

Red Feet Wine Market
HANG TIME “Amazing Austria”
Thursday, March 20, 2008

PRICES ARE FOR:

1 BOTTLE – 6 BOTTLES – 12 BOTTLES (Mixing is OK!)

**Domäne Wachau Gruner Veltliner, “Terrassen,”
Federspiel, 2006 (Wachau)**

\$12.50 each - \$11.25 (6) - \$10.63 (12)

This is a good quality Gruner for the price. Classic lemon, fresh herb (mint perhaps?), citrus and peach on the nose lead to a crisp, fresh white that still has good roundness, despite its acid structure. Medium weight.

**Josef Schmid “Pepino” (Gruner Veltliner,
Chardonnay, Yellow Muscat), 2006 (Kremstal)**

\$18 each - \$16.20 (6) - \$15.30 (12)

This is a medium to fuller bodied blend with light aromas of citrus, white pepper and herb. The wine is round and nicely rich with a creamy, lemony character. We recommend drinking this closer to 49°F in order to enjoy its lush texture.

Berger Zweigelt 2006 (Kremstal)

\$12 each - \$10.80 (6) - \$10.20 (12)

This lighter to medium bodied, fun red wine is fruity and easy-going like a high quality Beaujolais. It's quite aromatic with strawberry, raspberry and plum flavors and great freshness and acidity. Try this with spicy Thai or highly seasoned foods when you still want a red.

Weingut Glatzer Blaufränkisch 2006 (Carnuntum)

\$15.50 each - \$13.95 (6) - \$13.18 (12)

Like all screwcap wines, this enjoys some aeration time to be its best. It will become richer over time. This medium-bodied red is Barbera-like with a touch of acidity. It tastes and smells of blackberry and dried herbs. The tannins are very soft, the finish medium length.

**Paul Lehrner “Claus”—85% Zweigelt, 15%
Blaufränkisch, 2006 (Mittelburgenland)**

\$20 each - \$18 (6) - \$17 (12)

Herbs, earth and red and black fruit on the nose. The entry is round and complex. As the wine opens, rich blackberry flavors dominate the palate, supported by fine, soft tannins and high-toned acid. The finish is long and ripe.

Sattler Zweigelt 2006 (Burgenland)

\$19 each - \$17.10 (6) - \$16.15 (12)

A nose of farmyard, earth, mushrooms, and black pepper prepares you for the flavors of this comparatively heavier wine. Mushrooms and black pepper continue and are joined by jammy blackberries, plums, dried herbs with a round mouthfeel. Acidity helps structure the wine. The finish is long and satisfying.

See you next Thursday for HANG TIME!

Our subject will be “Cabernet Franc from around the World”

EXPLORE THE WORLD IN YOUR GLASS.

Amazing Austria

Austria produces both red and white wines in four major regions in the eastern part of the country. Vienna is the smallest, followed by Styria in the southern Alps; Burgenland borders Hungary and shares many of the same traditions; Lower Austria is the largest region, including the Weinviertel, Donauland, Kamptal, Thermenregion, Carnuntum, and Wachau.

Eighty percent of Austrian wine is white, mostly dry with some dessert wines. Grüner Veltliner is Austria's signature white grape, tart, lemony, herby, creamy and savory with white pepper notes. Austria's Riesling is racy and taut; but also makes glorious dessert wine. Sauvignon Blanc, Gewürztraminer, Weißburgunder (Pinot Blanc), Morillon (Chardonnay) and various Muscats are also grown. Austrian whites tend to be more full bodied and fruity than their German counterparts. Austria's dessert wines, often made from Welschriesling (neither Welsh nor Riesling) or Furmint, deserve a write-up of their own.

The main red grapes are Blauburgunder (Pinot Noir), St. Laurent, Blaufränkisch (Lemberger) and Zweigelt (a cross of St. Laurent and Blaufränkisch). These medium-bodied reds often have a spicy character and soft tannins. All pair well with a variety of foods

Wines are graded by ripeness at harvest; the less ripe the grapes, the lighter bodied the wine (sweetness is not a factor). Wines are labeled by grape type, and different grapes are rarely blended. Today we'll pour exceptions to this practice, a white from Josef Schmid that contains Grüner Veltliner, Chardonnay, and Yellow Muscat (the finest of Austria's Muscats), and a red from Paul Lehrner that is an 85/15 field blend of Zweigelt and Blaufränkisch.

Most Austrian wineries are very small—some 30,000 of them are less than 2.5 acres and sell most of their wines at the winery (somewhat like our Finger Lakes). Many have a Heuriger, a wine bar that features the producer's wine and food. The right to set up these wine bars dates from the time of Charlemagne. *Heurig* means “this season's”; a wine officially becomes heurig on St. Martin's Day, November 11. Local laws specify when a Heurige may sell the new wine; on that day, a bush of pine twigs is hung above the entrance.

Austria's first grapevines were planted by the Celts in the 4th century BC. Vineyards were taken over by the Romans when the southeast became provinces. After a few centuries of barbarian incursions, viticulture resumed under Charlemagne. Later, monasteries became the center, and the area under vine was ten times that of today. The modern story of wine begins with the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1919. A weak and unstable economy led to the production and export of cheap, somewhat sweet juice, a downward spiral that came to a head in 1985. Some unscrupulous producers were adulterating their wine with diethylene glycol, a non-toxic component of antifreeze, to make the wine taste fuller and sweeter. In the aftermath of this scandal, the Austrian government developed Europe's most strict and comprehensive set of wine laws, specifying what grapes can be grown where, yields, ripeness at harvest, fermentation methods, and label information. The result has been a rapid increase in quality across the board.