

GOLD MEDAL WINE CLUB

T A S T E T H E A D V E N T U R E



AUSTRIA



*International Series*

# WITH A VIGOROUS WINE CULTURE AND DISTINGUISHED HISTORY, AUSTRIA IS MAKING A DRAMATIC RE-ENTRANCE ONTO THE WORLD WINE STAGE.

While the beautiful wine crystal glasses of Austrian producer Riedel are often the most expensive and most recognized in the world, such is not the case with Austria's wine industry. Even though its origins can be traced back more than 4,000 years, it is only during the past two decades that Austria's high quality wines have reemerged onto the world wine scene.



An embarrassing wine scandal in 1985 almost did in Austria's wine reputation, oddly caused by a few insiders attempting to aid some of the country's lower caliber wines by adding unauthorized agents to the wines. Nevertheless, it has taken the better part of twenty years for Austrian producers to regain the confidence of wine aficionados across the globe.

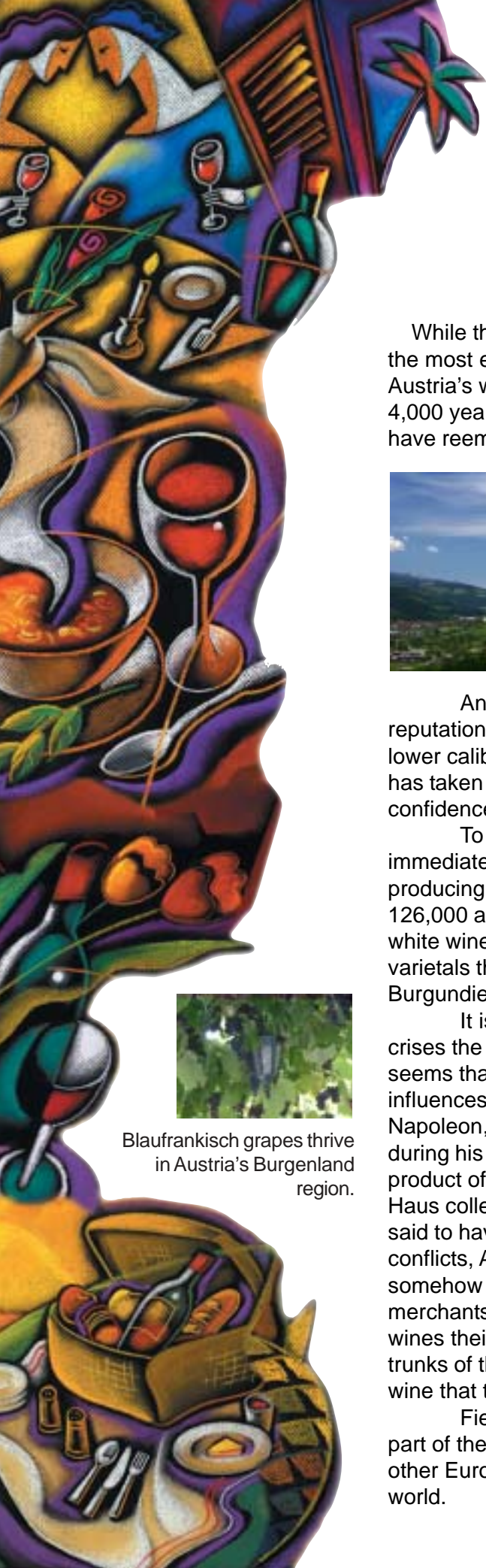
To be sure, the Austrians have *always* made great wine. In fact, immediately after World War I, Austria was considered the third largest wine-producing country in the world. More than 51,000 hectares (slightly more than 126,000 acres) are currently in vine, producing twenty-two varietals of mostly dry white wine that generally stays within Austria's own borders. There are also eight varietals that produce Austria's red wines that are modeled after the Bordeaux and Burgundies of France.

It is almost impossible for Americans to realize just how many wars and crises the Austrian wine growing industry has had to endure during its existence. It seems that the country has been attacked by just about everyone and the influences of each of these attackers can be found in Austria's wine history. Napoleon, for instance, ordered the planting of a number of French varietals during his period of occupation at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the product of which is the Blaufrankish grape that makes up one of the Blaues Haus collection. The Cabernet Sauvignon, Bordeaux's premiere grape, is also said to have started in Austria under Napoleon's orders. Through many conflicts, Austria's wine growing areas have remained uniformly intact, somehow under the radar of both wine aficionados and also international wine merchants. It is a well known fact that many Germans consider Austrian wines their own special secret and continually cross the border to fill the trunks of their Mercedes' and BMW's with cases of high quality Austrian wine that they prefer to their somewhat sweeter German wines.

Fiercely loyal to their own wines, Austrians consume the greater part of their country's wine production with a small amount exported to other European countries and an even smaller amount to the rest of the world.



Blaufrankish grapes thrive in Austria's Burgenland region.





defined as wine-growing regions that produce the greatest amount of grapes. There are also 16 other wine-growing areas throughout the country.

The grapes themselves are a study in charmingly exotic names. The main grape is the Gruner Veltliner, which is followed in popularity by the Blauer Zweigelt and the Welschreising. These three grape varieties account for almost 50% of the entire Austrian wine production.

Thanks to the 1985 incident mentioned above, the Austrian wine (appellation) laws are now stricter than most countries in the world. Austrian wine law is closely modeled after their German neighbor's strict system, and the country maintains a tight hand over any wines produced within its borders.



While the 1985 wine fiasco deeply embarrassed Austria as a whole, it might be considered as

the starting point for the new world of Austrian wine. A relatively large number of small new producers have sprung up in the wake of the debacle and the wines currently being produced are turning heads around the globe. International awards are being garnered at a rapid pace and the world supply of Austrian wine is practically non-existent, thanks to the continuing support of everyday Austrians who are fiercely loyal to their country's wines.

All of this has been done in a little over 20 years, a minor miracle considering the age of other wine producing nations.

Austria has begun the ascension to the ranks of top wine producing nations with reliable wines and top quality standards that are strictly enforced. It is our pleasure to be able to share them with you in our *International Series*.



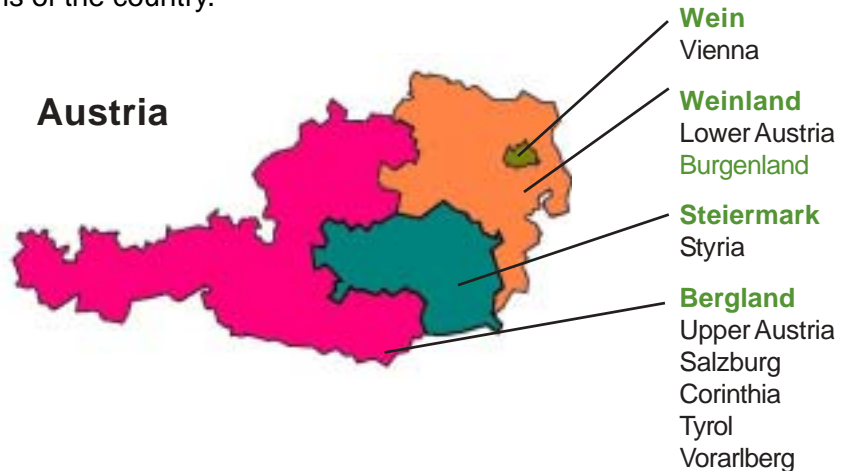
## Burgenland

The Burgenland Wine Region, home to the Blaues Haus collection, is Austria's second largest grape growing region, and the most easterly located of all Austrian grape growing regions, nestled along the Hungarian/Slovenia Border. Sub-divided into four minor grape growing areas, it is also the country's most sparsely-populated area, and is but an easy 40-minute drive from cultural Vienna. A great destination for vacationers during the summer, Burgenland is also the home to Lake Neusiedler. The lake is an

Continued

## wine regions of Austria

Austrian wines have recently gained tremendously in profile and popularity, and for good reason. The burst of attention to Austrian wines is particularly due to their very individual characters, owed not only to regional grape varieties not often found elsewhere, but also because of their unique *terroir*. Along with differing microclimates, Austria enjoys a great diversity of soil types. The mix provides excellent conditions for growing a wide range of both red and white grapes, translating their distinctive origins into the bottle. Most Austrian wineries are family owned and operated with an average size of just under 4 vineyard acres, making the country a land of boutique wineries. Austria's four wine regions include Wein, Steiermarck, Bergland, and Weinland, which is Austria's largest wine region in terms of vineyard acreage. Weinland consists of the provinces **Burgenland** and Lower Austria, which occupy the easternmost regions of the country.



### Photos top to bottom, left to right:

- View of the lush rolling hills of Burgenland, Austria.
- Blaufrankisch grapes thrive in Austria's Burgenland region.
- The charming countryside of Burgenland.
- A grapevine covered cobblestone walkway leads visitors into the quaint home of Blaues Haus Cellars.
- A thriving Blaues Haus Cabernet Sauvignon vineyard in eastern Burgenland.
- Map of Austrian wine regions.
- Blaues Haus 2002 Blaufrankisch wine label.
- Austria flag.

### Front Cover Photo:

- The colorful Austrian landscape is truly breathtaking.

## Austrian wine terminology

*German is the most used language in Austria.*

Anbaugebiet - wine region

Buschenschank - wine restaurant

Flaschenwein - wine by the bottle

Getrankekarte - wine list

Gutsabfüllung - estate bottled

Hauer - wine grower

Jahrgang - vintage

Kellerei - wine cellars

Kelter - wine press

*Prosit! - Cheers!*

Rotwein - red wine

Sekt - sparkling wine

Trocken - dry wine

Weißwein - white wine

Wein - wine

Weingut - wine estate

Weinkellerei - wine cellar

Weinstube - wine bar

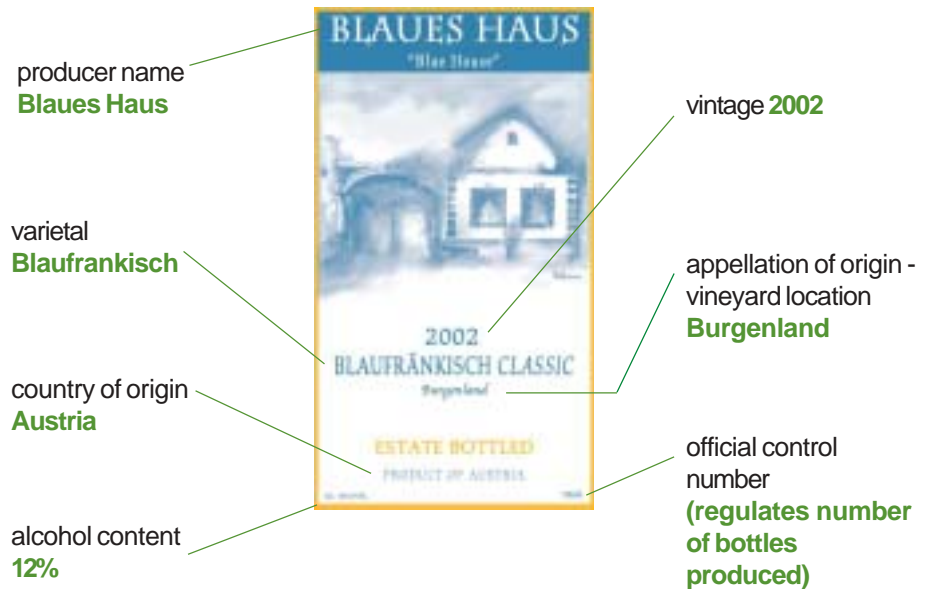
Weintraube - grape

Winzer - vineyard owner

## reading an Austrian wine label

Austria's wine law has maintained its individuality through controlled origins, capped yields, quality designations and official quality controls. By printing an 'official quality control number' on each bottle's label, Austria regulates the number of wine bottles produced from each origin, and thus maintains a strict standard of quality. In order to meet international wine industry requirements, labeling standards must be met on all exported wine.

### Austria's mandatory wine label requirements:



## the flag of Austria



The Austrian flag consists of three equal horizontal stripes: the top and bottom both red, and the middle white. Legend has it that Duke Leopold V. of Austria (1157-1194) was involved in a battle during the



Crusades, and after the fight his white battledress was red with blood, except for the white band covered by his swordbelt. That very sight is said to have inspired the stripes on the Austrian flag. One of the oldest flags in the world, the red-white-red striped emblem was first used on an Austrian flag in 1191, but wasn't officially adopted as the national flag until 1918. During World War II, the Austrian flag and coat of arms were banned, and then restored in 1945 with the crest of an eagle in the center. The current version of the flag, with out a coat of arms, was adopted on April 27, 1984.



*Prosit!*



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Burgenland continued

incredibly shallow body of water (it averages slightly less than five feet in depth) that affects grape growing in a major manner and allows the region to produce some of Austria's finest table and dessert wines.

Burgenland experiences cold, wet winters and truly hot summers, the perfect combination for growing quality grapes. It also contains a variety of different mineral earthen formations and strata, including hills, plains and other alluvial-favorable types of earth. More grape varieties are grown in Burgenland than any other Austrian wine region and the country's finest reds come from within its confines.

*FOUR GENERATIONS OF TRADITIONAL FAMILY WINEMAKING MAKES  
BLAUES HAUS CELLARS A CLASSIC FRONT-RUNNER IN AUSTRIA'S TOP WINE REGION.*



Weingut Ernest Palkovich first began producing wines as early as 1875, when Ernest's great-grandfather made wines the local people around Trausdorf simply couldn't resist

buying. The family house became a welcome stop off once the year's new wines were pronounced ready to drink. Soon a family business was established that was continued despite world wars and a great deal of local strife that most Austrians became accustomed to. The Palkovich tradition continued and today results in marvelous red and white wines that have been rated among the finest in Austria.

Palkovich believes his wines are superior due to the fact that he cuts his vines back more during the winter than other area growers. The resulting yields are smaller and according to Palkovich, "are allowed to mature more and improve their quality." Such growing techniques in both Burgundy and Bordeaux have long been hailed by viticulturists as the primary key to quality in the vineyards. It is also interesting that Ernest Palkovich only uses French Oak (Seguin Moreau and Allier) to age his wines while a number of his contemporary Austrian winemakers prefer the nearby Slovakian Oak for their wines.

Weingut Ernest Palkovich occupies the restored arcade-cellar of the more than 300 year-old Palkovich family estate house in Trausdorf, a short distance from the district capital of Eisenstadt where Palkovich first attended viticulture school.

Like most Austrian wineries, almost all of Ernest Palkovich's wines are sold within Austria, with only a limited amount of his production available for export. The winery's production is almost half white and half red, another rarity among Austrian wineries that tend to produce mostly white wines.

Palkovich informed us that his favorite white was his Chardonnay, a wine that possesses enough acid and fruit "to be able to stand up to our local



*Bratwuerstel* (sausage) that we are so well known for."

Immediately after finishing school, Ernest Palkovich became a policeman for the extra money it provided his family. After three years, his love for the winery and grape growing proved too strong to overcome and he returned to the winery where he has remained ever since.

His son Ernest, 20, is also interested in the wine business and has worked around the winery since he was a youngster. At present, the younger Palkovich is contemplating further university viticulture training before joining the winery on a full time basis.

Weingut Ernest Palkovich's *Blaues Haus* Collection is a unique opportunity for a glance within a wine producing country that is practically unknown outside of Eastern Europe, yet continues to find itself ranked among the world's best producers of high quality wine.

The owner and staff of Weingut Ernest Palkovich are committed to producing the finest wines in Burgenland, Austria's top wine region. We trust you will enjoy this wonderful assortment of great Austrian wines as much as we have enjoyed finding them for you.

### **The Winemaker**

Ernest Palkovich is the fourth generation of his East Austrian family to make his living in the wine business. He



initially attended the nearby Eisenstadt Viticulture School for three years but still considers himself as basically self-taught, having learned the nuances of winemaking from his grandfather and father. He is a bit of a rarity among

Austrian winemakers in that he believes in blending old and new methods of production to achieve the best possible results. His feelings toward pruning and subsequent low yields are also somewhat unique in that many Austrian growers believe in high yield vineyards for their wines.

Ernest Palkovich enjoys most the tasting and sharing of his wines with his customers and many friends who join him at the winery for special events. He considers it a special honor if one enjoys the wines that he has made.

*The International Series features specially-selected imported hard-to-find wines of the world for members of the Gold Medal Wine Club.*

**International Series**

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## Featured Austrian Wines

## International Series

### **Blaufrankisch**

(Blou - fronk - ish)

*One of the most unique and important varieties of Austria, Blaufrankisch is so productive in the southeastern Burgenland region, that the land is often nicknamed "Blaufrankischland."*



### 2002 Blaues Haus Blaufrankisch *Classic*

Often called 'Central Europe's favorite native grape variety,' Blaufrankisch is famous as Austria's workhorse red grape varietal and is most closely associated with the southeastern Burgenland region. The most popular and widely planted varietal in Burgenland, the Palkovich family has been producing the Blaues Haus Blaufrankisch for over 40 years. Intensely deep in color, the 2002 Blaufrankisch exudes notes of earthy pepper, black cherry and spice that are well integrated with the ripe, finesse-rich tannins. Individualistic and distinctive to Austria's major wine producing region, the Blaues Haus 2002 Blaufrankisch is a savory achievement that pairs well with richer, liberally spiced dishes such as authentic Chicken Paprikash, casseroles, and barbecued steaks. 100% Blaufrankisch. 660 Cases Produced.

• enjoy now or up to 2012

#### REORDER

- **half case** (6) **\$132** / \$22.00 btl. **Save 21%**
- **full case** (12) **\$228** / \$19.00 btl. **Save 32%**

### **Chardonnay**

(Shar - don - nay)

*The Blaues Haus Chardonnay represents a classic Austrian style with lively notes of expressive, floral characters and a powerful, rich backbone - a wonderfully food friendly wine!*



### 2005 Blaues Haus Chardonnay

Owner Ernest Palkovich's favorite wine he produces is the Blaues Haus Chardonnay. Distinctively balanced and wonderfully rich, this Chardonnay, or *Klevner* as it is locally known, comes from a top Austrian producer who has helped boost Burgenland Chardonnays to an international 'cult status.' Chardonnay has flourished in Burgenland for over one-hundred years and is currently one of the most widely planted white varieties in Austria. The dry 2005 Blaues Haus Chardonnay exhibits a beautifully expressive bouquet of floral, nectar-like components and a gracefully long finish. Also a great food wine, try pairing the Blaues Haus Chardonnay with shellfish, green vegetables, Camembert cheese, and even Austrian Brautwuerstel (sausage). 100% Chardonnay. 416 Cases Produced.

• enjoy now or up to 2010

#### REORDER

- **half case** (6) **\$96** / \$16.00 btl. **Save 16%**
- **full case** (12) **\$168** / \$14.00 btl. **Save 26%**

### **Cabernet Sauvignon**

(Kah - behr - neh  
Soh - veen - yon)

*This Cabernet Sauvignon shows its Austrian accent with savory, earthy juiciness and a refined complexity that makes this classic wine enjoyable now, or ageworthy for years to come!*



### 2004 Blaues Haus Cabernet Sauvignon

A relatively new arrival to the Burgenland region, Cabernet Sauvignon was reintroduced to Austria in 1981 following the phylloxera epidemic of the early 1900s. Often used as a blending grape with Austria's popular red varieties (Blaufrankisch and Zweigelt) in complex classy blends, Burgenland Cabernet Sauvignons are also bold and expressive on their own, with silky fruit flavors and ripe concentrated tannins. The refined 2004 Blaues Haus Cabernet Sauvignon is a dry wine with fleshy fruit characters and hints of cassis, cherry, and blackberries that lead into a long finish. An idealistic example of Burgenland's world-class Cabernets, this 2004 vintage has the body and structure that will continue developing with age. Try pairing the 2004 Blaues Haus Cabernet with roast beef, pork tenderloin and strong aged cheeses. 100% Cabernet Sauvignon. 416 Cases Produced.

• enjoy now or up to 2014

#### REORDER

- **half case** (6) **\$126** / \$21.00 btl. **Save 16%**
- **full case** (12) **\$216** / \$18.00 btl. **Save 28%**

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