

Stephen Tanzer's
INTERNATIONAL WINE CELLAR

Johann Donabaum, Spitz

By Peter Moser

Nov/Dec 08

The 2007 vintage was particularly difficult in the Spitzer Graben, a cool side valley of the Wachau. Four days of heavy rainfall in mid-September led to massive swelling of the ripening grapes. The main harvest was then delayed until November. According to Johann Donabaum, "We had to be very restrictive in our manual selection of fruit in the vineyard: our two top gruner veltliners [the Spitzer Point and Loibner Reserve] were not harvested until the 18th and 21st of November." The situation was different with riesling, Donabaum went on. "The rain in September proved to be advantageous for the ripening of riesling grapes on meager primary rock. Fruit from the Offenberg and Setzberg vineyards was harvested in nearly perfect conditions with very little botrytis at the end of October. In fact, 2007 is the best riesling vintage here since I began making wines at my parents' winery ten years ago."

Also recommended: 2007 Gruner Veltliner Federspiel Spitzer Point (86). (Winemonger, Los Angeles, CA; Frederick Wildman & Sons, New York, NY)

2007 Johann Donabaum Gruner Veltliner Federspiel Johann

(\$24) Pale green-yellow. Inviting apple and delicate white pepper aromas. Medium-bodied and light on its feet, with delicate flavors of grapefruit and crisp green apple. This agile, youthful and uncomplicated wine makes for an extremely appetizing drink on a hot summer day, and is a perfect accompaniment for light summer dishes. Drink now to 2012.

87

2007 Johann Donabaum Gruner Veltliner Smaragd Spitzer Point

(\$51) Medium green-yellow. Smoky flint, green apple, banana, grapefruit zest and black pepper on the nose. The wine's pronounced varietal expression also comes through clearly in the mouth, which features abundant pepper, grapefruit, apple and banana peel flavors. Fairly full-bodied but elegantly focused thanks to vibrant acidity. Notes of flint and dill join the fruits and spices on the finish. A very versatile food wine that

can be paired with anything from grilled fish to spicy chicken dishes. Drink now to 2017.

92

2007 Johann Donabaum Gruner Veltliner Smaragd Loibner Reserve

(\$65) Medium green-yellow. Aromas of apricot and peach are complicated by nuances of anise, dill, white pepper, tobacco, wet stone and blossom honey on the fascinating, varietally expressive nose. Quite complex in the mouth as well, offering flavors of juicy pear, yellow apple and hay blossom, along with an abundant minerality reminiscent of fresh rain on warm slate. Quite powerful but also vibrantly structured thanks to sound acidity. The very long and nuanced finish echoes the wine's diverse aromas and flavors. Drink now to 2022.

94

2007 Johann Donabaum Riesling Federspiel Bergterrassen

(\$26) Pale green-yellow. Lime zest, white peach and a hint of spice on the nose. Light in body but not especially tightly strung despite its dominant acidity. Notes of white apple and lemon linger on the finish. Drink 2009 to 2013.

87

2007 Johann Donabaum Riesling Smaragd Offenberg

(\$57) Medium green-yellow. Peach, apricot, lichee and blossom honey give the nose and mouth of this wine a rather exotic impression. The sweet fruit of this dry wine is perfectly countered by an appropriate dose of acidity. Finishes fruity and persistent. Already offers plenty of drinking pleasure, but also possesses excellent aging potential. Drink through 2017.

92

2007 Johann Donabaum Riesling Smaragd Setzberg

(\$57) Medium green-yellow. Initially subdued nose opens with air to show gooseberry, apricot, peach and smoky flint elements that carry through onto the palate. Full-bodied yet juicy and elegant, with delicate ginger and minerals contributing complexity. Yellow peach lingers on an extraordinarily long finish. This wine already hints at its greatness, but will continue to benefit from bottle maturation. Drink 2013 to 2022.

94

2007 Johann Donabaum Neuburger Spitzer Biern Reserve

(\$45) Medium green-yellow. Raisined apricot and pear with green hazelnut and honey on the nose. Very creamy and elegant in the mouth, with distinctly mild acidity. Juicy papaya and raisins flavor the mouth and the finish. This is a very successful and exotic interpretation of the neuburger grape variety which, despite its rather soft acidity, should prove to be ageworthy. Drink now to 2017.

93

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Meinhard Forstreiter, Hollenburg-Krems

By Peter Moser

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Hail in June damaged a large portion of the crop here in 2007, with some vineyards producing no fruit at all. The remaining grapes, however, profited from near-ideal autumn weather and were physiologically ripe, with varietally expressive fruit aromas: the Forstreiter 2007s generally exhibit intense fruit and noteworthy vitality. Incidentally, 95% of the wines exported by Forstreiter are gruner veltliner.

2007 Meinhard Forstreiter Gruner Veltliner Kremser Kogl Bergwein

(\$13) Pale green-yellow. Discreet nose offers smoky flint, bay leaf and hints of gooseberry and peach. Juicy, medium-bodied fruit is nicely balanced by a racy acid structure. Yellow apple and nettles linger pleasantly on this refreshing, appetizing wine. Drink now to 2012.

88

[Compare Price](#)

2007 Meinhard Forstreiter Gruner Veltliner Kremstal DAC Reserve Schiefer

(\$24) Medium green-yellow. Gooseberry jelly, apple and delicate smoky flint on the nose. Complex, juicy and refreshing in the mouth, with a sweetly extracted core of yellow apple wrapped in zingy grapefruit. Intense apricot and apple flavors linger on the back end. Drink now to 2017.

91

2007 Meinhard Forstreiter Gruner Veltliner Kremstal DAC Reserve Tabor

(\$38) Medium green-yellow. Initially subdued nose slowly opens to reveal attractive varietal notes of apple fruit backed with sponge cake, tobacco and bay leaf. Very complex and full-bodied in the mouth, with wet slate and sweetly extracted green apple and pear flavors highlighted by a lively acid structure. A characterful, ageworthy wine with a very

persistent finish. Drink now to 2022.

93

2007 Meinhard Forstreiter Riesling Donau

(\$19) Pale green-yellow. Apricot, green apple and a touch of lemon zest on the nose. Juicy fresh peach dominates in the mouth, with the sweet fruit of this dry, crisp wine nicely buffering its racy acidity. Finishes with apple and a delicate leafy flavor. Drink now to 2012.

88

2007 Meinhard Forstreiter Riesling Kremstal DAC Reserve Schiefer

Pale green-yellow. Inviting apricot and peach aromas complicated by passion fruit, nutmeg and lime zest. Juicy and elegant in the mouth, with brilliant acidity giving it a precise structure. Sweet lemon and minerals linger on the finish of this appetizing wine. Drink now to 2017. (Frederick Wildman & Sons, New York, NY)

90

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Karl Fritsch, Kirchberg

By Peter Moser

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The deep loess soils here made possible an early harvest beginning in the middle of September. Karl Fritsch was able to achieve physiological ripeness quite early with his methods of cultivation, and the harvest yielded sophisticated wines with moderate alcohol levels and plenty of spice and finesse.

2007 Karl Fritsch Gruner Veltliner Windspiel

(\$14) Pale green-yellow. Appetizing bouquet exhibits yellow apple and subtle celery, with white pepper and lemon in the background. On the palate, surprisingly juicy pear is pleasantly highlighted by a lively play of acid. A medium-bodied, dry wine with discreet residual sweetness and peppered celery on the finish. Drink now to 2012.

88

[Compare Price](#)

2007 Karl Fritsch Gruner Veltliner Steinberg

(\$17) Medium green-yellow. Apricot and ripe mango backed by tobacco and discreet blossom honey on the nose. Elegant and creamy in the mouth, with plenty of extract but still retaining a streamlined character due to a finely strung acid structure. Pleasantly sweet fruit persists on the finish of this dry wine. Drink now to 2017.

90

2007 Karl Fritsch Gruner Veltliner Schlossberg

Medium green-yellow. Inviting bouquet of honeydew melon, subtle orange zest and smoky flint. Juicy, sweet apricot fruit is spiced with pepper and cool wet minerals. Pear and orange linger long on the finish of this multifaceted wine. Drink through 2017.

93

2007 Karl Fritsch Riesling Wagram

(\$18) Pale green-yellow. Honey-drizzled apricot and peach with orange peel and melon on the nose. Strongly mineral flavors evoke a mountain stream, with a juicy fruitiness reminiscent of apricot and grapefruit. Offers lively acidity and a nicely delineated structure. The persistent finish features a lemony nuance along with mineral elements. An appetizing, well-balanced riesling with good aging potential. Drink now to 2017. (Frederick Wildman & Sons, New York, NY)

91

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Neumeister, Straden

By Peter Moser

Nov/Dec 08

The cool but dry harvest in southeast Styria lasted from late September through the end of October. All of the Neumeisters' grapes were picked fully ripe, with their primary fruit and acidity well preserved. Enologist Christoph Neumeister expects a lot from this vintage: "The wines are ripe and well-structured, firm and compact, yet still very elegant and with plenty of the typical Styrian varietal fruit expression. It promises to develop into a truly great vintage."

2007 Neumeister Morillon Steirische Klassik

(\$26) Pale green-yellow. Apple, pear, orange and almond blossom on the nose and in the mouth. Elegantly integrated, lively acidity gives shape and lift to this enticing chardonnay. Finishes with lingering notes of apple and quince. Drink now to 2012.

89

2007 Neumeister Grauburgunder Klassik

(\$26) Medium yellow-green. Exotic suggestions of papaya and melon are complicated by walnut and spring meadow herbs on the nose. Powerful and full-bodied yet still elegant, with bright acidity framing the pinot gris-typical apricot flavor. Rich fruit lingers on the finish. Should benefit from a bit of bottle maturation and hold until at least 2013.

89

2007 Neumeister Gelber Muskateller Steirische Klassik

(\$23) Pale green-yellow. Wonderfully fragrant nose offers freshly crushed grape seed, nutmeg, elderflower and orange zest. Crisp and refreshing, with appetizing acidity brightening the wine's delicate floral flavors. Delicate bergamot and borage nuances linger on the moderately long finish. This makes an excellent aperitif. Drink now to 2012.

90

2007 Neumeister Sauvignon Blanc Steirische Klassik

(\$23) Pale green-yellow. Juicy gooseberry, cassis, mango, lemon zest and elderflower on the nose. A lively midweight with excellent shape and grip to its mango and green apple flavors. This very versatile food wine finishes with a lingering wet stone quality. Drink now to 2012.

90**2007 Neumeister Sauvignon Blanc Klausen**

(\$38) Pale green-yellow. Clear varietal character is expressed by aromas of elderflower, blackcurrant, gooseberry jelly and mandarin orange. Medium-bodied sauvignon, with juicy acidity framing and freshening the inviting and rather tropical flavors of lichee and mandarin orange. More bracing and delicate at present than particularly generous, this very young wine leaves one with the desire for another glass. Drink now to 2012.

91**2007 Neumeister Sauvignon Blanc Moarfeitl**

(\$50) Medium green-yellow. Concentrated gooseberry jelly is accompanied by greengage plum, blossom honey, green bell pepper and dark wet slate on the nose and palate. Fairly large-scaled and muscular, but given grace by harmonious, lively acidity. The long finish throws off notes of blackcurrant, apricot and mango complicated by wet stone. Drink now to 2017.

93**2007 Neumeister Roter Traminer Steintal**

(\$36) Medium yellow-green with subtle golden highlights. A classic gewurztraminer nose exudes rose, marshmallow, lichee and a hint of honey. Opulent and full-bodied with generous and somewhat sweet yellow peach flavor buffered by a rather raw mineral character. This long-distance runner should benefit significantly from a few years in the bottle. Drink 2010 to 2019. (Frederick Wildman & Sons, New York, NY)

92