

Floral Terranes

winemakers: Erik Longabardi, Benford Lepley

organic* biodynamic* wild yeasts non-filtré low SO2

country: United States **state:** New York

AVA: North Fork (Long Island)

main vineyard(s): the apples are a mix of foraged, wild and cultivated trees; the grapes are sourced from various backyard vineyards and Macari Vineyard, Long Island



summary: Long Island was, not so long ago, an agricultural oasis that supplied Manhattan with food. The latter half of the 20th century *redefined* this landscape, with Robert Moses and others using the heavy hand of machinery to lay motorways through the Hempstead plains and beyond. This direct line to the city quickened the transformation from farmhouses to mansions, and then later the subdivision of mansions into suburban sprawl. Thus an agricultural history, centuries old, was largely erased from the landscape (and our collective memories?) within the span of a few decades. It became “suburban terroir” as Erik would say. As it turns out, often the agricultural remnants have been saved as part of institutional landscapes. Thus Erik found 28 assorted apple trees sprinkled at Banbury Farm, part of the Cold Spring Laboratory complex. (The human genome and natty cider, all from one place.) Seminaries and monasteries tucked away on huge tracts of land, with the remains of agriculture, apple trees and grape vines, slowly being integrated back into the wild landscape, make up a serious part of the Floral Terranes terroir. What matters most to Erik, and to the Floral Terranes project, is saving this land. The logic is easy enough: if we had no idea this land existed, how would we know to save it? Knowledge is the beginning. The beverage, in this case, is the beginning. The apples are pressed by simple basket press, grapes by foot. All fermentations are carried out exclusively by natural yeasts, in various vessels of different sizes. It is bottled, by hand, with very low doses of sulfur, in Erik’s garage / cellar in Roslyn. As of 2018, Benford Lepley, the Obi Wan of apples, is working alongside Erik.

production: ~300 cases

key varieties: Assorted heritage apple varieties, Chardonnay, Riesling, Cabernet Sauvignon, Marquette, Merlot

soil: Sand, Gravel, Clay

vine age: apple trees 25–75 years old; vines 6–25 years old

vineyard work: Most of the apples are sourced from places that have never been treated at all, other orchards are organic or using Integrated Pest Management; as for the grapes, the Macari Vineyard is organic/biodynamic; most backyard vineyards are practicing organic.

vinification: Apples are pressed and ferment spontaneously in open-top containers. All ciders are then put into glass demi-johns and neutral oak barrels to age up to 9 months before bottling. All wines are foot-stomped and left in open-top containers to ferment spontaneously. Pressings are very gentle; all wines are put into old neutral wood barrels to age up to 10 months before bottling. All ciders and wines are unfinned and unfiltered with low to no SO2 used depending on cuvée.

ciders/wines:

Harbor Hill Moraine – organic, backyard orchard w/ 40 y/o Grimes Golden trees in Orient, North Fork w/Russet apples from an untended orchard two miles away, 10% skin-fermented Chardonnay from Macari

Ronkonkoma Moraine – Northern Spy and Roxbury Russet (Restoration Farm) w/unknown varieties from backyard trees; pressed 10/15/19 with 15 gallons of Crabapple cider from 2015 added

Suburban Moraines – Black Twig apples, Winesap apples, 10% crab apples, aged in neutral barrel

Upland Moraine – mix of wild seedling trees from the Catskills & organic orchard fruit near Taconic mtns, aged in neutral barrel

Chardonnay – Macari Vineyards, North Fork; 1/2 of the grapes soaked overnight (whole cluster) before pressing (by foot), 1/2 (also whole cluster) fermented on skins for two wks in an open-top barrel before pressing; blended in mid-July

Riesling – backyard vineyard on North Fork; foot-crushed, 12-day whole cluster fermentation, aged in neutral barrel

‘Abracadabra’ – 70% skin-contact Chardonnay from Macari Vineyard and 30% Merlot from a two-acre, backyard vineyard in Orient, Long Island, aged in neutral barrels before blending in mid-June

Cabernet Sauvignon #1 – 20 y/o vines from backyard vineyard North Fork of Long Island, crushed by foot. Two weeks of whole-cluster maceration and fermentation in open top neutral oak, aged in neutral tank

Cabernet Sauvignon #2 – 20 y/o vines from backyard vineyard North Fork of Long Island, crushed by foot. Two weeks of whole-cluster maceration and fermentation in open top neutral tank with more extraction, aged in neutral oak

Marquette – grapes from North Fork backyard vineyard, foot-trodden, aged in neutral oak, bottled off gross lees in late June

Merlot – grapes from a two-acre, backyard vineyard in Orient, Long Island, planted in the 90s; foot-crushed, spontaneously fermented in open-top container, aged in neutral oak