

Maria Hick 2017 Gelber Muskateller "Terrassen", Ried Stiegelstal (Wachau)

WineWise Code	AHI-GMT17
Country	Austria
Region	Oberarnsdorf
Subregion	Wachau
Color	White
Case Size	12x750
ABV	12.5
Acidity	6.7
Residual Sugar	2.2
Closure	Screw-top
Annual Cases Produced	140
Destemming	Whole Cluster
Fermentation Vessel	Stainless Steel
Aging Method	Stainless Steel
Aging Duration (months)	5 months
Filtered	Yes
Fining Agents	Bentonite
Yeast	Cultured
Malolactic	No
Vineyard Name	Stiegelstal
Soil Type	Paragneiss
Elevation (meters)	250
Vineyard Aspect	West
Vine Age (years)	12
Vine Yields (hl/ha)	60
Farming Practices	Sustainable
Grape Picking	Hand-harvested

Notes from the producer:

From 1699 to 1930 mixed agricultural with viticulture, now they produce wine and apricots. Winery was founded in 1930 by Maria's great-grandfather Josef who was Hofmeister (manager) of abbey St. Peter's estate in Arnsdorf. The Abbey got into a financial crisis and had to sell the property and Josef lost his job. He founded his own estate in 1930.

Oldest family records date back to 1699. Maria took over in 2003 after completing viticultural school in Krems, manages estate with husband Manfred.



WineWise Notes:

The pesky "Muscat à petits grains" is a divisive grape. Aficionados love it with unalloyed passion, while detractors find its perfumed charms too much of a good thing. Needless to say, we are in the former camp, and could not resist the resonant floral tones and juicy palate of this forthright and delicious wine. Stiegelstal is the estate's most important vineyard. It enjoys complex soils rich in paragneiss and quartzite, mixed with amphybolites.

Maria and her husband Manfred run this pocket-sized (approximately 6 hectares) estate near Spitz, in the western part of the Wachau. Her family has links to the property that go back 300 years, when it was owned by St. Peter's Stift in Salzburg. Her great-grandfather bought it from the church in 1931 after the financial crash obliged it to cash out. She has quietly been making wines of exemplary quality at moderate prices since taking over and has achieved increasing recognition in the Austrian wine press. The vineyard practices are solidly organic: composting, eschewal of herbicides and insecticides, feromonal pest-control, and leaving alternate vineyard rows unmown. Using minimal sulphur (below 5.5 gm) is another hallmark. The wines are sleek and pure, but also show flashes of Wachau grandeur without excess. The prices are truly exceptional.