



Zweigelt - seductive charm

Despite its relative youth, Zweigelt is actually an Austrian classic. This variety was created in 1922, when Dr. Fritz Zweigelt crossed two grapes - Sankt Laurent and Blaufränkisch. Originally, it was intended for the new variety to be called Rotburger, referring to the place where it was born, Klosterneuburg. But this name never took hold, and instead, Zweigelt was named after the man who was the key in its development. Today, Zweigelt is the most widely planted red variety in Austria, growing in nearly 9% of this country's vineyards. It is a robust grape, highly resistant to dryness, frost and various diseases. While it does not take particularly well to chalk, it nevertheless makes little demand on most soils. In fact, in deep, nutrient-rich soils - especially in young and moderately young vineyards – Zweigelt yields high amounts of grapes. Therefore, in order to create high quality wines with good storage potential, its yields must be rigorously limited.

In tastings, Zweigelt makes quite an impression with its charming tannins. It is full-bodied with an acidity structure that, in youth, is not overly strong but in maturity becomes smooth and round - resulting in soft, velvety wines. This variety has a concentrated, often dark violet colour. Its aroma is fruity, yet spicy, while its flavours exude tones of cherry and a variety of berries. Because of its fruity individuality and charm, Zweigelt is an ideal food companion. This variety is also well-suited for maturing in barriques as well as in large wooden barrels and steel tanks, and can be bottled as a single varietal or as a partner in a cuvée blend.

Zweigelt can be found in nearly all of Austria's wine-growing areas, especially in the Weinviertel, which boasts the highest number of Zweigelt vines. Planting of the variety abroad has not been very successful, except for a few small areas and where experiments have been conducted - in Germany, England, the USA (the Finger Lakes) and Canada (Ontario, British Columbia).