

KNEWITZ

WEINGUT KNEWITZ APPENHEIM



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THE VINTAGE 2022

Early in the year, when we leave winter behind and start the growing season, we try – often unconsciously at first – to draw parallels to previous vintages and to classify the current wine year.

Vintages can be so similar, and yet no two are alike. Every vintage is unique – just like the wines that emerge from it. Our intention is to create wines that are not only a reflection of their origin, but also allow us to taste the typicity of the corresponding vintage.

A healthy and balanced vineyard is the core requirement for authentic, distinctive wines. Only in this way can we maintain and promote the vitality of the vines and harvest extract-rich grapes at a perfect stage of ripeness.

Already at the beginning of the 2022 wine year, the weather pattern made us think back to the 2018 vintage. We started both years with a wet and mild winter, followed by an equally warm spring and a hot, dry summer. We also recognized a lot of parallels in the management of the vineyards due to the similar weather. But in the fall there was a drastic turnaround ...



The wine year

We were happy to have a wet winter 2021/2022, which, in combination with the good water storage capacity of our soils, always helps us to get through the worst dry spells of a year without any problems.

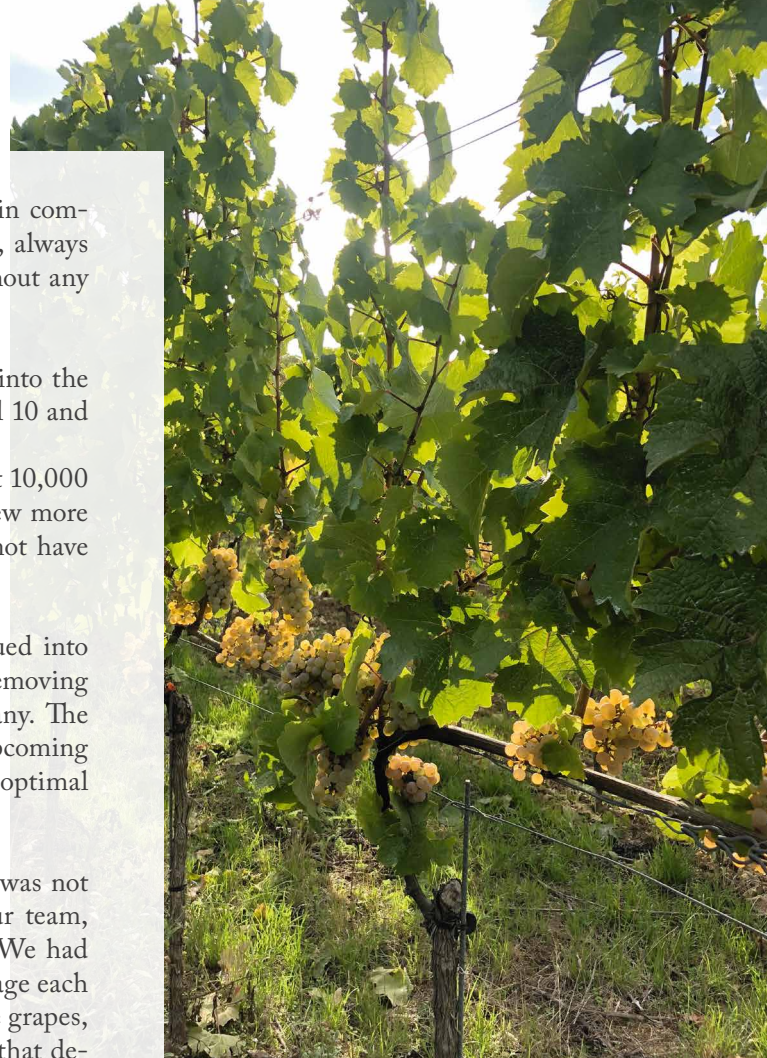
The balanced humidity and mild temperatures continued into the spring, resulting in relatively early budbreak between April 10 and 15.

On April 19, 2022 we planted a 1.5-ha vineyard with about 10,000 vines in the Honigberg site. These vines would see us a few more times in the upcoming summer, as they would probably not have grown without our irrigation.

As the warm temperatures and moderate rainfall continued into May and June, the foliage work initially consisted of removing double shoots and shoots/leaves where there were too many. The resulting yield reduction was important in view of the upcoming drought, and thus helped the remaining berries to receive optimal nutrition.

In view of the enormous number of hours of sunshine, it was not only necessary to provide sufficient sun protection for our team, who worked up a good sweat during the vineyard work. We had almost 40 hours of sunshine more than the long-term average each month. Therefore, sufficient shade was also essential for the grapes, and hardly any defoliation took place. Only lateral shoots that developed late were removed to ensure better ventilation.

This procedure is absolutely essential in sunny, hot vintages, as too much sunlight can increase the concentration of tannins or bitter substances in the grapes – and thus later in the wine. In addition, too many carotenoids are formed. These give the wine an intense color already in the young stage – which means less maturation potential and is therefore undesirable. Ripening the grapes too quickly causes pH levels to rise and accelerates natural acidity degradation. All these points can have a decisive negative effect on the maturation potential of a wine – especially Riesling.



This period was followed by an almost precipitation-free July and August. With maximum values of up to 37.4 °C, the average temperatures were also up to three degrees warmer than the long-term average. These two months were an emotional rollercoaster for us. Time and again, the weather forecast predicted the eagerly awaited rain. Time and again we got our hopes up high and were disappointed when rain again failed to materialize. Even the thunderstorms that passed over our region did not bring any precipitation.

All hope and trepidation did not help: We had to further reduce yields to ensure optimal supply of the grapes with water and nutrients. Some young vines had to be irrigated in order to survive.

After these hot and dry summer months, we eagerly observed the weather in the last weeks in August and stood in the starting blocks for the beginning autumn.





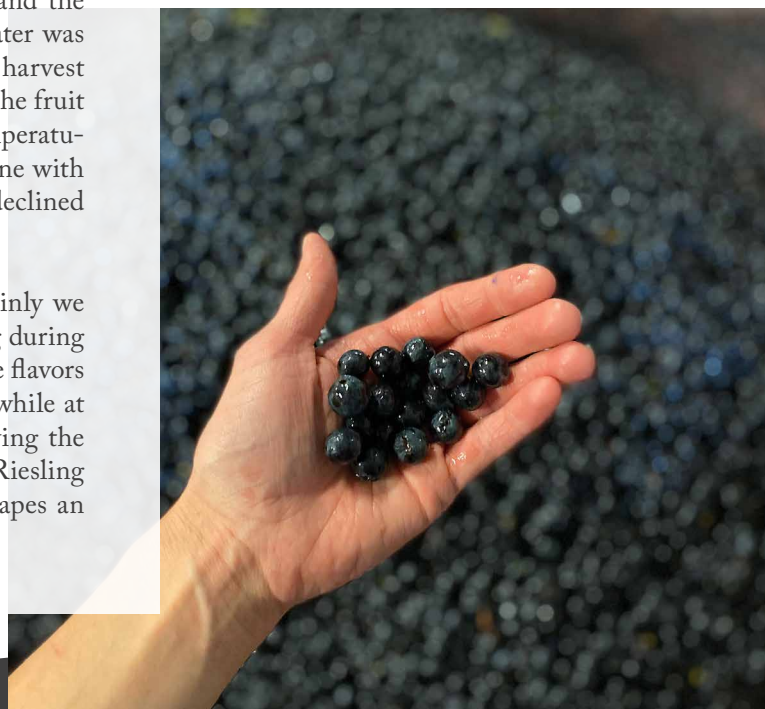
Picking

We started the harvest quite relaxed on September 6, with the first Chardonnay grapes for sparkling wine base wine, as well as beautiful Pinot Noir grapes from the Gau-Algesheimer Laurenzikapelle and the Ingelheimer Schlossberg.

The day after, the actual Chardonnay harvest followed. Until September 15, we continued with Chardonnay and Weisser Burgunder, both with incredibly aromatic grapes, and we were pleased with their great ripeness and the almost perfect pH values between 3.1 and 3.3 as well as acidity values between 7.7 and 8.5 g/l. For us it was already clear that 2022 would be an absolute Pinot year, both red and white.

In the meantime, a nice country rain not only made for a beautiful change but was indeed very important for further ripening, because it was very good for the flavors of the remaining grapes and the texture of the juice. Since the soils were so thirsty, the water was positively absorbed and had no negative effects. During the harvest breaks, a little defoliation was done here and there to keep the fruit zone dry. There was no longer any danger of sunburn, as temperatures now reached more moderate, pleasant levels again, in line with the long-term average. The intensity of solar radiation also declined steadily.

From September 14, temperatures continued to drop. Mainly we had very cool nights, and it was really chilly in the morning during the first hours of picking. The cool temperatures allowed the flavors and aromas already present in the grapes to be preserved, while at the same time slowing down the ripening process and giving the berries enough time to further develop the characteristic Riesling profile. The interplay of sweetness and acidity gave the grapes an incredible edge and we got a total buzz out of tasting them.



We very happily finished harvesting our Pinot grapes on September 15. But the positive mood quickly toppled when we started to turn our attention to our Riesling. All of a sudden it started to rain, and we could hardly believe the masses of rain that were now coming from the sky every day. After two incredibly hot and almost rain-free months, 99 liters of rain fell within 20 days. Right in the middle of the main harvest season, a phase in which we really couldn't use it anymore. We were stunned and frustrated. In retrospect, it was almost a bit crazy how well the grapes had toughened up and coped with all that water. Of course, there were some berries that fell victim to the moisture and needed to be meticulously removed by our harvesting team with an enormous time effort. In addition, the grapes were manually sorted and selected in the winery with the help of our sorting table. This was an enormous additional effort, without which we would not have been able to deliver only healthy and fully ripe grapes to the winepress.

There were another 78 liters of rain in October. In both months, this was almost twice as much rain as the long-term average.

We finished the harvest on October 4 with the grapes from the Honigberg as well as a plot in the Steinacker. The values of our Rieslings were also truly pleasing, with pH values between 2.9 and 3.1 and acidity values between 7.5 and 9.0 g/l. Less pleasing, however, were the final quantities. This is because the yields were literally „thinned out“ by the extensive selection measures required. As a result, only 18 - 20 hectoliters per hectare remained for the „Große Gewächse“, as an example.



In retrospect, the 2022 vintage was for us an „autumn with two faces“, and there were two completely contrasting harvest periods. The first ten days were characterized by dryness and warmth. The Pinot grapes were almost perfectly ripe and highly aromatic. Harvesting took place only in the morning hours, as it was simply too warm during the day.

Then, in the second half of September, the weather turned to never-ending rain and cool nights. From a climatic point of view, it was a classic autumn, but the high precipitation caused us a lot of extra work.

It was nice, however, that despite the warm vintage we were able to record almost perfect pH and acidity values, which are so important for expressive and long-lived wines. Here we see again how important a lively, well-supplied and aerated soil is. This promotes a healthy balance, an optimal nutrient regime and a good exchange between soil and vine. Only in this way can the grapes be supplied with water and nutrients in an optimal manner.



Outlook

We are pleased about a very expressive vintage, which makes you want more. The Gutsweine (estate wines) entice with juicy yellow fruit, are invigorating and playful and offer – even at entry level in our range – drinking pleasure of the highest quality.

The wines of the Erste Lagen and the Ortsweine Aus Ersten Lagen also present themselves in the usual Knewitz style with exciting herbal spice and crystalline clarity. One could even speak of truly terroir-driven wines, which transport the taste of the predominant rock to the palate, where it unfolds a playful saltiness.

Hundertgulden GG 2022 – at its best age

Our core plot, grown in the middle of Appenheim's Hundertgulden, is now 17 years old and getting more and more into its stride. The vines grow on pure limestone, which allows the wines to reach top form.

In the 2022 vintage, our Hundertgulden GG presents itself as a very powerful and complex wine that comes across as wonderfully spicy and with delicately notes of yellow fruit. The creamy texture of the wine's acidity caresses the palate and reverberates for a long time.

Steinacker GG 2022 – two rocky filet plots

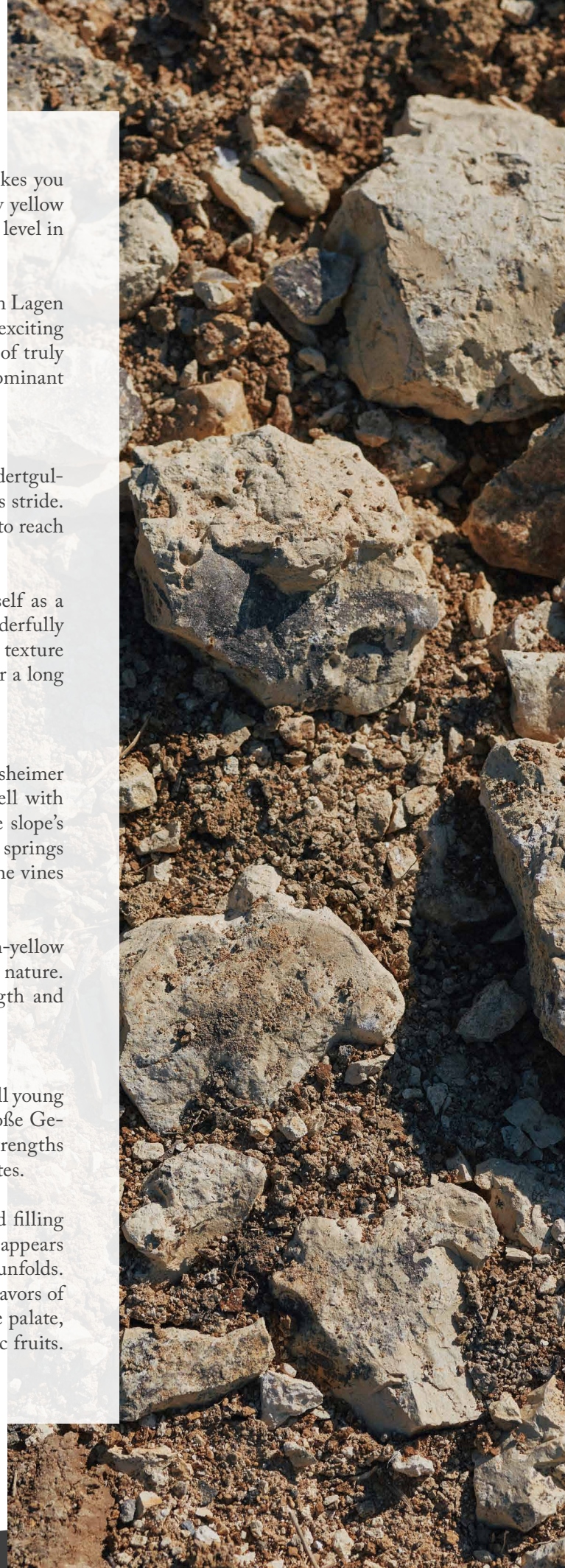
The two „filet parcels“ from the heart of the Nieder-Hilbersheimer Steinacker have now also reached a nice age and cope well with the warm years. The vines are now deeply rooted and the slope's aspect, the plot's high altitude as well as the underground springs and the good water storage capacity of the soil also help the vines immensely.

The Steinacker GG from the 2022 vintage brings greenish-yellow reflections into the glass and delights with its cool and wild nature. The salty acidity structure provides it with plenty of length and elegance.

Honigberg 2022 – young jewel

Our Honigberg 2022 complements our series of sites as a still young gem. For us, this wine is a great link between the two Große Gewächse. Not only the site, but also the wine combines the strengths and characteristics of the Hundertgulden and Steinacker sites.

For us, Honigberg is a wine that combines complexity and filling warmth with a cool and fine acidity backbone. Initially it appears cool and restrained, then its yeasty-spicy and reductive nose unfolds. Subtle aromas of wildflowers and herbs increase, and the flavors of the terroir – pure iron ore included – follow through to the palate, triggering associations with different hues of red and exotic fruits. Despite the contrasts, this wine is wonderfully balanced.





News and updates

„Standstill is a step backwards“: Almost everyone knows the quote by Rudolf von Bennigsen-Foerder. It is also our mission to always develop and improve. There are still many adjustments necessary, and we are still a long way from reaching our goals. But we are on our way. Read on to learn more about the latest developments.

Riesling – about new and old sites

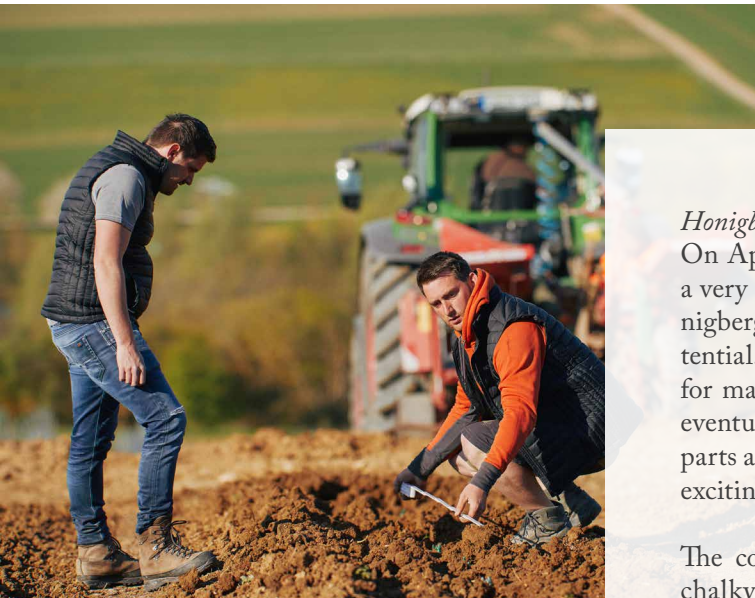
In recent years, we have been able to plant or replant several plots predestined for Riesling with this great grape variety. For us, there is no other grape that so precisely and clearly reflects the soil, the climate, the aspect and gradient of the vineyards, the course of the weather and thus the vintage as Riesling is able to do. There is no other variety that can be vinified in so many different ways, as sparkling wine and still wine, in all Prädikat levels, a variety whose wines can age for decades and sometimes even a century.

Riesling is a grape variety of great elegance, which very rarely pushes itself to the forefront. Weighty and heavy may be characteristics of other varieties. Above all, Riesling entices with its delicate and playful nature, with its elegance and its charms. This wonderful character can be perceived in its youth already, when the fruit predominates. And Riesling stays true to this character as it matures and more complex aromas and flavors develop.

Erste Lage 1G

We are very pleased that starting this year, the regional association VDP.Rheinhausen is also introducing a new quality level with the Erste Lage 1G and thus the four-level model. Since our Goldberg has been classified as Erste Lage, this wine may from now on – again – bear the name Gau-Algesheimer Goldberg Riesling.

Furthermore, our Appenheimer Eselspfad Riesling will complement our Riesling range from this vintage on. Not to be confused with the former Weisser Burgunder Eselspfad, which has since been renamed Weisser Burgunder Réserve. We have removed this wine from our range in order to be able to continue to focus more on Riesling.



Honigberg – a new vineyard is created

On April 19, 2022 we planted a 1.5-ha plot in Honigberg. For us a very special and emotional event. On the one hand, because Honigberg is a very distinctive, traditional site with great future potential. On the other hand, because the area has been in the family for many generations and, after splitting it up amongst heirs and eventually leaving it to lie fallow, we were finally able to reunite all parts and plant the complete plot with Riesling vines that carry very exciting genes.

The color spectrum of the rock predominant there ranges from chalky white to ore red. The southwestern exposure and elevation of 235 meters above sea level provide the grapes with cool temperatures that, combined with the soil, create incredibly good conditions for great, long-lived wines. Since we had before only been able to cultivate a small parcel in the Honigberg, we are now truly happy to be able to develop this site further in the future.

Kabinett – a small vintage

Of our Riesling Kabinett, which enjoyed great popularity last year, there was only a very small quantity in the 2022 vintage due to vintage conditions. Unfortunately, we were only able to harvest about a third of last year's quantity. If you are interested in this wine, we recommend that you reserve it as well as the 1G and GG.

Conversion to organic viticulture

The issue of sustainability is particularly close to our heart. In this context, we have already made many adjustments in recent years: Starting with the use of lightweight glass and the avoidance of tin capsules, to using organic cultivation practices in our vineyards to the creation of ecological compensation areas. Here, orchards with old fruit varieties, bushes, shrubs, selected cover crops and stone walls play a major role. And there are other pieces in the large mosaic of sustainability that we would like to gradually replace and add in order to be able to work even more sustainably.

With the last vintage we have completed the three-year conversion phase to organic viticulture. Thus, our wine will be officially certified organic from the 2023 vintage onwards.

Many ideas and further projects are still in our heads and waiting to be implemented. We are looking forward to the next months and the development of the currently very promising vintage.

Corina & Tobias Knewitz

