

falstaff / sep 2020

GENIESSEN WEIN ESSEN REISEN

falstaff

Weingut **Stadt Krens**

**AUSGEZEICHNET
DER WINZER
DES JAHRES**

**STIFT
GÖTTWEIG**
DAS WEINGUT DER
BENEDIKTINER



Ehrliche Ernte
DIE GENÜSSE DER BUNTESTEN JAHRESZEIT



WINEGROWER OF THE YEAR

At the helm of two top traditional wine estates, Fritz Miesbauer plays a major role in shaping the personality of Austria's winegrowing region Kremstal. Wines from Weingut Stadt Krems & Weingut Stift Göttweig have figured among the finest in the country for many years.

TEXT PETER MOSER PHOTOS RAPHAELA PRÖLL
PRODUCTION THOMAS HOPFERWIESER

STYLING SIMON WINKELMÜLLER
GROOMING NICOLE PESSL

Turtleneck sweater: FALCONERI
Trousers: WILFRIED MAYER

For Fritz Miesbauer there are no half measures. On the contrary; he has been running not just one but two top wine estates for fifteen years.



Looking out over Ried Altenberg at the twin cities Krems an der Donau and Stein.

In 2020, a number of things are turning out to be rather different – even the job description of the man who has been awarded the title ‘Falstaff Winegrower of the Year 2020’ by the Falstaff wine department will be just a little out of the ordinary. Because Fritz Miesbauer is not the proprietor of a wine estate, though an individual who bears full operational responsibility for not just one, but two major Austrian wine producers – as managing director & mastermind. Strictly speaking, both enterprises have belonged to an evolving group of people for centuries: respectively, the residents of the city of Krems and the Benedictine brothers of Göttweig Abbey, which is enthroned across from the city on the right bank of the Danube River. Both estates cultivate prime vineyard sites in the winegrowing region Kremstal, ranging from Steiner Pfaffenberg in the west to the Weinzierlberg east of Krems, where the region’s trilogy of soils ranges from primordial rock through conglomerate to pure loess, expressing the region’s terroir in optimal fashion. The wines of both estates are vinified in a shared cellar right in the old town of Krems – more precisely in what used to be the town moat – where Fritz Miesbauer has set up his oenological headquarters. World class white wines are vinified



The steep slopes & terraces of primordial stone that arise right behind the town of Stein yield great Rieslings.

& matured here, with Grüner Veltliner & Riesling in the foreground.

WACHAUER BLOOD

Wachau native Miesbauer has known wine from the cradle onward... ‘My parents own around three hectares of vines in Joching, and even as a child I enjoyed helping my mother in the vineyards’, Fritz recalls. ‘When I wanted to transfer to the viticultural college at Klosterneuburg after my first four school years at the Gymnasium in Krems, my father encouraged me to do so’. During his school days, Fritz Miesbauer served an internship with Josef Jamek, the doyen of Wachau growers, in his home village of Joching. Jamek’s patience and enthusiasm for achieving the highest quality made a deep impression on the aspiring oenologist. He gained further invaluable experience working for the famous German Riesling wine estate Bassermann-Jordan in the Pfalz. After graduating from viticultural school, Miesbauer began his career with the cooperative winery Winzer Krems. In the year 1991, legendary director Wilhelm Schwengler brought Fritz Miesbauer to Dürnstein as general manager of the growers’ co-op Freie Weingärtner Wachau. There he initially acted as cellar master as >

A man with short brown hair, wearing a maroon suit jacket and matching trousers, a beige turtleneck sweater, and aviator sunglasses. He is holding a wine glass filled with white wine in his right hand. The background is a dark, textured grey.

» AS A CHILD
IT ALREADY WAS CLEAR
TO ME THAT I WAS BORN
TO BE A WINEGROWER.«

FRITZ MIESBAUER
Winegrower of the Year

After years at the head of the
growers' cooperative in Dürnstein,
Fritz Miesbauer took over
the management of tradition-blessed
Weingut Stadt Krems in 2003.

Suit: MCNEAL, from Peek&Cloppenburg
Turtleneck sweater: HESS NATUR
Sunglasses: PERSOL

Facing page
Shirt: FRACK&CO

> well, alongside Johann Donabaum, who had also just joined the operation. From January 1996 Miesbauer formed a dual leadership team with Willi Klinger, who at that time switched from retail at Wein & Co to production, becoming sales manager of the Wachau's largest vinous enterprise. The young team set about making the co-op fit for the future with utmost vigour: the famous single vineyard sites from Kellerberg to Singerriedel were placed more clearly 'on display'; the optics of the bottles were given a facelift and greater attention was paid to exports, with substantial success. When Willi Klinger went to work for Angelo Gaja in Piedmont, Miesbauer got a new partner in the management team, Rainer Wess, in 2000. Since 2001 the company has been operating under the name Domäne Wachau, then producing three million bottles of wine a year, and long regarded as one of the best white wine cooperatives in the world,.

AT THE HEAD OF WEINGUT STADT KREMS

In July 2003 Fritz Miesbauer left Dürnstein to take over another, albeit much smaller, traditional viticultural concern, shortly before the harvest. He became head of Weingut Stadt Krems, which had some thirty hectares under cultivation and at that time released about 120,000 bottles to the market. This historically important wine estate is owned by the city of Krems itself, and today has forty-three hectares under vines within the perimeters of Krems & Stein. These include top-flight vineyards such as Schreck & Grillenparz in Stein, Wachtberg & Weinzierlberg in Krems. The history of viticulture in Krems is as old as the city itself; in the Middle Ages Krems operated – along with Vienna and Falkenstein in the Weinviertel – as one of the few municipalities devoted to viticulture in the land that is now the Austrian federal state of Niederösterreich.



The mica schist in the soil gave Ried Silberbichl (the Silver Hill) on the right bank of the Danube its descriptive name.

No fewer than forty-two monasteries had harvest input stations in the city. In the year 1210, Duke Leopold VI gifted vineyards to the community hospital in Krems. From this beneficence and generous legacies bestowed by imperial castellan Ulrich von Dachsberg in 1452, Weingut Stadt Krems came into being, and can now look back on over 550 years of uninterrupted viticultural tradition. Up until the middle of the 18th century, the cellar & press house were located directly under the town hall, and later in the cellar of the Corporis-Christi monks, with headquarters in the Stöhrigasse. The cellar of Weingut Stadt Krems has been located in the Stadtgraben (formerly the town moat) since 1915; after the collapse of the underground architecture on 27 June 2010, the cellars were rebuilt, expanded and – in all possible facets – brought up to the latest technical standards.

>

A photograph of Fritz Miesbauer, a middle-aged man with grey hair, wearing a dark blue blazer over a black turtleneck. He is standing on a balcony with an ornate black metal railing, holding a glass of white wine. The background shows a scenic view of a valley with green hills and a blue sky. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

BOTH WINE ESTATES
PLACE THEIR CLEAR
FOCUS ON RIESLING &
GRÜNER VELTLINER,
HARVESTED FROM THE
BEST VINEYARD SITES
AROUND KREMS.

Fritz Miesbauer took over the management of Göttweig Abbey's wine operation in 2006, since then heading yet another member estate of the Österreichische Traditionsweingüter.

Blazer: WENDY+JIM
Pullover: FALCONERI

> **F**RITZ MIESBAUER'S SIGNATURE IS CLEARLY RECOGNISABLE IN ALL HIS WINES: THEY ARE PRECISE, TERROIR-BASED AND HIGHLY EXPRESSIVE.

950 YEARS OF WINE CULTURE

In 2006, a group of wine-loving investors leased the wine operation of Göttweig Abbey, which towers majestically atop the hill across the Danube from Krems. Here, Fritz Miesbauer was given responsibility for a vineyard area of some twenty-six hectares, and he quickly recognised extraordinary potential in the sites Ried Gottschelle for Grüner Veltliner and Ried Silberbichl for Riesling. Almost immediately – hand in hand with the new management of the abbey's winery – came membership in the elite association Österreichische Traditionsweingüter, which increased awareness of the estate's (and Miesbauer's) presence on the scene.

A beginning date for winemaking at the abbey can be accurately set with the establishment of the institution itself, because vineyards are documented as an essential economic asset as early as its founding year in 1083. Vineyard holdings grew steadily through donations & inheritances; in the 14th century all winegrowers in the neighbourhood of Mautern Feld were already related to or dependent on the abbey. The central cellar was located in Furth, where Abbot Bessel had the new harvest facility (»Neuer Lesehof«) constructed in representative Baroque style by master builder Franz Anton Pilgram around 1740. The massive new baroque edifice of Göttweig Abbey, which impresses visitors to this day, was co-financed to a large extent by the income from wine.

TWO ESTATES, TOP QUALITY

The portfolio of Weingut Stift Göttweig is kept very focussed and clear:

- The pleasant & easy entry level is the Grüner Veltliner Messwein, natur-



Shirt: FRACK&CO
Blazer: HUGO BOSS from Peek&Cloppenburg

ally vinified according to ecclesiastical purity statutes

- then comes Grüner Veltliner Ortswein from Furth
- and finally the single-vineyard Grüner Veltliner Kremstal DAC Ried Gottschelle. The name of this exceptional loess vineyard can be traced back to 1341 as »Gotschalich«, probably from »Gottschalk«, which suggests the meaning 'servant of God'. The Rieslings come as Ortswein once more from Furth, and as a single vineyard bottling from the vineyard Ried Silberbichl and the famous Ried Steiner Pfaffenberg on the left bank of the Danube, both of which have been designated Erste Lage sites (1 ÖTW) by the Österreichische Traditionsweingüter. A Rosé Messwein (altar wine), a Pinot Noir from Göttweiger Berg and a Blanc de Blancs Zero Dosage Sekt round out the selection. Weingut Stadt Krems cultivates the two DAC varieties Grüner Veltliner & Riesling, but also features the Pinot family varieties Pinot Blanc/Weissburgunder & Chardonnay plus the red wine Blauer Zweigelt in its offering. For Ortswein from Krems and

Stein, Riesling & Veltliner are presented in the middle range, then crowned by the impressive & expressive single vineyard wines (Riedenwein). The Grüner Veltliner comes from the Krems sites Ried Wachtberg 1 ÖTW and Ried Weinzierlberg, while their Riesling is harvested from the primordial rock terraces of Ried Grillenparz 1 ÖTW in Stein, and in recent years from Ried Schreck. Thanks to the efforts of his team, Miesbauer succeeds year after year in raising the quality bar ever higher: 'We are on the right track in every respect, and when I look at the potential of our vineyards, I know that even better things are possible'!

Anyone who wants to get to know the wines of the Traditionsweingüter can do so in the modern tasting room of Weingut Stadt Krems (Stadtgraben 11). However, only Mondays thru Fridays; on the weekend their tasting room is closed, like all municipal outlets & offices. 'That offers advantages and has disadvantages', smiles the winegrower of the year, 'after all, there are also great wines across the river at Stift Göttweig'!

THE BEST OF FRITZ MIESBAUER



Shirt: Frack&CO
Tuxedo: LARDINI

WEINGUT STADT KREMS

96

RIESLING KREMSTAL DAC STEINER RIED SCHRECK 1 ÖTW 2018

13.5% alcohol, natural cork closure. Bright yellow-green, silver highlights. Delicate lime zest, white peach, a hint of blossoms & passion fruit, fine blossom honey. Juicy & complex; white fruit, delicate sweetness; a lively, racy arc of acidity, shows great length, salty minerality, great potential for many years of cellaring.

weingutstadtkrems.at, € 29.90

95

RIESLING KREMSTAL DAC STEINER RIED GRILLENPARZ 1 ÖTW 2019

13% alcohol, natural cork closure. Bright yellow-green, silver highlights. Attractive nuances of fresh vineyard peach, with a touch of orange blossom & appealing minerality. Juicy, good complexity, subtle sweet extract, finely chiselled acidic structure, salty/mineral finish, very good freshness & length, with a hint of lemon in the aftertaste.

weingutstadtkrems.at, € 25,-

94

GRÜNER VELTLINER KREMSTAL DAC KREMSE RIED WACHTBERG 1 ÖTW 2019

13.5% alcohol, natural cork closure. Bright yellow-green, silver highlights. White apple fruit underlaid with a touch of meadow herbs; nuances of mango and a hint of minerality. Complex, juicy, a subtle touch of pineapple, structured with great finesse, very persistent on the palate; is already accessible but shows certain potential for development.

weingutstadtkrems.at, € 25,-

WEINGUT STIFT GÖTTWEIG

95

RIESLING KREMSTAL DAC RIED STEINER PFAFFENBERG 1 ÖTW 2019

13% alcohol, natural cork closure. Bright yellow-green, silver highlights. Attractive yellow fruit nuances of pineapple & ripe passion fruit, candied tangerine zest and a hint of blossom honey. Juicy, elegant, fine white peach fruit, lively structure; delicate sweet extract in the finish, mineral-salty aftertaste.

weingutstiftgoettweig.at, € 29.90

94

RIESLING KREMSTAL DAC RIED FURTHER SILBERBICHL 1 ÖTW 2018

13.5% alcohol, natural cork closure. Medium yellow-green, silver highlights. Fresh yellow tropical fruit, delicate blossom honey, hints of passion fruit and an inviting bouquet. Juicy peach fruit, pleasant sweetness in the texture, freshly structured with salty touch in the aftertaste; good development potential, will benefit from bottle aging.

weingutstiftgoettweig.at, € 25,-

93

GRÜNER VELTLINER KREMSTAL DAC RIED GOTT- SCHELLE 1 ÖTW 2019

13.5% alcohol, natural cork closure. Bright yellow-green, silver highlights. Fine notes of tropical fruit, a hint of pineapple, fine herbal spice, delicate mention of tangerine zest. Juicy, white apple fruit, fine acidic structure; a hint of pears, mineral salts in the finish, exotic fruit in the aftertaste, good aging potential.

weingutstiftgoettweig.at, € 25,-