

Press Release
Vienna, June 2016

This was VieVinum 2016 – Glamorous Anniversary with a Small Sensation

Once again, VieVinum attracted more than 15,000 visitors and transformed the Vienna Hofburg Palace into a throbbing centre of superb wine culture. The importance of inimitable origins and vintages was the central theme for lively exchanges with vintners from Austria and neighbouring wine countries to the east and the west. A friendly competition staged by Vinum wine magazine led to a small triumph for Austrian red wines.

The kick-off for the three-day wine festival was on Saturday June 4th. VieVinum organiser Mag. Alexandra Graski-Hoffmann chaired the opening ceremony, highlighting the meritorious significance of Austrian vintners for the fair: “The extraordinarily high concentration of first-class wines in this country is an essential key to the success story of VieVinum. The stars of VieVinum are the vintners.” Mag. Wilhelm Klinger, managing director of the Austrian Wine Marketing Board and Johannes Schmuckenschlager, Austrian Viticulture President also gave celebratory greetings. His Excellency Konrad Max Scharinger Ambassador of Germany also spoke in the name of this year’s guest vintners, the Association of German Prädikat Wine Estates (VDP).

Engagement of the Austrian Wine Marketing Board

The Austrian Wine Marketing Board (AWMB) has been the most important cooperation partner of the VieVinum since its initial launch. The AWMB brought around 850 international wine professionals from international trade, restaurants and sommelier associations to Vienna for the fair. Many of these visitors took the opportunity to participate in introductory seminars and special tastings that were organized by the AWMB. A versatile side event programme also helped deepen understanding of Austrian wine. The AWMB’s goal is to offer Austrian vintners the possibility to make new contacts and to deepen existing business relationships. Continuously increasing export statistics confirm the success of these efforts.

A Firework of Oenological Highlights

When the VieVinum was launched in 1998, it was the goal to position it as the prime exhibition for Austrian wine and vintners. This expectation continues to be the central focus and over the years, its influence has become increasingly international as a high profile platform for professional discourse and networking between various branch sectors. The new exhibitor stand design is kept intentionally discreet to draw focus to the essential. Among the important highlights was also a side event programme with several commented tastings; the topical themes addressed and the quality and versatility offered comprised a veritable

oenological firework. Ever since Cordoba 1978, the Austrian national soccer team has never again beat Germany, but the tables were turned at Vinum magazine's friendly bi-annual competition this year. The German dream team was not able to defend their supremacy in this year's theme of red wine blends: the Austrian "Wein-Elf" team triumphed 10 to 1 against their favourite competitors – something that the Austrians can only dream of achieving in soccer!

Who was there?

Around 550 exhibitors, predominantly from Austria, were pleased about the tremendous visitor interest. Vintners from Niederösterreich (Lower Austria) comprised the largest group of exhibitors followed by vintners from Burgenland, Styria, and Vienna as well as Carinthia. The Association of German Prädikat Wine Estates (VDP) filled the most prominent position among the international exhibitors. Vintners from East and Southeast Europe appeared under the "New Europe" banner to communicate a convincing message with the exciting flair of the yet undiscovered. There was a strong delegation representing France, as there was also for Portugal and South Tyrol (Alto Adige). The Austrian wine merchant Wein&Co presented the highly topical theme "Natural Wines". Falstaff magazine broadened its presence at VieVinum with a special focus on great growths from Italy. Numerous small vintner groups from other European countries as well as from overseas provided further diversity. Mag. Alexandra Graski-Hoffmann comments on the exhibitor structure, "It is important to remain open and to promote exchange with other wine countries. Due to the advantageous geographic position of Vienna, it is a gate between the East and the West and the VieVinum enjoys high status among vintner groups from East and Southeast Europe."

The VDP as Guest Vintners at the VieVinum

The VDP vintner association has been the prestigious ambassador of German wine culture since its establishment in 1910. They have been central for the international success of Riesling, Sylvaner, and other German specialties. A delegation of producers from the prestigious association presented their wines personally at the VieVinum. The association also presented their wines together with wines from the Traditionsweingüter Österreich and the STK vintners in a tasting that was commented by Master of Wine Caro Maurer. This tasting highlighted top vineyard sites and the influence of inimitable origin on wine style.

Pause for Refreshment

A la Carte magazine made a statement for first class coffee with their Lavazza Lounge. The CLUTURBRAUER were also A la Carte partners and offered their specialties in the CRAFT BIER LOUNGE in front of the entrance to the Vienna Hofburg Palace. In addition to this, the Austrian Sekt Committee offered select sparkling enjoyment at their large Sekt Bar, while the Genuss Region Österreich association's presentation focussed on fruit wines and ciders.

Steirereck at the VieVinum

There are duties that go unnoticed when they are done well, such as keeping exhibitor stands tidy, replenishing bread, and emptying spittoons. Students of the Modul School of Tourism fulfilled these important duties under the supervision of restaurateur Birgit Reitbauer and her team from Steirereck. Restaurant Steirereck has been a guarantee for the highest standard of service possible at the VieVinum since 2010. Exhibitors enjoy the very best service that a fair can offer.

Cooperation Partners are Key Factors

Dependable partners and functioning networks are among the key factors for the long-term attractiveness of VieVinum. The network of opinion makers has grown and intensified over the years. Numerous wine merchants, restaurateurs, sommelier associations, and cooperation partners of the Austrian Wine Academy are all of great importance for continued success.

The European Sommelier Championship Calls

The crème de la crème of sommeliers from Europe and around the world will meet in Vienna in 2017. After the Sommelier World Championships of 1998 in Vienna, the Austrian Sommelier Association will host an international sommelier competition for the second time. This occasion prompted each participating country to send a selected wine or spirit as an advance greeting to the Vienna Hofburg Palace. Sommeliers from the Sommelier Association presented these specialties for tasting at the VieVinum.

The next VieVinum will take place from June 9 to June 11 2018. This occasion will also be the 20-year anniversary of the VieVinum.

Great Praise for the VieVinum from both Exhibitors and Visitors:

Visitors

David Schildknecht, wine author

“Three days are simply not enough for this wonderful event. I would like it if the VieVinum took place every year.”

Karl Axel Svenson, wine author

“I have attended every VieVinum since its launch. This fair has evolved wonderfully. The number of visitors increases. The side event programme is superb. Personally, I found it great that the press centre was located outside this year.”

Michael Thurner, Austria's Fine Brands, former AWMB managing director

"In my opinion, the VieVinum unites the effectivity of three wine fairs. A well-prepared exhibitor can reap its full potential."

Romana Echensperger, Master of Wine

"The VieVinum is a marvellous event that is perfectly organized. I was able to discover many new and interesting wine producers."

Anne Kriebiehl, Master of Wine

"I am quite impressed by the Vienna Hofburg Palace as a venue; it offers the great wines that are presented a perfect ambience."

Walter Kaltzin, "Der Winzer" magazine

"The VieVinum brings all branch participants together harmoniously. The opening hours for wine professionals are also a good feature."

Martin Müller, Niederösterreich Economics Press Service

"I can ascertain that the Vinum is very actively used for networking, even among vintners."

Utz Graafmann, wein-plus

"The VieVinum is the meeting place for the wine branch. I have the impression that all the key people are here – both among exhibitors and visitors."

Armin Diel, Weingut Schlossgut Diel in the Nahe and VDP.Vicepresident

"To be so hospitably received in such a proud wine country as Austria is not something to take for granted. We are very pleased that we have been able to present ourselves as guest vintner group so well here."

Exhibitors

Emmerich Knoll, vintner in Unterloiben und chairman of the Vinea Wachau

"The VieVinum is not only the ideal platform for presentation as a vintner, but also for perfect presentation of Austrian wine country."

Martin Nigl, vintner in Senftenberg

"Numerous international visitors came to us; the AWMB does a superb job."

Paul Schabl, vintner in Königsbrunn

"This is our second time at the VieVinum. This is really a marvellous event where you can meet a lot of people."

Christian Fink, vintner in Eggenburg

“As a neo-vintner, this is my first time at the VieVinum and I am thrilled about the collegiality of my vintner colleagues and was also able to make a lot of excellent contacts.”

Walter Kirnbauer, vintner in Deutschkreutz

“Particularly positive was the remarkable number of sommeliers that visited us. In addition to this, I find the new exhibitor stand design very well done.”

Georg Schneider, vintner in Tattendorf

“I found the number of high-profile visitors that we had absolutely fantastic; many of them were international wine experts.”

Rainer Christ, vintner in Jedlersdorf

“I had a particularly high number of international visitors of exceptionally high standard.”

Daniel Ribis, wine merchant Vinoribis in Neustift/Tyrol

“Many visitors told us that they found it great that we contributed to the diversity of the VieVinum with an international selection of wines.”

Petra Harkamp, vintner in St. Nikolai in Sausal

“We loved the VieVinum 2016. Numerous new visitors came that had first encountered our wines through international AWMB events.”

Herbert Jagersberger, executive board Schlumberger

“The VieVinum was an excellent presentation platform for us as a sekt producer as well as for the Austrian Sekt Committee. We hope that consumer demand for Austrian sekt will continue to increase in the future.”

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