

FRITSCH

Karl Fritsch believes that quality originates in the vineyard. He learned this philosophy from his father, Karl Fritsch, Sr., who had been carefully cultivating the foliage and thinning out the grapes (yield minimization) since the 1970's. After graduating from the Krems School of Viticulture, Karl Fritsch, Jr. became the winemaker.

The Fritsch estate is situated in the Donauland wine region, about 50 km northwest of Vienna, along the Danube River. During ancient times, powerful winds blew fine particles of sand, creating a huge barrier of loess soil, with pockets of loam and gravel under the surface – the hills of the Wagram.

More than a third of Fritsch's 17 hectares of vineyards is planted with Grüner Veltliner (Schlossberg, Steinberg), which requires very mature grapes and is vinified separately, according to the location of the site. The grapes are estate grown, and, as of vintage 2006, the winemaking is following bio dynamic rules and methods. (However, it takes several years of practicing these methods before certification appears on the wine label.)

Fritsch also makes powerful Rieslings, as well as red wines. All Fritsch wines shine with fruit and finesse that can only be expected from a master of the art of winemaking. In 2006, he added a Riesling and Zweigelt Windspiel to the already very successful Grüner Veltliner Windspiel, to provide a complete line for easy drinking and a value oriented consumer.

Wine region:

Donauland (stretching along the Danube River from an area east of Krems, to Klosterneuburg) **Wagram** (known for its loess soil)

Town and Province:

Kirchberg am Wagram/ Oberstockstall, Niederösterreich (Lower Austria)

Hectares/Acres: 17/42

Wine Varietals: 62% white wine, 38% red wine

White Wine:

Grüner Veltliner comprises 30% of the entire wine production.
Other varietals are Riesling and Chardonnay

Red Wine:

Zweigelt, Pinot Noir, Cabemet Sauvignon, Merlot

Single Vineyards:

Schlossberg, Zeiselgnabo, Mordthal, Kapuzinerberg, Steinberg, Kreuzberg, Foggathal

Climate:

Cold air from the north meets warm Pannonian winds from the east, with the temperature regulated by the Danube.

Soil:

Most of the vineyards are on loess soil, with the exception of Ried (Cru) Steinberg, where ground composition is primarily slate. The top rated Riesling Reserve (Falstaff 93-95) grows on pure primary rock (Urgesteinsboden), which creates a very powerful wine. Grüner Veltliner is a very versatile grape that develops into stylistically different wines, depending on the soil. The loess soil Grüns tend to be quite peppery and spicy, while those planted in slate soil have more minerals and a leaner body. The Foggathal vineyard has iron-rich, loamy red soil, which offers the perfect condition for the production of fine extracted red wines.

Harvest and Vinification:

Grüner Veltliner:

The first harvest is at the end of September for “Windspiel”, Fritsch’s lighter Grüner Veltliner (30% of their entire Grüner Veltliner production). They use grapes from all their vineyards and ferment 100% in steel tanks to produce a light, fruity and easy drinking wine.

At the end of October, they harvest the Ried (Cru) wines: Steinberg and Schlossberg.

Through rigorous yield limitations and hand picking, they achieve about 4000 to 5000 kg to produce very powerful, spicy and elegant wines. These grapes are fermented at 22 degrees Celsius in steel tanks.

After the first frost (usually in December), they finally harvest the last Grüner Veltliner grapes at around 8 degrees Celsius, in a frozen state.

Riesling:

Riesling is harvested much later than Grüner Veltliner (end of October – beginning of November). The grapes yield around 6000kg.

Export: USA, Germany, Switzerland, Lichtenstein, the Netherlands, Ireland, Japan, Thailand