



View from single vineyard Herawingert to Liechtenstein castle in Vaduz

# Fine wines offer a taste of tradition

With centuries of tradition and heritage in every glass, elite wines grown from historic vineyards form an integral part of the principality's past, but are adapting well to modern trends

**P**roud ambassadors for the world famous viticulture regions of Liechtenstein and Austria in which the pristine vineyards of its multi-award winning red and white wines are nurtured, the Princely Wine Cellars of the Prince of Liechtenstein is one of the oldest firms owned by the Princely family.

Boasting roots that stretch back several centuries, the Princely Winery's long and rich history serves as an inspiration to the younger generation now working in its vineyards and wineries scattered across the principality and areas of its largest neighbor in the east.

The wineries' luxurious grounds near the capital cities of both nations exemplify the company's ethos and philosophy and imbue a certain character only found at the Princely Winery to the style of its highly sought after wines.

The princely domain includes the Court Cellar of the Prince of Liechtenstein in Wilfersdorf, Austria, the Court Cellar in Vaduz, Liechtenstein, and the Court Cellar in the Garden Palace — Vinothek & Bar in Vienna.

## Centuries of tradition in every bottle

"Our fine wines are grown in the best-suited locations, with the vineyards situated around the villages of Herrnbaumgarten and Schratzenberg just northeast of Vienna," says Stefan Tscheppe, General Manager of the Princely Winery and a respected wine industry professional.

"The area has been renowned for producing red and white wines for centuries. Today's single vineyards of Karlsberg and Johannesbergen were also made for the Princely family and poured at their occasions and festivities. This area was one of the main quality-producing wine locations in the Austrian monarchy.

"The winery at Wilfersdorf near Vienna is our main wine production facility, with around 80 acres of producing vineyards. It is largely focused on Riesling and Grüner Veltliner blends and some red varieties like Zweigelt and Merlot. All wines ripen in our extensive wine cellars, that were built in 1725."

Switching his attention to operations closer to home, the wine connoisseur describes how centuries of winegrowing experience is complemented by the adoption of sustainable ideas to lower its carbon footprint and ecological-focused practices in the winemaking process.



Stefan Tscheppe  
General Manager, Princely Winery

"The Princely Winery in Vaduz is a single vineyard that was purchased in 1712," he details. "It has produced Pinot Noir for the past 300 years. The Herawingert — with 10 acres densely planted with old French and Swiss Pinot Noir clones — is the centerpiece of winegrowing in the principality. Its Pinot Noirs have been rated highly internationally.

"The single vineyards of the wineries in Austria and Liechtenstein have a lot of potential to produce origin-driven, fresh and long-living wines. It was a matter of convincing a young, yet experienced team to farm the vineyards to their full potential and make low-intervention wines that would put both wineries on the map of fine wine in a short time.

"From 2019, we gained experience with organic and regenerative farming, with the production of our first certified vintage wine in 2024. This transition has changed everything from pruning to canopy work and picking dates to achieve more elegance, more vitality and a sense of place in all our wines."

## Building benchmarks few can match

Farming regeneratively, with a strong focus on healthy soils, the company utilizes deep-rooting cover crops, no irrigation and organic supplements only where needed. No herbicides or pesticides are used and the Austrian winery



Wine tasting Hofkellerei des Fürsten von Liechtenstein

is solar-powered and employ recycling sprays.

"We engage in careful fungal disease monitoring and manual preventive practices such as de-leafing to reduce tractor hours," Tscheppe continues. "We aim to be a positive role model for other wineries working in our region and very open to sharing our successes in sustainable farming and production.

"We use non-coated carton cases for our packaging and avoid waste wherever possible. The teams at the wineries live close to the wineries and do not have long commutes. We sell most of our wines locally within a short distance in Austria and Liechtenstein.

"However, it is crucial we establish the brand in foreign markets to help raise the value of the wines in our home markets. This will allow us to keep farming sustainably and invest extra hours in our vineyards' quality and health. Our approach to running the wineries is wholesome, but there is always room for improvement."

## Reshuffle pays rich dividends

In the wake of a major reorganization in 2018 that also involved the support of a French consultant group funded by legendary winemaker Stéphane Derenoncourt, the Princely Winery has gone from strength to strength across its production, sales and marketing activities and operations.

According to Tscheppe, despite the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in many leading global wine markets being depressed, the coveted winegrower built up its international distribution with placements in some of the top restaurants throughout the US and Asia.

"Quantitative growth strategies were abandoned in favor of a quality approach to fine wine," he shares. "We now produce a smaller number of bottles at a higher average price. All wines are as they were around 40 years ago; we can still taste wines from the 1970s to the early 1990s in our library, which are more handcrafted, true to their origin and unique in stylistic expression and representation of the vintage.

STEFAN TSCHEPPE  
GENERAL MANAGER, PRINCELY WINERY

**"We aim to be followed by wine lovers throughout the world, with international placements in great restaurants."**

"Through this approach and the new energy within the teams, we have attracted a younger customer base and found our way quickly into the fine wine scene in Switzerland and Austria. The winery is now a member of the elite group, Österreichische Traditionsweingüter (Association of Austrian Traditional Wine Estates) too."

In recent years, the wineries' branding has become more elegant and distinct, with haptic packaging choices that better reflect its current fine wine offerings. In marketing, especially when targeting major international markets, being a Princely winery owned by the actual family is considered very important.

"Around 10% of our production goes to the Princely family and their companies," reveals Tscheppe. "The wines are beloved gifts offered

at events, which has led to increasing demand among business partners.

"In addition, our fine wines are offered in small quantities into the Asian and US markets through small fine wine importers based in California, New York and Oregon — the latter is from where our importer ships to consumers across the US. Our exported portfolio focuses solely on signature wines such as our single vineyard blends and Pinot Noir.

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"We aim to be followed by wine lovers throughout the world, with international placements in great restaurants, Our wines should be enjoyable and also ambassadors of their regions in Austria and Liechtenstein."

## Embracing nature via organic methods

The Princely Winery is firmly committed to cool-climate, low-intervention, vineyard-driven wines. In Austria, its focus is on Riesling and Grüner Veltliner blends; wines that are unique, yet rooted in their regional origin, which has been lauded for hundreds of years.

"These wines' aromatic profiles make them some of the most enjoyable fine wines on offer today," the wine expert explains. From the 2024 vintage onwards they will be certified organic, with gentle farming of these old vines to boost the vitality of all our wines.

"As for the Pinot Noirs, the 8,000-foot-high Alpstiz mountain makes them truly alpine Pinot Noirs, with great structure, a long, delicate and vivid mouthfeel and lower-than-usual alcohol levels. Our Pinot Noirs are unique, made for Pinot Noir lovers and great on any wine list. They are to be found in the eclectic or substantial Pinot Noir section.

"The only problem is that they are rare given the Vaduz vineyard's relatively small size. However, this is much like the small size of our country; it makes them even more appealing and exciting for wine lovers to taste."

In recent years, the wineries' branding has become more elegant and distinct, with haptic packaging choices, leading to increasing demand among business partners. This successful branding transformation has taken place under the careful watch of Princess Marie of Liechtenstein, the member of the Princely family most heavily involved in the winery over the last decade, Tscheppe discloses.

"Princess Marie has tastefully created many of our labels, some even with her handwriting on them [and] has introduced our wines in Asia, Austria and Liechtenstein," he concludes.

