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News

Austria, September 9th 2008

Vinea Wachau Awards Steinfeder Prize

by **Darrel Joseph**

The Vinea Wachau association of wine producers from Austria's Wachau region has awarded its twenty-second Steinfeder Prize to Madeleine Jakits, the editor-in-chief of Germany's Feinschmecker and Wein Gourmet magazines.

The award, which is presented annually to a wine journalist who has enhanced reader awareness of Wachau wines, terroir and producers, was introduced in 1986 when the Wachau was beginning to establish itself as a fine quality wine region. Since then, as a result of the outstanding quality and international success that Wachau wines have acquired, the Steinfeder Prize has evolved into an Austrian wine icon. Recipients in past years include Jancis Robinson MW (UK) and David Schildknecht (USA).

"Wachau wines are the kind of wines that we like to show in the magazines," said Jakits after the 5 September award. "They are original and distinct. And they cannot be made faster, easier or cheaper. To make them, you have to surrender to what nature gives you."

Steinfeder is the German name of the Stipa Pinnata feathergrass growing in the steep vineyard-terraced hills of the Wachau. It is also the category name for light-bodied wines made by Vinea Wachau producers.

Vinea Wachau, headed by renowned producer Franz Hirtzberger, comprises 206 winemakers, whose wines are made from 90% of the Wachau's 1,400 hectares of vineyards.

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