

## THE 2019 VINTAGE AT WEINGUT EGON MÜLLER-SCHARZHOF

Another mild winter. December brought the much needed rain but 2019 started dry. Until the end of April the weather was mild and dry and the vegetation was well ahead of normal. In May the weather deteriorated and on May 4<sup>th</sup>. after a long dry spell, we had rain and sleet. During the night the temperature dropped to - 1°C. In dry conditions this would not have been sufficient to damage the young shoots but the combination humidity and frost had a devastating effect particularly in the lower parts of Scharzhofberg and Rosenberg. During the following night a strong northerly wind drove cold air over the hill and at this time the damage was greatest in the higher parts of Rosenberg, Braunfels and even braune Kupp along the "Grätenbach" ravine. It remained cold until May 22<sup>nd</sup> and the growth of the vineyards slowed. Flowering began late and slowly but a few days of very hot weather at the beginning of June sped things up and by June 20<sup>th</sup>, flowering was finished.

June and July were mostly hot and dry and it was easy to tend the vines and vineyards.

From July 20<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> it was extremely hot. On July 26<sup>th</sup> the weather station in Kanzem registered a maximum temperature of 41.6°C. It was the moment when the vineyards were being hedged and in those plots where the grapes had been recently exposed to the sun we saw considerable sunburn. Plots that had not yet been hedged weren't damaged at all but in the very old vineyards which are less vigorous and have smaller leaves the damage was great throughout.

The weather remained mostly fine and we were preparing for another September harvest. After September 20<sup>th</sup> the weather became less stable. The temperatures were still warm and it rained intermittently. Botrytis began to spread. We started picking on September 30<sup>th</sup>. The first few days were fine and the results were quite satisfactory. We even harvested a first batch of Trockenbeereauslese. From October 6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> it was rainy and we had to interrupt our picking. Fine and warm weather followed and we harvested more and more Botrytis grapes, but at the same time tried to maintain speed since the long range forecast was not favorable. We finished on October 18<sup>th</sup>.

Since 2014 the summers had been dry and hot and in such conditions the resistance of the old un-grafted vineyards to Phyloxera seems to decline. One of our old plots had been infected by the louse for many years but in 2018 many vines died and the trend continued in 2019. When we harvested this vineyard we were shocked not only by the small quantity but also by the bitterness and lack of taste in the grapes. With great sadness the decision was taken to uproot and replant this plot.

The 2019 crop is small but of very high quality. We only harvested 20 hl/ha but there's a great variation between vineyards: While braune Kupp was relatively good at 25 hl/ha, Scharzhofberg because of frost, sunburn and Phyloxera only yielded 18 hl/ha.

Unlike 2018, this is a Botrytis vintage and Botrytis years often have trouble fermenting. Fermentations started well enough but a long cold spell in November cooled down the cellar and the casks that were still fermenting almost came to a halt. At this time, quite a few casks aren't finished yet but those that are, show great promise.