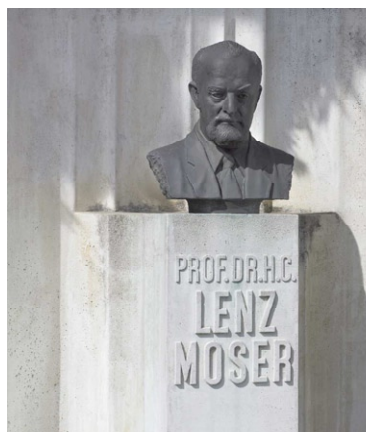




LAURENZ V. MEISTERBRIEF



IN THE BEGINNING

It is said that a white wine variety likening Grüner Veltliner dates way back to Roman times, where viticulture thrived in the Roman provinces of Noricum and Pannonia, situated in the south east of modern Austria. Under Charlemagne grape vines flourished and the founding of the Benedikt and Cistercian Monasteries from 1000 AD on the steep slopes of the River Danube led to a stable development of wine making in Lower Austria in the wine regions we know as Kremstal, Kamptal and the Wachau.

Despite this romantic notion, the term Grüner Veltliner was first recorded as late as the mid 1930's, when it was regarded as just another Austrian grape of little significance. Then Dr. Lorenz (Lenz) Moser III – the famous grandfather of Laurenz Maria Moser V. got his hands onto it, and within three decades had turned it into Austria's favourite and most popular variety, accounting for over a third of all vineyards in Austria, and the wine that everybody was to associate with Austria.

MADE IN AUSTRIA

Grüner Veltliner is an indigenous variety that accounts for 36% of all vineyards in Austria, almost all of it being grown in the northeast of the country. Other countries include the Czech Republic, where it makes up 11% of the vineyards, then small quantities in Hungary followed by individual experiments by winemakers in California, New Zealand and Australia, Argentina & China.

Today in Austria, Gruner primarily grows along the River Danube about a one hour drive to the west of Vienna, in the Wachau, Kremstal and Kamptal and thrives together with Riesling in dry-stone walled terraces and on slopes so steep they can barely retain any soil. Gruner ripens relatively late, from mid-October and often as late as November, and thus is well suited to the long growing season, and warm days and cool nights that are the trademark of Austrian aromatic wines. The finished wine shows very pure fruit characters with hints of complex minerals, as well as the white pepper touch that epitomises Gruner as we know it today. Gruner is capable of long ageing, that stands comparison with some of the greatest white wines of the world.

Laurenz V and Dieter will prove this in bringing a 30 year old Gruner for the next "Meistertraining" – this 1978 was made by Laurenz IV.



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LENZ MOSER'S HOCHKULTUR

It took Lenz Moser's revolutionary Hochkultur high vine training method to really get the best out Gruner, and thus paved the way for extensive plantings and the development of Grüner Veltliner over the next 50 years.

Lorenz III was indeed looking for an ideal white wine grape for his new trellising system – he found Gruner and foresaw a bright future for this unique grape.



GRUNER OR LATER



One might call the Grüner Veltliner the “Chameleon of Wines“. A chameleon can change colour in order to express its physical and psychological condition – and its change in colour plays a key role in communication: either wooing a mate or hiding from its prey. Gruner is therefore not dissimilar: it can be drunk young in the omnipresent local “Heuriger“ bars of Vienna and Lower Austria, accompanied by the high spirited singing of folk songs, or is especially enjoyable decanted and served cellar aged in high quality Burgundy glasses with your favourite dishes – Gruner craves to be served with food. Like the chameleon, Gruner comes in array of hues, from lemon with green reflections to bright, rich gold with exotic aromas, when aged. The expression and mood of Gruner – like the chameleon – is found in its tasting profile: think of the floral perfume of a German Riesling, the refreshing zip of a Loire Sauvignon Blanc and the lusciousness of a Northern Italian Pinot Grigio, all in great harmony!

Its chameleon likeness is not only due to its complex characters or diversity, but also the result of its chequered history. Grape varieties are grouped into families, and in Austria there is the „Veltliner“ family, comprising of the Brauner, Roter and Frühroter Veltliner, that most probably derive from the Italian Valtellina. However, Gruner Veltliner is not a member of the “Veltliners“ and following DNA analysis actually has the late ripening, aromatic Traminer as its direct parent, originally discovered in the small south Tyrolian town of Tramin 1000 years ago. To confuse matters more, it was previously called „Grüner Muskateller“, loosely translated to the 'Green Muscat grape', a term that stayed until the mid 1930s, despite it not being related to the Muscat family either. As the scientists continue to delve into its past, wine lovers around the world share the same thought that Gruner is unique.



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