



Vintage report 2005

The generally accepted, popular evaluation of a year's weather still seems to be tied to the extreme conditions of the benchmark year 2003. For this reason, the summer weather during vintage 2005 is generally rated as just average – despite concrete data that impressively show that this was really not the case. The growing season was marked by a number of sun hours that well exceeded the average quota. By the end of July 2005 in the Rheingau, for example, 150 sun hours had been recorded – more than the long-term average (1971–2000). Rainfall was evenly distributed throughout the year, above all during the growing season – providing ideal conditions for grape growth.

Budburst in mid-April, as well as blossoming a few weeks later, took place a week earlier than usual. This extremely positive development continued throughout June and July, thanks to ideal weather. As such, the official “ripening” of the grapes began in mid-August, or some two weeks earlier than normal.

The vintage was then crowned by an unusually sunny September, followed by a truly “golden” October.

These conditions led to an unusually early ripeness of the grapes, so that Weingut Robert Weil could begin harvesting at the start of October.

The vineyards yielded completely healthy and golden yellow grapes with a wonderful, ripe fruitiness as well as intensive aromas and perfect must weights at the start of the harvest.

These were ideal prerequisites for the extraordinarily high quality of our Estate-Rieslings, our *Erstes Gewächs* (first growth) and the Gräfenberg Spätlese with record must weights. Some three weeks after the start of the harvest (ideal timing), a very fine Botrytis (noble rot) set in, so that this year we were able to continue the tradition – for the 17th year in a row and unique in the world! – of harvesting every quality level of wine up to Trockenbeerenauslese with 245 degrees Oechsle.

The exceptional ripeness levels of the grapes combined with the 10% lower-than-average yield, lends vintage 2005 the strength and long finish of the wines of 2003. On the other hand, the wines also show the finesse and elegance, as well as the mineral tones and perfect acidity levels, of the wines of 2004 – in all, vintage 2005 represents a perfect combination of the best of two earlier vintages.

If one wants to classify or compare 2005 with other vintages, it seems likely that this year's wines will be comparable with those of the great vintages 1971, 1953 and even 1921.