

## Hofkellerei des Fürsten von Liechtenstein

The Hofkellerei des Fürsten von Liechtenstein goes back to 1426, simply because the princely family of Liechtenstein were great landowners with holdings that stretched from the Weinviertel across the Czech border. While the family moved to the Principality of Liechtenstein after the Second World War where they have had another cellar since 1712, they are still large landowners in Austria. They farm 31 hectares in the Weinviertel of mature vines between 35-40 years of age, mostly Grüner Veltliner, supplemented by Riesling and a little Zweigelt. All sites are in the villages of Herrnbaumgarten and Schratzenberg on the Czech border. They are converting to organic farming; the first certified vintage will be 2024. Stefan Tscheppe has run the family's wine operations in both Austria and Liechtenstein since 2018. He has orchestrated a general overhaul of the formerly sleepy operation and pulled the estate into the 21st century in tandem with Princess Marie von und zu Liechtenstein. Tscheppe hired Josef Stumvoll as cellar master in 2020, and the lockdown gave them time to re-think the entire approach and release wines later. This means that the white wines from 2022 are the current releases. The estate also makes Blaufränkisch from grapes bought in Leithaberg/Burgenland and has grafted some Zweigelt vineyards over to Furmint with a view to climate change. While there was a major overhaul, the wines still benefitted from being made in the cool and humid cellar dating to 1725. The pair showed me two wines from 1992 to demonstrate longevity afforded by relative lightness and brightness. Stumvoll said these wines are filigree and still have presence, despite moderate alcohols, yet with a lot of concentration. They also made a wine they believe is "radical" in Austrian terms but not illogical: they blended a Grüner Veltliner with Riesling, a happy and harmonious blend, as the "ultimate expression of site, regardless of variety," Tscheppe said. I also tasted the wines from the Liechtenstein estate, where the family farms just 3.8 hectares of vines and has made Pinot Noir for the past 300 years. Ten percent of the area is planted to Chardonnay, and the vines benefit from the warm föhn winds during the day and cool nights due to altitude. The annual production of this small estate amounts to just 18,000 bottles per annum. The wines—both for Weinviertel and Liechtenstein—show pristine freshness and clarity throughout.

*From 2023 Wachau and Lower Austria: Mercurial Weather Gods Smiled in the End (Jul 2024) by Anne Krebiehl MW*

### 1992 Grüner Veltliner Herrenbaumgarten

Color **White**

Anne Krebiehl MW, May 2024

Drinking Window: **2024 - 2035**

## 92

The 1992 Grüner Veltliner Herrenbaumgarten has never left the estate and was opened to demonstrate the lasting freshness that can be achieved in the northern Weinviertel. A blend of chamomile, dried yarrow and hayflowers beguiles the nose with a subtle herbal lift. This smells much fresher than a wine that is 32 years old and from a hot year. An edge of honey and beeswax gives just a little evolution away. The slender palate has a distinct chalkiness, a meltingly smooth texture and exquisite freshness. This chalkiness results from the deep, calcareous loess. Immense freshness shines. (Bone-dry)

## **2022 Grüner Veltliner Reserve**

Color **White**

Anne Krebiehl MW, May 2024

Drinking Window: **2024 - 2030**

**90**

The 2022 Grüner Veltliner Reserve is from the Karlsberg site on deep loess. The nose exudes green notions of dark, wet moss and subtle fern with a gentle smattering of white pepper. The palate is peppery, juicy and light-footed, yet it has a lovely texture and a slight phenolic edge that adds to this graceful structure. The 2022 is fragrant, generous, yet svelte. (Bone-dry)

## **1992 Riesling Kabinett Herrenbaumgarten**

Color **White**

Anne Krebiehl MW, May 2024

Drinking Window: **2024 - 2030**

**90**

The 1992 Riesling Kabinett Herrnbaumgarten is a little dusty on the nose, but the Riesling force radiates with dried citrus peel lift underneath. The palate is dry, super-slender, balm-like in its texture, and oh-so light, elegant and even tender. The finish is bone-dry. Interestingly, this was not bottled in flute but in a Burgundy bottle. (Bone-dry)

## **2022 Riesling Ried Karlsberg Privat**

Color **White**

Anne Krebiehl MW, May 2024

Drinking Window: **2024 - 2035**

**92**

The 2022 Riesling Ried Karlsberg Privat opens with an exquisitely floral top note, tender and perfumed, almost with a touch of crushed citrus leaf. The palate is a picture of svelteness, veil-like lightness. I find it hard to square 12.8% abv with this kind of brightness. The finish brings zestiness and even more citrus. It is absolutely linear, providing refreshment. What a charmer. Wow. (Bone-dry)

## **2022 Herrenbaumgarten**

Color: **White**

**Anne Krebiehl MW, May 2024**

Drinking Window: **2024 - 2035**

**92**

The 2022 Herrnbäumgarten is a blend of roughly half Grüner Veltliner and half Riesling. The nose has elements of both, the creaminess of Grüner and the scentedness of Riesling, resulting in a creamy orange peel freshness, enticing with a real citrus lift. The palate has exquisite lightness, white pepper and smooth, cooling, supple lemon. Slenderness, lightness, pepper, savor, length and crunch all come in one superb package. (Bone-dry)

## **2022 Ried Karlsberg**

Color: **White**

**Anne Krebiehl MW, May 2024**

Drinking Window: **2028 - 2040**

**93**

The 2022 Ried Karlsberg is from a single site in Schratzenberg, on deep loess, made from 40+-year-old Riesling and Grüner Veltliner vines. It is fermented partially spontaneously in tonneaux. The nose is vividly pure with ripe Mirabelle, white pepper and subtle mandarin peel. A lovely fluidity defines the palate, a compact, rounded, flexible shape, agile and juicy, filled to the brim with white pepper and elongated by citrus notions that combine lemon, tangerine and clementine. (Bone-dry)

## **2021 Ried Karlsberg**

Color: **White**

**Anne Krebiehl MW, May 2024**

Drinking Window: **2028 - 2050**

**94**

The 2021 Ried Karlsberg is blended from roughly half Grüner Veltliner and Riesling. In contrast to the 2022, here, the Grüner seems more present at first, sending subtle pepper and salty yeast, but then stretching into Riesling's elongated, extended, stretched citrus length. All of this peppery suppleness is carried along, leaving you with vividly fresh, tingling, zesty length. Despite having been fermented in mostly used tonneaux, there is no discernible oak, just a gorgeous texture with a long finish on a bone-dry style. (Bone-dry)

## **2021 Chardonnay**

Color: **White**

**Anne Krebiehl MW, May 2024**

Drinking Window: **2028 - 2050**

**93**

The 2021 Chardonnay is harvested in the villages of Margarethen and Oslip in Burgenland on pure Leitha limestone. The gentle creaminess and lemon promise floral freshness. The palate is juicy and slender, rippling across the tongue with lightness and ease, with the textural finesse of supple yeast and more of that florality. Freshness is key, as is lightness and flow, leading deep into cool, stony, pure, pale soil. The lemon length defines it all. (Bone-dry)

## **2022 Chardonnay**

Color: **White**

**Anne Krebiehl MW, May 2024**

Drinking Window: **2024 - 2035**

**92**

The 2022 Chardonnay, harvested in Leitha limestone in the villages of Margarethen and Oslip in Burgenland, shows subtle floral perfume and only the gentlest, creamiest touch of oak. This was made two-thirds in large Stockinger oak and in French *tonneaux* and one-third in stainless steel. The 2022 is slightly less intense than 2021, creamier, but with the same chalky backdrop, softer and gentler; this will be ready earlier. (Bone-dry)

## **2021 Chardonnay Herawingert**

Color: **White**

**Anne Krebiehl MW, May 2024**

Drinking Window: **2028 - 2050**

**94**

The 2021 Chardonnay Herawingert is from a single site on a mix of limestone and slate at 300 meters altitude above the Rhine. The nose opens with a lactic overtone that disappears on the taut palate. The body seems to transport rock and stone with lemony, citric concentration. That citric force is long, strong, defined, concentrated and linear, almost austere, with beautiful length. On average, just 2,000 bottles are made of this, but some hail in 2021 meant 1,500 bottles. (Bone-dry)

## **2022 Chardonnay Herawingert**

Color **White**

Anne Krebiehl MW, May 2024

Drinking Window: **2028 - 2040**

**93**

The 2022 Chardonnay Herawingert was grown 300 meters above the Rhine River in Liechtenstein on a mix of limestone and slate. Exquisite depth and stoniness run along a central spine of salty, serene, rocky freshness. There is not an ounce of fat on this, showing lovely sinew, linearity and such length. (Bone-dry)

## **2021 Pinot Noir Herawingert**

Color: **Red**

Anne Krebiehl MW, May 2024

Drinking Window: **2024 - 2035**

**91**

The 2021 Pinot Noir Herawingert was grown at 300 meters on limestone and slate. It is made from Dijon clones planted just over 40 years ago, including between 20-25% of whole bunches. The nose offers smoky cherry and stone. The palate is taut and slender, just as stony as the nose, with exquisite freshness and fine, tender tannins that crunch like starched Atlas silk. The red-fruited nature pulls right through on this almost austere wine, with lovely translucent, scented length. (Bone-dry)

## **2020 Pinot Noir Herawingert**

Color **Red**

Anne Krebiehl MW, May 2024

Drinking Window: **2028 - 2050**

**93**

The 2020 Pinot Noir Herawingert, from a mix of slate and limestone soils, was grown at 300 meters. A touch of smoky black cherry announces ripeness on the nose. However, the palate is beautifully taut and stony, with a lovely finesse of tannins like silk threads stretched across hard rock. There is deep savor, profound fruit, much length and lovely freshness. This will need time to evolve charm from its present austerity. With delicate lift, all is here; all it needs is time. (Bone-dry)

## **2020 Pinot Noir Herawingert Grosse Reserve**

Color Red

Anne Krebiehl MW, May 2024

Drinking Window: 2028 - 2050

**94**

The 2020 Pinot Noir Herawingert Grosse Reserve was made in just two barriques and one tonneau. It comes from the uppermost, driest part of the steep site, vinified separately, released later and made with slightly more wood. That wood is subtly evident on the nose with fine toast, but underneath that is rocky, stony red cherry. There is ripe, red fruit, but always with that stony backdrop and a taut, tight web of tannins. This still needs to relax, but it has oodles of 'Pinot-ness', with exquisite concentration and length. The light hand in making it shows that all this needs is time. (Bone-dry)