

www.STLtoday.com

## Grüner Veltliner: Call it Gru-Ve, GV or simply 'groovy'

**BY GAIL APPLESON • Special to the Post-Dispatch > stlwinfinds@gmail.com | Posted: Wednesday, August 25, 2010 12:00 am**

I enjoy hearing from readers with wine recommendations. For example, after my recent piece on rosés appeared, Ann Zimpfer suggested Chaumette's dry rosé, which she first tasted last year at a garden party at the Missouri Botanical Garden.

Coincidentally, I recently visited the Chaumette Vineyard & Winery in Ste. Genevieve, Mo., and tasted the 2009 Spring Rosé, made from the Chambourcin grape. This is a dry rosé that's delicate and delicious. If you have an opportunity to sample it, do yourself a favor and take a sip.

Ann also mentioned one of her favorite summer whites, Grüner Veltliner. "It has a nice crispness that is perfect for the summer," she said. "You don't see it very much, but it's a nice find when you do."

True. This wine is not as ubiquitous as Chardonnay or Sauvignon Blanc. But it can be found if you hunt around.

Grüner Veltliner, sometimes referred to as Gru-Ve, as in groovy, or simply GV, is the most widely planted white grape in Austria. The wines range from light to medium body, contain racy acidity and minerality, and have flavors of citrus, apple, white pepper and spice. Grüner is sometimes described as having the floral perfume of a German Riesling and the refreshing zip of a Loire Sauvignon Blanc. This wine should be consumed young.

Around the time I spoke to Ann, The Wine and Cheese Place sent out a pick-of-the-day e-mail recommending the 2009 Hugl Weine Grüner Veltliner, selling for \$13.99 for a full liter, rather than the usual 750ml standard wine bottle. I headed to the Clayton store, 7435 Forsyth Boulevard.

This is a zesty wine with a beautiful floral aroma. It has layers of concentrated lemon, lime and grapefruit flavors and a spicy finish. It's a crisp and refreshing white that works well with appetizers and lighter cuisines. But don't let its lightness fool you. This wine is not low in alcohol. It's a full 13.5 percent, so if you're drinking it in the heat, don't guzzle it, and make sure to sip plenty of water. I know from experience how easy it is to get dehydrated sipping wine on a scorching day. A good rule of thumb is to drink equal amounts of water and wine.

And while we're talking about heat and wine, here's another warning: Don't leave wine in your car when the heat is excessive.

Back to the Wine & Cheese Place. The Clayton store had a nice selection of Grüner Veltliner, so I picked up a second for comparison, the 2008 Laurenz V. Singing Grüner Veltliner. Although this wine is also priced at \$13.99, it comes in a standard 750ml bottle. Both wines are from Austria's Niederösterreich appellation in lower Austria, the largest of the country's four wine regions.

The "V" in Laurenz V means that the Singing Grüner Veltliner comes from the fifth generation of the Laurenz Moser family. Dr. Laurenz Moser III invented the canopy management-trellising system that revolutionized vineyard cultivation all across Europe.

The Laurenz V is a year older than the Hugl and lower in alcohol at 12 percent, which I consider a plus for warm-weather drinking.

Although the two wines are similar in flavor — both are very citrusy with spice — the Laurenz is a bit fuller-bodied and slightly more complex. If the Laurenz V is not too cold, you'll also pick up some peach flavors.

Like the Hugl, this would pair with lighter foods as well as spicy cuisines.