



Vintage Report 2008

At first glance, 2008 seemed like such a wonderfully “normal” year. Nevertheless, and despite many a cloudy day in summer, the weather during the growing season was once again noticeably warmer than the long-term average. The somewhat above-average amount of rain during summer was good for both soil and grape.

The vines were in full blossom two weeks earlier than the 30-year average, and yet the main harvest didn’t begin until the second week of October. This meant that grapes remained on the vine for a long time, at least 120 days. Because sugar development proceeded slowly, the 2008 crop was able to reach an outstanding level of physiological ripeness.

This could be tasted during the harvest. Both grapes and grape musts were remarkable for their concentrated aromas, good body and high level of complexity. Even the grapes for our Gutsweine (“house wines”) reached high-end Kabinett must weights. This bodes well for the wines’ future development.

Most important of all, though, particularly in our stony parcels in the upper reaches of slopes, grapes once again remained healthy for a long time. As a result, we were able to harvest grapes suitable for producing great dry Rieslings – up to and including “Erstes Gewächs” – from our steep Kiedrich sites Klosterberg, Turmberg and Gräfenberg.

Despite all best efforts to achieve the highest quality possible, damp weather during the harvest naturally reduced the quantities of grapes we could harvest that would be suitable for our finest dry, as well as lusciously sweet, wines.

Nevertheless, Weingut Robert Weil once again was able to harvest grapes that qualified for all Prädikat levels, up to and including Trockenbeerenauslese. And this, for the 20th consecutive year – an unparalleled feat worldwide that underscores the special terroirs of our sites at higher elevations.

Harvests in recent years have increasingly required a focus on quality strategies in vineyard management – we have responded accordingly and our efforts have paid off. It could be summed up, perhaps, as follows: don’t begin harvesting too late, yet be the last to finish harvesting, and get the timing of the main harvest right. It’s essential to plan enough time for a painstakingly selective harvest of the crop to meet the challenge of reaching high quality. Quality: if it doesn’t happen in the vineyard, it can’t and won’t happen in the cellar, for winemaking can only accompany what Mother Nature brings forth.