

F.X. Pichler,

‘Ried Burgstall’ Wachau Riesling 2024

Wachau, Austria



PRODUCER

F.X. Pichler is located in Wachau, a region so remarkably beautiful it has earned a spot on Unesco's World Heritage list. The Pichler family have been farmers in the region for five generations. Franz Xaver (F.X.) built a winery in 1971, and his son Lucas makes the wines today. Lucas' grandfather began with three hectares of land, which have now grown to 20 hectares because Lucas finds it hard to say no when rare vineyard plots are made available for sale. The climate in the Wachau is influenced by several sources: the moderating Danube River, cold air from the forests in Waldviertel and Dunkelsteiner and warm air from the Pannonian basin. From a need to adapt to the effects of global climate change, F.X. Pichler have left the Vinea Wachau association and the 2020 vintage is the first to fall under the Districtus Austriae Controllatus (DAC) regulations. Going forward, the wines will drop the 'Federspiel' and 'Smaragd' classifications based on must weights and will be labelled according to a three-tier system, either as regional, village or single site wines.

VINEYARDS

The Burgstall vineyard refers to a crag bedrock plateau towering some 30 metres, bordering on Unterloiben to the east. The name goes back to a small fortification that was built in the Middle Ages to defend livestock against pillages and the site was first mentioned in a document in 1248. It is also assumed that the first settlement "Liupna" was located here, from which the village name Loiben may derive. This sun-drenched and well-circulated vineyard is situated at the westernmost end of this rock terrace and the soils consist of pure gneiss and granite, with a shallow topsoil of sand.

VINTAGE

The 2024 vintage was challenging in the Wachau region. A relatively warm but wet winter that helped to replenish the water reserves, was followed by a warm spring that encouraged very early budburst, three weeks earlier than the long-term average. This early start left vines vulnerable to the late frosts which occurred in Wachau in April and resulted in reduced yields. Spring was followed by very hot temperatures starting from July and lasting into late summer. Flooding during harvest created further challenges in the vineyards and contributed to a very early harvest. Despite the challenges, the resulting wines are very elegant, high quality and approachable in their youth.

VINIFICATION

The hand-harvested grapes were destemmed and macerated for six hours on the skins. Fermentation took place in stainless-steel tanks at controlled temperatures. The wine was then aged on fine lees in large wooden casks for five months before bottling.

TASTING NOTES

This Riesling opens with intense aromas of tangerine zest, yellow peach and subtle hints of tropical fruit. The palate is vivid, zesty and juicy with a racy acidity and the long finish brings notes of salinity and wet stone.