



The 2014 Vintage

A year of constant highs and lows: in temperature, precipitation and the winemakers' disposition - but the key factor for the quality of the grapes was preventing the vines from getting "wet feet"

Following a mild winter, the vegetation phase began with an unprecedented April 7 bud break, the earliest in living memory. But while the first four months of the year were consistently too warm, May proved a bit too cool, which slowed development between bud break and flowering. In the end, however, the vines were still almost two weeks ahead of the historical average, culminating in an optimal and steady fruit set that put the winemakers in a fine mood. That euphoria faded, however, in the face of strong, sustained precipitation throughout July and August. When all was said and done, rain volumes measured two to three times higher than normal. The rain was obviously beyond our control, but optimal preparation of our vineyards to handle the challenging conditions was not. Our decision to abstain from the use of fertilizer was particularly helpful for us at Weingut Robert Weil this year.

The sparse, stony soils of our hillside vineyards are already inclined to produce grapes with small berries. Beyond this, our terrain is notable for its outstanding drainage. And with the complete ground cover on our vineyards further drawing away some of the excess water, our vines never got wet feet.

Our organic philosophy and practices in the vineyards paid strong dividends through the natural health and strengthening of the vines and thicker skins on the berries. These were real factors in guaranteeing the health of the grapes during the contrary weather conditions of early and mid-autumn, and set the stage for the long hang times needed for physiological maturity.

Our grapes in the Kiedrich vineyards looked superb and tasted even better.

Even so, the 2014 vintage still had more challenges in store!

Our window for harvesting healthy, physiologically ripe berries was so short that even with 80 harvest assistants we all had our hands full.

Yet the results speak for themselves: excellent quality throughout the entire range, from the dry estate (Gutswein) and village (Ortswein) wines to the classified sites of the Klosterberg and Turmberg (Erste Lagen), and all the way to our crown jewel, the Gräfenberg (Grosse Lage). This held true for both dry and dessert Prädikat wines, albeit in minute amounts for the naturally and noble sweet ones.

The 2014 vintage is Weingut Robert Weil's 26th straight to produce a Beerenauslese and Trockenbeerenauslese.

While harvest volumes were in line with the historical averages, the noble sweet Prädikat wines were, as noted above, gathered in minute quantities.