

## **Press dossier**

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## Schloss Gobelsburg – Wine | cultur | heritage

Gobelsburgs history of settlement goes back beyond 4000 years, which is documented by Celtic ceramics shown in a vitrine of the Gobelsburg cellars.

The castle was first mentioned in a contract dated 1074 in relation to Azzo de Gobatsburich, Earl of Kuenring. The Monastery of Zwettl – also a Kuenringer foundation of 1138 - in the northern parts of the province Niederösterreich is today the owner of the property. But till the 12th century the fortress remained in the belonging of the Kuenringer family but changed hands until 1740 to as many as 19 different families on the estate and castle Gobelsburg. The last aristocratic owner - Freiherr Achaz Ehrenreich von Hohenfeld - instigated the alterations of the Renaissance manor house of the 16th century into a handsome Baroque chateau in the first half of the 18th century. On the 17th of September 1740 Ehrenreich sold the property for 40.000 Gulden to the monastery of Zwettl, which had already a Manor estate in Kammern since 1171. With the purchase important vineyards on the Gobelsburg side (Steinsetz, Haide, Redling) were added to the existing vineyards on Heiligenstein, Gaisberg, Renner and Lamm. When in 1784 the old Manor in Kammern burned down, the two properties were brought together at Schloss Gobelsburg.

In the beginning of the 19th century the cellar capacity is reported to be of 1410 Eimer, which is about 85000 litres of wine, partly brought to the monastery and sold there, partly sold from the castle. The wines were named either after their origin (Nussberger, Zöbinger, Gobelsburger) or for their use (Messwein, Conventwein, etc). Since the middle of the 19th century estate bottling is reported, but the biggest share is sold in small casks.

Until 1930 the wines of the winery in Nussdorf (Vienna) were also brought to Schloss Gobelsburg. Due to the difficult economic situation in the late twenties the property was then sold to the monastery Schotten in Vienna. The Manor, which is very similar in form and appearance to Schloss Gobelsburg, still exists.

Between world war one and two the castle was also used as a summer camp for apprentices. During world war II French soldiers were imprisoned and the castle was left devastated in 1945 and all the reserves back to the last century were gone.

Father Bertrand Baumann – a monk of the monastery, who took over in 1958 – was an extraordinary winemaker. He not only achieved to establish the 'altar wine' as an Austrian Classic, he also established the winery as the leading winery of the area. The wines of the Vinothek still show the great skill of this period of the winery.

Since February 1996 the estate is managed by Eva & Michael Moosbrugger. Michael originates out of a Hotel family in Lech / Arlberg (Hotel Post in Lech), but turned into winemaking after some years of University and Hotel business. In 2006 Michael was awarded with the title 'Winemaker of the year' by the wine magazine Falstaff. In 2007 followed the 'Golden Glass' by the Swedish Food & Wine magazine 'Ålt om mat' and 'Ålt om vin' the first time for an Austrian winery.

In 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013 & 2014 the Winery was awarded with the titles 'Top 100 Winery of the year' and in 2009 'Champion of Value' by the Wine & Spirits Magazine.

Primary goal is to preserve, develop and bring the cultural heritage of Schloss Gobelsburg with its prime vineyards on the oldest documented sites of the area into a new generation.

## The Castle and its Architecture

The castle, situated next to the church on the 'Burgberg', forms jointly with the church a fortification as a four-winged building complex with a Renaissance core. Documented in 1178, Schloss Gobelsburg evolved from a castle in the 16th century. It was completely rebuilt in 1725 by Joseph Mungenast.

### Exterior Building

The castle presents itself today as a two-storey, four-sided building complex with a massive mansard hipped roof and a high compensatory base rising to the north. The main façade of the south tract is 13-axial with 5-axial protruding façade bays, with interlacing plaster work beneath the window roofing and in the fields following. In the middle-axis is a gabled portal with pilasters on the sides and the Zwettl Monastery coat of arms. A double coat of arms is also to be found in the gable field. The windows of the ground floor are furnished with baroque gratings.

In the lenticular courtyard are arcades with groin vaulting on the north and south sides, remains of the building from the 16th century. As a main accent to the courtyard in the north wing, a tri-axial central pavilion rises a half-storey higher, emphasized on the exterior and courtyard side in the upper storey by round-arch windows and oblique oval oculi between gigantic pilasters, respectively, standing volutes. In the raised part one can admire the sundial of 1743 (renovated in 1966). The entrance door is equipped with metal fittings and handles from around the middle of the 18th century. In the drive-through entrance hall, on the north side, a wrought-iron door with metal bands and hand grips is still retained from the 16th century.

### Interior

One reaches the upper floor up a triple stairway with a wrought-iron grill from the middle of the 18th century. These grandiose rooms, of which there are six in number, are found in the south tract. In the south-west corner is the chapel with a stuccoed flat ceiling. There is an oval frame on the curved mirror containing the oil painting "The Birth of Christ" from Martin Johann Schmidt, from the middle of the 18th century. It is decorated with a sarcophagus altar, with a picture-frame altarpiece from 1769, with side pilasters with volute extensions. The altar picture depicts "St. Bernard Before the Cross", also from M. J. Schmidt.

The rooms in the upper storey are almost completely decorated with leaf work and interlacing stucco. The south tract is characterized by grooved flat ceilings with stuccoed or painted scenes from Roman or Greek mythology. A further characteristic of these rooms are the four tiled ovens from the second half of the 18th century. These are glazed in various colours, with partly unglazed, respectively, gilded interlacing decoration with figural additions.

## Vineyards and Grape Varieties

In 1996, the Schloss Gobelsburg Winery was accepted as member of the renowned Verein der Österreichischen Traditionsweingüter (Association of Austrian Traditional Wineries) ([www.traditionsweingueter.at](http://www.traditionsweingueter.at)). This association – founded in 1992 - was the first in Austria to classify vineyard sites in the Danube area. Some of them – usually locations with a long history – produce wines with great potential year after year and stand out from the other conventional vineyards.

As one of the oldest wineries in Austria, Schloss Gobelsburg has some 70 hectares in historical vineyard sites around the castle. Every site has its specialties and particularities with different soil and micro-climatic conditions. From the sun-exposed terraces at Heiligenstein and Gaisberg to the extensive vineyard sites around the castle, the vines are subjected to a wide range of conditions. In accordance with their respective potential, the best possible development conditions are established for every grape variety. At Schloss Gobelsburg, sustainable winegrowing is not just simply 'En vogue' as a current trend. The monks of the Zwettl Monastery, who had managed the winery themselves until 1995, used organic fertiliser, abstained from employing herbicides, and endeavoured to reduce the use of plant protectants.

The most important grape varieties are Grüner Veltliner and Riesling. Over the centuries, these varieties have proven to be the most suitable for the surrounding soil structure. The Riesling feels at home on the meagre and stony terraces of Heiligenstein and Gaisberg, Grüner Veltliner thrives on the sandy loess soils of the environs.

Red wine has also enjoyed a very long tradition at Gobelsburg Castle: the abbots of all Cistercian monasteries meet once a year in Burgundy (origin of the religious order). In this way, the monks were continuously in contact with winegrowing in Burgundy. It is therefore no big surprise that all Cistercian monasteries of Europe also have Pinot Noir. This is how Pinot Noir found its way to Schloss Gobelsburg. The variety is ideal for vineyard sites that are too dry for white wine production. Some of these sites are in connection with Danube sedimentation – especially where you have nothing else than fist sized river pebbles. These soils and the climatic conditions are suitable for the cultivation of elegance and depth in fruit, that lovers of this variety are always looking for.

### Individual Sites

The best vineyard sites are vinified and bottled individually. The designations "ÖTW\_Erste Lage" (comparable to the concept of a *Premier cru*) and "ÖTW\_Grosse Lage" (comparable to the concept of a *Grand cru*) are taken from the classification of the Association 'Österreichische Traditionsweingüter':

Zöbinger HEILIGENSTEIN, ÖTW_Erste Lage 1 <sup>ÖTW</sup>	Riesling
Kammerner GAISBERG, ÖTW_Erste Lage 1 <sup>ÖTW</sup>	Riesling
Kammerner LAMM, ÖTW_Erste Lage 1 <sup>ÖTW</sup>	Grüner Veltliner
Kammerner GRUB, ÖTW_Erste Lage 1 <sup>ÖTW</sup>	Grüner Veltliner
Kammerner RENNER, ÖTW_Erste Lage 1 <sup>ÖTW</sup>	Grüner Veltliner
Gobelsburger SPIEGEL	Grüner Veltliner
Gobelsburger STEINSETZ	Grüner Veltliner

### Grape varieties

Grüner Veltliner	55 %
Riesling	25%
Zweigelt	6%
Blauburgunder	6%
St. Laurent	6%
Merlot	2%

### Cellar and Vinification – simplicity and strictness

The oldest part of the cellar dates back to the original fortress in the 11th century. Over the centuries, the cellar was continuously expanded.

In times when many large international cellars are attempting to produce uniform wines which try to please uniform and standardised tastes, Moosbrugger is convinced that the future of wineries like Schloss Gobelsburg is based on individuality and character. As a high level of technology is necessary to guarantee uniformity, Moosbrugger believes, that a maximum of individuality can only be achieved through reduction of intervention.

This is why thought were not focusing on the question what technology could be added to the cellar facility, but, which could be left away. Moosbrugger therefore developed the 'Dynamic Cellar Concept' for Gobelsburg. The key issue here is to have flexible cellar operation where – to put it simple – wines are no longer pumped from one location to the other, but transported in 'barrels on wheels' from one part of the cellar to the other.

The containers used to mature wines also help shape the character of these wines. For centuries oak trees from the Manhartsberg (a region north of Langenlois) are used for the large and small casks. Of course, this tree origin has a different character than those from Allier or America.

But it's the regional character that forms the authentic personality of Schloss Gobelsburg wines, which comes from a symbiosis between the trees and the grapes, that are grown under the same climatically and geological conditions.

This approach is also based on important findings derived from the study of old wine-making techniques, which also results in a wine series by the name of 'Tradition'. These wines are made using the traditional method of the 19th century and do not only have old and sound ageing structures, but also pave the way to an (almost) forgotten Austrian culture of taste.

## **The Wines (Schloss Gobelsburg)**

### **Schloss Gobelsburg Brut Reserve**

The basis of this sparkling is derived of different varieties (Pinot Noir, Riesling, Grüner Veltliner) selected from different sites of the estate. Grapes from Heiligenstein, Gaisberg, Grub and Lamm are harvested at the right moment, laid in small boxes and are immediately pressed, whereby only the core of the basic wine is used. After six months of cask storage, it is bottled for the second fermentation. It then rests for about three years on the yeast, which contributes to the creamy texture, until it is hand riddled and then disgorged.

### **Gobelsburger STEINSETZ – Grüner Veltliner**

Ried (single vineyard, cru) Steinsetz is situated south of the castle just outside of the village Gobelsburg and is marked by sedimentation material of Danube and Traisen. Depending on the size of the flow smaller or larger pebbles – mostly quartzite – were deposited. The sediments are covered by loess of 10 to 50 cm.

### **Kammerner RENNER | 1<sup>ÖW</sup> ÖTW\_Erste Lage – Grüner Veltliner**

Ried (single vineyard, cru) Renner is situated on the slope of the Ried Gaisberg Riesling terraces. The soil structure here is getting deeper and is offering more retention for the wines. Beside loess a high proportion of erosion material from primary rock (brownish para-gneiss, amphibolite and mica) is the basement of this vineyard.

### **Kammerner GRUB | 1<sup>ÖW</sup> ÖTW\_Erste Lage – Grüner Veltliner**

Ried (single vineyard, cru) Grub is a basin between Ried Heiligenstein and Ried Gaisberg. Slightly higher and wind protected the site opens to the south. 20.000 years ago – during the last glacier period – mammoth and reindeer hunters used it as a settling place. The soil consists of pure loess as well as remains of bones from the Stone Age period.

### **Kammerner LAMM | 1<sup>ÖW</sup> ÖTW\_Erste Lage – Grüner Veltliner**

The Lamm lies on the southeast part of the Heiligenstein, where the mountain forms into soft hills. In this cru, the Grüner Veltliner finds ideal conditions to outdo even itself. The terroir features loess and loam formed by the geological elements of the Heiligenstein (volcanic rock and

heavy silt from the Permian period). A southerly-oriented slope with deep, fertile soil provides the core for power, body and grace.

### **Gobelsburger SPIEGEL - Grüner Veltliner**

Ried (single vineyard, cru) Spiegel is an east to southeast-facing ridge situated south of Langenlois. The deep, calcareous soils here are based on thick loess with a balanced mineral composition. Thin layers of gravelly stone in some places as well as old soil formations indicate that the loess was structured according to different climatic phases.

### **Kammerner GAISBERG | 1<sup>GW</sup> ÖTW\_Erste Lage – Riesling**

Ried (single vineyard, cru) Gaisberg belongs to three villages (Kammern, Zöbing and Strass) and is situated right east to Heiligenstein. The most eastern part of the Gföhler gneiss plate is marked by slaty para-gneiss, amphibolite and mica. Some parts of the Riesling terraces belong to the oldest vineyards of the winery.

### **Kammerner HEILIGENSTEIN | 1<sup>GW</sup> ÖTW\_Erste Lage – Riesling**

Heiligenstein is facing south towards the plain of the joining rivers Kamp and Danube, the vineyard is terraced, protected by hill-top forests in addition.

In geological terms Heiligenstein is also something special: a cone of primeval rock which had pushed through the surrounding area. The top soil consists of weathered crystalline rock, volcanic and desert sands that provides a fine mixture of minerals to the vines and, in addition, accumulates heat till long.

Zöbinger Heiligenstein Riesling is an elegant wine finely chiselled with finesse and great length.

### **TRADITION – Grüner Veltliner & Riesling (historical vinification)**

The 'Tradition' wines are related to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century – especially to the period between around 1800 and 1850. This period is marked on one side by the period of baroque, where intense aromatisation in vinification was practice. With the upcoming Romantic aromatisation yielded the idea of pure nature and the 'pure' taste. Beside – winemakers were looking back to an empirical knowledge of nearly 2000 years of winemaking. On the other hand this period is marked in the middle of the century by the upcoming industrialisation which has been leading to more and more technology in the cellar and started to change the craftsmanship side of winemaking. This development leads step by step to the point, when we start to talk about modern winemaking, which focuses on the question of aromas and fruit components.

200 years ago the cellar masters of Gobelsburg had a completely different idea on wine. Wine was seen in these days much more as an individual. They compared wine with the human being and believed that as we humans have to undergo certain development, also a wine has to do so. And as we have to breathe, also a wine has to breathe in order to accomplish all that. These considerations have been leading to the common practice to rack the wine from cask to cask to let the wine breath in order to encourage the next step of his development. This was repeated several times and was called the 'teaching' of the wine (ger: die Schulung). Here the relation between wine and cellar master can be seen in the same way as the relation between a teacher and his pupil. The task of the cellar master was to identify the potential of the wine and

according to that, 'teach' him up to his potential. This can be seen in contradiction to our today's modern imagination that great wine is made in the vineyard and not in the cellar. In our today's mind we believe that the big art of making a great wine is to do 'nothing'.

The grapes are pressed with a basket press for low sediment content, without further sedimentation the wines are fermented without temperature control in 25 hl Manhartsberg oak casks (double foudrer). After the fermentation the wines are racked every 3 to 4 months to let the wine 'breathe' on one side, but on the other side to go off the lease. This process lasts for about two years until the wine is ready to be bottled.

### **Cuvée BERTRAND**

Abbot father Bertrand Baumann used to be responsible for the winery between 1958 and 1980 and played a major part in the development of the winery. In his days he belonged to the leading winemakers of Austria. The wines from the library are still documenting this period. This cuvee of Pinot Noir, St. Laurent and Zweigelt is dedicated to the memory of his achievements.

### **ST. LAURENT Reserve**

Ried (single vineyard, cru) Haide is based on tertiary gravel derived from the Alps in the past millions of years. Sufficient drainage, high altitude and good wind exposure is ideal for cultivating St. Laurent. The wine is matured in regional oak casks (Manhartsberg) of 600 lt. The wine is only slightly filtered and could contain sediments.

### **PINOT NOIR Reserve**

Pinot Noir belongs nowadays to the identities of Cistercian monks as they are originating from Burgundy (Citeaux). Danube and Traisen have been sedimenting in the past millions of years river pebble (Quartzite) in the southern part of the Kamptal. The wine is matured in regional oak casks (Manhartsberg). The wine is only slightly filtered and could contain sediments.

### **ZWEIGELT Reserve**

Grapes from the oldest Zweigelt vineyards of the winery are used for this wine. Especially the well-drained sites on the Gobelsburger Haide suit very well for red wine production. The wine is matured in regional oak casks (Manhartsberg) of 600 lt. The wine is only slightly filtered and could contain sediments.

### **MERLOT Privatkeller**

The vineyard on the Ried Sachsenberg was planted in the beginning of the 80'ies and its soil is based on loess and clay. Because of the Lyra training system it is possible to achieve high ripeness levels. The wine is matured in regional oak casks (Manhartsberg) of 600 lt. The wine is only slightly filtered and could contain sediments.