

Heidi Schröck & Söhne,
`Riede Kulm` Burgenland Blaufränkisch 2023
Neusiedlersee, Burgenland, Austria



PRODUCER

Heidi Schröck took over her family's 10 hectare estate in 1983, in the famous village of Rust, Burgenland, just five miles from the Hungarian border. Her south-east facing vineyards along the western banks of Lake Neusiedl form a semi-amphitheatre, which provides considerably more sunlight hours compared to the rest of Austria. The soils here are sandy with clay, gravel, grey quartz and schist. With help from her twin sons, Johannes and Georg, Heidi sustainably cultivates the classic Austrian varieties, Zweigelt, Blaufränkisch and St Laurent, as well as pioneering the revival of traditional varieties, such as Furmint, better known today across the Hungarian border.

VINEYARDS

The "Kulm" vineyard is the centrepiece of the Ruster hill and grows on east-facing hills at approximately 130 metres above sea level, facing Lake Neusiedl. The oldest vines, of various Blaufränkisch types, were planted in 1955 by the great grand aunts of Heidi and grow small and concentrated berries every single year. The vines are trained in the guyot simple method on sandy loam soil with gneiss and mica shist - a mixture known as "Ruster Schotter". Viticulture is done sustainably, without the use of herbicides or insecticides and local plants are grown as cover crop.

VINTAGE

The 2023 vintage began with a dry winter period before beneficial rainfall arrived in April and May to support vine development. A hot, dry summer provided ideal ripening conditions, with strategic mid-August precipitation offering necessary hydration during the final maturation phase. Cool nights and warm days in late August created optimal diurnal temperature variation, achieving excellent balance between sugar accumulation and acidity retention in the grapes. Harvest commenced in the first week of September under favourable conditions, allowing for optimal grape selection and quality preservation.

VINIFICATION

The grapes were hand-harvested in late September and quickly transported to the winery. Upon arrival, the fruit was partially destemmed and transferred into stainless steel tanks, with 20% remaining as whole clusters, placed at the bottom of the tank. After two days of cold soaking, the indigenous yeasts started fermentation, which continued for two weeks, with gentle pumping over twice daily. The wine was then pressed and transferred into large old Austrian oak barrels (up to 60 years old) for 11 months, before undergoing gentle filtration and bottling.

TASTING NOTES

'Riede Kulm' Blaufränkisch is a benchmark example of Burgenland's signature variety. Ruby red in colour, with aromas of cherries and black pepper, this wine has a vibrant and lively palate, with fine-grained tannins and a long finish.