



## **Blaufränkisch – So Magnificent**

Its origins are not really clear. While the name Blaufränkisch hints that the grape could come from Franken, this variety is actually known in Germany as Lemberger, and there is no trace of it in Franken itself! But there is a chance that the grape hails from France, dating to the time of Charlemagne. Back then, noble French wine varieties were known as “fränkisch”, while not-so-nice ones were called “hunnisch”.

It is said that Blaufränkisch arrived in Austria at the end of the 10th century. From here, it spread to Germany and to eastern- and southeastern Europe – mainly Croatia, Slovenia, and Hungary, where it is called Kekfrankos. Nevertheless, it is clear that Blaufränkisch is Austria’s second-most important red grape variety; it is planted in 5% of the vineyards here. It thrives in the ideal conditions of the Pannonian region, especially in Burgenland, where it produces first-class, complex wines.

Blaufränkisch prefers deep, loamy soils, such as those found in Mittelburgenland, or Middle Burgenland, where the variety thrives. Just as with Zweigelt, the key to high quality Blaufränkisch is yield limitation. This variety tolerates chalky soil, but doesn’t require it. And it grows best in warm southerly-exposed sites with wind protection. It is a late-ripening grape, and strongly fungi-resistant as well.

Blaufränkisch often has a distinctive, fruity taste, showing mainly dark ripe cherry and dark berry notes. But there is also a touch of piquant spiciness. With a sometimes animated acidity, Blaufränkisch wines can be multilayered and concentrated – very nice for laying down. The variety is ideal for maturing in barriques. And in the bottle, it is impressive either as a single varietal or as a partner in a cuvée blend – and not only with other Austrian red varieties, but international ones as well. Blaufränkisch is at home throughout all of the wine-growing areas of Burgenland and in Carnuntum (Lower Austria).