

Harm-Weingut

Back to the roots in a relaxed way

Actually, Maria and Andreas had other plans concerning their professional life – structure. But in their hearts they felt, that wine was the passion which they couldn't resist and so in 2010 they founded a new, dynamic and jovial winery with a lot of energy and enthusiasm.

Before, they had spent a lot of their spare time working and helping in the winery of Andreas' parents, but then they knew that it was time to go their own way. They had the chance to get some very special single vineyards in Wachau and Kremstal. There was no way back: Maria and Andreas opted for a life between grapes and nature. Until then, they had worked in other, academic jobs.

Maria had worked as a French – teacher and Andreas as a viticultural – consultant and scientist in a wine – laboratory.

Even if the days are quite longer now, they don't regret their decision, in the contrary: Regarding their success and the created structure, they are very happy and absolutely satisfied. "We're quite relaxed, and this is, what even the grapes can feel!"

Something very particular is generated in Andreas' and Maria's heads and hands. This has already been recognized by some well-known wine-journalists, whose ratings and evaluations speak for themselves.

Wachau, Kremstal and back again

Thanks to a fortunate coincidence the couple had the chance to get two very famous single vineyards in the Wachau. Fine-fruity, juicy, salty-mouthwatering Riesling with the provenience Dürnsteiner Hollerin and Dürnsteiner Kellerberg went down very well and appealed to the wine – enthusiastic public. This was the go-ahead for further activities. Some parcels on the Kremser Wachtberg as well as in the Kremser "Alaun", an idyllic region close to the left Danube-riverside, were soon added to the portfolio.

The main grape varieties are Grüner Veltliner and Riesling, but in the "Kremser Alaun" area there has also been planted the old variety "Roter Veltliner". But people still have to wait some time for the bottled version of these grapes.

In the meantime, Maria and Andreas could acquire further, very famous single-vineyards in the Wachau, Ried "Bruck" in the Spitzer Graben and Ried "Kollnitz" in Weißenkirchen.

Of course it is a lot of extra effort to have several parcels in different areas, but for Maria and Andreas, this is a further special allure: interaction with the grapes under very various conditions, getting very different types of Grüner Veltliner and Riesling due to completely different terroir.

Somehow wild, but natural and healthy

Working organically was not a decision, it is a logic consequence of Maria's and Andreas' way of life.

"For us, organic viticulture is the understanding of processes in the vinyard's ecosystem and interaction with these natural circumstances. New acquired parcels are of course immediately converted to organic agriculture. Andreas' knowledge as oeno-scientist and consultant in organic viticulture are an important instrument in this context. In his view the vineyards are biospheres,

which must be protected and supported. For example by clearing banks in the vineyards in order to force biodiversity. “We can observe the return of endangered species, such as the bee-eater.”

It's the same with newly acquired, old vineyards, which must carefully be recultivated to preserve the enormous potential of the old vines.

Focus on single vineyards and high quality wines

In the beginning it was possible to profit from the given structures in the parental winery but as a consequence of the process of growth it became more and more necessary to look for an own wine cellar. Once more due to a happy coincidence they could settle in a 500 year old, historically interesting cellar in Krems-Stein with a constant temperature of 8°C. “For more than a hundred years it has not been used in it's original meaning.” In 2014, after an intense period of adaption, the wine was for the first time pressed in the new location.

Minimalism is the obvious concept in the cellar. During the harvest, a fastidious selection of the grapes guarantees perfect initial conditions for the following “laissez-faire”: spontaneous fermentation! The pressed grapes “go their way” and Andreas and Maria accompany them. During the period of fermentation they are very patient and they trust in the energy of their grapes and natural yeasts.

A very long yeast contact is important for the particular character of the Harm(onic) wines which are mainly bottled after a one year ripening period in the tanks or wooden barrels.

HarmGarten

For Maria and Andreas, biodiversity around the grapes is very important. Therefore they started another very special project, which combines viticulture and vegetable growing. Maria Harm grew up in a small nursery, where she experienced the necessary skills. So, on the terraces of the Kremser Wachtberg for example Grüner Veltliner is accompanied by different old tomato varieties, cucumbers, peppers, herbs and garlic. In the Wachau, Maria and Andreas have apricot and peach trees as well as almond trees between the Riesling vines.

Maria and Andreas are also lovers of culinary delicacies and they are currently working on the creation of products from the herbs, fruits and vegetables of their vineyards.

How does a young family with four children manage all these challenges?

“We are so happy and satisfied with what we are doing and we can act out our passions. Our children profit from our activities: They are playing in the vineyards, they get to know them as “natural playgrounds” while we are spending our time on cultivating our vines. The children are learning by observing what we are doing!

This is the kind of luxury, we've always been dreaming of! Our vineyards are lively places in various regards – this is exactly what we want to express with our wines.”