

mosel

günther steinmetz
brauneberg

overview | Stefan Steinmetz took over from his father in 1999 and now makes some of the most underrated and authentic wines along the Mosel. From the renowned Brauneberger Juffer, his Rieslings have plenty of depth and substance eked out of low yields, long fermentation on the fine lees in old Fuder, and minimal intervention.

vineyard area: 5.8 hectares

annual production: 50,000 bottles

top sites: Brauneberger Juffer and Mühlheimer Sonnenlay

soil types: Devonian slate

grape varieties: riesling

vineyard/cellar practices | Stefan Steinmetz, the younger of two sons, took over the 5.8-ha (14.3-acre) domaine from his father in 1999. The Renaissance slate house lies on the main thoroughfare and underneath the ancient vaulted cellar (1563) offers a perfect place for Stefan to handcraft his Riesling wines in old 1000-liter Moselfuder.

His vineyards include the famous Brauneberger Juffer, as well as underappreciated sites such as Mühlheimer Sonnenlay and Kestener Paulinsberg. The grapes for his “Alte Reben” (old vines) come from two ungrafted parcels in the Mühlheimer Sonnenlay.

The Juffer with its old subplots ranked among the greatest crus during Napoleon’s reign on the Mosel. In fact, the Napoleonic classification from 1804 rates Dusemond tops (see table). In 1788, Thomas Jefferson rated the (bone-dry) wines of Brauneberg as his favorite.

In the Juffer, Stefan holds four parcels, two plots at the foot of the hill, less prone to drought; the other two lie higher up on steeper ground. “The Juffer gives uniquely spicy wines with great minerality,” explains Stefan, “they have opulence as well as structure.”

He prefers wire-trained vines, converting his older plots to this method by removing every second row, providing the vines with more air and greater opportunity for photosynthesis, and fewer bunches per branch. He applies natural compost and stopped using insecticides twenty-five years ago. “Wine-growing is a way of life, not a job,” states Stefan. Walking with him through his various parcels, one notices his intimate knowledge as well as healthy vines and soils—a prerequisite for making top-class wines.

When the grapes reach the cellar, Stefan forks them into the destemmer-crusher for a gentle crushing. Afterward, they drop into a pneumatic press and the resulting juice receives intentional contact with air. The Riesling wines ferment without outside yeasts and on their lees for roughly half a year in Fuder.

wines |

Riesling Kabinett Feinherb Brauneberger Juffer

Riesling Spätlese Muhlheimer Sonnenlay

Riesling Spätlese Brauneberger Juffer Devon

Riesling Auslese Brauneberger Juffer

Riesling Auslese* Kestener Paulinsberg



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