

WEIN und SEKTGUT CH. W BERNHARD



BERNHARD Rheinhessen, Germany



YEAR FOUNDED: ~1650
OWNER: Hartmut Bernhard
WINEMAKER: Hartmut Bernhard
ANNUAL PRODUCTION: 6,000 cases
WINERY LOCATION: Frei-Laubersheim, Rheinhessen
VINEYARD LOCATIONS: Rheinhessen, Germany

This 600 year-old family estate is nominally in the Hessen but its soils, with their complex amalgam of porphyry, quartzite and loam, bear more resemblance to the Nahe, which is just over the hill. Hartmut Bernhard, the current proprietor, is an instinctive wine-grower and maker. He knows exactly what he is doing without intellectualising it. The estate has gone from strength to strength in recent years.



Twelve generations ago, Hartmut's ancestors, originating from the Spanish Netherlands in a region known as Brabant, faced religious persecution, compelling them to emigrate. Utilizing their Gulden, they purchased vineyards, initiating the cultivation and trade of wine. In 1890, Hartmut's Great-Grandfather notably supplied wine to the government in barrels. Post World War II, his father transitioned to bottling wine, marking the inception of the present-day winery.

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In 1988, Terry These became involved and provided support to the estate. Hartmut and his wife Petra introduced modernized processes, venturing into the production of Sekt. Presently, their son Justus is upholding the family legacy, commencing in 2017 with his inaugural wine—a dry Scheurebe, which promptly sold out. While deeply rooted in tradition, the winery remains adaptable and open to innovative changes, demonstrating a nimble approach to evolving circumstances.



The winery places a strong emphasis on the appreciation of its terroir, aligning its benefits with a keen commitment to quality. In spring, the grape vines undergo their initial pruning, followed by a second cut during the summer when the grapes begin to ripen. The "green harvest" in August involves the reduction of leaves and removal of immature fruit, channeling the vine's energy towards the carefully selected remaining grapes. Harvesting of sound grapes occurs from September to October, with a meticulous triage based on quality.



Situated in a region with an orientation between south-east and south-west, the vineyards enjoy an optimal sun exposure. During the fall, a gentle mist often hovers over the hilly slopes of the Mainz Basin, a geological feature of the area, preventing the grape fields from succumbing to freezing temperatures. This microclimate, coupled with a diverse range of soils surrounding the village, contributes to the distinctive character of the wines—fruity, spicy, and full-bodied.

A constant pursuit of harmony and a well-defined aromatic structure guides the winemaking process. This journey begins with meticulous clearing, followed by maturation in steel, oak, or barrique barrels sourced from France.

Quick Facts:

- 11.5 HA Vineyards
- 600 year old winery.
- Very close in distance and characteristics to Nahe.