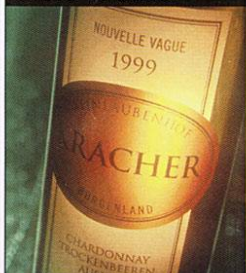


KRACHER



Alois Kracher



When Alois Kracher started making the wines at his father's winery in 1986, he had a hunch that his homeland, the eastern shore of Lake Neuseidl, could one day become famous for sweet wines. With cold winters, hot summers and the blanketing fog, all the ingredients were in place.

By 1995, Kracher was putting out 15 different sweet wines from myriad grapes and methods. The "classics," as he calls his ice wines and Zwischen den Seen ("Between the Lakes") bottlings, he vinifies in stainless steel. These focus on fruit, as the '99 Number 5 Scheurebe shows. It's a funky grape made glamorous, with herbal notes as demure as chamomile tea in a sea of golden plum fruit.

The Nouvelle Vague wines are the haute couture line of the wine world: masterful, complex creations that range from outlandish to gorgeous. All are fermented in new oak. Jarring ideas like a barrique-fermented TBA chardonnay come off as brilliant here.

The numbers may seem a Chanel-like approach to labelling, but in fact they indicate relative sweetness, from wines like the Number 2 Traminer, whose dry

★ 10 Wines Tasted | 9 Recommended

All from Neusiedlersee, and all 375ml:	
92	'99 TBA No. 6 Grand Cuvée \$70 (4/03)
92	'99 TBA No. 7 Nouvelle Vague Chardonnay \$65 (6/03)
91	'99 TBA No. 5 Zwischen d. Seen Scheurebe \$62 (6/03)
90	'99 TBA No. 2 Nouvelle Vague Traminer \$60 (6/03)
89	'99 TBA No. 3 Nouvelle Vague Welschriesling-Chardonnay \$60 (6/03)
88	'99 TBA No. 4 Zwischen den Seen Muscat Ottonel \$67 (6/03)
87	'99 TBA No. 8 Zwischen den Seen Welschriesling \$70 (6/03)
87	'01 BA Cuvée \$28 (6/03)
84	'01 Eiswein Cuvée \$40 (6/03)

finish suggests it could pair well with main courses, to the screamingly sweet Number 8 Welschriesling. The wines Kracher finds to be in perfect harmony, however, take the title Grand Cuvée. These are the jaw-droppers, heady elixirs like the Cuvée Number 6, that enliven their preposterous sweetness with an acidity that could put life into stone. —T.Q.T

Founded: 1961 **Winemaker/Owner:** Alois Kracher **Acres owned:** 49.5 acres **Annual production:** 10,000 cases of half-bottles
Estate grown: 100% **Known for:** Dessert wines that live up to the term "elixir" **Imported by:** Vin Divino, Chicago, IL