

WEINGUT WITTMANN

REGION - Westhofen, Rheinhessen, Germany

APPELLATION - Rheinhessen

WINEMAKER - Philipp Wittmann

FARMING - Organic; Biodynamic

WEBSITE - www.weingutwittmann.de



HISTORY

The Wittmann family has been growing grapes and producing wine in the small Rheinhessen village of Westhofen since 1663. Philipp Wittmann and his wife Eva manage the estate with Philipp's parents, Günther and Elisabeth Wittmann. Today, they farm 25 ha (62 acres) of vines in the rolling limestone hills found in the southern part of the region known as the Wonnegau just west of the Rhine River valley. Their respect for nature and commitment to quality radiate from the wines just as much as the character of the grape and soil.

“With his family’s winemaking history dating back to 1663, Wittmann credits his parents...for the winery’s rebirth... Wittmann had transitioned the estate into biodynamics, which he believes has brought even more balance into the vineyards. The measures were revolutionary at the time, according to Wittmann, but were keys to developing soil and wines truly reflective of their regional terroir.”

- Marco J. Schöler, Wine Enthusiast

VITICULTURE

No herbicides, fungicides or chemical fertilizers have been used in the vineyards for over 20 years due to the family's goal to truly express the regional terroir. In 1990, Günther Wittmann converted all of the estate's vineyards to organic farming, and his son Philipp went a step further in 2004 by transitioning to biodynamic farming practices. Philipp looks for natural balance in the vineyards, in order to slow the ripening process and harvest grapes that have fully developed without overripening.

The Rheinhessen is Germany's largest wine growing region. Westhofen's south to southeast-facing vineyard slopes rise from the glacial valley of the Rhine to the rim of a high plateau. Soils are primarily made up of limestone with a mix of topsoils including clay, marl and loess. The deep-rooted vines help promote the expression of terroir in the finished wines.

Riesling is the dominant grape variety, accounting for 65% of the estate's vineyard area. They also produce the three Pinot varieties (Pinot Blanc, Pinot Gris and Pinot Noir), as well as Silvaner. In addition, small quantities of Scheurebe, Chardonnay and some minor varieties are grown.

VINIFICATION

All fruit is harvested by hand and carefully transported to the winery. After 4 to 24 hours of skin contact, fruit is gently pressed, undergoes natural fermentation and ages in a combination of steel tanks and large, neutral oak casks (1200 and 2400 liters) depending on the wine. The wines are kept on their lees with careful handling until bottling.



WEINGUT WITTMANN

Wittmann 100 Hills Weissburgunder

Weissburgunder (Pinot Blanc) is still a minor variety in Germany-- just 4.5% of all vineyard area-- but is rapidly increasing in popularity. The 100 Hills wines are produced with about 40% estate-harvested fruit, primarily from sites that are not as dominated by limestone as the estate wine vineyards. The remainder of the fruit is sourced from other local growers, all of whom are members of Naturland, a German certification organization for organic agriculture. Fruit is fermented naturally and matured in 50% stainless steel tanks and 50% large, neutral wooden casks.

Wittmann 100 Hills Riesling

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Wittmann Westhofener Trocken

The term VDP Gutswein (estate wine) is used for the basic range of wines from a producer who is a member of the VDP, Germany's top growers association. The Wittmann Estate Riesling Trocken is harvested by hand from estate-owned vineyards around the village of Westhofen. It is fermented with native yeasts and matured in large, neutral oak casks.

Wittmann Morstein GG

Wittmann's vineyards lie between 600-720 feet on the south-facing slope of Morstein. Its soils consist of limestone covered by clay. The thin topsoil allows the vines to penetrate deep into the rocks resulting in a wine that is impressively complex with purity and multi-layered finesse.

Wittmann Spatburgunder

Pinot Noir from estate vineyards with limestone soil. Intensive vineyard maintenance throughout the year, low yields and an uncompromising hand selection of ripe clusters lay the foundation of the wine's high quality. In the cellar, the wine matures for 16 months in 250-liter oak casks.

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