

Wasenhaus

winemakers: Alex Götze and Christoph Wolber

organic wild yeasts non-filtré low SO2

country: Germany

appellation: Baden

village: Staufen

main vineyard(s): Kirchberg, Ölberg



summary: Alex and Christoph were bitten by the same Burgundy-bug and ended up meeting each other in Beaune, both on their own wine pilgrimage. Over 5+ years, both garnered serious Burgundy credentials, working at Comte Armand, Bernard van Berg, Domaine Leflaive, de Montille, Pierre Morey and Domaine de la Vougeraie. Alex, in fact, remains the vineyard manager for de Montille and makes the 2.5-hour trip regularly to Baden for Wasenhaus. Similar to Enderle & Moll, the Wasenhaus wines show an uncommon lightness and clarity. They are ultra-fine, with a textural elegance that is second to none. The farming is organic with elements of biodynamics woven in; they do buy grapes from a select few farmers who have worthy sites and who farm correctly (organic or biodynamic). The priority here is high-quality fruit with active, living yeasts so they can work with as little sulfur as possible. Winemaking is low intervention (see below for more information). Grapes are from two parts of Baden, their home sites around Staufen and purchased fruit from Kaiserstuhl.

size: 3.3 acres and 2.2 acres of purchased fruit

key grape varieties: Pinot Noir, Weissburgunder (Pinot Blanc), Chardonnay and Gutedel (Chasselas)

soil: limestone, volcanic soils and loess

vine age: old vines in Staufen, some planted in the 1950s; vines between 10-30 years in Kaiserstuhl

vineyard work: Organic with respect to various biodynamic practices (moon, compost). Spraying only with sulfur and copper, plowing once or twice per year; all replanting is by selection massale. Everything is hand harvested, for both estate fruit and purchased fruit.

vinification: All whites are whole-cluster, screw pressed; fermentation takes place in neutral barrels. After malo, they are kept on the fine lees until bottling. Reds ferment in open-top vats and are later moved to age in older barrels with not more than 10-20% new oak for most wines. Their aim is for less than 20ppm (most of them are about 10 ppm or less) free SO2 in all wines. For the classic reds (not the Nouveau) average time on the skins is 16-20 days and then they wait for the temperature to get above the mid-80s (naturally). Extraction is mainly through foot treading and manual punch downs; everything is bottled no fining / filtering.

red wines:

Baden Nouveau – carbonic Pinot Noir, no sulfur added most vintages, from a vineyard 10km south of Staufen

Pinot Noir – 10% whole cluster, 25yo vines, different origins and orientations from the Kaiserstuhl; south of Staufen

Pinot Noir “Vulkan” – 33 % whole cluster, pure volcanic soil from the Kaiserstuhl

Pinot Noir “Bellen” – 40% whole cluster, majority French clones, steep site, limestone in the Kirchberg

white wines:

Gutedel – 50% destemmed, short fermentation on skins and aging in 600L wood casks; 30 yo vines; biodynamic; 9.7% ABV(!)

Weissburgunder – whole-cluster pressed; two 600L wood casks; loess and volcanic soil on the Kaiserstuhl; one year in barrel followed by a half year in stainless steel

Weissburgunder Bellen – 60 yo vines; steep site; rich clay over limestone in the Kirchberg

Weissburgunder Möhlin – whole cluster pressed; 60 yo vines from the limestone terraces of Ölberg; 18 month old barrique retail

Chardonnay Filzen – aromatic clone of Chardonnay (maybe Musqué); other side of the hill from Bellen