



ÖSTERREICHISCHE TRADITIONSWEINGÜTER  
TRADITIONAL WINERIES OF AUSTRIA (ÖTW)

## New dawn for Austria's premier winery group

### Weinviertel joins ÖTW, new managing director takes helm

A new chapter has begun in the storied history of the pioneering group *Österreichische Traditionsweingüter* (ÖTW or 'Traditional Wineries of Austria'). Founded in 1991 by 10 Austrian family-estates who wanted, according to their first charter, to establish a vineyard classification system for the growing areas of Austria. Nowadays, ÖTW is stepping boldly into the future as the guardians of outstanding origin-based wine across Austria.

There is no group better placed to do this than the ÖTW, whose member wineries span the regions of the Danube Valley and its tributaries: Kamptal, Kremstal, Traisental and Wagram, as well as further east in Vienna (Wien), Thermenregion and Carnuntum – and now also Weinviertel.

Not only did the ÖTW work tirelessly for nearly two decades to achieve its goal of developing a pioneering Austrian classification system that reflects and clearly communicates the best vineyards as "ÖTW Erste Lage" (Premier Cru) or "ÖTW Grosse Lage" (Grand Cru), but it also launched the hugely successful annual Single Vineyard Summit multi-day tasting at Grafenegg castle. The next summit will be held from September 9–13, 2024.

#### Weinviertel debut

Now it is redoubling its work to safeguard and expand the reach of origin-based wines from around Austria. To this end, the group is delighted to welcome the first 13 wineries from Weinviertel, Austria's largest wine region, to its ranks in 2024, with the founding of the ÖTW Weinviertel branch.

*"Our aim is to create wines characterised by their origin that are internationally recognised for their top quality. Joining the Österreichische Traditionsweingüter is therefore a logical step for us,"* explains Stefan Tscheppe, the Chairman of the ÖTW-Weinviertel Association.

The entry of the Weinviertel producers marks another significant step in the ÖTW's journey towards being a national body representing premium Austrian wineries. What began as a small group of 10 winegrowers from Kamptal and Kremstal who came together in 1991 to address the process of vineyard classification (and to discuss the potential of their outstanding single vineyards) has now evolved into a group of 90 (77 plus 13 Weinviertel) winemakers from key Austrian regions with a current total of 109 "ÖTW Erste Lage" sites (the "ÖTW Grosse Lage" sites are still in the process of being defined, as are the "ÖTW Erste Lage" from Weinviertel).

#### True to its origins

However, the expansion does not come at the expense of the ÖTW's unstinting focus on origin. Now, as it was at the beginning, the group's aim is to give wine lovers a clear and transparent way to navigate the best origin wines from Austria. Every ÖTW member must carry either the 'Sustainable Austria' certification or the "EU organic certification". The use of herbicides and insecticides is prohibited in the member wineries and grapes from "ÖTW Erste Lage" and "ÖTW Grosse Lage" sites must be hand harvested.



Consumers know when they buy a wine with the distinctive ÖTW member seal depicting a sundial and compass on the capsule or label that they are from one of the leading producers of the country. The most characteristic vineyards additionally carry the 1<sup>ÖTW</sup> symbol, which highlights the “ÖTW Erste Lage” wines. These sites have been defined based on their history, soil, microclimate, and the influence those factors have on the characteristics and quality of the wine.

Österreichische Traditionsweingüter’s partnerships are not limited to its own members. It also collaborates with Germany’s Verband Deutscher Prädikatsweingüter (VDP) and Styria’s 12-member Steirische Terroir- und Klassikweingüter (STK) with the goal of establishing a harmonised classification system in German-speaking countries.

### **International orientation**

This international focus is of particular interest to the ÖTW’s new managing director Michael Tischler-Zimmermann. He took up the newly-created role in March 2024 after more than seven years in senior roles at the Austrian Wine Marketing Board – five-and-a-half years as Head of International Markets and two years in charge of the Eastern Markets department. Prior to this, Mr Tischler-Zimmermann was responsible for Marketing & Sales at Weingut Weszeli, a Kamptal winery which is a member of the ÖTW.

Michael Tischler-Zimmermann has an MA in Export Management from the IMC Krems University of Applied Sciences and lives in Krems, where the ÖTW winegrowers’ association has its headquarters.

*“I have always admired the many contributions the ÖTW has made to the positive development of premium Austrian wines,” Mr Tischler-Zimmermann says. “I look forward to leading the organisation as it continues its pioneering work on behalf of its luxury Austrian winery members worldwide.”*

### **Background on the ÖTW and Austria’s vineyard classification system**

Österreichische Traditionsweingüter (ÖTW) or *Traditional Wineries of Austria* was founded in 1991 with the primary goal of classifying Austria’s best single vineyard sites. An important part of this process was the development of the “ÖTW Single Vineyard Summit”, which gathers international journalists, sommeliers and other wine professionals in Grafenegg for five days every September to taste and evaluate wines from the “ÖTW Erste Lage” sites.

The results of this work are published annually in the catalogue of the “ÖTW Erste Lage”. One hundred and nine vineyards are currently classified “ÖTW Erste Lage” from Kremstal, Kamptal, Traisental, Wagram, Vienna, Carnuntum and Thermenregion. The classification of “ÖTW Grosse Lage” (Grand Cru) sites has yet to be finalised. The ÖTW vineyard site classifications – 1<sup>ÖTW</sup> and G<sup>ÖTW</sup> – refer to the top of the Austrian quality wine pyramid: Ried or Single Vineyard wines.

In 2023, a historic signature by Austria’s Minister of Agriculture and Forestry paved the way for Austria to be the only country apart from France in which the classification of vineyards was written into law – a major milestone for the ÖTW. This will see responsibility for vineyard classification handed over to the state. However, the private classification by the ÖTW will continue until there is a statutory classification by the relevant Regional Wine Committees.



**Press conference attendees:**

*Michael Moosbrugger, National Chairman of the ÖTW*

*Michael Tischler-Zimmermann, Managing Director of the ÖTW*

*Stefan Tscheppe, Chairman of the ÖTW Weinviertel Association*

**The new ÖTW Weinviertel member wineries:**

*Hofkellerei des Fürsten von Liechtenstein*

*Weingut Dürnberg*

*Weingut Gerhard J. Lobner*

*Weingut Gruber Röschitz*

*Weingut Julius Klein*

*Weingut Prechtl*

*Weingut Taubenschuss*

*Weingut Zull*

*Weingut Ebner-Ebenauer*

*Weingut Setzer*

*Weingut Ingrid Groiss*

*Weingut Gschweicher*

*Weingut Seher*

**More information about the ÖTW here:**



**To attend the Single Vineyard Summit 2024 in Grafenegg, please visit:**



**You can find the press text online here:**

