

Lower Austria / Niederösterreich: Wachau



Size & Location: 1,400 ha/3,500 acres. Austria's westernmost and smallest wine region. South of Kremstal.

Important Villages: Durnstein, Loiben, Spitz.

Soil Types: Vineyards are terraced on the banks of the Danube and made up of gneiss, granite, slate, and loamy sandy soil. Primary rock formations with layers of *loess* aid in developing acid and extract.

Varietals & Style: The best Grüner Veltliner and Riesling. Botrytis and Eisweins are also produced.

Climate: Cool with extreme variations in day and night temps, contributing to aroma and acidity. Temperature regulated by the Danube River.

Important Facts

- **Vinea Wachau Association** - Created in 1983 by respected family estates such as Alzinger, F.X. Pichler, Prager, Knoll, Jamek and Hitzberger. Established three levels of quality for the wines of Wachau. The goal of this was to set the wines of Wachau apart from the rest.
 1. **Steinfeder** - Lightest; naturally uncapitalized with no more than 10.7% abv. Also the name of a local grass.
 2. **Federspiel** - Naturally uncapitalized, made with riper grapes, no more than 11.9% abv. Equivalent/similar to kabinett level.
 3. **Smaragd** - Naturally uncapitalized, the best and ripest grapes are used. Minimum abv is 11.3%. (Smaragd means 'Emerald.' Also the name of the bright green lizard often found sunning in the vineyards).
- Terms like "trocken" still apply and are printed on wine labels
- Grüner Veltliner typically displays aroma characteristics of White Pepper.
- **Producers of Note:** see creators of Vinea Wachau Association.