



RIED ACHLEITEN

The Achleiten is located on the east side of Weissenkirchen. It borders the Klaus vineyard to the east and southeast and the Hinterkirchen and Weitenberg vineyards to the west. It drops steeply towards the south and on the western end, lightly towards the southwest. The terraces begin directly above the Danube River at around 210 metres above seal level and the most highly elevated parcels are nearly at 360 metres. The Achleiten is situated in the middle of the Wachau and the climate influences are cool, but well balanced. The Danube takes a bend after Dürnstein and the warm Pannonian influences from the east are palpably diminished. In addition to this, strong winds rise from the Danube River. The site was first documented in the 9th century (1314) as "Echleiten", a slope with oak trees.

Crystalline rock dominates the Achleiten with an abundance of pale, foliated Gfoehler gneiss with mica-schist, particularly in the upper portion of the site. Gfoehler gneiss belongs to the orthogneiss group, a metamorphic rock that was formed out of magmatic granite-like rock. The metamorphosis took place several hundred million years ago under the enormous pressure and extremely high temperatures that formed mountains during the Variscan Orogeny. Gfoehler gneiss is pale grey and banded and becomes darker with exposure, but remains pale inside. It is generally porous and crumbles easily. This leads to additional mineral deposits in the soil that are taken up in dissolved form with water by the vines' fibre roots. The mother rock changes significantly at the bottom of the slope where Achleiten meets the Klaus vineyard. Paragneiss, also a metamorphic rock, but formed from sediments (clay-marl and sandstone) under less pressure and lower temperatures, is prevalent here. Paragneiss is also a metamorphic rock that was formed during the Variscan Orogeny, but was however not subject to melting. Paragneiss metamorphosed from sedimentary rocks like marl, clay, and sandstone. Due to differing rocks of origin, its mineral content is quite diverse (mica schist, quartzite, and dark amphibolite stemming from volcanic activity). Paragneiss is formed under lower pressures and temperatures than orthogneiss, assumedly around 1000 bar and 600-700 °C.

Paragneiss also occurred later and is more prone to weathering. Light and sandy soils with good drainage develop from paragneiss;

they warm quickly in spring and are easy for roots to permeate. Soils stemming from pure paragneiss usually have low lime content. Calcareous paragneiss can occur through chemical transformations or, as is the case with Gfoehler gneiss, from ice age deposits of loess. Particularly striking is the schistose amphibolite rock that is often embedded in the site. Base-rich migmatite-amphibolite often accompanies Gfoehler gneiss in the upper Achleiten. Migmatite-amphibolite is a metamorphic rock with high amphibole content, most commonly hornblende.

It often appears in small lentil-shapes and is distributed fairly homogeneously, especially in paragneiss. As a further example of the unique heterogeneity of the Achleiten are loess deposits. The topsoil is generally quite shallow with 20-30 cm of weathered, fine material over rock, which makes drip irrigation a necessity in very dry years to ensure vines constant mineral nourishment.

The average age of the vines is around 40 years. Domäne Wachau cultivates around 6 of the 18.6 hectares of vines in the Achleiten; 45 % of which are Grüner Veltliner and 55 % are Riesling. The grapes from Achleiten yield very mineral wines that are often perceived as smoky and accompanied by nuances of flint. The wines of the Achleiten are distinguished by a particular elegant, taut-vibrant structure that certainly contributes to their tremendous potential for ageing. The Achleiten is perhaps the most uncompromising vineyard of the Wachau: the expression of the site persistently dominates the grape variety.

Grüner Veltliner Smaragd ^{RIED} ACHLEITEN
Riesling Smaragd ^{RIED} ACHLEITEN



Our Achleiten vintners:

Herbert Bernhard, Claudia Denk, Martin Denk, Karl Fröschl, Gertrude & Gerald Herndl, Marianne Holzinger, Dietmar Lehensteiner, Eva Lehensteiner, Angelika Mang, Heinrich Mang, Eduard Stierschneider, Franz & Paul Stierschneider, Elfriede Trautsamwieser, Karin & Josef Trautsamwieser, Martin Weixelbaum, Rudolf Zottl