

Weststeiermark (Western Styria) reaches from Graz (the Styrian capital) southwest to the border of Slovenia, and is one of the smallest wine regions in Austria.

Within this region is the “Schilcherweinstraße”, a 70km long “wine road”, along which are three areas where most of the vineyards are: first, the southern area including the villages Eibiswald and Wies, second, the area around the city Deutschlandsberg, and finally nearest to Graz are the vineyards of Stainz and St.Stefan, where Strohmeier comes from.

As you can see by the name “Schilcherweinstraße”, Schilcher wine dominates all of Weststeiermark. Schilcher is made from gently pressed Blauer Wildbacher grapes, and has a distinctive soft pink color. This indigenous grape variety goes back to the Celts more than 2400 years ago, proven by the many excavations done in this area.

The name “Schilcher” is legally protected for the wine from 100% Blauer Wildbacher which must grow in the province of Steiermark (Styria). 85% of the 550 hectare wine farming land in Weststeiermark is planted with Blauer Wildbacher; other varieties are mostly white wine grapes like Pinot Blanc, Müller Thurgau, Welschrieling, Morillon and Sauvignon blanc.

Blauer Wildbacher is very robust and hearty, with a long vegetation period and late harvest.

The climate is influenced by the mountains of the “Koralpe”. As a result, there are very hot days and cool nights during the time when the grapes are ripening. This creates the typical fruity and fresh character in our wines.

In the last ten years, the climate is growing warmer, so that some producers make red wine from Wildbacher, too. Also, the tradition of sparkling rosé wine was rediscovered. According to the circa 1900 chronicle from the village Stainz, the highlight at the trade fair in Graz was Schilcher-champagne. (Today this name is not allowed, so it is called Schilchersekt.)

Furthermore, a handful winemakers produce sweet wine from Wildbacher; either Auslese and ice wine, or dessert wine like Trockenbeerenauslese.