

# Movia

GORISKA BRDA



**Founded:** 1820

**Winemaker/Viticulturist:**

Ales Kristancic

**Acres owned:** 52

**Annual production:** 10,000 cases

**Estate grown:** 100%

**Owner:** Ales Kristancic

**Known for:** Radical natural wines from Slovenia

**Importer:** Domaine Select Wine Estates, NY

**Website:** movia.si

**Ales Kristancic**

If I were to shoot a documentary about the natural wine movement, Movia's Ales Kristancic would be the lead interview. Sure, Kristancic employs organic and biodynamic practices in his vineyards, and believes in minimal intervention when it comes to working in the cellar. But he's also a singular personality, a talented winemaker with a zest for life and a knack for promotion. In fact, it's this latter attribute that's not only built Movia's presence in the US, but also has helped pave the way for other compelling wines from Slovenia and Croatia to enter the market. Today, thanks to Movia's reach, the category has some modest buzz behind it: We tasted more than 40 Slovenian wines for our August 2009 issue, a record.

The Kristancic family has owned the Movia estate since 1820. The vineyards are situated on the border with Friuli at Goriska Brda; some parts extend into Italy. Rather than pursue formal organic or biodynamic certification, Kristancic sticks to his own philosophy, a combination of farming in the manner of his grandfather and respect for the natural cycles in the vineyard.

His creative approach to wine is clearest in Lunar, a ribolla gialla from 65-year-old vines planted in crumbly marl soils and named for the moon's influence on the vineyard and the wines fermenting in the cellar. In an effort to disturb the cycle as little as possible, Kristancic designed special barrels fitted with hatches wide enough to accommodate the whole ribolla clusters. The grapes are harvested by hand, but that's the last time they are touched. Once he fills the barrel with grapes, Kristancic leaves the wine alone. In the spring, he draws it off its skins by vacuum, directly into bottle without the use of sulfur dioxide. The result is compelling: In '07, Lunar feels vivid and alive, combining citrus and quince flavors with a saline undertone.

The '04 Veliko Bianco is more conventional but equally thrilling. An impressively structured blend of ribolla, chardonnay, sauvignon and pinot grigio, it feels dynamic and powerful, and will continue to develop for several years in the cellar. —W.M.W.



## TOP-SCORING WINES

**92** '04 Goriska Brda Veliko Bianco \$49 (8/09)

**91** '07 Goriska Brda Lunar \$44 (8/09)

**90** '04 Goriska Brda Pinot Nero \$34 (8/09)