



Nº. 1

toa zine

MAGAZINE FOR &
FROM WINE LOVERS



Dear Austrian Wine Lovers

Dear partners & wine lovers,
Stories, background knowledge and personal opinions are the salt in soup when it comes to finding out what we prefer, whether it's in food or drinks. We want to be honest with you - the quality of today's wines has never been better and at the same time it has never been worse. The search for the right wine often resembles the search for a needle in a haystack. Finding the „right“ winemaker, the producers who are responsible for the right way, that's what it's all about. After all, wine consumption has been declining all over the world for years. But not the quantity should be the key factor, it's the quality. It's ok if we decide to drink less but we should at least drink the good stuff. We value winegrowers

who respect the nature and aim to produce genuine, authentic wines. We are happy to see a continuing upward trend in this respect. The reasons and the winegrower's approach may vary from person to person and

WE ARE SURE EACH INDIVIDUAL WILL FIND SUITABLE WINES IN OUR SELECTION. THIS WAS OUR GOAL FROM DAY 1.

yet they pursue the same goal: producing wines that offer real joy and which tell their own stories - about their origin, the particular grapes, the vintage and of course the philosophy, the human touch of their creators.

Knowledge tends to stimulate our taste buds and helps us better understand and appreciate the background of the wine in our glass. That's why we've created this magazine to provide you with stories, portraits and interviews on a regular basis - about the winegrowers and their wines, but also about the people who pour these wines to the wine lovers as a profession. Furthermore, we're not afraid to tell our personal opinion on current hot topics of the wine world. Feel free to disagree! Last but not least, we want to provide you with useful information on upcoming fairs and events. There is no way around tasting and drinking if you wish to make up your own mind!

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The M-Word

Minerality. This (in)famous word has gained such popularity in the last 2 decades that people in the wine business seem to take it for granted. Winegrowers grab for it at any occasion and for basically every single wine they produce. Wine writers, journalists and alike use it in order to spice up their exuberant tasting notes. What about the consumers? They are not so sure, really, studies show.

SEMANTIC CHAOS

Basically, minerality is a fascinating word whose upswing seems to go hand in hand with the emergence of the term „terroir“. Where terroir is discussed (and often disputed), minerality is not far away. One could even get the feeling that minerality seems to replace the (often overused) word terroir. In the meantime, a number of scientific studies have actually dealt with the M-word, so that the discussions at regulars' tables can also be accompanied by facts. As long as only personal opinions are exchanged, a meaningful debate is hardly possible - no matter how enjoyable it may be.

Sarah Jane Evans, Master of Wine, writes:

*The International Mineralogical Association defines 'mineral' as 'an element or chemical compound that is normally crystalline and that has been formed as a result of geological processes'. So vines take up elements from the soil and this gives wines their distinct taste? Right? Wrong! The mineral elements in wine are tiny; only potassium and calcium even come close to 1,000 parts per million. There's no question of tasting them. As a result, science gives the 'mineral' tasting note short shrift.*²

The idea that vines take minerals directly from the soil and then transfer them into a taste sensation on the palate or as an odour is not tenable. To put it shortly, rocks and minerals have no flavour nor can the vine transfer them from the soil into a detectable taste in the resulting wine. Thus, from a scientific point of view minerality does not exist – or does it? The studies mentioned above have interviewed wine experts (growers, journalists, retailers) and consumers in order to find out how they define minerality and which terms are referred to when speaking of it. The study leaders gathered terms covering different aspects of the wine - origin, soil, degree of ripeness, fruitiness (or lack of it) and, of course, vinification. The terms that have been used over and over again are well known. Here is a selection of the most frequently mentioned ones:

- Gunflint, (wet) stones, chalk, all pointing towards the soil category
- Palate sensations like acidity, freshness, tension and vivacity
- Seashore terms such as iodine, saltiness, algae or shellfish
- Quality, elegance, finesse and purity also popped up as terms not related to specific palate or flavour sensations

It comes as no surprise that there is no real consensus between wine people (experts and consumers alike) and that everyone uses its own descriptors. Wine is a complex matter, not a fridge or a car engine, and tastes are perceived and interpreted differently by every human being. Now we are facing a dilemma: we describe wines with a term whose meaning is not quite clear to anyone and which is also subjectively evaluated. We wine professionals may still understand each other to a certain degree but consumers may often turn their eyes. Let us not forget that the overlaid wine language, often understood as elitist, is more likely to cause rejection than affection for the fascination of wine among „normal“ people.

A CERTAIN STYLE

If we look at the terms attributed to minerality, we get the impression that „mineral“ wines are more likely to be associated with certain styles and wine growing regions, and ultimately also with vinification methods. Where are wines at home which have a distinctive acidity, which offer elegance, finesse, varietal purity and a faithful interpretation of origin? One could answer with „everywhere“, but in principle it's the cool climate regions with their often barren, stony soils (think of slate, chalk, lime or volcanic soils) that can hardly be dismissed. Exceptions confirm the rule and fans of the slate slopes of the Douro valley or Priorat will rightly insist on it. Dry white wines are most often mentioned

Currently, there appears to be no accepted definition of minerality in wine, no consensus on the characteristics that are associated with it, nor even whether it is perceived primarily as a smell, a taste or a mouthfeel sensation.¹

when the language revolves around minerality, but red wines also have their justification - if one considers the quoted attributes such as acidity, structure and elegance.

What about vinification? Approaches which favour high alcohol gradations, residual sugar, excessively exotic fruit expression, the use of small barrels as well as the countless possibilities of acid and sugar correction, will find it difficult to be accepted into the circle of minerality, regardless of the ubiquitous assertions on the back labels. Just because vines grow on soil (stony soils!) does not mean their fruit has an automatic legitimation for mineral honours. If the grower has the means of letting go of excessive manipulation, rather sticks to large barrels or alternative containers such as concrete vessels, amphora or granite and if he or she carefully handles sulphur additions, filtration and fining, lively wines rich in finesse and structure will show their beauty. Assuming their vineyard management is top level, of course.

QUALITY IS THE ANSWER

So what are we going to make of this? We cannot deny minerality is here and probably to stay - in our language and in our modern understanding of wine, which in many parts of the world is increasingly seen as a high-quality product rather than simple beverage. Certainly, wine consumption is declining world-wide, but the conscious enjoyment of wine as a cultural asset will always have its place. The decisive factor here (besides the omnipresent price factor) is quality. Of course, quality is another term that could be discussed endlessly and which is also interpreted individually.

Nevertheless, in recent years trends have been emerging which equate quality with sustainable cultivation, typicality of origin and grape variety as well as drinkability. We do not want to claim that industrially produced wines do not have their customers, not at all. But we want to claim that conscious consumers are increasingly asking for wines whose quality criteria overlap with the descriptions of the ominous minerality. Wines produced by artisans, wines

with palpable acidity, freshness, structure and complexity, wines that are often served in Scandinavia (to give an example) and generally in the world's top restaurants.

LET'S MAKE A DEAL

Will there ever be common ground on the M-word? A definition everyone will be happy with? Probably not. The term is too diverse, can be interpreted in various ways and to a very individual degree. In fact, most of the characteristics of minerality could also be summarized under the word terroir. The question also arises as to how useful it is to constantly use the M-word – more often than not it seems the wine critic would rather praise himself than the wine. Does the wine really have a salty vein or is there a hint of flint (which, by the way, smells of nothing at all)?

We would like to leave minerality a little alone and concentrate on true quality instead. You want a mineral wine, no matter what it costs and whatever the word means for you? Look out for a winemaker of your trust. One who works meticulously in the vineyard and is lazy in the cellar. One who harvests early enough and regards acidity as an advantage, one who does not abuse his wines and likes to drink them himself. Minerality, it then shows up all by itself...

¹ Wendy V. Parr 1*, Alex J. Maltman 2, Sally Easton 3 and Jordi Ballester: Minerality in Wine: Towards the Reality behind the Myths; Beverages 2018, 4, 77

² Sarah Jane Evans: Minerality in wine: What does it mean to you?; Decanter.com (December 11, 2014)

Fig. 1: Stones are often related to minerality © Steve Haider

Fig. 2: Amphorae @ Johannes Zillinger © Bioweingut Johannes Zillinger

Johannes Zillinger

For years Johannes Zillinger from Velm-Götzendorf in the Weinviertel region has been one of the flagships of authentic, unadulterated wine - in Austria and far beyond. What sounds so simple and perhaps self-evident is the result of decades of dedication and meticulous work. It's simply people who do what they do out of pure conviction. Plus: the Zillinger family is happy to rely on many years of invaluable experience.

PORTRAIT OF A GROWER

Johannes' father Hans turned to organic winegrowing already in the 1980s and is one of its pioneers in Austria. The soils and the vines in Velm-Götzendorf have been vitalized since more than 30 years and are accordingly healthy and robust. The vineyards are situated along the hills north (loess and sandstone) and south (loam) of Velm-Götzendorf.

All of them have individual cover crops and for several years now no animal fertilizer has been used. The ingredients for working the soils are derived in the region to avoid long transport routes. Together with his philosophy of minimal treatment in the cellar this results in long living and multi-layered wines. The logical next step for Zillinger was to dedicate themselves to biodynamic approaches. Therefore since 2013 no additionally purchased grapes are processed; all Zillinger wines come from their own vineyards.

Biodynamic cultivation is carried out according to the rules of Demeter. This includes the use of self-produced compost in order to fertilize and enhance soils as well as seeding herbs in the vineyard as a habitat for various beneficial insects and animals and as basis for extracts and teas.

In 2013 Johannes Zillinger breaks fresh ground to express the vitality and aromatic power of his grapes even better in his wines. The portfolio was newly structured and the wines were given more freedom during maturing. Johannes relied on bringing back to life ancient methods of vinifying and ageing his wines such as hand picking, spontaneous fermentation, using wooden acacia barrels or amphorae. He can afford this because he uses no less than perfect grapes – the basis for all great wines.

How is Johannes? Well, given that he is a fun guy and really enjoys spending time with his family and friends, he can't be other than great. When it comes to the wine side of life, the 2019 harvest has been finished successfully. Grapes were looking sound and healthy, the crop a bit smaller than in 2018. Johannes currently aims to put a stronger emphasis on his Rosé portfolio. Velue Rosé, Numen Rosé or Pink Solera, each of them based on different grapes and ageing approaches. Unique and lively taste profiles which come as they are. Just like their creator...

Find out more about Johannes Zillinger here:

www.toa.co.at/partner/johannes-zillinger
www.velue.at



Johannes has structured his wine portfolio into these lines:

VELUE

„Velue“ is the old name for Velm, moreover the name of the old willow trees which are growing near the river. Biodynamic worked vineyards – wines fermented spontaneously with natural yeast in stainless steel tanks – matured on the fine lees – fruit forward style

REFLEXION

The Reflexion wines are single vineyard wines, reflecting their origin. Older vines – matured on the lees – hand-harvested single berries are included in the fermentation process – medium bodied – individual style

REVOLUTION

Non vintage wines – blends of different grapes and vintages based on a Solera system – fermentation starts on the skins in amphorae – finished in stainless steel – unfiltered and bottled unfiltered – very individual style

NUMEN

“Numen” denotes the metaphysical process which cannot be influenced by human beings. Thus, the wine almost arose without any interventions of the grower – natural wines at their best. Selected grapes from the oldest vines – fermented on the skins – matured on the lees for more than a year without interventions – no fining, no filtration – cloudy wines – unique style

A Talk with Sosuke Okada

Sosuke Okada is the patron of “Ginza Soseki” in Tokyo’s Ginza district. His restaurant serves the traditional “Edo style Sushi” and “Kaiseki cuisine”. Sosuke is a great supporter of Austrian wines and believes firmly that they are perfectly suited for his outstanding cuisine. We have interviewed Sosuke on his philosophy and approach.

Please explain your type of cuisine.

“Edo style Sushi” uses three types of Sushi methods: 1) “Nigiri,”: holding a piece of fish and “Shari” (rice seasoned with vinegar), 2) “Edo-mae”: using Tokyo bay fishes and 3) “Zuke, Shime, Kobu-jime”: a Japanese style pickle

The “Kaiseki cuisine” consists of dishes that bring out the taste of seasonal seafood and vegetables. The basics of the “Kaiseki cuisine” are the traditional ones that use “Dashi” (the soup stock of kelp and small pieces of dried bonito) to bring out the “Umami”.

My grandfather established his “Edo style Sushi” restaurant in Tsukiji 90 years ago, my Sushi chef has inherited my grandfather’s traditional techniques. My aunt works as our restaurant’s Kaiseki cuisine chef. She has been a chef for over 60 years, and has carefully selected ingredients on the market every day, while respecting traditions and innovative approaches such as using new ingredients.

You focus on Austrian wines: what do you particularly like about these wines?

Austrian wines are generally elegant in taste and, moreover, provide a good sensation of clean high acidity,

minerals and “Umami”. These elements bring out the taste of Japanese food, especially sushi. For this reason, I think Austrian wines are a very good match for Japanese food. Therefore I always use them at my restaurant.



How do your customers react when being served Austrian wine? Do they know what to expect or does your team need to give a lot of information?

Almost all of my customers enjoy Sushi, Kaiseki cuisine and the Austrian wine food pairing. They really enjoy this combination since Austrian wines enhance and support the Japanese food taste. This is not about a strong taste, but the unique individuality of food pairing wines. Our team explains each feature of the served wine and recommends the best pairing with each dish. If the customer asks for more information, we explain the details after the meal. I think that enjoying wine and sushi is more convincing than going deeply into details.

Sushi is a Japanese classic: which kind of wines do match particularly well with your dishes?

Gumpoldkirchner (Niederösterreich, Thermenregion). This is good food pairing for all Sushi. I also think that it is a very good match for “Shari”.

Grüner Veltliner in a light and fresh style from Niederösterreich (for example from Kremstal, Kamptal, Weinviertel or Vienna). Grüner Veltliner is also a great pairing for all types of Sushi. It is distinguished by its crisp citrus notes that clear the palate after the different taste of each sushi, setting the stage for the next bite to shine just as brightly.

Riesling (Federspiel from Wachau or „Erste Lagen“ from Kremstal, Kamptal and Wien). This is very good pairing for crab and shrimp dishes. Especially for the “deep fried hair crab”, created by our chef Ms. Aoki. I always recommend Riesling for this dish.

GINZA SOSEKI
Ginza5-14-14-2F, Chuo-ku
Tokyo, Japan
www.nishitani-sushi.com

Fig. 1: Sosuke Okada @ Ginza Soseki

The vineyard alphabet

Great wines are born in great vineyards. Origin is key: we want to know where a product comes from, how it is made and who did it. Since centuries, winegrowers have studied their land and have identified the best plots for their fruit. It is no coincidence that many icon wines carry are recognizable not only by their producer but by their vineyard name – think of Burgundy, think of Piemonte and yes, of course, think of Austria. In our vineyard alphabet we would like to introduce to you the vineyards of the TOA wine partners. Step by step, letter by letter.



A - ALTER WEINGARTEN

„Alter Weingarten“ means „old vineyard“ and is a site in Deutsch Schützen in the unique wine growing region of Südburgenland (Southern Burgenland). The prevalent soil here is composed of moderately deep clay with a lot of minerals. The vines growing here are actually really pretty old, up to 46 years. The eponymous wine by Krutzler is strongly dominated by Blaufränkisch (what else for the region) with a dash of Zweigelt to round it up.

Fig. 1: © Weingut Krutzler



B - BACHSATZ

„Bachsatz“ is a site in Weißenkirchen in the western part of Wachau, cultivated by Erich Machherndl. This beautiful vineyard lies in the flatter section of the slopes, the soil is a typical mix of paragneiss & amphibolites. The wines from Bachsatz are somewhat more aromatic than those of Erich’s other vineyards. The planted variety is a Wachau classic, Grüner Veltliner, vinified in steel tank and resulting in a super fresh, spicy and lean fella.

Fig. 2: © Weingut Machherndl

C - A RARE LETTER

„C“ is a rare letter for vineyard names. But it also stands for Claus, like in Claus Preisinger. We highly recommend all of his wines, no matter the vineyard name.



D - DECHANT

Let’s take a stroll in the famous region of Kamptal. Dechant (referring to a high official in the catholic church that used to possess many vineyards in former times) is one the top notch vineyards in Langenlois. It consists of southeast facing terraces with calcareous loess soils – pretty perfect for Grüner Veltliner wines, such as the full bodied yet elegant and spicy “Grüner Veltliner Dechant” by Rudi Rabl. Kamptal at its best!

Fig. 3: © Weingut Rabl



Weingut Tinhof – regionality it is!

There is a number of things that make for the uniqueness of a family business. For Erwin Tinhof, it is terroir, origin and grape variety which are at the forefront of discussions when it comes to distinctiveness. However, at Tinhof's they do not only talk about them, they stand up for their convictions and act. A long history is not uncommon in Austria, but here, wine is already made in the 12th generation. Thus, know-how and tradition have been passed on over many decades. The winery is located in the immediate vicinity of the Burgenland capital Eisenstadt and the top vineyards can be found directly in Eisenstadt, above the famous Esterhazy Castle. Today this traditional winery is run by a two-man team: boss Erwin Tinhof and his nephew Lukas Plöckinger, who is responsible for the cellar.

Find out more about Erwin Tinhof here:
www.toa.co.at/partner/erwin-tinhof
www.tinhof.at

Fig. 1: True gems at Tinhof!



SOILS AND GRAPES

Terroir is nowadays a fancy word used all over the world, often without particular meaning. For Tinhof, terroir means focusing on what lies right in front of their cellar door: the unique limestone and schist soils of the Leithaberg mountain range and the grapes that have always grown here. Blaufränkisch, St. Laurent and the white grape Neuburger are varieties the Tinhof's are absolutely crazy about. Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay, they do grow everywhere, Blaufränkisch from Leithaberg and Neuburger out of the unique "Golden Erd" vineyard, they do not.

Let's hear Lukas: "The 17 million-year-old geology can be experienced and be tasted! It invokes delicate, elegantly structured and expressive wines with distinctive character. Our vineyards are located at 150 to 400 meters above sea level, but all have different microclimates: some are near the forest, others lay open. Numerous small plots on the Leitha Mountains allow for great diversity."

Fig. 2: Neuburger grapes ready to be picked | Fig. 3: Cellar master Lukas Plöckinger believes in his homeland terroir

STRONG BELIEFS

Organic viticulture is a matter of fact for Erwin Tinhof and the estate has been certified since 2012. "I was inspired by André Ostertag, Marc Kreydenweiss and also Anne-Claude Leflaive, because on the chalky soils of Burgundy, the conditions are comparable to ours. I am too much of a natural scientist to let myself get carried away emotionally, but I do have great respect for nature. Things must be allowed to grow and arise on their own. We cultivate vineyards that have been known for more than 500 years. We are working for the long-term welfare of our environment; we don't consider the short-term much and our wines also stand for longevity. We work with time! Intense devotion to the vineyards develops knowledge, understanding and finally trust that our vines won't let us down!", says Erwin.

GLASS OF WINE?

Did you ever get to taste **Neuburger**? This ancient variety is rarely cultivated due to its sensitive behaviour in the vineyard. However, Tinhof believes very much in the great potential of this grape. Neuburger has a lean structure with slightly lower acidity than other Austrian varieties but it amazes with its decent fruit, harmonious texture and elegant aftertaste. Moreover, the wines age wonderfully and are perfect partners for many dishes. Unique stuff – not to be missed! You can of course indulge the entire portfolio of Tinhof whether it's the easy drinking **Tinhof Blanc**, **Sankt Laurent Eisenstadt** or the classic **Weissburgunder**. The **Leithaberg DAC** range (Blaufränkisch, Neuburger, Weissburgunder) features more structured, mineral styles and the outstanding single vineyard gems such as **Sankt Laurent Feiersteig** or **Golden Erd** (again Neuburger and Weissburgunder) from old vines will show you why the focus on regionality really makes sense.

The Biodyn Puzzle

For people in the wine industry, biodynamics is no longer a foreign word and more and more consumers are getting to grips with this complex - because holistic - topic. In recent years, the qualities and thus the image of biodynamic wine have developed radically into something positive. The holistic approach is the fascinating thing when it comes to biodynamics: the coexistence and interaction of soils, plants, cosmos, animals and human beings, with the goal to create a self-sustaining farming system. At the same time, the complex nature of this approach is not immediately accessible and comprehensible to everyone. We want to pick out and illustrate individual aspects of biodynamics for a better understanding and start a sightseeing tour over the colourful world of biodynamic viticulture.



The preparations certainly belong to those puzzle pieces that can appear mysterious or even incomprehensible. One of these is the cow horn manure or preparation 500. Here, cow horns are stuffed with manure compost and buried into the ground throughout the winter. The horns are later dug out and the stuffed material is spread throughout the vineyard. 500 is a powerful preparation which structures the soil: it also stimulates the microbial activity of the soil, regulates the pH-value and helps with seed germination.

HORN MANURE STRENGTHENS SOIL LIFE

Horn manure strengthens soil life „Healthy, vital soils are not only essential for our vineyards - without them we could not achieve the qualities in wine we are aiming for“, says Julie-Ann Hoch from Hollenburg in Kremstal. She is the woman behind “Hochdeutschwein” and its the extraordinary “mea” project (and wife of fellow Demeter grower Christoph Hoch). “We spread preparation 500 or horn manure several times a year. In addition, every

biodynamic winegrower deals with his soils from an individual point of view. I personally attach great importance to the development of wild growing medicinal herbs: St. John's wort, yarrow, nettle, thistle, wild roses, elderberry, etc. These herbs are on the one hand bioindicators for the vineyard, on the other hand I use them as medicinal plants. We make extracts and teas for plant protection, and since 2 years also for my “botanical sparklings”, for which I assemble grape must with freshly brewed tea before filling it into bottles. The subsequent bottle fermentation takes place spontaneously without additives such as sugar or artificial yeast. The botanical sparklings are light, dry, sparkling aperitif wines with the pure taste of herbs.”

Find out more about Julie-Ann Hoch here:
www.toa.co.at/partner/hochdeutsch
www.hochdeutsch-wein.com



MICHAEL GINDL: ANIMAL LIFE

In the world of biodynamics, it is the winegrowers who are not obliged to keep animals, viticulture being such a specialized form of cultivation. However, more and more growers are nowadays returning to livestock farming. Animals should be part of a self-sustaining farm organism, they think and their contribution to healthy soils, manure and the overall wellbeing of the farm turns out invaluable.

Michael Gindl has been working his vineyards in Hohenruppersdorf according to biodynamic principles for some years now, and in 2016 he joined the Demeter association. His

estate in many ways meets the biodynamic ideal of a holistic farm. One of Michael's strengths is his love for animals. He is convinced that they form an essential component not only of his working of the land but also of the quality of his wines – some of which showcase an animal on the label. During the past years more and more livestock has been populating the farm. Besides highland cattle, bred here since 2012, Michael works the vineyards almost solely with horses. These are accompanied by sheep which graze between the vines and provide valuable compost. You will also find goats on Gindl farm whose milk is processed into tasty goat's cheese.

Find out more about Michael Gindl here:
www.toa.co.at/partner/michael-gindl
www.mgsol.at



Fig. 4: NANUI? © mg vom Sol | Fig. 5: For Michael Gindl, horses are indispensable © mg vom Sol

KARL FRITSCH: REVITALIZE THE SOIL

Compost management is another important factor, closely linked to livestock farming. "Compost is essential for the functioning of biodynamic agriculture. The soil should be full of life and compost ensures an intensive revitalisation of the soil", Karl Fritsch of the eponymous

iconic winery in the Lower Austrian region of Wagram is convinced. While manure merely provides raw nutrients that only lead to overheated growth, compost provides refined nutrients that ensure quiet, sustainable growth. These are formed by long conversion and decomposition processes of cow manure, plant material, wooden chips and straw as well as special

preparations from herbs or bark under the influence of oxygen and water. In addition, water-soluble minerals are released, which act as fertilizers.

Another puzzle stone that ensures that wines from biodynamic cultivation gradually convince even the last doubters. Stay tuned for more in our upcoming issues!



Find out more about
 Karl Fritsch here:
www.toa.co.at/partner/karl-fritsch
www.fritsch.cc



Fig. 6 & 7: © Weinberghof Fritsch



Perwolff : the Red Legend

One of the smallest wine regions of Austria, the South Burgenland with its famous Eisenberg, was not on the wine maps of the world for a long time. Small family businesses, little export, a main grape variety that was regarded as difficult, a lack of know-how in marketing and sales, all these were not favourable conditions for wines of world renown. But an outstanding terroir will eventually find his way...

The Krutzler family from Deutsch Schützen took this path in the 1980s. Being a Blaufränkisch fan, grandfather Eduard had already planted the variety in the 60s and his son Hermann also believed in the potential of this unique grape. Reinhold Krutzler is the current leader of this renown family business. All of them can be seen as pioneering spirits who have always looked into the future. Today, Blaufränkisch is responsible for the best Austrian red wines and is rightly regarded as a top grape among wine lovers all over the world.

REVOLUTION

In the 80s not only the awareness for Blaufränkisch as an outstanding variety arose, but also the will to try out the use of barriques for maturing it - something that had previously been unusual and unknown in Austria. This international orientation also brought international grape varieties such as Cabernet Sauvignon into the country. The Krutzler family launched a wine in 1992 that shone with both elements. From the best Blaufränkisch grapes and a portion of Cabernet Sauvignon „Perwolff“ was created and entered the market in 1994. „Perwolff“ is, by the way, an old name for Deutsch Schützen, the small wine-growing centre of the region. A part of the grapes, which are used for the wine of the same name, also stems from here.

This year, this top wine celebrates its 25th anniversary. Since its first launch it has gained international recognition and brought Austrian red wines onto the wine lists of the

world. While in the first years it was still composed as a cuvée, the Krutzler family changed the recipe in 2012: „Perwolff“ is now a pure Blaufränkisch, whose 30 to 50 year old vines grow in the top sites on Eisenberg and Deutsch Schützen. It is vinified in barriques and 500-litre barrels. How does „Perwolff“ taste? The slate soils of the Eisenberg provide incomparable length and radiance, while the deeper soils in Deutsch Schützen lend strength and firm tannins. No surprise in case for top wines, „Perwolff“ should be allowed to mature; its elegance and individuality is best revealed after 10 - 15 years. The current vintage is 2017 and together with great vintages like 1999, 2009 and 2015, it will certainly go down in the history of red wine not only in Southern Burgenland.



Find out more about Reinhold Krutzler here:
www.toa.co.at/partner/reinhold-krutzler
www.krutzler.at



Weingut Rabl – many shades of Kamptal

Kamptal, Rabl, Grüner Veltliner and Riesling - these are all terms that seem inseparable. After all, the Rabl family (father Rudolf and son “Rudi” who now runs the winery) can look back on a long tradition of wine making in Langenlois (Lower Austria). Their first bottlings date back to as much as 70 years ago and Rabl is now one of the widely recognised representatives of Austrian wine culture. Today, estate manager Rudi Rabl is proud to cultivate 80 hectares of vineyards surrounding the Langenlois area. Currently every second bottle by Rabl finds its way to customers in export countries.

Find out more about Rudolf Rabl here:
www.toa.co.at/partner/rudolf-rabl
www.weingut-rabl.at

IDEAL PLACE(S)

The Kamptal is one of the coolest wine growing regions in Austria, so white wine is key - that does not mean, however, that winegrowers are unable to produce excellent red wines. As usual in the cooler top notch regions, Grüner Veltliner and Riesling form the spearhead when it comes to quality. What really sticks out in the beautiful Kamptal region - and for Rudi Rabl - is the variety of soils and terroirs. They range from loess, gravel and sandstone soils to crystalline bedrock. Depending on the location, one or the other variety may feel more comfortable. Rudolf Rabl Senior and Junior have been dealing with this question for decades and thanks to their wealth of experience they can provide convincing answers. The differences in the vineyards have to be detectable in the respective wine, Rudi Rabl is particularly concerned about that!

STYLES FOR EVERYONE!

The size of the Rabl estate makes it possible to select grapes both for easy-drinking, entry-level wines as well as complex single-vineyard wines. In the cellar, Rudi Rabl gives his wines plenty of freedom. He is an advocate of spontaneous fermentation and long macerations. This ensures that the natural enzymes draw more extract and aroma from the pulp and skin. Fermentation takes place at moderate temperatures of 20-21°C (68-70°F) and varies from eight weeks to four months. The resulting wines are mineral and firmly structured, power and spiciness are always accompanied by a brilliant acidity, so typical for the Kamptal region. Lively wines with character – you must not expect anything less neither from Kamptal, nor from Rabl!

A rather big estate such as Rabl offers a wide portfolio. Here's some guidelines to find style you like:

Classic fruit driven whites such as the DAC-wines **Grüner Veltliner Kamptal DAC Löss**, his siblings **Terrassen** or **Langenlois**, the latter two also as **Rieslings**. Varietals such as **Weissburgunder**, **Chardonnay** or **Gemischter Satz** equally ensure easy drinking. For red wines lovers, this segment includes not too heavy, charming reds like **Blauer Zweigelt Heide**, **Sankt Laurent** or **Pinot Noir**, just to name a very few.

The Vinum Optimum (or V.O.) range offers wines from selected grapes, older vines and a longer maturation. It's pretty easy to get to grips with those: **Grüner Veltliner Kamptal DAC**, **Riesling Kamptal DAC Reserve** or simply **Chardonnay**, **Sauvignon Blanc**, **Gelber Muskateller**, always followed by the suffix **V.O.** The same applies for the red: **Zweigelt Titan V.O.**, **Merlot V.O.** or **Syrah V.O.** are full bodied wines that will not fail to please...

As mentioned before, the single vineyard wines showcase what Rabl and Kamptal stand for: showing what Grüner and Riesling are capable of when growing in the right place. Would you fancy a short extract of the top locations in the house of Rabl? How about Grüner Veltliner **Käferberg** or Riesling **Steinhaus** (both with barren primary rock soils), Grüner Veltliner **Loiserberg** (loess, rocky brown earth), or Riesling **Schenkenbichl** (primary rock with limestone)? The winery also owns vines in some other top vineyards around its hometown Langenlois, the single vineyard wines usually being categorized as Kamptal DAC Reserve. Full body, expression, great potential – that's what it's all about!

Last but not least, Rudi Rabl regularly produces extraordinary dessert wines à la Auslese, Beerenauslese, Trockenbeerenauslese or Eiswein for those who love them.



Fig. 1: Rudi Rabl is responsible for some outstanding Kamptal wines © Weingut Rabl

Fig. 2: A magic place for great wines © Weingut Rabl | Fig. 3–5: © Weingut Rabl

2019

Harvest Report 2019: less but good!

It's true, the new vintage is for the most part not even bottled yet. The wines will only gradually see the light of the world, i.e. the bottling, from spring onwards. As for the top wines, they will not be put on the market until autumn or even the following year(s). Nevertheless, based on our experience and the reports of the winegrowers, we can already offer a first assessment of the quality of the 2019 vintage.

In general, 2019 was a very good year throughout the Austrian wine regions. Bud break occurred at the right time and went smoothly, just like flowering as dry weather prevented diseases during this fragile phase. The absence of frosts and severe hail made for smiling growers' faces. Heat waves in June and July however, once again presented a common feature as they did the last couple of years but timely

precipitations at the end of July provided for relief. Although maturation progressed rapidly in all wine growing regions, the harvest took place just on time. So how did the grapes turn out in particular regions?



Christoph Wachter of the **Wachter-Wiesler** winery in the famous southern Burgenland region (think "Eisenberg") says:

2019 was warm and rather dry but we had enough rainfalls and perfect conditions throughout the harvest. Naturally, we had to do some sorting in the vineyards, but hand picking helps a lot in this regard so grape quality was very good. The incoming material was picture perfect! We are looking forward to lively wines with fine acidity and moderate alcohol levels. Quantity is ok, quality is great – we're happy!

Find out more about Christoph Wachter here:
www.toa.co.at/partner/christoph-wachter-wiesler
www.wachter-wiesler.at

Fellow Southern Burgenland producer **Thomas Straka** from Rechnitz is equally satisfied with the outcome of the season. Being a specialist for the white Welschriesling grape, he can rely on the higher altitudes of the mountain range Geschriebenstein. There is little doubt outstanding wines are to be expected from Thomas carrying 2019 on their label.

Find out more about Thomas Straka here:
www.toa.co.at/partner/tom-straka
www.weinbau-straka.at



What about Lower Austria? Ewald Gruber of the **Gruber Röschitz** winery in Weinviertel:

Bud break took place at a normal time (3 weeks later than last year), thus the risks of late frosts were low. We received sufficient rainfall and in June very hot weather favoured the maturing process. Fungal diseases were at a low so we could pick healthy grapes for all of our varieties. The yields were average, but we are very happy with the quality! I'm pretty sure 2019 will take its place among the famous xxx9 vintages such as 1999 or 2009!

Find out more about Gruber Röschitz here:
www.toa.co.at/partner/gruber-roeschitz
www.weinbau-straka.at



Finally, let's also have a look at the most southern end of the Austrian winelands, at Styria. Here, quite some vintages present themselves differently than in other regions, Styria providing for vineyards with the highest altitudes in Austria and often the highest amount of rain-falls as well. **Hannes Sabathi** from Gamlitz in Südsteiermark however, is very pleased with how the year turned out:

Compared to the last couple of years, the 2019 harvest started 14 days later, in the middle of September. The conditions were ideal – we had cool nights with temperatures of 6-10 C° degrees and warm days with 20-25 degrees. This resulted in ideal ripeness with perfect structure, acidity and pH values. The wines already show a precise fruit character and fine acidity. So far, we believe the 2019 vintage will be a showcase vintage - we are very happy!

Find out more about Hannes Sabathi here:
www.toa.co.at/partner/hannes-sabathi
www.wachter-wiesler.at



It comes as no surprise that not too distant Wachau also praises the current vintage. Besides the already mentioned hot periods and perfect weather during harvest, Martin Mittelbach of **Tegernseerhof** in Unterloiben especially liked the cool evenings and nights which favoured aroma development and finesse. Again, sorting was of significance in order to discard berries affected by drought. *We started harvest on September 19 and finished on October 31. Good yields, excellent quality – we will be enjoying elegant and complex wines with great potential, pronounced acidity and depth*, Martin says.



Find out more about Tegernseerhof here:
www.toa.co.at/partner/tegernseerhof
www.tegernseerhof.at



Fig. 6 & 7: © Weingut Tegernseerhof | Fig. 8 & 9: © Weingut Hannes Sabathi

Rosé

The perfect thirst quencher for hot summers? For sure. A charming (and uncomplicated?) drink for your terrace? Yeah, why not. The first course companion in the restaurant? Bring it on! Wait a minute. Is this all rosé is about? A simple wine, more than often merely a side product of red wine production? This is just a rhetorical question because yes, of course, there's much more to Rosé. Let us dig deeper into rosé styles that offer a wider range of flavours, structure and drinking options.

WINE GROWING & "MAKING"

As most of us are aware of, good wine starts in the vineyard. The natural conditions, climate, soils and the winegrower's care of the plants, they equally apply when it comes to producing a rosé worth speaking of. Yes, for sure, many Rosés come in handy as a "side event" of red wine production. The saignée method is a great way of ending up with a juicy, not heavily tannic rosé and a red wine with power, tannin and possibly lots of colour at the same time. Hence, there is little to object in such case since it's the quality of the raw material (aka the grape) that determines the quality of the end product(s). You can have subpar Rosés made by saignée or superb ones. The same applies to every other Rosé production method, for obvious reasons.

WHAT DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Well, it's rather who. It's the wine-grower. Who else. He or she usually has a philosophy for the entire range of products they offer and it's the great producers who pay as much attention to their "smallest" wine as to their top of the pops superstars. So once you find a great producer the only thing you need to determine is the style you prefer (for your customers, your restaurant or yourself). As for the area of use, exciting Rosé wines should not be limited by any means to summer terraces. Structured and flavourful examples will find their place at any table and at all times of the year.

THE OTHER COOL

It comes as no surprise that organic or bio-dynamic winegrowers tend to excel in this regard. They apply the same care in the vineyards to all of their vines and possess great knowledge when it comes to vinifying the juice in a hands-off way. Again: flawless grapes do account for a certificate of pleasure. The use of "alternative" ageing vessels (speak of amphorae, concrete eggs, etc.), zero or little addition of sulphites as well as extended time on the lees will lend character and uniqueness to your unfiltered and unfinned Rosé. So forget about #roseallday. It's #roseallyear! Let's check out some Rosé labels worth seeking out:



Fig. 1: It all starts with red grapes...© Steve Haider | Fig. 2: Beautiful vineyards can yield beautiful Rosé wines © Julie-Ann Hoch

GRUBER RÖSCHITZ
ROSÉ SANKT LAURENT

The Rosé Sankt Laurent Rösschitz courtesy of Gruber Rösschitz family from Weinviertel is a great example for a Rosé made in a classical way: short maceration, vinified in stainless steel but out of organic grapes and low yields. Bone-dry, no make-up sugar, refreshing acidity, red berry fruit, elegant and lean.



Fig. 3: © Weingut Gruber Rösschitz



CLAUS PREISINGER
DOPE

Claus Preisinger likes his wines unadulterated, regardless of their colour. His “Dope” is a directly pressed Rosé from Blaufränkisch grapes (it’s Burgenland, you know), vinified in amphorae and without any addition of sulphites. Funky label (or basically the lack of any label) included. Rosé as dope as it gets...

Fig. 4: © Weingut Claus Preisinger

CHRISTOPH HOCH
ROSÉ N.V.

As so often with Christoph Hoch, his wines are non vintage. Using various vintages in one wine simply gives him the opportunity to bring out even more character and flavour. Freshness and acidity are key! This one is a Zweigelt aged in used barrels and comes in at a staggering 9% alc. with less than 1g of residual sugar. Very Cool.



Fig. 5: © Christoph Hoch



JOHANNES TRAPL
UNI6

Trapl’s unique Rosé style is based on the idea that various grapes and ageing methods each play a part in a bigger concert. Basically all red varieties and ageing approaches (steel tank, barrels, etc.) come together in the Uni6 to give a fresh wine low in alcohol (10% approx.) yet with complexity and depth.

Fig. 6: © Weingut Johannes Trapl



Fig. 7: © Bioweingut Johannes Zillinger

JOHANNES ZILLINGER
NUMEN ROSÉ

Johannes’ Numen wines are the masterpiece of his portfolio and they show why Zillinger is a sought after name in the world of great wines. Super old vines, tiny yield, hand-picked grapes, semi-carbonic fermentation, aged in amphorae and used barrels – voilà the recipe for a unique Rosé that will blow your mind.



ERICH MACHHERNDL
PULP FICTION NO. 4

Last but certainly not least, let’s taste a red. Well, it’s not your everyday red and it’s no Rosé either but its freshness and linear punch will put this Syrah-based, northern cool beauty into the right perspective. This comes low in alc., high in lively acidity and with a red berry spiciness that will make you forget the Wachau was “designed” for whites. Erich begs to differ.

Fig. 8: © Weingut Machherndl

OUR PARTNERS



CLAUS PREISINGER



WEIN VOM LEITHABERG



Christoph Hoch
Weiner aus Hohenburg a.d. Donau



SCHLOSS MAISSAU
Manbartsberg Austria



TEGERNSEERHOF
WEINGUT MITTELBACH - WACHAU - AUSTRIA

EVENTS

Upcoming Events

TOA @ MILLÉSIMEBIO

27 – 29 January 2020 in Montpellier, France
www.millesime-bio.com

TOA @ VINEXPO PARIS

10 – 12 February 2020 in Paris, France
www.vinexpoparis.com

TOA @ PROWEIN

15 – 17 March 2020 in Düsseldorf, Germany
www.prowein.de

TOA @ VIEVINUM

6 – 8 June 2020 in Vienna, Austria
www.vievinum.at



admin office
MD Franz Hofstätter
1010 Wien – Austria
Annagasse 3a / 35
Tel. +43 664 4626199
toa@live.at

working & visitors office
toa – tastes of Austria
1020 Wien – Austria
Palais Rohan, Praterstrasse 38 / 30
Tel. +43 664 4541754
toanews@live.at

