

grüner veltliner recommendations

Domäne Wachau Terrassen Federspiel | 2008 | WACHAU

★★★\$\$ Federspiel is a designation of quality between Steinfeder and Smaragd, but this wine exceeds all expectations, with distinctive white pepper and stone-fruit aromas leading to a silky, citrus-laden palate. There are touches of nettle and nuts on the crisp finish.

Forstreiter Schiefer | 2008 | KREMSTAL

★★★\$\$ Grüner Veltliner reveals its rich and creamy side in this stellar wine. Honeyed citrus peel, ripe melon and juicy apple flavors are laced with intriguing white pepper, watercress and arugula notes on the lively palate.

Franz Hirtzberger Rotes Tor Federspiel | 2008 | WACHAU

★★★\$\$\$\$ The Wachau is Austria's westernmost wine region, and its proximity to the moderating Danube River makes it an ideal place for crafting flavorful yet refreshing wines. There's an up-front vegetal, peppery quality to this Grüner. It's fresh and inviting, layered with citrus, herbs and minerals, and finishes on a salty, dry note.

Fritsch Steinberg | 2008 | WAGRAM

★★\$\$ White flower and jasmine tea aromas meet apple and pear flavors in this vibrant and focused white. Minerals and citrus mark the zippy, saline-accented finish.

Grooner | 2009 | NIEDERÖSTERREICH

★★\$ Meinhard Forstreiter is the acclaimed winemaker behind this terrific Grüner Veltliner. Invigorating and fresh, thanks to electric acidity and a slight spritz, it's loaded with pink grapefruit and tart gooseberry flavors.

GV | 2008 | WEINLAND

★\$ (1L) This wonderful bargain (a full liter for less than \$15) is light-bodied and quaffable, with juicy green and yellow apple flavors, notes of bread and minerals and zesty acidity.

Hirsch Veltliner #1 | 2008 | NIEDERÖSTERREICH

★★\$\$ Tart green apple and lime are woven with undercurrents of grapefruit and minerals in this snappy white.

Neumayer Engelberg | 2008 | TRAISENTAL

★★★\$\$ Earth and burnt citrus peel characterize the nose of this unusual Grüner, which follows up with toasted nut, fresh herb and intense grapefruit flavors in the mouth. It's very dry, with minerals and powerful acidity.

R&A Pfaffl Haidviertel | 2008 | WEINVIERTEL

★★\$\$ This Grüner has a banana bread quality—nuts, spice, sweet fruit—woven with apple and orange flavors, a soft, rounded palate and nicely balanced acidity.

Salomon Undhof Hochterrassen | 2009 |

NIEDERÖSTERREICH

★★\$\$ *Hochterrassen* refers to the high terraces that grow the grapes for this fruity Grüner. Rich flavors of stone fruit, green apple, grapefruit, pineapple and guava are laced with a minerality that's reminiscent of seashells.

Weingut Schwarzböck Kirchberg | 2008 |

NIEDERÖSTERREICH

★★\$\$ Rather generous and full in body for a Grüner Veltliner, this highly aromatic wine displays golden apple, bright citrus and berry flavors uplifted by lively acidity throughout the slightly bitter, citrus rind-infused finish.

riesling recommendations

Brandl Heiligenstein | 2008 | KAMPTAL

★★★\$\$ Kamptal is defined by steep, south-facing vineyards and hot sun, which result in particularly expressive wines. This shows pretty floral, mineral and peach aromas and flavors of crisp green apple with a fine saline streak. Lean and tight, without an abundance of fruit, it captivates with a bright acidity and slate-like minerality.

Gobelsburger | 2009 | KAMPTAL

★★\$\$ Banana and bubble gum aromas turn to ripe orange and grapefruit flavors on the palate of this well-made Riesling. After a bit of time in the glass, tart red berries and gooseberries begin to emerge, adding intrigue and refreshment.

Graf Hardegg vom Schloss | 2008 | NIEDERÖSTERREICH

★★★\$\$ Graf Hardegg makes wine the old-fashioned way, such as aging Riesling in large oak barrels. The result is an outstanding, very dry wine displaying complex layers of flower, peach, apricot, pear and petrol flavors with a mineral edge.

Weingut Johann Donabaum Bergterrassen Federspiel | 2008 | WACHAU

★★\$\$ This is classic Austrian Riesling, with its super-dry, mineral-laden, flinty style and well-structured palate full of firm white peach, green apple, pepper and slate flavors.

other austrian whites

Austrian vintners produce an impressive range of other wonderfully expressive white wines, most notably Welschriesling and Gelber Muskateller, as well as a small amount of Weissburgunder, Grauburgunder (Pinot Gris), Morillon and Muskat-Sylvaner (Sauvignon Blanc). This last grape variety comes predominantly from the Styria (Steiermark) region, where most of the grapes are hand-picked and the wines well crafted.

other austrian white recommendations

Lackner-Tinnacher Gamitz Gelber Muskateller | 2007 | SÜDSTEIERMARK

★★★ \$\$\$ Tea, flowers and jasmine jump out of the glass of this beautiful white. The palate offers slightly bitter green tea and firm peach flavors that are flecked with minerals, banana and melon on the very dry finish.

Neumeister Sauvignon Blanc Steirische Klassik | 2008 | SÜD-OSTSTEIERMARK

★★★ \$\$\$ Neumeister specializes in Sauvignon Blanc and grows more of it than any other variety. This version is somewhat Sancerre-like, with tart currant, gooseberry and herbal aromas and a lovely undercurrent of minerals beneath grapefruit, berry and lime flavors.

Stift Kloster Neuburg Wiener Nussberg Gemischter Satz | 2009 | VIENNA

★★ \$ Produced by a 900-year-old monastic order, this bargain white is a field blend—a mix of many grapes grown in the same vineyard. Fresh, delicious citrus flavors have a touch of herbs and pepper and end on a melon note.

austrian reds

Austria's most popular red grape is Zweigelt; it yields light-bodied wines with juicy red cherry flavors. Blaufränkisch (Lemberger) is decidedly spicier and has firmer tannins. It is responsible for some of the most interesting Austrian reds today, though they can be hard to find in the U.S. Blauburgunder (Pinot Noir) and St. Laurent (which is similar to Pinot Noir) can also yield some great wines.

austrian red recommendations

Glatzer Blaufränkisch | 2007 | CARNUNTUM

★★ \$\$\$ Glatzer is known for well-priced red wines. Silky and inviting, with a medium-bodied, Pinot Noir-like palate, this terrific red features earth, dark cherry and peppery spice flavors with some toasted oak notes.

Heinrich Red | 2008 | BURGENLAND

★★ \$\$\$ This combination of Zweigelt, Blaufränkisch and St. Laurent shows greatly balanced dried cherries, roasted red fruits and smoke.

Moric Blaufränkisch | 2008 | BURGENLAND

★★★ \$\$\$ Winemaker Roland Velich crafts this ultraserious Blaufränkisch layered with aromas of prunes, berries, meat and smoke. The body remains light and refreshing; fresh pine and herbs are woven among black cherry, earth and leather flavors, which finish with good acidic verve.

Prieler Johanneshöhe Blaufränkisch | 2007 | BURGENLAND

★★ \$\$\$ Soft, round and plush on the palate, with very fine tannins, this is a supremely well-balanced red, marked by flavors of earth, peppery spice and dusty cherry.

Rosi Schuster Sankt Laurent | 2008 | BURGENLAND

★★ \$\$\$ Ripe blackberry meets pine, juniper and smoke on the nose of this nice red, turning to vanilla-tinged cherry-berry flavors on the palate. A strong acidic backbone and extremely light tannins make this a supple, elegant wine.

Umatham Zweigelt | 2008 | BURGENLAND

★★ \$\$\$ Ample dark fruit, cocoa and plum flavors come on strong in this very dry yet plush Zweigelt, which concludes with a final burst of black pepper and spice.

Zantho Zweigelt | 2008 | BURGENLAND

★★ \$ Joseph Umatham and the Andau winegrowers' cooperative craft this line of modern-style wines from traditional grapes. Round and soft, with some floral, meaty and red fruit aromas, this shows fleshy berry flavors tinged with oak and vanilla on the finish.