

Weingut Pichler-Krutzler

F. X. Pichler's daughter Elisabeth and her husband Erich Krutzler (who had significant prior involvement in Slovenian projects, and whose brother continues to run their family's winery in Südburgenland) leased vineyards to establish their estate in 2007 and have been growing steadily since. They are not members of the Vinea Wachau and so do not qualify for labeling with the designations "Federspiel" or "Smaragd," but it seems likely anyway that they prefer not to signal any such obvious distinction between lighter- and fuller-bodied bottlings. There is a sliding scale here, and even from their top sites, Pichler and Krutzler welcome relatively low alcohol when it can be achieved without sacrifice of flavor, something more easily accomplished from their sites in 2013 with Riesling than with Grüner Veltliner. "In general, and in the future," Krutzler already remarked four years ago, "we are going to prefer in questionable instances to pick five to seven days earlier [than they did in 2007-2009] to achieve better balance with lower alcohol." Picking here utilizes the same crew as that at F. X. Pichler. The musts tend to enjoy more than 24 hours of skin contact. Casks are gradually being purchased new from Stockinger to supplement still-dominant stainless steel, and the couple hopes soon to extend the *élevage* on selected wines through a second winter. Despite extreme *millerandage* in some of their Grüner Veltliner, Krutzler reports that they came away in 2013 with only around 20% less than an average crop. In certain instances, Riesling fruit was whole-cluster-pressed; in others, it was given the estate's usual pre-fermentation skin contact. (I'll review recent vintages of the consistently impressive Pichler-Krutzler Blaufränkisch from Südburgenland in the context of a subsequent report that covers, among others, the estates of that region.)

From 2013: A Great Vintage for Austrian Riesling and Grüner Veltliner (Nov 2015) by David Schildknecht

	Vintage	(Hover for Commentary) Producer	Name	Tasting Notes	Score	Author	Drinking Window	Release Price	Review Date
2013	Weingut Pichler- Krutzler	<u>Grüner Veltliner</u> <u>Frauenweingarten</u>	Diverse meadow-like floral and leafy notes are accompanied on the nose by intimations of apple and lime that then come to the palate with Riesling-like cut and vivacity. Lusciously ripe honeydew melon serves to assuage the wine's high-acid edge, and the refreshingly juicy, long finish introduces stimulating pepper and intriguing stoniness.	90	David Schildknecht	2015 - 2020	\$23.00	Nov 2015	
			-- David Schildknecht						
2013	Weingut Pichler- Krutzler	<u>Grüner Veltliner</u> <u>Klostersatz</u>	A sappy, juicy mélange of ripe honeydew melon and white peach informs a glossy, polished palate, with pepper, smoky black tea, nut oils,	92	David Schildknecht	2015 - 2025	\$27.00	Nov 2015	

peach kernel and crushed stone adding invigoration, interest and a sort of cyanic glow to the brightly juicy and succulently sustained finish. All the while there is a delightfully cooling and vaguely minty overlay to this entire performance. In this wine's personality vis-à-vis that of the Frauenweingarten, more gravel and better drainage are implicated in the site and some cask in the *élevage*. The alcohol is also significantly higher than in that bottling--not to mention higher than Pichler and Krutzler would usually target for Klostersatz--but the extreme *millerandage* in this site pushed up must weights.

-- David Schildknecht

2013	Weingut Pichler-Krutzler	<u>Grüner Veltliner Superin</u>	High-toned herbal notes and green tea mingle with peanut oil and intimations of white peach in a fetching aromatic display. The juicy, peachy, citrusy palate is underlaid with roasted turnip and suffused with cooling green herbs. Silky in texture, it displays vivacity, remarkable clarity and (even at 13.2% alcohol) lift. Alkali and salt, crushed stone and pepper-cress, nut and lemon oils lend counterpoint and render the lusciously lingering finish intriguing and invigorating. These 50-year-old vines from a riverside slope at the edge of Dürnstein characteristically accumulate sugar precociously, yet elevated alcohol vis-à-vis the other Pichler-Krutzler bottlings has never proven in any way problematic.	93	David Schildknecht	2015 - 2030	\$45.00	Nov 2015
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-- David Schildknecht

2013	Weingut Pichler-Krutzler	<u>Grüner Veltliner Loibenberg</u>	A sweet sense of ripeness is already suggested in the white peach-, pink grapefruit- and passion fruit-scented nose, and then projected on a subtly	90	David Schildknecht	2015 - 2025	Not Available	Nov 2015
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creamy, glossy, expansive palate. Lusciously fruity to a fault, this picked up delightful variety- and site-typical snap pea and white pepper as it evolved over its first year and change in bottle. "It's still finding its way," suggested Erich Krutzler this September, adding that, "despite its early harvest and our having left eight grams of sugar behind, this is the first of our Grüner Veltliners from Loibenberg to go over 14% alcohol." There is very faint alcoholic warmth to a satisfyingly sustained finish, but it isn't obtrusive. (Pichler and Krutzler culled some shriveled berries to avoid driving this wine's must weight yet higher. They would have liked to have matured it in cask but the volume was too small for those they had on hand.)

-- David Schildknecht

2013	Weingut Pichler-Krutzler	<u>Grüner Veltliner Pfaffenberg Alte Reben</u>	Both nose and palate here offer a striking but not at all jarring contrast of cooling herbal and kelp-like infusions with incisive caraway and pungent smoked meat. Here is one of several Grüner Veltliners of its vintage that had me wondering "who let the Gewurztraminer loose on this?" Creamy, broad and full but without heaviness, it preserves and essential core of primary juiciness, though, were one inclined to grade on typicality (which I'm not), one would have to mark it down. The lipsmackingly sustained, sappy, smoky, salty finish delightfully complements richly ripe white peach and muskmelon. Raised in a 600-liter cask, though in tank by the time I last tasted it, this wine is informed by the same tiny parcel of 60-year-old vines as were previous Pichler-Krutzler Grüner Veltliners from Pfaffenberg, but they have	91	David Schildknecht	2015 - 2025	\$36.00	Nov 2015
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now added the "old vines" label designation.

-- David Schildknecht

2013	Weingut Pichler-Krutzler	<u>Grüner Veltliner Kellerberg</u>	This impressive offering reflects the same vines on a rocky extension of the Kellerberg that until this vintage were labeled more specifically as "Wunderburg." But Pichler and Krutzler decided that "Kellerberg" was, after all, the name to conjure--and to market--with. A lush combination of pineapple, pear and <i>Mirabelle</i> is laced with sweet/smoky Szechuan pepper and Latakia tobacco, further tinged with mocha on a palpably high-extract, voluminous, creamy palate, yet a lovely sense of clarity is preserved to herbal, mineral and kelp-like notes in a downright reverberating finish. Raised largely in cask but with a small tank-rendered portion (and last tasted as an immediate pre-bottling assemblage), this displays the ripe effects of the season's tiny, sparse Grüner Veltliner berries, yet without its roughly 14% alcohol engendering any heat. It became more impressive over the course of its first year in bottle.	94	David Schildknecht	2015 - 2028	\$60.00	Nov 2015
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-- David Schildknecht

2013	Weingut Pichler-Krutzler	<u>Riesling Trum</u>	Juicy fresh lime and green herb-tinged ripe apricot inform a vivacious and buoyant performance, with apricot kernel piquancy and hints of salinity lending vigor and saliva-	89	David Schildknecht	2015 - 2018	\$25.00	Nov 2015
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inducement to a sustained finish. This disguises 18 grams of residual sugar against a background of nearly 9 grams of acidity--high even by normal

...highly engaging or lively, high acidity, minimal German Riesling standards. (In fact, Krutzler gave this fruit added skin contact to help ameliorate those acids.)

-- David Schildknecht

2013	Weingut Pichler-Krutzler	<u>Riesling Pfaffenberg</u>	White peach and apple are strongly tinged by their pits and pips, but that bitterness is well integrated into a lusciously juicy whole, and there is an exceptional impression of transparency to a crystalline sense of shimmeringly complex and mouthwatering mineral impingement. This harbors high acidity by any standards, yet the effect is engagingly ripe and enhances the impression of buoyancy, even at 12.5% alcohol.	93	David Schildknecht	2015 - 2025	\$36.00	Nov 2015
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-- David Schildknecht

2013	Weingut Pichler-Krutzler	<u>Riesling In der Wand</u>	From a site named for a steep cliff of gneiss that rises right along the Danube shore just upstream from Dürnstein, this leads with a fascinating aromatic amalgam of musky floral perfume and intimations of fruit pits and fruit pit distillate. More voluminous than its Pfaffenberg and Trum counterparts, and more texturally flattering thanks to significantly lower acidity, this doesn't quite capture the vivacity or clarity of those siblings. That said, the finish here is rich, juicy and sustained, its piquancy--along with a hints of crushed stone and saliva-liberating shrimp shell savor--serving for welcome counterpoint.	91	David Schildknecht	2015 - 2020	\$37.00	Nov 2015
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-- David Schildknecht

2013	Weingut	<u>Riesling Loibenberg</u>	The sole Riesling of its vintage that Krutzler and	93	David	2015 -	\$48.00	Nov
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Pichler elected--or were able--to raise in cask, this leads with pungently penetrating lemon oil, bruised kumquat rind, musk, smoky black tea, blond tobacco and a hint of peach kernel, all of which go on to accent juicy ripe peach on a polished palate. A certain youthful severity here thanks to botrytis prickle, intensity of high-toned esters, sheer phenolic concentration and prominent piquancy has given way after a year's bottle age to luscious creaminess. Yet for all of its consequent textural caress and its sheer richness of fruit, this beauty displays dynamic interaction with seemingly crystalline mineral accents in its vibrantly gripping finish. A TBA. was pulled out from this parcel in order to make sure that virtually no botrytis berries informed the present wine; but there certainly remains an aura of very ripe and, at least in part, lightly desiccated, botrytis-tinged berries about it.

-- David Schildknecht

Schildknecht 2022

2015

2013	Weingut Pichler- Krutzler	<u>Riesling Rotenberg</u>	Luscious peach, apple and <i>Mirabelle</i> garlanded with haunting aromas of toasted almond, peony, rowan berry and honeysuckle are supported by 16 grams of residual sugar without the effect more than supportively hinting at sweetness. Smoky overtones and palate piquancy of black tea and pit fruit distillates lend interest and counterpoint, while an esterous, voluminous, polished palate leads to a succulent, soothingly sustained, saliva-inducing salt-tinged finish that also features a sort of cyanic glow. These 600 liters originate in an Urgestein site adjacent to the Loibenberg, and while the fruit was extremely ripe, Krutzler reports it was botrytis-free. Although Krutzler and Pichler don't utilize the	92	David Schildknecht	2015 - 2020	Not Available	Nov 2015
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stylistic distinctions of the Vinea Wachau familiar to Austrian wine lovers, their use of "Reserve" here is precisely analogous to one frequently employed by members of that organization for labeling wines that on account of their residual sugar fail to qualify as Smaragd.

-- David Schildknecht

2013	Weingut Pichler-Krutzler	<u>Riesling Pfaffenberg Alte Reben</u>	An exotic and effusive alliance of pink grapefruit, white peach and very ripe Bartlett pear is garlanded by heliotrope, rowan berry and freesia perfumes whose liquid essences have after a year in bottle become utterly seductive. The wine's sheer richness, reinforced by 12 grams of residual sugar, gains welcome counterpoint from grapefruit rind piquancy and smoky nut oils on an expansive, silky, subtly oily palate. When I first tasted this I wondered whether it might ultimately want for enough sheer primary juiciness, but the long, luscious finish on display this September dispelled any doubts.	93	David Schildknecht	2015 - 2025	Not Available	Nov 2015
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-- David Schildknecht

2013	Weingut Pichler-Krutzler	<u>Riesling Kellerberg</u>	Picked the same day, November 6, as the corresponding old-vines Pfaffenberg, this was the last of the Pichler-Krutzler 2013s to have been racked from its full lees. It offers ripe <i>Mirabelle</i> , peach and quince accented by grapefruit and nut oils, with lily- and rowan-like floral notes having emerged with time in bottle. Voluminous, glossy and opulently rich, it gains welcome counterpoint by way of site-typically smoky Szechuan or Madagascar peppercorn-like bite, leading to a finish of phenomenal sheer persistence. A subtle	94	David Schildknecht	2015 - 2025	\$60.00	Nov 2015
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sense of sweetness is entirely supportive of a picture that reflects the ripeness and intensity of tiny but botrytis-free berries.

-- David Schildknecht

2013	Weingut Pichler-Krutzler	<u>Riesling</u> <u>Trockenbeerenauslese</u>	These 120 liters issued from botrytized as well as entirely air-dried bunches and berries picked out to ensure a dry Loibenberg (and nearly dry Rotenberg, from within Loibenberg) Riesling, but Pichler and Krutzler forgot to put "Loibenberg" on the label! An absolutely hauntingly gorgeous nose of floral honey with <i>Mirabelle</i> , quince and apricot preserves sets the tone for a creamy and, at 10% alcohol, delicately buoyant palate exhibiting impeccable balance, 14 grams of acidity and an amazing 73 grams of sugar-free dry extract, which manage to prevent the more than 200 grams of sugar from becoming in the least sticky or cloying. Vanilla, caramel and honey add confectionery richness to a luscious lingering finish but, happily, a vivacious stream of primary grapefruit and lime juiciness as well as saliva-drawing salinity follow along.	95	David Schildknecht	2015 - 2040	Not Available	Nov 2015
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-- David Schildknecht