



Top Quality Wines in Balance with Nature

Spitzenweine in Balance mit der Natur



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KRUG'SCHER HOF MOTZENBÄCKER
Familie Menger-Krug
VILLA IM PARADIES



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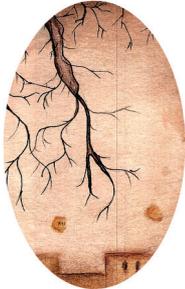
For many generations (since 1758) our family has been cultivating top quality wines with passion. It is our philosophy that top quality wines can only develop in balance with nature. We follow this principle in our vineyards – more than 75 hectares family owned – and in the cellar. Our endeavour is to ever increasingly operate in a sustainable manner, saving resources.

As a family, we think also of the generations to come, which is why sustainability is an important principle. We would like our most valuable resources - the exceptional vineyard sites, the healthy soils and the acquired knowledge about the cultivation of vines in the vineyard and wine production in the cellar - to be preserved for future generations.

The picture on the label illustrates our principle: the vine takes centre stage, yet the whole ecosystem contributes to the fact that we can harvest excellent grapes from healthy vines and produce top quality wines in balance with nature. We are convinced that quality grows in the vineyard. Only healthy and strong vines can yield exceptional wines. A healthy environment in our vineyards is extremely important to us.



Climate is of vital importance for the quality of the grapes. The sun supplies energy, which the plants can use to produce biomass such as roots, leaves, blossoms and fruit. Rain provides vital water for our plants. What is also of major importance is the timely occurrence of rain, wind and sun. Wind after the rain helps to prevent fungal diseases, as the wind dries the leaves. Rain is particularly crucial during the early stages of the vine growing season, we hope, however, for a dry and sunny autumn.



The Palatinate and Rhine-Hesse offer particularly favourable climates for winegrowing. In the Palatinate the hills of the Palatinate forest in the West create a foehn effect. Moist air masses coming from the main wind direction produce rain on the hills of the Palatinate Forest and warm, dry, katabatic winds develop during the descent to the Rhine Valley producing a clear sky. The Palatinate Haardt is thus one of the sunniest and warmest regions in Germany: so close to the sky. Likewise, Rhine-Hesse as the land of 1000 hills profits from small-scale foehn effects and provides a favourable climate.

Just as important as the climate from above is the soil from below. After all, the majority of the vine exists under the soil surface in the form of roots. The roots of the vine can descend to a depth of 25 m.

The soil of the vineyards tells a story – of the original rocks and the transition processes on the ground. Living soil develops when rocks are transformed by soil life and roots and nourished with organic matter. The soil retains water, air and nutrients nourishing the plants and thus the animals and the human beings.

The type of soil determines the character of the wine. Warm variegated sandstone soils produce full and fruity wines, calcareous soils lend minerality to the wine and wines grown on heavy loess soils have a full-bodied character.



In a vibrant soil millions of living organisms are busy maintaining equilibrium, producing nutrients by means of natural processes and making them available for the plants. Living organisms in the soil decompose organic matter into its elements thus releasing nutrients ready to be used as components for future growth. For these processes creatures invisible to the naked eye are of particular importance: microorganisms. They control complex biogeochemical reactions maintaining the nutrient cycle thus allowing for healthy plant growth. For this purpose the microorganisms produce enzymes, i.e. complex biomolecules with special features. There are, for example, enzymes, which separate phosphate from the soil matrix and transport it effectively. Apart from the microorganisms the plants also profit from this. Without a sufficient amount of such enzymes the vital nutrient phosphate sticks to the soil particles and is not available for the plants. If the soil community is disturbed, e.g. by excessive use of mineral fertilizers, inappropriate soil cultivation or a lack of organic matter in the soil, the vines can suffer from a phosphate deficiency despite the surplus of this nutrient in the soil. Apart from controlling such vital biochemical reactions, living soil organisms also have an influence on the soil structure. Earthworms are hard workers, eating their way through soil and enriching the soil particles with special substances stimulating fertility. Their tunnels improve soil aeration for the benefit of the plant roots and the living organisms.



A healthy soil is the basis for healthy plant growth, which, in turn is also dependent on the vegetation cover. It acts like a skin to protect the soil from dehydration, erosion and overheating and it prevents nutrients from being washed out. We believe that a high degree of biodiversity above ground has a positive influence on the vital processes below ground. Therefore we attach importance to a permanent green cover with a diverse plant community in our vineyards.



Biodiversity

We consider well-directed plant cover with various herbs and flowers as an opportunity to add diversity to the monoculture of the vineyard. The vines and the green cover should coexist symbiotically, complement one another and communicate.



We believe that old medicinal plants and herbs such as chamomile, yarrow and calendula exert a positive influence on vine and soil. They release substances into soil and air, which contribute to the health of the vines. Other plants support the nutrient supply for the vines. Various types of clovers and legumes accommodate symbiotic microorganisms in their root nodules: rhizobia. Rhizobia can break down nitrogen from the air and make it available to the plant. By means of a diverse plant community between the vines with different rooting depths the soil is aerated and enriched with various secondary plant compounds.

In addition, we plant perennial plants such as roses, iris and thyme among the vines or at the beginning of the row as well as various bushes and trees in the border areas and gaps between the vineyards.



A diverse plant community also offers food and protection for a diverse insect community. Beneficial insects such as the common green lacewing and the ladybird beetle keep vineyard pests under control. It is a lot more difficult for pests to spread in a healthy and diverse insect community. The health of the grapes is thus naturally protected.



We believe that, over the years, seed diversity helps to establish exactly the type of plant community best suitable for the individual character and the health of the vineyard. Thus every vineyard can find its own balance. We want to preserve the natural, individual personality of the vineyard characterised by its microclimate, soil and plant community. The character distinguishes our top quality wines.

Diversity constitutes the most important basis for an intact natural environment. The diversity of the plants, the animals and the living organisms provides a healthy ecosystem of the vineyard. They are, in fact, interdependent and a necessary prerequisite for healthy vines and top quality wines. In order to support a healthy ecosystem we have adapted cultivation in our vineyards with measures including permanent green cover and dispensing with herbicides and insecticides (since 1987) and a well-planned use of vehicles in the vineyards to prevent soil compaction.

In order to supply the soil and the vines with nutrients and organic matter we count on the natural nutrient cycles based on diverse companion plants and healthy living organisms. We support this by using composted horse manure, plant manure and rock powder. We believe that the vines are healthier and produce higher quality grapes if they are supplied with natural

nutrients rather than 'fast food' from artificial mineral fertilisers. Furthermore, mineral fertilisers have an impact on soil creatures. A reduction in soil enzymes can diminish the availability of nutrients, so that the vines suffer from a deficiency despite the fact that nutrients are added to the soil. In order to boost the health of the vines we use herbal extracts and infusions from various medicinal plants such as valerian, horsetail, stinging nettle or yarrow. Despite initial doubts we have discovered that the infusions have had a positive influence on the health of our vines and that they have become more resistant to fungal diseases.

In this way we stimulate the diversity of plants, animals and living organisms in a healthy vineyard ecosystem. Only within a healthy ecosystem the vines can exploit their full potential and produce exceptional grapes. It is vital to create a diverse, vibrant and healthy environment for the grapes in order to harvest top quality grapes.

In the cellar, we keep focussed on the principle of top quality wines in balance with nature. We do not use genetically modified products or animal products or fining agents.

The way to a sustainable use of resources is one of the greatest challenges for human society as a whole. We want to make a contribution by operating in an increasingly sustainable manner.

Apart from caring for a healthy environment in our wine-growing areas this also includes conscious resource management as far as energy and water are concerned, for example by means of solar panels or the use of rainwater.

Nature – sun, wind, rain, industrious living organisms, the diversity of plants and animals – give us the basis for this wine, we add human passion, care and know-how. We hope, that you enjoy this wine and our other wines and we would like to thank you for supporting the maintenance of our cultural landscape through the purchase of this top quality natural product.

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Herzlich Willkommen in unserer Vinothek !