

Our Year 2018

Report of the vintage - Weingut Peter Jakob Kühn



While I am writing this report about our past vintage 2018, the young wines are still fermenting down in our cellar and unfolding their new personalities. The aroma of the fermentations are waving around the entire house and provoke our curiosity, so that we keep on tasting and following the wines' development step by step. They already show a beautiful finesse and deepness, but of course it is still very early to tell where they will be at in a couple of months.

Winter and Spring

Winter 2017/18 brought us enough water to fill up our soils' reservoirs. A cold February with frosty nights, that cracked the upper soils' crust, also was beneficial for a good start into vegetation. When it got warm in March the vines had everything they needed to start into a new season. In Mid-April we had a quick budbreak and the first three leaves unfolded within just four days, which normally takes about ten to fourteen days.

With a lot of sunshine and an occasional rainfall we had perfect growing conditions during April and May. The vines grew with incredible strength and speed. During my time in Burgundy Hervé Arlaud told me: "If the vines grow quickly, they are healthy and vital enough to repel fungus diseases and will stay strong and healthy." And indeed 2018 was a year without problems in terms of plant protection.

End of May the vines in Sankt Nikolaus, which in most years is a little bit in advance, started to flower. This early flowering already indicated an early harvest. At this stage nature was three weeks ahead compared to the long-term average, and there have not been much signs for deceleration of vegetation. Those weeks demanded a lot of perseverance of all of our team to keep up with nature's speed, running through the parcels to pull the shoots upright, break away double-shoots, setting clips and pulling out herbes inbetween the vines. For all the work we had to do we were given only half the time, because the vines grew so quickly.



During the flowering end of May it was very warm. This led to some natural fruit-dropping of the grapes, which means that not every single flower of a grape is actually fertilized, so that the „mini-berries“ will dry and fall off. As a result we had smaller bunches with loose structure, which is perfect for a healthy development and great intensity of aromatic expression. By precisely timed defoliation during the days of flowering we stimulated this reaction to support the effect of fruit-dropping.

Summer

Summer was big and long and by the End of July it took its toll. The groundwater reservoirs had been reduced drastically and the remaining reserves lied deep under the surface of the soils, hard to reach for our younger vines, up to an age of six years, that don't yet have roots that would reach down far enough. We constructed waterspears and –ploughs to somehow carry the young vines through this challenging weeks, but it is almost impossible to fullfill their need for water like this.

We have been very lucky and finally got some rain of about 35 liters/m² on the 9th and 13th of August, which relaxed the situation a lot.

Our older vines went through this dry season without problems. Their deep roots reached down far enough to get to the water. They have been in great shape with good and ballanced vigour, continuously able to supply the grapes with enough water, nutrients and energy to develope beautifully.

Especially our parcels in the Appellations Oestricher LENCHEN, Oestricher DOOSBERG and Hallgartener JUNGFER were shining bright this year. Their profound soils with quarzite and loess-loam profiles have a great natural drainage and were able to hold sufficient water to provide it for our vines even during the hot season.

Autumn



It was the earliest start of harvest we can think of, and most likely one of the longest as well. With 30 people we started picking on August 23rd in some parcels for our sparkling wines. We continued with Pinot Noir during the first days of September and went on to the first passings of our Riesling parcels. With beautiful, sunny days and autumnal cold nights we had almost perfect conditions. The grapes' health was impeccable, so we could pick each parcel precisely on point. For eight weeks we have been

picking within a beautiful and unique ballance point. Moderate alcohol levels of about 11,0 to 12,5 % vol., PH of around 3,0 and very fine accidities around 8,5 to 9,0 g/l draw the analytical picture of the vintage. Wonderfull finesse, deep aroma and a lot of dynamic and tension are the sensorical impressions that I get while tasting the young wines.

2018 is a vintage with a luminous, soulfull character, that demanded everything of us during Spring and Summer, and endowed us in autumn. In the deciding moments mother nature was on our side this year, which makes us very happy, humble and thankful.

We are already looking forward to the moments we will taste the first wines together with you. Untill then we remain with the best regards,

Peter Bernhard Kühn and

Familie Kühn