


Parkers Report 2002 (Weinjahrgang 2000)

Prager 2000	Grüner Veltliner Smaragd Achleiten	Wachau	White	91
Prager 2000	Grüner Veltliner Smaragd Weitenberg	Wachau	White	89
Prager 1993	Riesling Smaragd Achleiten	Wachau	White	91
Prager 1999	Riesling Smaragd Achleiten	Wachau	White	89
Prager 2000	Riesling Smaragd Achleiten	Wachau	White	95
Prager 2000	Riesling Smaragd Dürnstein Hollerin	Wachau	White	90
Prager 2000	Riesling Smaragd Dürnstein Kaiserberg	Wachau	White	92
Prager 1993	Riesling Smaragd Klaus	Wachau	White	97
Prager 1996	Riesling Smaragd Klaus	Wachau	White	97
Prager 2000	Riesling Smaragd Klaus	Wachau	White	94
Prager 2000	Riesling Smaragd Steinriegl	Wachau	White	91
Prager 2000	Riesling Smaragd Wachstum Bodenstein	Wachau	White	91
Prager 2000	Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese Steinriegel	Wachau	White	96+



Robert M. Parker, Jr.'s

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WEINGUT PRAGER (WACHAU)				
2000	GRÜNER VELTLINER SMARAGD WEISSENKIRCHEN ACHLEITEN	(\$35.00)	WHITE	91
2000	GRÜNER VELTLINER SMARAGD WEISSENKIRCHEN WEITENBERG	(\$32.50)	WHITE	89
1993	RIESLING SMARAGD ACHLEITEN	(\$35.00)	WHITE	91
1999	RIESLING SMARAGD ACHLEITEN	(\$45.00)	WHITE	89
2000	RIESLING SMARAGD ACHLEITEN	(\$45.00)	WHITE	95
2000	RIESLING SMARAGD DÜRNSTEIN HOLLERIN	(\$45.00)	WHITE	90
2000	RIESLING SMARAGD DÜRNSTEIN KAISERBERG	(\$45.00)	WHITE	92
1993	RIESLING SMARAGD KLAUS	(\$45.00)	WHITE	97
1996	RIESLING SMARAGD KLAUS	(\$30.00)	WHITE	97
2000	RIESLING SMARAGD KLAUS	(\$45.00)	WHITE	94
2000	RIESLING SMARAGD STEINRIEGL	(\$45.00)	WHITE	91
2000	RIESLING SMARAGD WACHSTUM BODENSTEIN	(\$45.00)	WHITE	91
1997	RIESLING TROCKENBEERENAUSLESE STEINRIEGL	(not available)	WHITE	96+

Toni Bodenstein, the director and winemaker of Weingut Prager, was an environmental engineer before going to work for his father in law (Her Prager) in 1966. His first vintage on his own was 1966. A bright, thoughtful man, Bodenstein oversees the estate's 14 hectares (34.6 acres) and purchases grapes from an additional 2.5 hectares (6.18 acres) for an annual production of 93,333 bottles.

Lovely aromas of ripe pears, apricots, and white pepper can be found in the nose of the fresh 2000 Grüner Veltliner Smaragd Weissenkirchen Weitenberg. A linear, concentrated, highly-focused wine, it sports quinine, gravel, smoke, pepper, and white fruit flavors. Drink it over the next 7 years. The 2000 Grüner Veltliner Smaragd Weissenkirchen Achleiten offers apricot, peach, and lily aromas in its highly expressive nose. Medium-bodied and layered, this is a rich, intense, lush offering with powerful peppery apricot flavors. Projected maturity: Now-2011.

Produced from a terroir known for its poor, sandy soil, the 2000 Riesling Smaragd Dürnstein Hollerin has a rose filled with rich, ripe, pears. On the palate the pear flavors are intermingled with honeysuckle blossoms, verbena, and chamomile. This extremely elegant, light to medium-bodied, feminine wine has outstanding balance. Projected maturity: Now-2012. An herbal tea, white flower, and apple-scented wine, the 2000 Riesling Smaragd Dürnstein Kaiserberg is expressive, medium-bodied, forward, and loaded with fruit. Apples, pears and apricots can be discerned in its rich, plump character. Drink it over the next 10-12 years. The 2000 Riesling Smaragd Dürnstein Kaiserberg has a great nose of quartz and wild strawberries. A boisterous wine, it explodes on the palate with red currants, raspberries, minerals, and stones. Medium-bodied and exceptionally well-balanced as well as focused, it has outstanding depth and extract, particularly since it was produced from 12 year old vines.

Weingut Prager's top two vineyards, Klaus and Achleiten originate from the same hill and are planted in the 200-300 meter (above sea level) band that many consider to be Wachau's finest, the so-called *terroir*. The 2000 Riesling Smaragd Klaus boasts complex white peach and apple aromas. Big and muscular, it is a powerful, thick medium-bodied wine. Its profound core of apple-laced fruit is fresh, expressive, and velvety-textured. This exceptional, medium to full-bodied wine should be consumed between 2003 and 2015+. The flower and liquid stone-scented 2000 Riesling Smaragd Achleiten is a much more feminine, focused, and refined wine than the Klaus. Its pure, lily-like personality is medium-bodied and displays complex waves of candied citrus, red currants, and minerals. An immensely long wine, it should be at its best between 2003 and 2018+.

Toni Bodenstein purchased a parcel which he planted in 1962 and named after himself. Located at 460 meters of altitude, it is significantly higher than other Wachau vineyards so Bodenstein must have low yields to achieve ripeness. The 2000 Riesling Smaragd Wachstum Bodenstein reveals some yellow in its color (most Wachau wines are quite clear in their youth) as well as sweet herbal tea aromas interspersed with a powerful mineral component. Rich layers of honeyed minerals (this wine is virtually dry) are focused by this wine's bright acidity. It is expressive, well-balanced, flavorful, and powerful. Drink it between 2003 and 2012.

Bodenstein had generously made up a list of the wines he has in his library and asked me to select the vintages I was interested in tasting. Much to his surprise I selected two 1996s. Produced in the world's worst vintage Austria has witnessed since the dreadful 1964s, the 1996 Riesling Smaragd Klaus offers an herbal, leaf-like nose as well as a crystalline, light to medium-bodied character. This powerful, mineral-dominated wine is linear and unidimensional but delivers a delicious, expressive character. The more expressive and expansive 1996 Riesling Smaragd Achleiten coats the palate with broad waves of white flowers as well as liquid stones. It is an excellent, medium-bodied wine (a stunning feat in a vintage like 1996) with a long, feminine, supple finish. Both these wines are at their peak and should be drunk in the next 3-4 years.

In 1993, a vintage noted for its Riesling successes (it was less good for Grüner Veltliner), Bodenstein produced a show-stopping Riesling Smaragd Klaus. Its steely, quartz-like nose leads to a mind-boggling flavor profile. Quinine, stones, gravel, raspberries, red currants, cherries, spring onions, and assorted apricots are found in its complex, powerful character. A magnificent wine, its broad, delineated flavors linger for up to 45 seconds in its breath-taking finish. It is just now reaching its peak of maturity and will easily hold for another 15 years. The 1993 Riesling Smaragd Achleiten is outstanding yet doesn't hold a candle to the Klaus. An elegant, detailed wine with chalk and flower aromas as well as flavors, it is medium-bodied, and admirably concentrated. Drink it over the next 7-8 years.

While the Wachau is known for its dry wines, its top winemakers enjoy producing sweet wines, particularly in those vintages where botrytis appears in large quantities. What does a super-ripe apricot smell like in its pure essence? Try Prager's 1997 Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese Steinriegel and you'll know. It has monstrous intensity and depth to its medium to full-bodied personality. Loads of peaches, mangoes, papayas, and apricots can be found in this behemoth's character as well as in its interminable finish. Anticipated maturity: 2005-2035+. Importer: Vin Divno, Chicago, IL; tel. (773) 334-6700.