

5F, Shanghai Art Museum 325

Opening hour: 5:30 pm to 2:00 am

DECANTED by Summer Block

tongue tipplers

a visit to Austria's wine country



isitors to the recent FHC food and wine conference may have been surprised to see the range of Austrian wines spread out below the Austrian Trade council's red banners. Austrian wine is increasingly popular among enthusiasts, especially those in the United States and in Europe, but it has yet to penetrate the wider consciousness. This is bound to change as Austria continues to produce wines that are playful, easy to pair with food and eminently drinkable.

Many of Austria's most notable wine growing areas are clustered along the Czech and Hungarian borders. The state of Lower Austria (or Niederösterreich) is home to the Wachau Kremstal and Kamptal regions, spread along the Danube It is also home to Austria's two most famous exports, Grüner Veltliner and Reisling.

The names of Austria's finest may not exactly trip along the tongue, particularly for those accustomed to the sounds of French and Italian appellations. But it's worth practicing "Grüner Veltliner", the name of Austria's most famous grape. Grüner Veltliner makes a dry, spicy white wine described many as "peppery" and it makes an excellent match with a wide variety of foods. A cousin of the Traminer, Grüner Veltling is also Austria's most abundant grape, found in almost 40 per cent of Austria's vineyards.

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Austria's Rieslings share the critical spotlight with Grüner Veltline. Though Riesling remains synonymous with Germany in the minds many wine drinkers, Austria's Rieslings have a lot to offer. These whites are often fuller and heartier than Germany's Rieslings, and they stand up to pairing with stouter meals.

One reason Austrian wine is not more widely available experts fret, is that most of the small country's bottles snatched up by their own domestic market, and the little is exported goes mainly to neighboring Germany, leaving a few coveted cases for the rest of us, often selling at dismingly high prices.

If you're interested in learning more about Austrian wines Shanghai, you'll find a small but growing number of bottles able. ASC Wines currently offers a Chardonnay, a Pinot Noir Beerenauslese, all three dessert selections from Burgen near Lake Neusiedlersee. If you prefer to try your wines also side Austrian pastries, you'll find a small selection at the changing Vienna Café, where you can sip your Riesling in the free company of Shanghai's Austrian expat community.

