

# the world according to...

# Lenz Moser

The Grüner Veltliner guru regales **Susanna Forbes** with stories of biodynamic experiments, wine in China and his love of Puccini

“Our cellar was built in 943 AD by missionaries. I was brought up next to the vine nursery and my grandfather took me into the vineyards when I was five.”

“I called him Grandpa Grüner. He invented the modern trellis, was looking for a suitable grape variety to go with it and picked Grüner. He built the first and only house in Austria with an atrium. We had plays and concerts – we even had the Vienna Boys’ Choir.”

“My father was the first to start biodynamics in Austria in 1978. I thought he was crazy. It worked for the first few years, until the fertilisers faded and the bad weather arrived. After 15 years I gave up.”

“I love Mozart and Puccini. A nice La Bohème makes me dream. I am flying to Nice to see Madonna next week. I like her music, but I like her marketing more.”

“I learnt my red winemaking at Château Kirwan with the Schyler family. It was 1974, a very hot summer, and the family were drinking their red wine with ice.”

“I met Robert (Bob) Mondavi under the arch of his winery on my first day in Napa. I had no idea who he was. Two hours later I was sitting on his veranda and he was pouring the likes of Mouton and Lafite.”

“In 1978 I went to California for five months. I had long hair, of course, and drove around in a 1960 green Beetle.”

“When Michael Mondavi called me (regarding acting as Mondavi’s European agent) in 1997, I said, ‘Are you nuts?’ I eventually said yes. In less than 10 years, it went from 50,000 cases to 500,000.”

“I select wine first and then the meal. If you want to send your guests home, give them a heavy red. If you want them to stay until midnight, give them a Rheingau Riesling or a fresh Grüner and you will carry on until 4am.”

“If women are good (in work) they are better than men. You can depend on them much more. They cope with stress in a much better way, without freaking out.”

“One year I took 250 flights. I love it! The longer the flight the better!”

“Grüner is a very modern grape because it doesn’t need any additives or wood treatment in order to display typical character. For me it captures the floral perfume of a German Riesling with the zip of a Loire Sauvignon and the lushness of Pinot Grigio. Our mission is to build Grüner into a world grape, like Chardonnay. I think it’ll take 10 years.”

“We chose the names Charming, Friendly and Singing for our Laurenz V wines because we wanted to make it simple for the consumer.”

“I first went to China two years ago. We created Noble Dragon from zero. I had tears in my eyes when I tasted the first vintage – think Bordeaux in the 1960s.”

“Don’t do too much, but what you do, do it very well. That was Bob’s saying.”

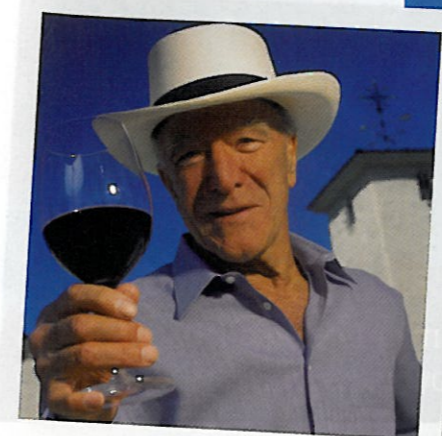
“I had dinner with Bob three years ago. It was the first time I had presented my project and at midnight, Bob rolls down the window and says in his husky voice: ‘It’s your wine, just fucking do it.’”

## GENERATION GAME

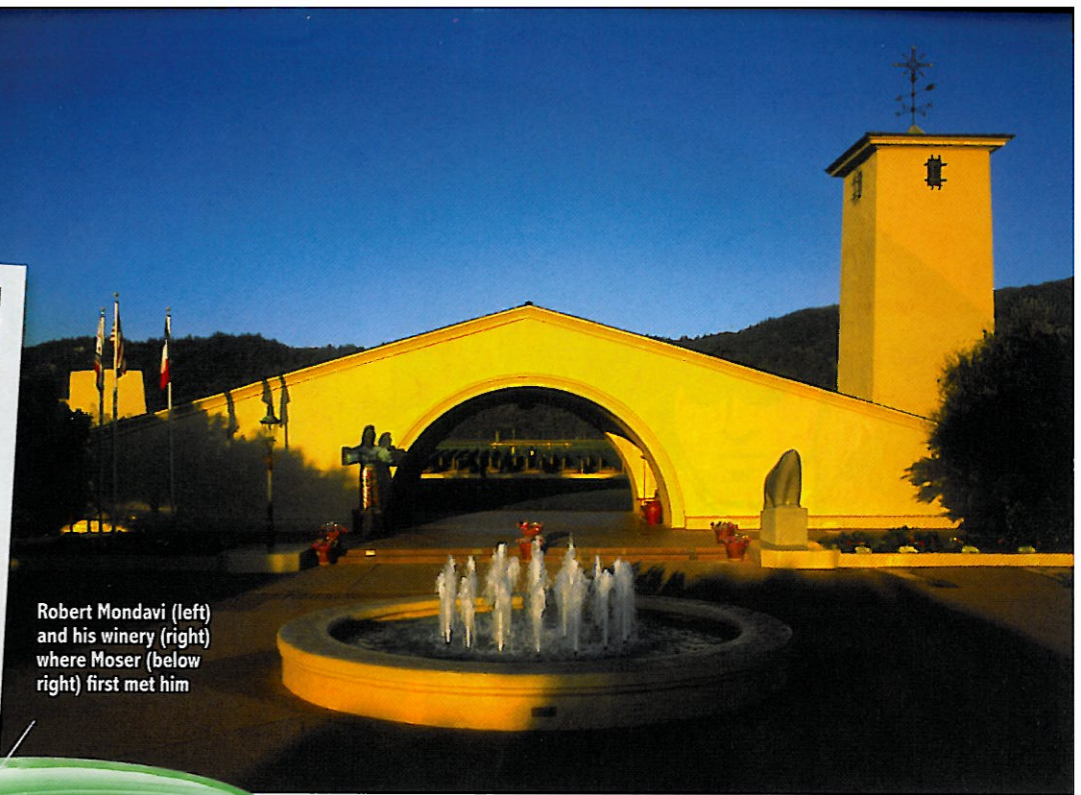
Lenz’s family have lived in the Rohrendorf village for over 400 years. Laurenz Moser I began the family winery in 1849, one year after the revolution which opened up winemaking to ‘commoners’.

Lenz Moser V launched the Laurenz V winery in 2004 and the TxB fine wine agency in 2005.

Lenz is married, with twin 17-year-olds: Sophie (‘She’s like me, into business and people. Her passion is wine’) and Anna (‘The philosopher, she reads a book a day’).



Robert Mondavi (left) and his winery (right) where Moser (below right) first met him



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Mozart (left) and Madonna are both on Moser’s playlist

