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Exploring the wines of Austria's Styria region: a deep dive into Steiermark single-vineyard wines with the STK members

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Jamie Goode explores the wines of Styria (Steiermark) in Austria and comes away impressed.

As part of the 2023 STW single-vineyard summit, the members of another similar terroir-focused group were invited to join a special tasting for some wines. This is the Styrian Terroir and Classic Vineyards, which, as the name implies, is a group of producers who are focusing on the terroir of their vineyards, and specifically on a number of wines for their vineyards, including Grüner Veltliner (Grüner Vee) Gross, Erwin Sabathi (Sabathi) and Weinrenner.

The STK members in 1996, when they were in their twenties and barely winemakers. 30 years later, they are the Styrian's answer, generation of winemakers. It's a large organised tasting to bring to everyone the best wines in Styria. As the benefit of the whole area.

Half of the STK members are organic, and more are any minimum.

The landscape here is one of steep hills, with a south-east facing slope and a fair bit of rain. It makes sense to be vineyard cultivating, but it's good for wine quality. There are 5,000 hectares of vines in Styria, and it's further further down into the SDCs (Schutzwert Steinmark, Tuckerman's and Weinbemerkung).

These are the wines I tasted, listed by producer:

Frauwallner

Frauwallner Weiß Sauvignon Remarkling Grundstücke 2021
Ripe and fruity, with a touch of tropical fruit and a hint of herbal complexity. Salted, sallow grape and citrus fruit. Textural and rounding present with a slight saltiness on the finish. 13.5%

Frauwallner Weiß Sauvignon Remarkling Grundstücke 2020
Ripe and fruity, with a touch of tropical fruit and a hint of herbal complexity. Salted, sallow grape and citrus fruit. Textural and rounding present with a touch of grapey richness. 14.0%

Frauwallner Rot Blaufränkisch Weinberg 2021
17% Zweigelt, 5% Merlot. Dark, ripe, and fruity, with a touch of herbal complexity. Dark and dark fruit with a touch of grapey richness. 14.0%

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Frauwallner Rot Sauvignon Blanc 2019
Ripe and fruity, with a touch of herbal complexity. Dark and dark fruit with a touch of grapey richness. 14.0%

Frauwallner Rot Sauvignon Blanc 2018
Ripe and fruity, with a touch of herbal complexity. Dark and dark fruit with a touch of grapey richness. 14.0%

Gross

Gross Rot Vinotheque Weinbergcuvée 2016
12.5% Blaufränkisch and Frühburgunder. Ripe and fruity with bright sour and spicy fruit. Underlying notes of Mediterranean structure under the fruit. Supple and expressive this is really good and refreshed. 13.5%

Gross Rot Erste Lieder Blaufränkisch 2020
12.5%. Clayey and well-grained vinotouches. Dunes flora, grapey note with nice brightness and juicy. Has been aged in 500 litre barrels and 1 year in barrels and demi-barrels. 14.0%

Gross Rot Sauvignon Blanc 2019
12.5%. Blue and plums fruit. This is really rustic and a clearly underscored in the slightly green-tinged terroir. Tangy and fruity, with a touch of herbal complexity. Textural and rounding. 14.0%

Gross Rot Sauvignon Blanc Pfarrbergl Weiße 2015
12.5%. Limestone, calcareous sandstone and marl. Nicely poised with freshness and presence, showing ripe and green apple as well as spicy citrus. Has a really impressive grip and rounding. 14.0%

Gross Rot Sauvignon Blanc Steinriegel 2016
12.5%. Limestone, calcareous sandstone and marl. Nicely poised with freshness and presence, showing ripe and green apple as well as spicy citrus. Has a really impressive grip and rounding. 14.0%

Gross Rot Sauvignon Blanc Steinriegel 2015
12.5%. Limestone, calcareous sandstone and marl. Sophisticated chalky, mineral-rose with sweet pear and citrus fruit. The powder, phone-grown concentration and fine green hints with a slight salinity on the finish. Very long and very fine. Drinking well now and for years. 14.0%

Gross Rot Steinberg Sauvignon Blanc 2008
50% Gelb, with gentle floral and some pithy notes, as well as a touch of bitterness. Lively weight and balance here. Good concentration with some bashfulness on the finish. 14.0%

LacknerTinnacher

LacknerTinnacher Rot Steinbach Kogel Blaufränkischer 2021
17% Zweigelt grapes. Sweet pear and apple notes with gentle floral note. Assertive and quite textured. There's a good structure. 14.0%

LacknerTinnacher Rot Blaufränkisch Weinberg Weißer 2021
17% Zweigelt. Vinotouches. Black berry fruit, also a sense of freshness with bright acidity under some textured fruit. Juicy and clean with a tight sensation on the finish. 14.0%

LacknerTinnacher Rot Blaufränkisch Weinberg Weißer 2020
17% Zweigelt. Vinotouches. Black berry fruit, also a sense of freshness with bright acidity under some textured fruit. Juicy and clean with a tight sensation on the finish. 14.0%

LacknerTinnacher Rot Sauvignon Blanc 2021
17% Zweigelt grapes. Fresh and textured with light pear and citrus fruit, showing some features. Ripe fruit is in the mouth

purity to the mineral edged citrus fruit, with just a hint of green. Amazing detail and refinement. 94/100

Tement Ried Zieregg Kår Sauvignon Blanc 2020
13.5%. Coralline limestone rock. Lovely expressive style with bright citrus and pear, showing a mineral edge and concentrated, refined fruit, finishing bright and a little saline. 94/100

Tement Ried Zieregg Sauvignon Blanc 2020
13.5% Marl on coralline limestone rock. Juicy and mineral with a salty twist to the focused pear and citrus fruit. Nice balance here: good concentration and some generosity to the fruit. 94/100

Tement Ried Zieregg Sauvignon Blanc 2007
Crystalline with a touch of toast as well as lively citrus fruit. Has brightness but also depth with a lovely mineral character. 94/100

Winkler-Hermaden

Winkler-Hermaden Ried Rosenleiten Morillon 2020
13% Tertiary sea and river sediments. Ripe and fruit driven with open pear and mandarin fruit, backed up by good acidity. Juicy and linear with nice weight. 90/100

Winkler-Hermaden Ried Schlosskogel Grauburgunder 2020
13% Volcanic tuff and lake sediments. Ripe with sweet, smooth, finely spiced pear and apple fruit, with a hint of honey and some stoniness. 89/100

Winkler-Hermaden Ried Hochwarth Sauvignon Blanc 2020
13.5% Red basalt. A vivid, fruity, juicy style of Sauvignon with lemon and mandarin fruit. Quite pure and focused with nice weight. Lovely balance here. 91/100

Winkler-Hermaden Ried Hochwarth Sauvignon Blanc 2017
13.5% Red basalt. This shows appealing ripe pear and peach fruit with some soft texture on the mid-palate. A ripe, forward, generous wine. 90/100

Winkler-Hermaden Ried Kirchleiten Sauvignon Blanc 2020
13.5% Tertiary sea and river sediments. Spicy and quite exotic with lovely bright fruit. Finely spiced with pear and peach. Has an ease to it. 91/100

Winkler-Hermaden Ried Kirchleiten Traminer 2020
13% Tertiary sea and river sediments. Highly exotic on the nose with turklish delight and table grapes, leading to a generous but focused spice-laden palate with layeres of detail. 92/100

Winkler-Hermaden Olivin Reserve 2017
Black cherries and some smoke here with nice tannins. There's a spicy quality and a touch of chocolate. Shows freshness, structure and also drinkability. 92/100

Wohlmuth

Wohlmuth Ried Dr. Wunsch Riesling 2022
12.5% Phyllitic red slate with quarzstones. Concentrated, fine and really mineral with fine spices and a vivid core of crystalline citrus fruit. So lovely: this is vibrant and detailed. 94/100

Wohlmuth Ried Steinriegl "Strohbart" Riesling 2021
12% Phyllitic red slate with quartzstones. There's some generosity to the ripe citrus fruit here with a lovely fine spicy framing to the palate. Has a hint of apricot and melon, but it's still well balanced. 93/100

Wohlmuth Ried Edelschuh Riesling 2021
13% Phyllitic black and red slate with quartzstones. Lively and vivid with brisk citrus fruit and some nice mineral characters. Shows depth but also focus with some nice saline twists on the finish. Lovely fruit here. 93/100

Wohlmuth Ried Edelschuh Riesling 2017
Crystalline and fresh with brightness and a distinctive mineral edge. Has lime, spicy, good acidity and great precision. 93/100

Wohlmuth Ried Sausaler Schlössl Sauvignon Blanc 2021
13% alcohol. Phyllitic black and red slate with quartzstones. Good concentration with weighty pear and citrus fruit, showing a bit of richness. Full and rounded with nice depth to it. 92/100

Wohlmuth Ried Hochsteinriegl Sauvignon Blanc 2021
13% Phyllitic red slate with quartzstones. Nicely balanced with good concentration to the ripe pear, peach and citrus fruit, as well as a hint of apple. Bold, smooth fruit with real appeal. 93/100

Wohlmuth Ried Edelschuh Sauvignon Blanc 2021
13% Phyllitic black and red slate with quartzstones. Textural and expressive with nice weight of pear and peach fruit. This expresses the ripe side of Sauvignon, showing good concentration and generous fruit. 93/100

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