

Hillinger Ried Umriss Blaufränkisch Leithaberg DAC – Burgenland

<https://www.leo-hillinger.com/die-geschichte-des-blaufraenkisch-leithaberg-dac-ried-umriss-2017/>



<https://www.falstaff.com/pd/w/weingut-leo-hillinger-2017-blaufraenkisch-leithaberg-dac-ried-umriss-rust/>

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THE HISTORY OF BLAUFRÄNKISCH LEITHABERG DAC RIED UMRISSE 2017

When it became apparent in 2016 that I would take over the cellar of the winery, I began to deal intensively with the individual wines that were stored in 2016. One of my first challenges was the assemblage of the Blaufränkisch Leithaberg DAC 2016 in late summer 2017. Since we had experienced a hundred-year frost in Burgenland in 2016, the individual wines were only available in small quantities, but in outstanding quality. As usual, the wines were tasted individually and then blended.

Based on the quality of the individual batches, I assumed that it should be easy to blend these wines to achieve great results. The result was sobering. The first attempts seemed inharmonious, out of round and agitated. The wines showed none of the expected fullness, power, and elegance. A few days, sleepless and brooding nights later, I devoted myself to the subject again. I couldn't accept that I shouldn't be able to blend these wines. The first attempt was a hit and the cuvée was ready. I didn't have an explanation for that.

When cutting the batches exactly on the paper, I noticed that I had simply forgotten a batch when I tried again. Due to the frost event, this batch was extremely small and I decided to do without it. The topic preoccupied me subconsciously in the first days of the 2017 harvest, but permanently. Then, one long evening at the winery, the scales fell from my eyes. I immediately tasted that single batch that had been forgotten during the assemblage again and concentrated. The result was one of the most beautiful experiences of my time in this profession. Immediately it became clear why this wine cannot exist in a cuvée. Or to put it better, why the cuvée cannot stand up to this wine. This wine was too original. Completely self-contained, majestic, elegant, and large, this wine does not tolerate any other gods beside it. This wine immediately takes the lead in every cuvée. It changes everything forever. Above all, it is the quiet, but more intense tones that make this wine sound. Absolutely stable fruit in the nose and on the palate opened the door for a feminine and elegant experience on the palate. Delicate, powerfully ground and perfectly gentle, it clarifies the relationships on the palate. The wine broke off completely for a moment and literally froze. Waiting and suppressing the disappointment that was announced, what we had hoped for then turned up. All impressions of the palate met in a minute-long and intensive experience.

The quintessence of this experience was that we are dealing with a real, independent, unique origin. One of the rare cases in which grape variety, vine age and location form an unmistakable, independent unit. That femininity and punchy elegance are not the result of the vintner's hand or of "wine-making". These properties come from that mystical triangle which cannot be explained but is an indescribable experience for every winemaker. I quickly found out that this batch was Ried outline from the Rust destination. Two lots high above Rust. Protected from the wind by a piece of forest, the outline with a slight north-west exposure is our highest vineyard above Lake Neusiedl. In the next few days, it was decided to harvest and expand this plot separately. The harvest was carried out highly selectively by hand. The grapes were then destemmed and placed in the open fermenter for mash fermentation. Our aim was to work quietly and as little invasively as possible. The mash should not be pushed or pumped excessively. The wine was only moved by hand three times a day. It was necessary to take a step back, to suppress the urge to act and sometimes even to forget what had been learned to let things happen and create space for the extraordinary. After 19 days, the wine was pressed and soon transferred to a 3,200-liter wooden barrel. He stayed there for three and a half years. He was only given a prize. Being able to accompany the wine during its development was one of the most exciting journeys of my professional path to date. Here, too, it was often necessary to remain calm so as not to impair the development of the wine. I don't know how often during this time I heard the question when the wine will finally be bottled. My answer was always the same. If the wine wants it. And he took his time. When the time finally came, I faced the challenge of filling it. Filtration or machines were completely ruled out because the wine was simply too sensitive and delicate. In the end it was all about leaving him everything he brought

with him. So, we decided to fill the wine by hand like our grandfathers, or with a hand-held filler. A very complex, but in this case, there is no alternative method to get something extraordinary.

As already mentioned, this journey was one of the most exciting and exciting of my path so far. Much of what I love and appreciate about my job and why it is the best job in the world came together on this path. It will be a celebration for me to continue to accompany this 2017 Blaufränkisch, Leithaberg DAC, Ried Ruster outline over the next few decades.

Kind regards

DI (FH) Peter Zuschlag (Celler Master)

