



## Sauvignon Blanc – Wonderfully Diverse

An Austrian Sauvignon Blanc reflects a unique constellation of pronounced fruitiness, a distinct acidity structure, discreet vegetal notes and - when planted in the right soils – an elegant mineral expression. It wasn't long ago that this variety was appreciated most for its tones of grass & green pepper; in recent years, however, a fruit-dominated Sauvignon Blanc – with an elderflower aroma and flavours of gooseberry and white currant – has been in high demand. No matter which of these two styles is preferred, Sauvignon Blanc always shines with a piquant elegance that contributes to fresh, aromatic wines.

The stronghold of Sauvignon Blanc in Austria is *Steiermark*, or Styria. Here, more than 50% of all plantings of the variety throughout the country are found. But even other areas, such as Carnuntum in *Niederösterreich*, or Lower Austria, as well as Leithagebirge and Neusiedler See - Hügelland in Burgenland, show impressive examples of this old grape variety. In fact, Sauvignon Blanc was planted in these areas more than a century ago. Thanks to the ideal climate combined with a growing popularity of the variety, plantings of Sauvignon Blanc have intensified in recent years.

In principle, Sauvignon Blanc thrives in cooler-climate areas. But it also requires sun in order to develop its intense, fruity aromas. *Südsteiermark*, or South Styria, offers these ideal conditions. And from the chalky, slate or flint soils here, Sauvignon Blanc produces wines with an elegant mineral undertone as well. Compared with other varieties, Sauvignon develops relatively late on the vine, but actually ripens early; this is yet another reason why it grows so well in areas that are not extremely warm. Also, its slow, consistent ripening on the vine has a strongly positive effect on its aroma intensity. Both kinds of aromas - "green vegetal" and "fruity" - can be influenced by meticulous leaf removal and a carefully selected harvest time.

Sauvignon Blanc is a global player. It is present in the Old World, but it also thrives on other continents. Well-known examples of this variety are found in New Zealand, the cooler coastal regions of Chile, and in South Africa. A particularly interesting version of Sauvignon is produced in Spain's Rueda region, around Valladolid.

Contrary to other regions of the wine world, Austria tends to apply classical steel-tank vinification. When wood is used, however, Austrian vintners look to large barrels. Barrique usage is seldom. The cooler the fermentation, the more exotic are the fruit tones – such as lychee and lime. Also sometimes referred to as Muskat-Sylvaner (a very old, traditional name here), Sauvignon Blanc is bottled in Austria mainly as a single varietal.

Recently, though, it has been used in light summer blends as well, but only in small amounts, due to its intensity.

Sauvignon Blanc can be drunk rather young, yet it certainly has long-life potential depending on its maturing process, or when it is made as a sweet wine. It makes a fine companion to light Asian cuisine.

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