brdih

+386 5 395 95 10

(by appointment only)

WINE BAR & SHOP

WINE BAR & SHOP VINOTEKA MOVIA

Mestni trg 2, 1000 Ljubljana

+386 1 425 54 48