

CODEx WACHAU

The Charter of Pure Wine

For the Vinea Wachau, wine is a completely natural product, one which represents its area of origin and the distinctions of the area as well. The Codex Wachau and the trademarks Steinfeder®, Federspiel® und Smaragd® are a declaration of dedication to natural wine production and strict control.

The 6 pillars of the “Codex Wachau” are:

I Strictest principles concerning origin

The Vinea Wachau is obligated to ensure that their wines come exclusively from the Wachau wine-growing region and are bottled there as well. In addition, Wachau premium-quality wines may not be sold outside of the Wachau in barrels or tanks.

II No additives

The Vinea winegrowers work without any additives (chaptalisation and/or RTK=rectified grape/must concentrate). This means that the quality of the wine in the glass is determined solely by nature – the maturity potential of the individual vintage and the resultant natural sugar content of the grape. This results in the denomination of the Vinea Wachau wines as Steinfeder®, Federspiel® or Smaragd®.

III No concentration

The Vinea winegrowers do without any artificial concentration. This means that the natural composition of the grapes, must and wine may not be altered using technical methods (vacuum distillation, reverse osmosis, kyroextraktion /grape freezing, etc.).

IV No aromatisation

It is guaranteed that no aromatisation takes place. This means that the Vinea winegrowers do without any adulteration of the natural aroma structure – barrique use, wood chips and tannin powder are not permitted.

V No fractionation

It is guaranteed that no fractionation occurs. This means that, although the decomposition of wines into their individual components and the arbitrary re-composition (“spinning cone column”) is permitted for foreign wines, the Vinea winegrowers regard this technology as a betrayal of nature and, of course, make no use of it.

VI Nature and nothing else

The Vinea winegrowers renounce many of the possibilities that can be undertaken in the contemporary wine business – which means the same as manipulating nature – for the production of their Steinfeder®, Federspiel® and Smaragd® wines. The grapes are harvested by hand and late in the season (attaining a high physiological ripeness potential is an indication of the high level of willingness to take risks).

The natural state is of paramount importance!



The Vinea Wachau

The Vinea Wachau (Vinea Wachau Nobilis Districtus – The Noble Winegrowing Area of the Wachau) was founded in 1983. It is an association of Wachau winegrowers who produce wines exclusively originating from a legally demarcated area of cultivation and who have an uncompromising commitment to quality, origin and purity. The name can be traced back to Leuthold I von Kuenring (1243–1313), who was regarded as “Austria’s supreme innkeeper”. The core area of his properties today makes up the “Wachau Winegrowing Area”.

Unique – Europe-wide

THE STRONGEST EXPRESSION FOR VINEA WACHAU QUALITY ARE THE REGISTERED TRADEMARKS STEINFEDER®, FEDERSPIEL® AND SMARAGD®.

These brandmarks stand for natural wine production, guaranteed origin and strict control. The wines are considered ambassadors of the Austrian white wine culture – and especially of the World Cultural Heritage Wachau. Not only are the three designations unique in Austria, but a similar example of them cannot be found in all of Europe. Most importantly, the designations serve as an orientation structure for wine lovers, because it allows for dry white wines to be defined according to three weight classes, each of which is based on natural alcohol content.

Steinfeder® Fruity charm and a stipulated maximum alcohol content of 11.5% by volume characterize the lightest style of top Vinea Wachau wines – the Steinfeder®. The name itself refers to the typical “Steinfeder-gras” (Stipa pennata), a grass which grows near the vines in the Wachau’s terraced vineyards; it is light like a feather, and fragrant – just like the wine named after it.

This classic dry wine is distinguished by a strong, nuance-rich character. Federspiel® wines feature a must weight of at least 17° KMW and an alcohol content of between 11.5% and 12.5% by volume. The name Federspiel refers back to the times of falconry, when this favourite form of noble hunting was practiced in the Wachau.



Smaragd® Smaragd® is the name for the best, most treasured wines from the Vinea Wachau members. The alcohol content of these wines begin at 12.5% by volume. This, along with the highest grape ripeness and natural concentration are what make this world-class designation possible. Emerald-coloured lizards – also known as Smaragd – are at home in the terraced vineyards of the Wachau. On bright, sunny days, their beauty is highlighted dramatically as they bask in the gleaming sun next to the grapevines – the perfect symbol for the absolute top Wachau wines with full physiological ripeness.



Wine shapes people and the landscape –
the terroir creates the character;
the winegrower, the quality.

— ANTON R. BODENSTEIN



Austria’s best-known wine-growing area: the Wachau

The Wachau was mentioned for the first time in a Carolingian document from 823. The origin of the tradition of wine growing can be traced back to the period of the Roman settlement of the Wachau and experienced its first peak under the Carolingians. In the middle ages, Wachau wines were known far beyond the borders of Austria.



Kofinanziert durch die
Europäische Union

© Fotos: L. Lammerhuber, NÖ-Werbung; S. Wood; Weingut Hirtzberger; Vinea Wachau.

Steinfeder®



Steinfeder®, Federspiel® und Smaragd® are registered trademarks of Vinea Wachau Nobilis Districtus. Use is limited to its member wineries.



VINEA WACHAU NOBILIS DISTRICTUS
Schlossgasse 3 · 3620 Spitz/Donau · Austria
Tel.: +43 (0)27 13/3 00 00-12
Fax: +43 (0)27 13/3 00 00-40
office@vinea-wachau.at
www.vinea-wachau.at