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2018 Ried Spitzerberg 1ÖTW



Site & soil

The Spitzerberg is an approximately 5km-long & 300-metre-high limestone bar in easternmost Carnuntum. It is situated, extremely exposed to the wind, between the Alps (Leitha Range) and the Carpathians (Hainburg Hills). Thanks to the constantly breaking surf of the primeval sea that once covered the area, a thick layer of limestone was deposited on the hillside, which eroded over time to the size of grains of sand.
Rainfall on the Spitzerberg amounts to only about 400mm per year, and the summer temperatures often reach 35–40°C. The sandy limestone soil can only store precious little water. This leads to very low yields at harvest, a maximum of 3000kg of grapes per hectare.
Blaufränkisch is the traditional grape variety on the Spitzerberg. This vine has no problems with the extremely hot summer, when no precipitation is expected. In any case, the Blaufränkisch postpones physiologic maturity until autumn – and not until late September does it gradually develop its charming notes of red berries, violets and slightly spicy aromaticity. Arid conditions here on the Spitzerberg also cause the grapes to produce only moderate levels of sugar (and thus moderate alcohol in the wine). Furthermore, the Blaufränkisch always retains its typical acidity, which guarantees gradual development & long life.
Blaufränkisch grapes from the oldest vineyards are selected for the estate's top wine: a parcel in Ried Spitzer planted in 1955, a parcel in Ried Roterd (planted in 1985) and a parcel in Panhölzern (1985). Each year, these old vines produce the most elegant & refined wines, with fresh acidity, precise aromas and great potential for aging.

Harvest & vinification

The clusters are harvested by hand, and any overripe berry is painstakingly removed.
In the cellar, the grapes are lightly crushed and macerated partly with the stems in open fermentation vats. This extraction is very gentle and occurs completely without pumping. Clusters from Ried Roterd are trodden by foot every year. Fermentation begins after a few days thanks to the wild yeasts. This spontaneous fermentation proceeds very slowly and at room temperature; the must is neither heated nor cooled. This guarantees wines that are very precise and very aromatic. After some twenty days, the wine is pressed and then matured in 1000-liter wooden casks; no new wood is utilized, in order to avoid masking the pristine fruit of the Blaufränkisch. During the approximately twenty months of maturation, the wine is racked only once and ultimately bottled without filtration.

Vintage 2018

2018 was a year of extremes: very fast flowering, then a cooler period with some rains until end of June. Followed by a very dry and very hot summer. We had to cut off grapes from young vines to prevent them from dying. The old vines with their deep roots, though, were less impressed by the heat. Begin of september, just before harvest, we had big rains which caused some problems in flat vineyards. But on the stony and dry vineyards on the higher Spitzerberg, those rains even were beneficial, as they reduced the stress and helped to soften the tannins. The result is a beautiful complex and dense wine which is at the same time refreshing, cheerful and light-footed. An ideal expression of limestone terroir.

Basic Information

VARIETIES	Blaufränkisch 100%
ALCOHOL	13,5%
RESIDUAL SUGAR	1g
TARTARIC ACID	5,7g
BOTTLES	1700 / 0,75l und 100 / 1,5l

Ratings

JAMES SUCKLING	97
JANCIS ROBINSON	17,5
ROBERT PARKER WINE ADVOCATE	94
WEIN.PLUS	92
A LA CARTE	96
GAULT&MILLAU	18,5