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VDP. DIE PRÄDIKATSWEINGÜTER

VDP.DIE PRÄDIKATSWEINGÜTER
AN ASSOCIATION

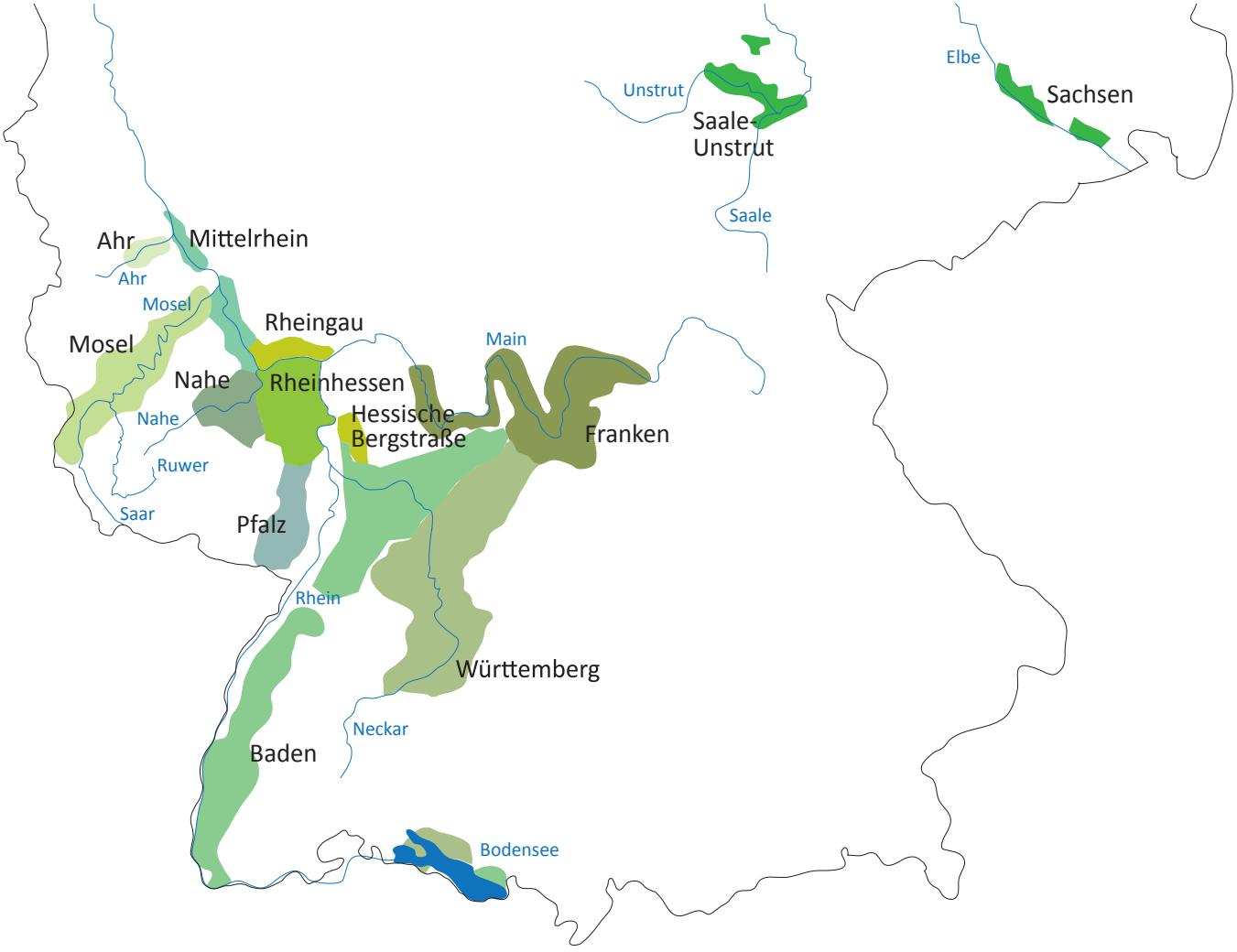
The Verband Deutscher Prädikatsweingüter e.V. (VDP) is the oldest national association of fine winegrowing estates anywhere in the world. In 1910 four regional associations joined forces to form the Verband Deutscher Naturweinversteigerer (VDNV). Those regional associations from the Rheingau, Rheinhessen, Rheinpfalz (today known as Pfalz) and the Mosel, Saar and Ruwer region were primarily concerned with promoting quality and preserving the focus on natural (i.e. unchaptalized) wine. Today, over a hundred years later, the VDP brings together approx. 200 elite winegrowing estates from each of Germany's winegrowing regions. VDP.members adhere to strict self-imposed quality standards – from the berries to the bottle.

THE VDP.EAGLE

Stylized eagle bearing a cluster of grapes

The VDP.Eagle on the capsule of a bottle guarantees:

- hand-crafted wines of the highest quality
- from some of the finest wine estates of Germany



VDP.DIE PRÄDIKATSWEINGÜTER
FACT AND FIGURES

YEAR OF FOUNDING

1910

MEMBERS

198 winegrowing estates from each of Germany's winegrowing regions

POSITIONING

- Harvest yields: approx. 3% of the German wine harvest
- Vineyard holdings: approx. 5% of Germany's land under vine (5.260 ha)
- Revenue: approx. 7.5% of total German wine sales

STATISTICAL AVERAGES FOR VDP.ESTATES

- Land under vine: 26.5 hectares
- Bottles / year: 171.000
- Revenues / year: approx. €1.63 mn

RIESLING EXPERTISE

- 23 % of Germany's hectares under vine are planted with Riesling
- Within the VDP, 55 % of all vineyards are planted with Riesling
- These 2.893 ha correspond to 5 % of the global Riesling production and 12 % of Germany's Riesling vineyards

ABOVE-AVERAGE SHARE OF ORGANIC VINICULTURE

- Germany boasts 8.100 ha of organic agriculture: 22 % of that area belong to VDP.estates
- Within the VDP, approx. 1.116 ha of organically tended vineyards are spread across 50 estates (some currently still transitioning).
- One quarter of VDP.estates follow organic guidelines, and the trend is increasing.

(Source: Statistisches Bundesamt March 2014)

GROWTH

- 1990: VDP counts 161 estate members
- Since then: 128 new members and 92 departures
- 2021: 198 estates are members of the VDP

SALES FIGURES

- Revenue volumes for all VDP.estates totalled roughly €323 mn, on sales of approx. 34 mn bottles
- 42 % of VDP wines are marketed directly to consumers
- Another 35 % are sold via specialized retailers
- Restaurants represent the remaining 17 %
- 77 % of VDP wines are sold domestically, with the remaining 23 % exported
- Half of those exports are dry wines

VDP.GROSSES GEWÄCHS® / 2015 VINTAGE (RED: 2014):

- Approx. 5 % of VDP production, approx. 1.700.000 bottles
- Average price € 32.00 per bottle

VDP.CLASSIFICATION

THE REASON

‘Only a vine that grows in harmony with its vineyard can yield grapes for truly great, distinctive wines that perceptibly reflect their soil and climate’

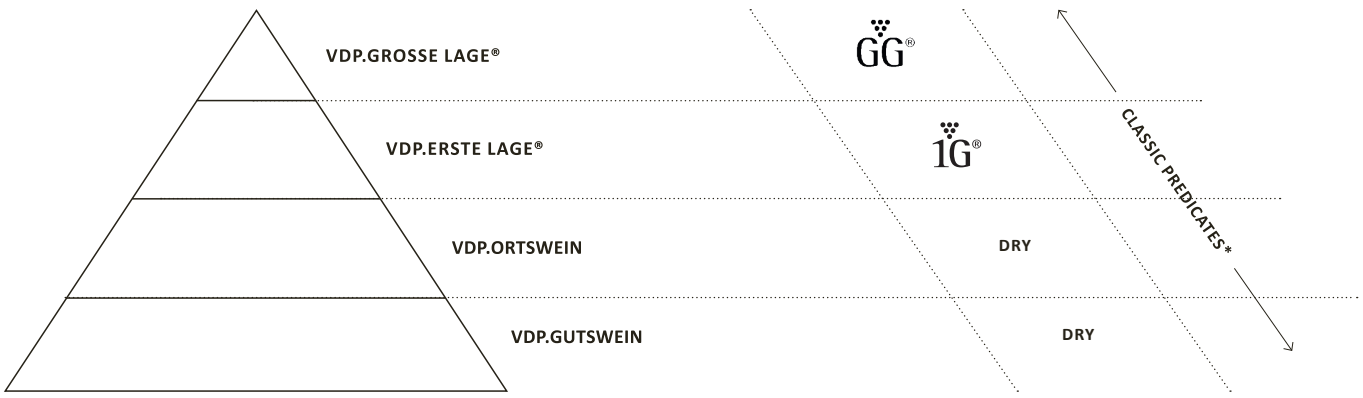
STEFFEN CHRISTMANN
VDP.PRESIDENT

THE FOUR TIERS OF VDP.CLASSIFICATION

The VDP.Classification system is based on the association's statutes. A wine's quality is defined based on its terroir, here meant as its specific origins as linked to a tightly defined set of quality criteria. For the VDP.estates, the vineyard is the definitive quality criterion. Classification is made based on the principle:

"The narrower the origin, the higher the quality."

THE VDP.CLASSIFICATION PYRAMID



*Wines that are semi-sweet and sweet bear the classic predicates Kabinett, Spätlese, Auslese, Beerenauslese, Trockenbeerenauslese or Eiswein. They are unique specialties in the world of wine. Compared to other countries, Germany’s cool climate provides ideal conditions to balance sweetness with pronounced acidity. Off-dry wines are designated as quality wines at all levels.

VDP.CLASSIFICATION

THE NEW CLASSIFICATION

VDP.GROSSE LAGE®
(comparable with Grand Cru in Burgundy)

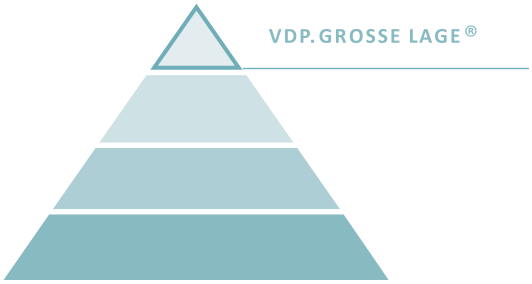
VDP.ERSTE LAGE®
(comparable with Premier Cru in Burgundy)

VDP.ORTSWEIN
(comparable with Village in Burgundy)

VDP.GUTSWEIN
(comparable with generic wine in Burgundy)

VDP.CLASSIFICATION

VDP.GROSSE LAGE® - THE PEAK OF THE PYRAMID



The VDP.GROSSE LAGE® designation is reserved for top parcels in the very best German vineyards. The first-class wines grown here present a singular sense of place, complex taste profile and remarkable ageing potential. They are planted solely with varieties tightly linked with the region and suitable for that specific vineyard. Strict production criteria ensure that these bottles stand at the peak of the VDP.classification pyramid.

GG Dry wines from a VDP.GROSSE LAGE® are labeled as VDP.GROSSES GEWÄCHS®.

VDP.CLASSIFICATION

VDP.GROSSE LAGE® - THE PEAK OF THE PYRAMID

SITE CLASSIFICATION CRITERIA

In 2012, a procedure was ratified for determining eligibility for potential VDP.GROSSE LAGE® sites. It called for an in-depth review of all existing Erste Lage sites. The new VDP.GROSSE LAGEN® sites can be carved out of larger vineyards that had been drawn overly broad or which were topographically heterogeneous. They can now also be registered by their geographical designations of origin (geographische Ursprungsbezeichnung or g.U.) or, thanks to a modification to wine law, by their lieu-dit. This process remains a work in progress, as the list of sites can be expected to change periodically through new members and changes in ownership.

GRAPE VARIETIES

Restricted to varieties defined by the regional association as suitable for the specific vineyard.

MAXIMUM YIELDS

Yield volumes are restricted to a maximum of 50 hl/ha.

HARVEST

Grapes are harvested selectively, by hand. The harvest fruit must be physiologically fully ripe.

VINIFICATION

The wines are produced exclusively using traditional methods and techniques.

CERTIFICATION

Beyond the standard operations audits for VDP.members, wines from VDP.GROSSE LAGEN® are also subject to additional inspections and monitoring: quality-oriented work in the vineyard and, in particular, yield volumes are monitored for each vineyard throughout the entire growing season and in the weeks prior to harvest. The wines are audited and certified by a testing commission before and after bottling.

TASTE PROFILES

Wines meeting the legal criteria for dry are designated as VDP.GROSSES GEWÄCHS®. Labelling as "trocken" (dry) is mandatory. Wines that are legally classified as halbtrocken (semi-dry) and feinherb (off-dry) do not receive additional labelling. Wines with higher levels of residual sugar are classified based on the classic Prädikat categories: Kabinett, Spätlese, Auslese, Beerenauslese, Trockenbeerenauslese and Eiswein. The regional associations bear responsibility for establishing appropriate taste profiles, although Spätlese wines must have at least 18 g/L of residual sugar.

LABELLING

The site — without the name of the village — is indicated on the front and decorative label in capital letters. The term VDP.GROSSE LAGE® must be implemented as a circumferential band on the capsule below the VDP.Traubenadler logo. VDP.GROSSE GEWÄCHSE® wines are filled in special bottles with the "GG Grape Cluster" logo embossed on the glass. In exceptional cases, the "GG Grape Cluster" logo and the term VDP.GROSSE LAGE® can be placed on the label.

RELEASE DATES

Naturally and nobly sweet wines from VDP.GROSSE LAGEN® are released onto the market on 1 May. VDP.GROSSES GEWÄCHS® wines are not to be marketed before 1 September of the year following the harvest. Red wines mature for at least 12 months in wood casks and are released one year later on 1 September.

USE OF THE SITE NAME

All wines from a VDP.GROSSE LAGE® to be marketed with site names must fulfil the criteria for this quality tier. No estate may produce more than one VDP.GROSSES GEWÄCHS® per site and variety.

VDP.CLASSIFICATION

PERMISSIBLE VARIETIES FOR VDP.GROSSE LAGE®

WINEGROWING	VDP.GROSSE LAGE® VARIETIES
AHR	Spätburgunder, Frühburgunder; Nobly sweet only: Riesling
BADEN	Weißburgunder, Grauburgunder, Spätburgunder, Riesling, Chardonnay, Lemberger (Kraichgau and Badische Bergstraße only) Nobly sweet only: Muskateller
FRANKEN	Riesling, Silvaner, Weißburgunder, Spätburgunder
HESSISCHE BERGSTRASSE	Riesling, Weißburgunder, Grauburgunder, Spätburgunder
MITTELRHEIN	Riesling, Spätburgunder
MOSEL-SAAR-RUWER	Riesling
NAHE	Riesling
PFALZ	Riesling, Weißburgunder, Spätburgunder
RHEINGAU	Riesling, Spätburgunder
RHEINHESSEN	Riesling, Spätburgunder
SAALE-UNSTRUT	Riesling, Weißburgunder, Grauburgunder, Spätburgunder, Frühburgunder, Traminer, Silvaner
SACHSEN	Riesling, Weißburgunder, Grauburgunder, Spätburgunder, Frühburgunder, Traminer
WÜRTTEMBERG	Riesling, Weißburgunder, Grauburgunder, Spätburgunder, Lemberger

VDP.GROSSES GEWÄCHS®
COMMENTS ON THE TASTING 2020

The VDP.GROSSE LAGE® from which these special wines come is the award for the highest quality German vineyards and represents the top of the VDP.classification model. Wines that have grown there under the perfect conditions of soil, light, shade, wind, heat and coolness impress with their independence and are expressive representatives of the vineyard itself. Above all, the high ageing potential distinguishes the wines that carry the GG logo on the bottle.

"Wonderful to drink from the first moment on, ripe, silky acidity - a really great vintage."
Christoph Raffelt, Blog "Originalverkorkt"

"It took me completely by surprise. The reds from 2018 are coping extremely well with the second warmest year after 2003. Wow. I must say whether Ahr or also Rheinhessen, I liked it throughout. "
Caro Maurer, Master of Wine

"To see the development - how the individual character of the vineyard sites is brought out is great. That is quite clearly noticeable"
Nancy Großmann, Sommelière, Rutz Berlin***

"Many wines from 2019 have an incredible finesse, despite the enormous heat waves and the inconsistent weather. This constant change has given the wines their special tension."
Stuart Pigott, James Suckling

"Intense, rich wines - but also complex wines with balance. Despite the great concentration, one still has an enormous freshness."
Konstantin Baum, Master of Wine

"The wines are accessible early and where they are really great I would even put them above 2018 - but they are really great in a charming way!"
Gerhard Retter, Sommelier and Host

SUMMARY

The VDP.estates view themselves as pioneers in establishing origin-based wine labelling for high-end wines that are comprehensible to consumers. Productive discussions and successful agreements on this topic achieved by the VDP have made it a role model for numerous imitators (the more the merrier), thus confirming the direction being taken. The VDP.estates are aware that course corrections are sometimes necessary to reach the final goal, especially when wine law and regional differences necessitate certain compromises.

The goal for the VDP.estate's all-round efforts, and the key to the future of high-end winegrowing in Germany, are hand-crafted, terroir-shaped wines that express the long viticultural history and diversity of German wine styles.

The combination of outstanding soils, individual microclimates, traditional varieties and the dedication of VDP.winemakers represents a unique foundation. Guided properly, it will secure the existence of quality-minded estates and the well-deserved stature of German wine within the larger international wine universe. And last but not least, it serves the aspiration for unique, comprehensible authenticity.

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