

# 'Zilga'



Mark Hart

**Synonyms:** Dvietes 4-2-108 (1, 2).

**Pedigree:** 'Smuglyanka' x (pollen mix of 'Dvietes Zila' and 'Yubileinyi Novgoroda') (1).

**Origin:** Latvia. Bred by Paul Sukatniek (1, 3).

**Introduction:** Cross made in 1964 (1, 2).

**Type:** Interspecific hybrid. Reported to be a complex (*V. amurensis* x *V. labrusca* x *V. vinifera*) cross (1).

**Color:** Blue

**Berry:** Medium large (3 g), with sky-blue shading (2).

**Cluster:** Small to medium in size (.35 lb); compact and with a wing (2).

**Viticultural Characteristics:** Very vigorous and productive (2).

**Disease/Pests:** Good disease resistance (3). Decent tolerance to most fungal diseases; requires moderate spray program (1).

**Wine Quality and Characteristics:** Plocher and Parke (2) report that the wines are still experimental. They stated that the juice is prone to oxidation and needs careful measures to prevent this. Plocher and Parke (2) described wines produced by semi-carbonic maceration as typically purple-red, with a nose described as "cranberry" with "mineral" overtones and a hint of foxiness. They added that rosé style wines made from 'Zilga' are reminiscent of fruit wines with strawberry being the predominant aroma. They suggested that 'Zilga' wines are improved in mouth feel and aromatics by addition of dense aromatic red wines such as 'Maréchal Foch'.

**Season:** Early (2).

**Cold Hardiness:** Reported to have survived -40° F (2).

**Use:** Wine, table, ornamental (3) Suitable for cool, wet, frost-prone climates (2).

**Notes:** The name 'Zilga' in Latvian is quite poetic, meaning something like "deep, dark-blue waters". It is the only blue selection ever released by Latvian breeder, Pauls Sukatnieks (2).

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## Literature Cited

1. Hart, M., Mount Ashwabay Vineyard and Orchard, Bayfield, WI. *Personal communication* (2008).
2. Plocher, T., and B. Parke. 2001. Northern Winework. Northern Winework, Inc. Hugo, MN.
3. Ruisa, Silvija, Latvian State Institute of Fruit-Growing, Dobeles, Latvia. *Personal communication* (2008).