



The 2018 vintage

**Another "Summer of the Century" is in the books...
and this one began in April!
Warmest growth cycle on record!
And despite all that, our Kiedrich hillside vineyards never needed
extra sun protection!**

Weather conditions during the vegetative phase from April to October set new benchmarks: taken together, those months were more than one-half degree Celsius warmer than the previous record year (1947); viewed through the prism of a seven-month span, that's a huge jump.

This past growing season was almost a full degree Celsius warmer than the warmest year in recent history (2003). Compared with average temperatures since the beginning of recorded weather statistics, that figure totals an unbelievable 2.8 degree Celsius difference.

These Mediterranean temperatures were part of an extended period of warmth that, as of right now, is unprecedented.

April began with early summer conditions, May temperatures corresponded to those of an average June, and the consistently high temperatures of summer reached well into October, refusing to give way to autumn.

The growth in the vineyards reflected this. While bud break was just seven days ahead of the long-established average, the vines had already developed a 17-day lead by the time they blossomed. Veraison began 21 days ahead of a "normal" year and harvest kicked off 24 days earlier than expected.

This action in the vineyard was however only possible because we'd had reasonably high levels of precipitation during the winter, leaving sufficient water reserves in the soil to handle the extremely dry vegetation cycle.

That same dry weather also thwarted disease and pests from afflicting the vines during the growth cycle, and the fruit remained extraordinarily healthy right up until the end of harvest in early November.

To ensure that the wines from this hot vintage retained their noted cool climate character, we made the decision to start the harvest in mid-September ... following the motto "Our harvest will start first and end last... with a sharp focus on which grapes are ripe and ready for which intended wines."

In the end we brought in grapes for grand, fine and elegant "Guts"-Rieslings; fruit of tremendous density and expressiveness for the dry "Lagen" wines; and a small quantity of premium nobly sweet wines. For the 30th straight year, our berries covered the entire spectrum of quality levels, including a Trockenbeerenauslese measuring 274° Oe. We were thrilled not just with the residual sugar levels across the entire range, but also with the fine, elegant acidity and perfect physiological ripeness of the grapes that will express itself beautifully in these wines.

Harvest yields were also very strong and will allow us to balance out the small volumes of a year ago.