

WACHAU

TOP 10

RIESLING

SMARAGD

Wachau



The Wachau is an Austrian enological zone in central Europe. More precisely, it is located in the subzone of Lower Austria. Since 2000 the Wachau is listed as World Heritage sites. In total, the Wachau is made up of about 1344 hectares of vineyards, including the cities of Melk and Spitz.

One of the determining factors of the landscape, but above all, of the quality of the wines produced here, is the presence of the Danube. The river is not only capable of reflecting the light and the heat in the cold months, but also helps to mitigate the temperatures in the colder season. As well as this aspect of fundamental importance, it is necessary to note that in the Wachau different climatic aspects intersect each other (it is a generally continental climate with fresh winds from the Pannonia). The result is an alternation of warm and dry days with cool nights.

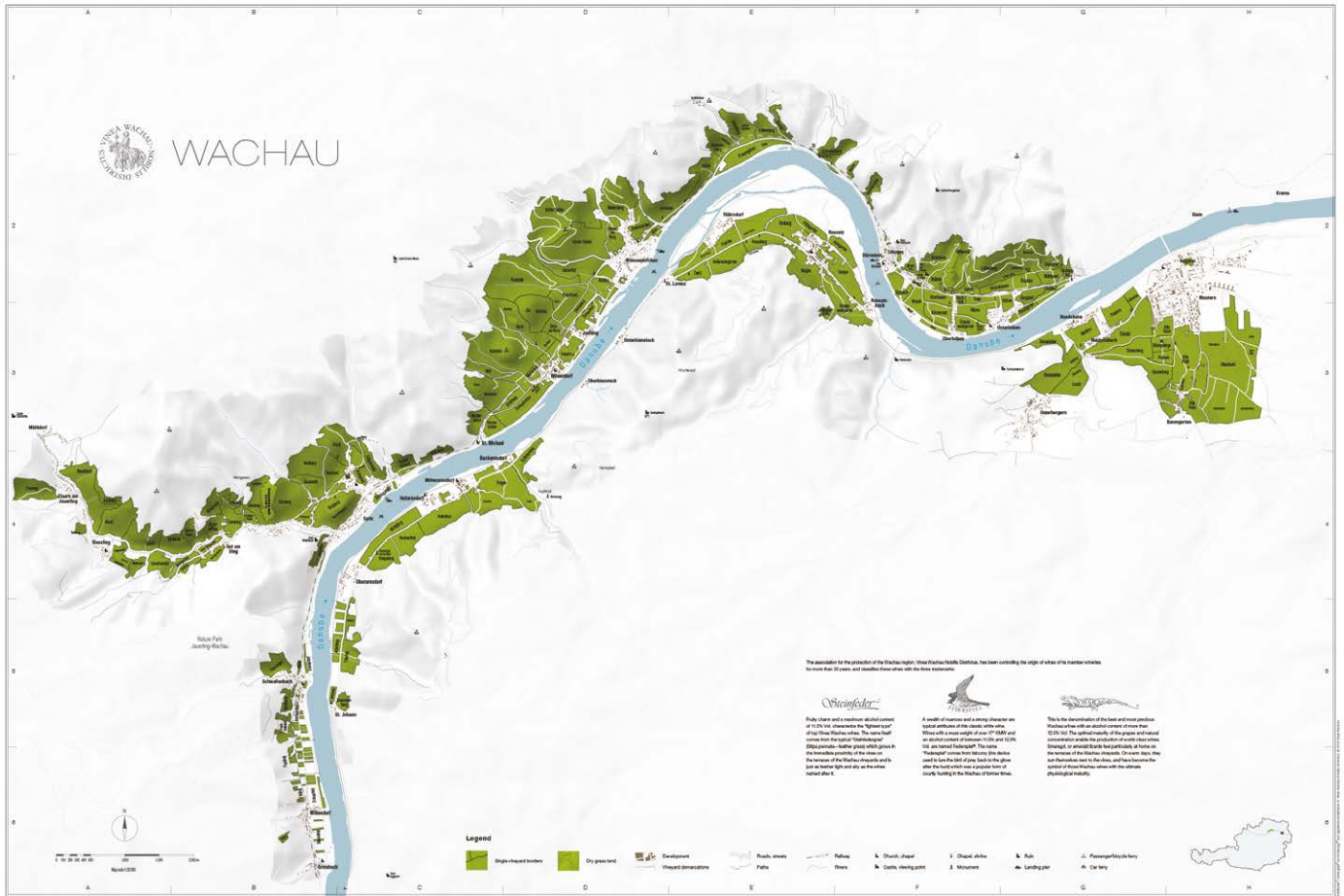
The geology of the area is rather varied, even if the most common structures are loam, kaolin, and gneiss. The terrain is very steep, so much so that often it must be terraced.

The principal varieties cultivated in the Wachau are:

- **Grüner Veltliner:** white berry married with the Traminer and not related to the Roter Veltliner or the Frühroter Veltliner. With reference to all Austrian vineyard soil, the Grüner Veltliner occupies 29% of the total surface. This grape tends to produce a lot; therefore, it must be kept in check, by the vineyard.

- **Riesling:** late white berry that is not related to the Welschriesling. In the Austrian territory, the Riesling does not occupy many hectares, making up 4% of the land. However, in the Wachau, is the

WINE RANKING



second most important grape in the area. Generally, in the cantina, these two varietals are fermented naturally in large barrels so old that they do not give up anything in terms of aromas, taste, or tannins.

Since the mid-1980s, most of the vintners are members of the regional association, called Vinea Wachau, that used its own classification system, divided into three categories: Steinfeder, Federspiel, and Smaragd.

Steinfeder: the name is derived from a type of grass that grows abundantly in the vineyards of the area. This type includes light wines, in which the alcohol grade never exceeds 11.5%.

Federspiel: the name comes from the practice of falconry and the hunting of a particular falcon

that was very common in centuries past. The wines have an alcohol grade between 11.5 and 12.5%.

Smaragd: this category derives its name from a lizard of emerald color that is often encountered in among the vineyards of the area. It regards strong, rich, and complex wines that in many cases manage to age well for decades.

Riesling Smaragd

GARDINI NOTES WINE RANKING

The targets are three: short (5-8 years), medium (10-15 years) and long (more than 15 years), which denote the aging potential of the wine.

 SHORT (5-8 years)

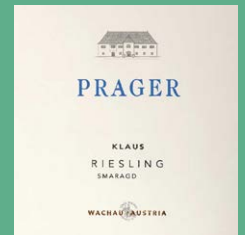
 MEDIUM (10-15 years)

 LONG (more than 15 years)

96

 **Riesling Smaragd Klaus 2016**
WEINGUT PRAGER

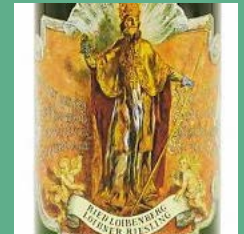
Its young age retains, in part a power that is noted early on that bottle aging will reveal more clearly. Aromas and sip are a succession of delicateness from elderflower and ginger, alternating between fruity, pulpy notes of mirabelle and citron. Excellent persistence.



95

 **Riesling Smaragd Loibenberg 2016**
EMMERICH KNOLL

In the vineyard, a mix of soils, in particular gneiss and loess. At least 8 months of aging on the lees without bâtonnage. Complex aromas of citrus, with the exoticness of tropical fruit and herbs, both aromatic and medicinal. In the mouth, texture, thanks to small amounts of loess present in the earth, but also an elegant dynamism, represented in part, by a nice flavor.



95

 **Riesling Smaragd Singerriedel 2016**
FRANZ HIRTZBERGER

Wine that comes from the hills overlooking the vineyard. This label is also the height of the winery's production, since the first vintage produced in 1987. Aromas of citron and yellow fruit, an evident note of mirabelle. In the mouth, a juicy entrance after which it takes on a more horizontal dimension on notes of mango and passion fruit. Flavor in every phase of the sip.



93

 **Riesling Smaragd Loibenberg 2016**
TEGERNSEERHOF

Fruity aspect and slightly balsamic on the nose. Clearly notable are white peach and fresh rind of lime. In the mouth, the citrusy part manifests itself at the entrance, then leaving space once again for sensations of white-fleshed fruit such as white melon. The mentholated balsamic part in this phase turns up the volume and characterizes the sip's finish.



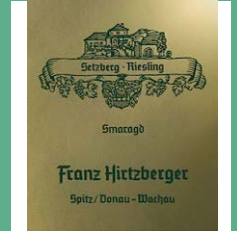
WINE RANKING

92

**Riesling Smaragd Setzberg 2016**

FRANZ HIRTZBERGER

Rather fresh cru. This characteristic manifests itself in a rather evident manner in the wine. Aromas more of citrus than white fruit and a pleasing, juicy note of pineapple. The bouquet cannot, however, be called complete without refreshing notes of mint and ivy. In the mouth, juicy and slender, but never thin.



92

**Riesling Smaragd Steinertal 2016**

TEGERNSEERHOF

Vineyard and field/amphitheater with perfect Southeastern exposition. Apple, translated into different varieties along with pineapple, represent the fruity part that manifests itself on the nose and in the mouth. In the second phase, however, the tropical part takes a slight upper hand. Delicate, spiced sensations of cumin and coriander complete the sip.



92

**Riesling Smaragd 1000 – Eimerberg 2016**

WOLFGANG HOFSTÄTTER

After an aromatic hint that recalls orange blossoms, the nose demonstrates clear, clean sensations of citrus, both sour and sweet. In the mouth, the same citrusy aspect remains until mid-sip, which is then characterized by exotic fruits such as papaya and passion fruit. Slightly savory finish.



92

**Riesling Smaragd Kellerberg 2016**

DOMÄNE WACHAU

Strong and typically flavorful on the sip. A wine that takes off on citrusy aromas, while sweetened by sensations of white peach. In the mouth, a dry citrus entrance. Notable citrus peel that softens the peach and then lengthens thanks to a tempting and persistent savory note.

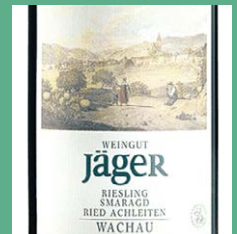


91

**Riesling Smaragd Achleiten 2015**

ROMAN JÄGER

One of the most ample crus right of the Weissenkirchen, characterized by a very precipitous vineyard. Intense and clean tones of yellow and white fruit noted on the nose. In this phase, a light spicing of coriander and star anise. In the mouth, none too ample silhouette, even if very recognizable by virtue of a pronounced mineralness.



90

**Riesling Smaragd Kirnberg 2016**

WEINGUT SIGL

Kirnberg, usually a generous cru. The character demonstrated by this wine remains faithful to the production area, thanks to an evident nose that is never excessive. Abundant fruit, including tropical variations. In the mouth, citrus take-off from candied lemon peel, citron, followed by white-fleshed fruit until the flavorful and spicy finish.



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AUGUST 2017

WACHAU RIESLING
WINE RANKING BY
LUCA GARDINI
THE WINE KILLER

TASTING PERIOD
AUGUST 2017

