



RIED LOIBENBERG

The Loibenberg Mountain climbs up to 400 metres and dominates the landscape of the eastern Wachau. A good 24 hectares of its slope are terraced and planted with vines. This not only makes Loibenberg one of the largest single vineyards in the Wachau, it is also one of the most diverse terroirs of the entire region. The vineyard is separated from the Höhereck to the west by the Menthalgraben and is bordered by the Steinertal vineyard to the east. At the foot of the slope, where the soils become deeper and gradually flatten towards the Danube River, the Loibenberg is framed by four further vineyards of superb reputation: Schütt, Hochstrasser, Kreutles and Mühlpoint. The Langen Zung, Raueneck, Rothenberg and Süssenberg are sub-sites within the Loibenberg vineyard.

The Loibenberg has a long history: in documents from the year 1384, it is mentioned as the "Weingaten Bünsam zu Lewben" describing vines planted on Loibenberg. Knowledge of its complex geology is more exact; it is based primarily on Gfoehler gneiss. Granite was formed under the earth's surface through cooling of molten rock around 500 million years ago. Magma encroached once again approximately 100 million years later during the Variscan Orogeny and transformed this rock to migmatic granite-gneiss, otherwise known as Gfoehler gneiss. This metamorphosis took place under much higher temperatures and pressure as, for example, paragneiss. Gfoehler gneiss belongs to the orthogneiss group and comprises the foundation for Loibenberg as well as the upper Achleiten and the Kellerberg.

The spectacular topography features savage cliff faces that rise 200 metres, from the foot of the slope at about 210m above sea level to an acacia forest that covers the peak at around 400 metres altitude. Between these, one finds terraced vineyards facing due south that are only occasionally interrupted by troughs and dips towards the southeast or southwest. The sun has plenty of opportunity to heat the vineyard, which has earned Loibenberg the reputation of the "stove top of the Wachau".

Despite this, there are drastic differences in the growing period of the vines due to two factors: the differences in elevation and the intense draught from the Waldviertel (Forest Quarter), which combine to disrupt the prevalent warm Pannonian influence.

Elevated, windy parcels can ripen up to two weeks later and yield a completely different wine style. Taut, precisely defined Federspiel wines generally come from the cool, wind exposed parcels

under the peak, while the centre and lower reaches of the Loibenberg are the source of concentrated, powerful Smaragd wines.

A further aspect of the vineyard is loess deposit, which at certain places is quite deep and changes the soil structure of the mountain dramatically. This is particularly the case in the eastern part of Loibenberg in the sub-sites Rothenberg and Süssenberg. Loess stores more moisture and warmth and offers the vines there a different environment than those that must force their way through mean and meagre rock. Wines from loess have a softer texture and more fruit.

The geological diversity and climatic complexity and the resulting diversity and quality of the wines from Loibenberg are the foundation for the vineyard's historic reputation. Together with the Achleiten, Ried Klaus and the 1000-Eimer-Berg, the Loibenberg belongs to the vineyards that were considered the best of the Wachau even centuries ago. It is not surprising that two service roads were built across the vineyard already in 1958 to implement a better cultivation and drip irrigation installed in 1978 to aid during excessive dry periods.

Domäne Wachau cultivates slightly over 6 hectares in Loibenberg. Four hectares are planted with Riesling, two with Grüner Veltliner, and a tiny parcel with Gelber Muskateller (Muscat). The Domäne Wachau parcels are predominantly in the west and upper parts of the Loibenberg. The resulting wines are taut, racy and delineated - often not the archetypical Loibenberg, but more reminiscent of the cool style from the western Wachau. Two elegant Federspiels, a Riesling and a Grüner Veltliner, and a Riesling Smaragd that are distinguished by juiciness and finesse are vinified from this site.

Grüner Veltliner Federspiel ^{RIED} LOIBENBERG
Riesling Federspiel ^{RIED} LOIBENBERG
Riesling Smaragd ^{RIED} LOIBENBERG



Our Loibenberg vintners:

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