



# WACHTER- WIESLER

## Sudburgenland, Austria

Christoph Wachter began working at his family winery in 2008 when he was just twenty years old. He took over full responsibility in 2010, and now farms sixteen hectares of vineyards in Südburgenland, in the towns of Eisenberg and Deutsch Schützen. His credo, “Wine is the most interesting, natural and authentic when you recognize its origin. After that, all of our efforts are aligned - and so our grapes grow as close to nature and with as little outside influence as possible. The character comes entirely from the soils of Deutsch-Schützen and Eisenberg.”

When Wachter started in 2010, he stopped using herbicides and pesticides entirely. Today, he is one of only three producers in Südburgenland who is farming organically and is certified as of the 2018 vintage. In 2012, he studied biodynamic farming for two years and he applies some biodynamic techniques today. He allows the weeds to grow in his vineyards, as they attract beneficial insects and eventually return to the soil as nutrients themselves. Rather than add fertilizer, he leaves the vines to extract what they need from the soil itself, thus instilling the wines with minerality and allowing them to express their unique terroir. Only native yeasts are used in the cellar. Wachter ferments his wines twenty to thirty percent whole-cluster, and ages in large barrels that allow the wines to mature gracefully without obscuring them with oak flavors.

The wines of Eisenberg / Sudburgenland are very unique expressions of Blaufränkisch grown on green schist; most Blaufränkisch comes from the limestone soils of Mittelburgenland. The biggest difference between Burgenland and Südburgenland is the soil and micro-climate. In Südburgenland, the vines grow in primary rock, and the most prized terroir is the green schist of the Eisenberg hill, regarded as one of the finest sites for producing Blaufränkisch in Austria, giving wines of great finesse and focus. The Eisenberg DAC includes wines from the surrounding villages, including Deutsch-Schützen, where you find iron rich loam and clay on top of the green schist subsoil. Deutsch-Schützen's soils are dense with a deep layer of loam, resulting in dark and spicy wines with soft tannins. Südburgenland is cooler than Mittelburgenland and there are rolling hillsides, small mountains really, called the pre-Alps, topped with forest; this regulates the temperature, another aspect of the micro-climate of Südburgenland. Harvest here tends to start two weeks after Mittelburgenland. Sudburgenland, with 500 hectares planted is considerably smaller compared to Mittelburgenland with 2,100 hectares.

In the summer of 2019, we were able to meet with Wachter in Eisenberg and we tasted through his new 2017's. He modestly admits that this is perhaps the best vintage that he has made to date. It finally was the first “normal” vintage since 2012 with great weather - no hail or drought - the first vintage since 2012 with great quality and quantity. It allowed Christoph to launch an idea that he's had in mind for a few years. In addition to his single vineyard wines, he will bottle two village level wines, one from Deutsch Schützen and one from Eisenberg. And he made four single-vineyard wines: Weinberg, Ratschen, Saybritz, and Reihberg. His cuvee Bela-Joska remains the flagship of the winery. It's named after his two grand-fathers and the cuvee was first bottled in 1992.

The Wachter-Wiesler wines are some of the most exciting red wines made in Austria today. Wachter-Wiesler wines have silky texture, floral aromatics, great energy, and elegance - truly Blaufränkisch at its finest.

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## Blaufränkisch Eisenberg 'Eisenberg' 2017 12/750ml

Starting with the 2017 vintage, Wachter-Wiesler began bottling two village-level wines, offering a middle ground between the Bela-Joska which gives a good idea of Eisenberg region and the show-stopping single-vineyard wines. The Eisenberg comes from three sites on the famous Eisenberg hill: Saibritz, Humengraben, and Fasching. To be clear, Eisenberg is a vineyard, the famous hill with very little topsoil, where vines grow right into the green schist soil. Eisenberg is a town, and the Eisenberg DAC is named after both because this is the very best place for Blaufränkisch in all of Sudburgenland. The vines here are 40 - 50 years old and give a wine that has a stoney structure, and restrained, yet pretty fruit.

## Technical Specifications

**Product Type:** Red Wine

**Varietal:** Blaufränkisch

**Appellation:** Eisenberg

**Farming Type:** Organic