

Alzinger, Smaragd Riesling, Ried Loibner Steinertal, Wachau 92

£43.30 Fine & Rare

Although slightly under the radar, the Alzingers make highly reliable wines. The nose shows spicy, lime aromas, while the palate is supple, concentrated and juicy. The upfront fruit is weighty, and while the finish lacks a little drive, it's mineral and zesty. **Drink** 2017-2028 **Alc** 13%



Hirtzberger, Smaragd Grüner Veltliner, Ried Honivogl, Wachau 92

£59.60 Clark Foyster

Hirtzberger always produces full-bodied, powerful wines from

his vineyards in Spitz. The weighty nose has rich apricot aromas, but none of the botrytis with which some Hirtzberger wines are infused. It's suave, broad and creamy, but still fresh, while the finish is opulent and long. **Drink** 2017-2030 **Alc** 14.5%

Proidl, Riesling, Ried Ehrenfels, Kremstal Reserve 92

N/A UK www.proidl.at

Proidl is based in the rockier, northern part of the Kremstal. Rich apricot aromas and a full-bodied palate with grip and precision. It's taut and mineral, a concentrated, complex wine, with a long, tangy finish. **Drink** 2017-2028 **Alc** 13%



Buchegger, Grüner Veltliner, Moosburgerin, Kremstal Reserve 91

POA Alpine Wines

Buchegger is one of the Kremstal's best producers. This has

elegant, discreet, apple aromas, while the palate is more imposing: creamy and compact, showing ample weight of fruit with considerable grip and extract, followed by a long, spicy, powerful finish. **Drink** 2017-2028 **Alc** 14%

Johann Donabaum, Smaragd Riesling, Limitierte Edition, Wachau 91

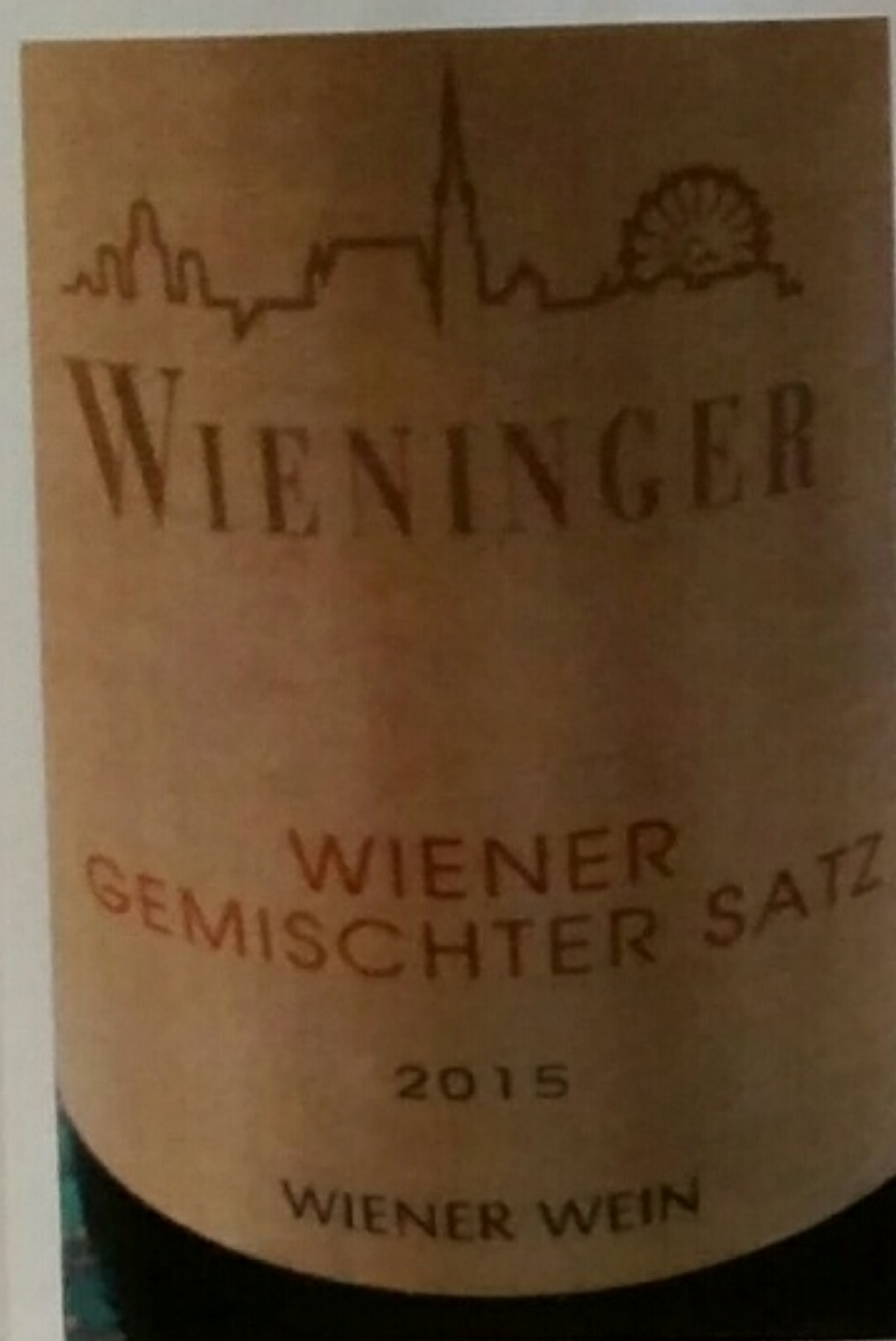
N/A UK www.weingut-donabaum.at

This is Donabaum's top Riesling bottling. Apples and apricots dominate the nose and palate, which is juicy and a touch broad, but doesn't lack mineral bite. It's concentrated, nutty and persistent, without being overbearing.

Drink 2017-2025 **Alc** 13.5%

Loimer, Riesling, Ried Steinmassl, Kamptal Reserve 91

£36.95-£44.99 (2014) Just in Cases, Liberty Wines, WoodWinters



Growers compared the vintage to 2007, 2011 and 2012, depending on their region, and all were at pains to insist it was not a torrid year like 2003. It was very dry, but not scorching, and cool nights maintained acidity levels. That meant that both whites and reds were of excellent quality, and the icing on the cake was a decent crop of botrytised wines in November. The wines, whatever their style, are balanced, and without excesses of acidity or tannin (with some exceptions), and that should enable the reds in particular to age very well.

THE REGIONS Kamptal

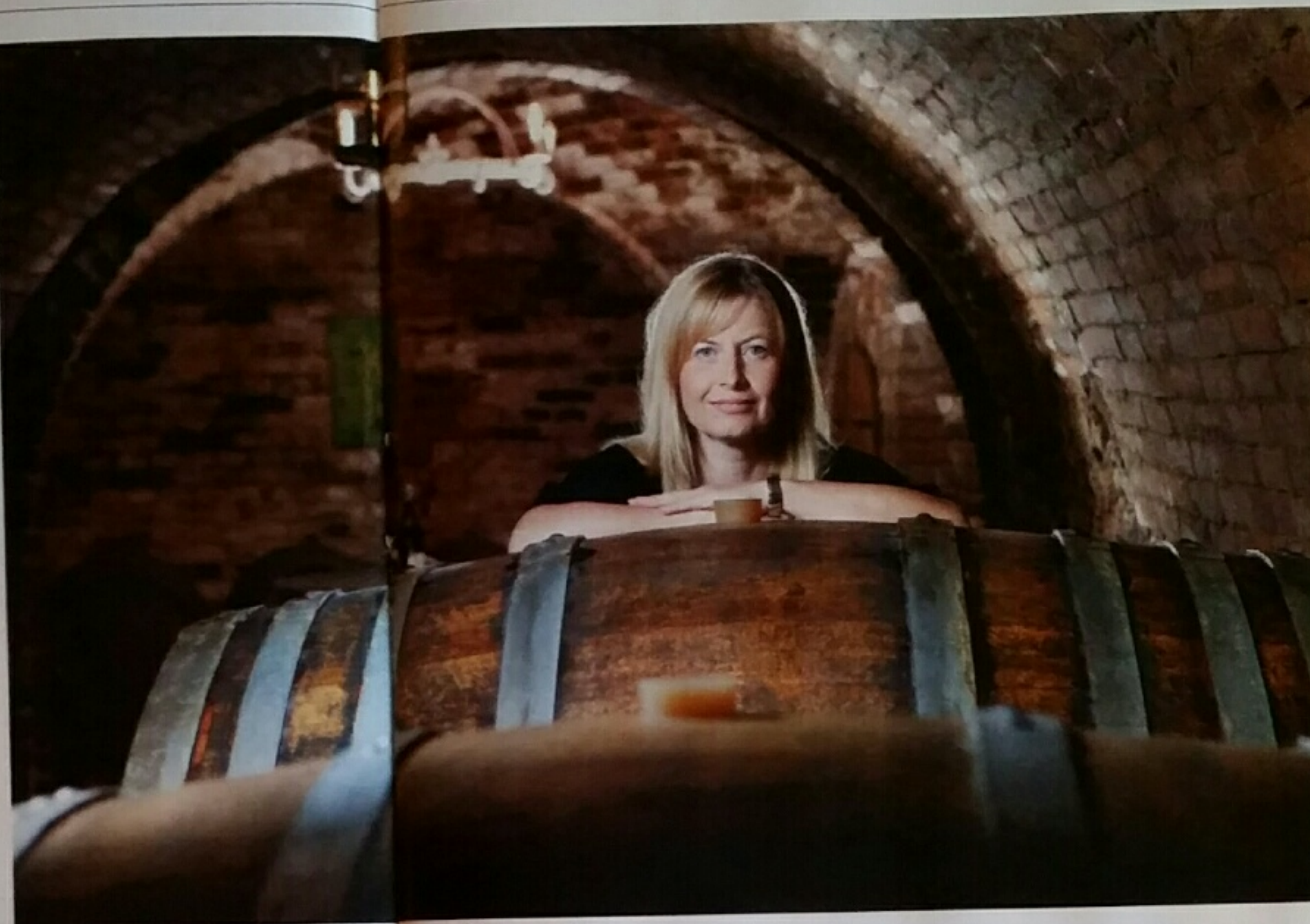
Starting in the north, the conditions were almost identical to those of nearby Kremstal. Loimer notes that acidity levels in the whites depended on when the grapes were picked; he favoured earlier picking. October rains put an end to the harvest. 'What's impressive about 2015,' remarks Loimer, 'is that it wasn't only the top sites that delivered great wines. The more basic wines are also of very good quality.' The usual suspects excelled: Allram, Bründlmayer, Eichinger, Hirsch, Jurtschitsch, Laurenz V, Loimer, Schloss Gobelsburg and others.

Kremstal

Conditions very similar to those of neighbouring Wachau (see below), except that the loess soils in much of the region retained moisture better than the rockier soils around Senftenberg. Hail reduced the crop by around 20% and the berries were small,

Left: Fritz Wieninger's Wiener Gemischter Satz 2015 field blend is 'firm and mineral'

Above: Birgit Eichinger in the barrel cellar at her winery in Kamptal



'What's impressive about 2015 is that it wasn't only the top sites that delivered great wines' **Fred Loimer**

giving wines of intensity and extract. Grüner Veltliner and Riesling were identical in quality. There are some superb wines from Buchegger, Mantlerhof, Nigl, Proidl, Salomon and Stadt Krems.

Wachau

The spring was warm, there was welcome rain rather than hail in May, and then a very hot summer, with July among the warmest on record. Some growers could irrigate, and did so. September proved perfect and some rain in October did no damage. There can be up to two weeks' difference in ripening between the eastern Wachau, near Krems, and the western area around Spitz, but Roman Horvath MW of Domäne Wachau notes that the very hot summer evened things out: 'Although Spitz wines still had the extra raciness and acidity for which they are known.' The top growers – Alzinger, Emmerich Knoll, FX Pichler, Hirtzberger, Johann Donabaum, Mauritiushof, Rudi Pichler and many others – all produced excellent wines.

Wagram

The dominant loess soils allowed the vines to avoid hydric stress in July, and while overall quality is ➤

This highly gifted grower produces consistently fine wines. This Riesling has a muted, stone-fruit nose with some minerality. It's dense and very concentrated, with tension and depth. Assertive now, it is nevertheless balanced and long, with a fine mineral finish. **Drink** 2017-2026 **Alc** 13.5%

Polz, Therese Sauvignon Blanc, Südsteiermark 91

£24 (2013) Clark Foyster

Grown on slate soils in the high-elevation Sausal sub-region. Aromas of lime, passion fruit. Palate shows unusual weight for a Sauvignon, but it's also spicy, zesty and complex, with energy and drive on the long finish. **Drink** 2017-2022 **Alc** 13.5%

Schloss Gobelsburg, Grüner Veltliner, Ried Steinsetz, Kamptal Reserve 91

£19 (2014) Wine Trust 100

An exotic style from this top producer, with tropical fruit and apple compote on the nose. It's plump and juicy, full-bodied and spicy, with exuberance and concentration, while the finish is long and mineral. **Drink** 2017-2025 **Alc** 13%



Schweiger, Grüner Veltliner, Ried Zöbinger Terrassen, Kamptal Reserve 91

£18.49 (2014)

Berkmann

Peter Schweiger deserves to be better

known. From this prestigious village, he produces a wine with peppery, vibrant, apple fruit on the nose. It is broad and creamy, in an imposing and full-bodied style that boasts concentration, power and spice, while the finish is long and mineral. **Drink** 2017-2025 **Alc** 13.5%

Wieninger, Wiener Gemischter Satz, Ried Rosengartl, Wien 91

£32.99 Liberty Wines

Gemischter Satz is a typical Viennese field blend that Wieninger, Vienna's top grower, helped to revive as a wine of quality. Although the nose is closed, the palate is creamy and full-bodied, firm and mineral, with a slight austerity that suggests good ageing potential. The finish is dense and long. **Drink** 2017-2025 **Alc** 13.5%

Eichinger, Grüner Veltliner, Ried Lamm, Kamptal Reserve 90

£27 (2013) Hic

Ever reliable, Birgit Eichinger makes splendid wines from one of the region's best-known sites. The nose is broad and powerful, full of rich stone-fruit aromas. On the palate, there's a good attack onto the rich, nutty, assertive palate. It's taut and textured, with a long stony finish. **Drink** 2017-2025 **Alc** 13.5% ➤