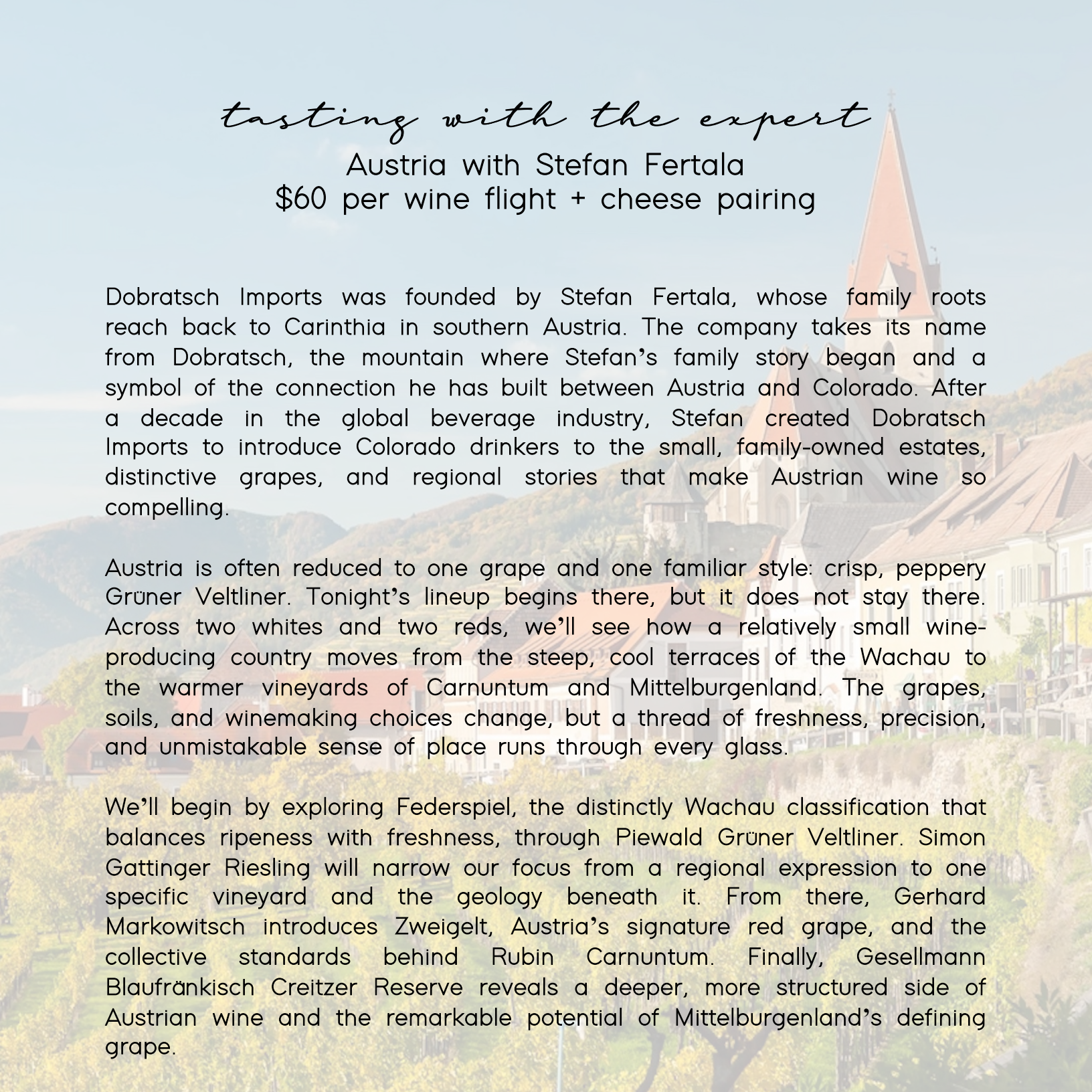




tasting with the expert

Austria with Stefan Fertala
\$60 per wine flight + cheese pairing

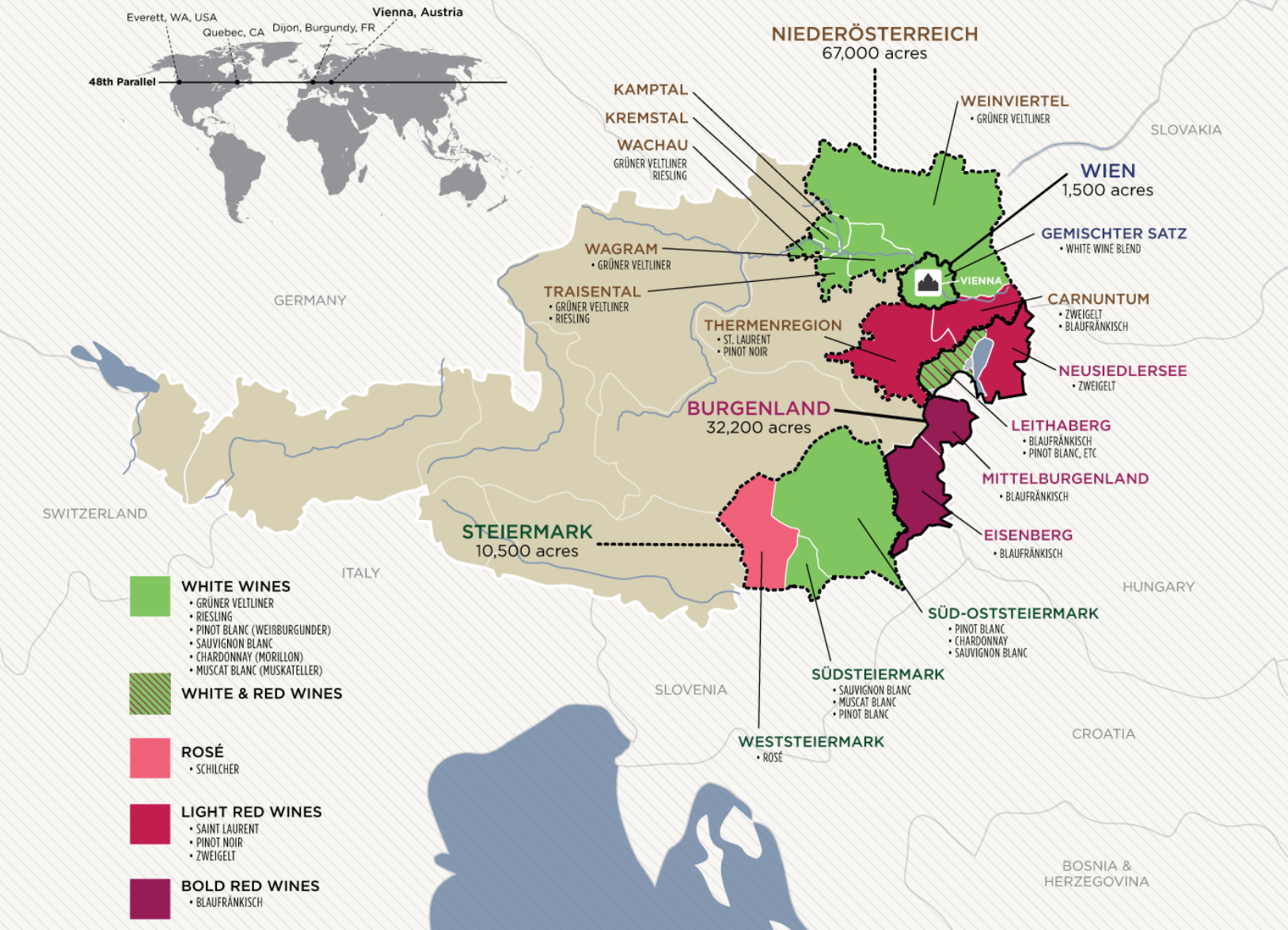
Dobratsch Imports was founded by Stefan Fertala, whose family roots reach back to Carinthia in southern Austria. The company takes its name from Dobratsch, the mountain where Stefan's family story began and a symbol of the connection he has built between Austria and Colorado. After a decade in the global beverage industry, Stefan created Dobratsch Imports to introduce Colorado drinkers to the small, family-owned estates, distinctive grapes, and regional stories that make Austrian wine so compelling.

Austria is often reduced to one grape and one familiar style: crisp, peppery Grüner Veltliner. Tonight's lineup begins there, but it does not stay there. Across two whites and two reds, we'll see how a relatively small wine-producing country moves from the steep, cool terraces of the Wachau to the warmer vineyards of Carnuntum and Mittelburgenland. The grapes, soils, and winemaking choices change, but a thread of freshness, precision, and unmistakable sense of place runs through every glass.

We'll begin by exploring Federspiel, the distinctly Wachau classification that balances ripeness with freshness, through Piewald Grüner Veltliner. Simon Gattinger Riesling will narrow our focus from a regional expression to one specific vineyard and the geology beneath it. From there, Gerhard Markowitsch introduces Zweigelt, Austria's signature red grape, and the collective standards behind Rubin Carnuntum. Finally, Gesellmann Blaufränkisch Creitzer Reserve reveals a deeper, more structured side of Austrian wine and the remarkable potential of Mittelburgenland's defining grape.

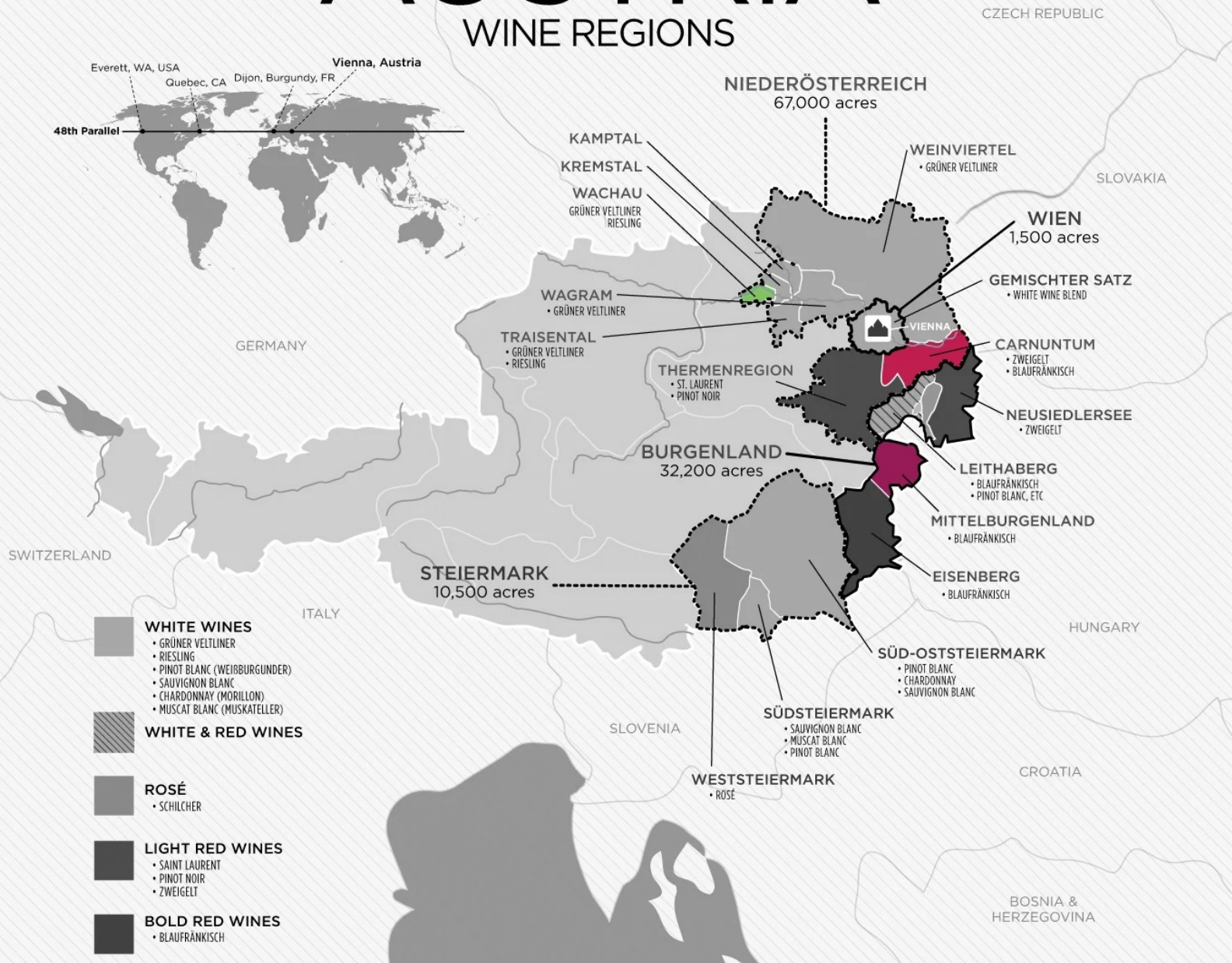
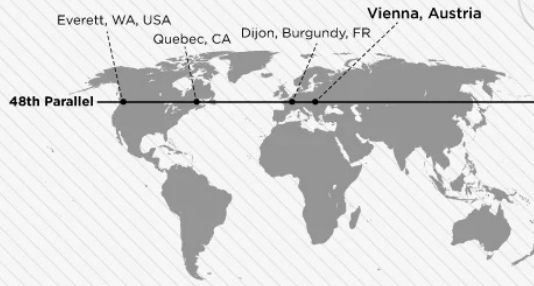
AUSTRIA

WINE REGIONS



AUSTRIA

WINE REGIONS



featured flight of the month

2025 Grüner Veltliner Federspiel [*stainless*]

Piewald 'π' • Spitz, Wachau

\$20|\$72 \$14|\$50 [additional 30% off tonight only]



yellow apple • lemon zest • savory spice

You'll immediately notice how much character can exist inside a wine this fresh. Yellow apple and lemon zest lead the nose, followed by savory spice and subtle mineral notes. The palate is lively but not sharp, with enough texture to carry the fruit through a clean, peppery finish. It delivers the brightness associated with Grüner Veltliner while showing that freshness does not have to mean simplicity.

Federspiel is the Wachau's classic middle-weight category, reserved for dry wines between 11.5% and 12.5% alcohol. The name comes from the lure traditionally used in falconry and is part of the three-tier classification created by the region's growers. Positioned between the lightest Steinfeder wines and the more powerful Smaragd category, Federspiel balances concentration with the freshness and precision that distinguish Wachau whites.

Piewald is based in Spitz, at the cooler western end of the Wachau, where narrow valleys and steep terraces slow ripening and allow the grapes to develop flavor without losing acidity. The wine name 'π' refers to the terraces that shape both the landscape and the demanding work required to farm it. This wine captures the balance at the heart of Federspiel: ripe enough to feel complete, but restrained enough to remain precise, savory, and refreshing.

featured flight of the month

2025 Riesling Federspiel [*stainless*]

Simon Gattinger • Ried Burgstall [vineyard], Unterloiben, Wachau

\$35|\$425 \$25|\$88 [additional 30% off tonight only]



apricot • elderflower • lively acidity

The fruit becomes more concentrated here, with apricot and other ripe stone-fruit aromas joined by elderflower and subtle Mediterranean spice. The palate has greater depth than the Grüner, but lively acidity keeps it focused and energetic. A long, fruit-driven finish reveals the balance between ripeness and precision that defines Riesling from this part of the Wachau.

While the Piewald introduces the broader character of the Wachau's terraced landscape, this wine narrows the focus to Ried Burgstall. With 'Ried' identifying a legally defined vineyard in Austria, the name connects the wine to one specific piece of land rather than simply its grape, village, or region. The comparison demonstrates how two wines carrying the same Federspiel classification can express their origins very differently.

Burgstall is a sunny, airy vineyard immediately east of Unterloiben, rising on a rocky terrace approximately 30 meters above its surroundings. The vines grow in a thin sandy layer over gneiss and granite, allowing Riesling to develop concentrated stone fruit while retaining mineral tension and acidity. Fermentation and aging in stainless steel preserve that clarity, keeping both the grape and the vineyard at the center of the wine.

featured flight of the month

2024 Zweigelt [*large oak + barrique*]
Markowitsch 'Rubin Carnuntum' • Carnuntum
\$22|~~\$84~~ \$15|\$57 [*30% off tonight only*]



ripe cherry • dark berries • cocoa

Ripe cherry and dark berries lead the nose, followed by gentle spice and a subtle cocoa note. The palate is supple and polished, with enough weight to feel generous but enough freshness to remain lively. Fine tannins and a long, savory finish make this an especially approachable introduction to Austrian red wine.

Unlike many of Europe's most recognizable grapes, Zweigelt is not an ancient variety. It was created in Austria in 1922 by crossing Blaufränkisch with St. Laurent. From Blaufränkisch it inherited color, spice, and freshness, while St. Laurent contributed aromatic fruit and a softer structure. Today, Zweigelt is Austria's most widely planted red grape, capable of producing everything from rosé and chillable reds to serious, age-worthy wines.

'Rubin Carnuntum' is both the wine's name and a regional designation governed by the area's producers. Every wine carrying the name must be made entirely from Zweigelt, originate in Carnuntum, and pass a tasting panel intended to preserve the designation's standards. Markowitsch sources this expression from vineyards surrounding the villages of Gottlesbrunn and Hoflein, then ages it in French oak barriques and large wooden casks. The result reflects the balance expected of Rubin Carnuntum: ripe and generous, but never heavy or dominated by oak.

featured flight of the month

2023 Blaufränkisch [*used barrique*]

Gesellmann 'Creitzer Reserve' • Deutschkreutz, Mittelburgenland DAC

\$35|\$427 \$25|\$89 [30% off tonight only]



wild berries • candied orange • mineral

This is the deepest and most structured wine of the evening. Wild berries and ripe cherry are layered with candied orange zest, herbal spice, and delicate oak. The palate is juicy and concentrated, with ripe, integrated tannins and a salty mineral quality that carries through the finish. Despite its power, the wine remains fresh and composed.

Blaufränkisch is one of the parents of Zweigelt, making the final two wines a direct look at how grape genetics can reveal themselves in the glass. The darker fruit, acidity, spice, and structure found more gently in Zweigelt become more pronounced here. In the right place and with careful aging, Blaufränkisch can produce wines with remarkable depth and longevity while retaining the freshness that gives the variety its identity.

Gesellmann is based in Deutschkreutz, in the heart of Mittelburgenland, a region so closely associated with Blaufränkisch that it is often called Blaufränkischland. In the local dialect, someone or something from Deutschkreutz is called 'Creitzer,' making the wine's name a direct reference to its home. Selected from some of the estate's finest vineyards and aged for 18 months in used barriques, this organic Reserve brings the evening to a fitting conclusion: serious and age-worthy, but still connected to the freshness and precision running through all four wines.

cheese pairing

cheese

Bûcheron • *Pasteurized Goat's Milk* • Loire Valley, France

The Loire Valley is known as France's heartland for goat cheese, a tradition shaped by the region's mild climate and abundant pasture. This bloomy-rind cheese ripens from the outside inward, creating two textures in every slice: a bright, cakey center surrounded by a softer creamline with deeper goat tang and gentle earthy flavors.

Beemster Graskaas • *Pasteurized Cow's Milk* • North Holland, Netherlands

The Beemster Polder was reclaimed from the sea more than 400 years ago, leaving behind mineral-rich clay pastures that help give its milk a distinctive richness. Graskaas is made only once each year, using the first milk produced after the cows return to pasture and feast on young spring grass. The cheese is aged only briefly, preserving its exceptionally supple texture and flavors of sweet cream, melted butter, and fresh grass.

Alp Blossom • *Raw Cow's Milk* • Vorarlberg, Austria

In the Alps, the flowers and herbs growing in mountain pastures influence both what the cows eat and the character of their milk. This aged cheese makes that relationship visible by covering the rind with dried local wildflowers and herbs. Beneath the edible floral coating is a dense, creamy Alpine cheese with savory flavors of toasted nuts and brown butter, while the rind contributes its own herbaceous and gently floral character.

Mastorazio • *Raw Sheep's Milk* • Campania, Italy

Casa Madaio is a fourth-generation family of cheesemakers and affineurs, the specialists responsible for guiding a cheese through the aging process. Mastorazio matures in the natural limestone caves of Castelvita, where the stable temperature, humidity, wood, and dried herbs help transform the raw sheep's milk. The finished Pecorino is firm and slightly flaky, with concentrated flavors of toasted hazelnut, dry hay, savory herbs, and a lingering piquant finish.

meat

River Bear Summer Sausage • *Wagyu Beef* • Denver, Colorado

Summer sausage earned its name before refrigeration, when curing and smoking allowed meat to be kept through the warmer months. River Bear gives that Midwestern tradition a Colorado treatment, using Wagyu beef sourced from American family farms and producing it in small batches at its Denver smokehouse. Mustard, red pepper, and coriander give the sausage its bold, savory spice before it is smoked for a rich finish.