

RIED

KAISERBERG



Ried Kaiserberg is situated halfway between Dürnstein and Weissenkirchen, exactly there where the Danube River makes a sharp bend towards the southwest. The special location on the Danube Bend has significant influence on the climatic conditions of this approximately 14-hectare vineyard. It is permanently affected by the warm Pannonian climate that flow in from the east, but it is also simultaneously exposed to cool air masses that enter the vineyard through north-facing side valleys.

The vineyard terraces face south and southeast and are bedded in a steeply rising slope of up to 73 %. The most elevated vines are at 376 metres, the lowest at 203 metres - a difference that manifests in quite contrasting grape harvest dates. Buschenberg borders the site to the left, while by Liebenberg is on its right. At the foot of the slope the Kaiserberg becomes the Frauengärten and gently continues down towards the Danube. The southeast Kaiserberg includes the sub-site Lichtensteinerin, which was mentioned by name in documents from the 14th century. The name Kaiserberg could possibly stem from Charlemagne, King of the Franks, who drove the Avars from the Wachau around the year 800 and set up camp in this vicinity. The late documentation of this vineyard name in the 17th century makes the theory that it stems from a family name more likely.

The Kaiserberg geology is composed of the two metamorphic rocks migmatite-amphibolite and paragneiss. Amphibolite is a dark rock of volcanic origin with a high concentration of minerals from the amphibole group. Hornblend is the most common representative. Amphibolite is often found together with paragneiss, which is typically occurs west of Dürnstein. Paragneiss is also a metamorphic rock that was formed during the Variscan Orogeny, but was however not subject to melting. Paragneiss metamorphosed from sedimentary rocks like marl, clay, and sandstone. Due to differing rocks of origin, its mineral content is quite diverse (mica schist, quartzite, and dark amphibolite stemming from volcanic activity).

Paragneiss is formed under lower pressures and temperatures than orthogneiss, assumedly around 1000 bar and 600-700 °C. Paragneiss also occurred later and is more prone to weathering. Light and sandy soils with good drainage develop from paragneiss; they warm quickly in spring and are easy for roots to permeate. Soils stemming from pure paragneiss usually have low lime content. Calcareous paragneiss can occur through chemical transformations or, as is the case with Gfoehler gneiss, from ice age deposits of loess.

Five vintner families cultivate 2.5 hectares in the Kaiserberg vineyard for the Domäne Wachau. Mechanical work on these terraces is impossible and the manual labour required is intense. There are a few parcels that were planted in 1935 making these vines not only older than today's Domäne Wachau, but also among the oldest vines in Austria. It is predominantly Grüner Veltliner that roots in this meagre soil, but there are a few Riesling parcels as well.

Depth, balance and elegant minerality distinguish the wines of Ried Kaiserberg. They are often lean and taut in their youth. With a little maturity, the full potential of Kaiserberg is revealed as an aroma profile successively opens and combines subtle peach and apricot notes with pleasant spice.

Grüner Veltliner Federspiel^{RIED} KAISERBERG

Our Kaiserberg vintners:

Hermann Böhmer, Ottilie Ettenauer, Erika Kranister, Gudrun Kropf, Johann Mang, Alois Pomassl, Regina Tauber, Martin Weixelbaum