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[Grüner or later at Donnybrook Fair](#)

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While there's no shortage of Celtic Tiger follies in Dublin and around the country, **Donnybrook Fair** is not one of them. Rather, it stands as a testament to the clear focus and hard work of owner Joe Doyle, our host for the Laurenz V wine tasting dinner.

Arriving a little early to my wine tasting dinner I spend the few spare minutes on the shop floor browsing the stars of the night's show. I find myself at the bright, clean and minimalist labels of the Sunny, Singing, Friendly and Charming bottles of Grüner Veltliner when I turn to meet their maker, Laurenz Maria Moser V.



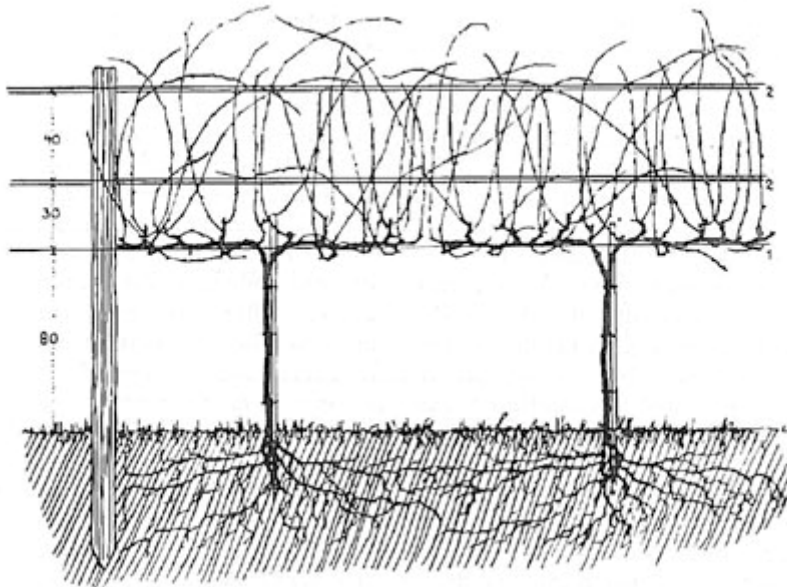
Lenz wears unmissably purple jeans, the colour of his signature "cru" wine, the Charming Grüner Veltliner.

Despite the unfortunate name, Grüner Veltliner is Austria's answer to Burgundy. Not just in aspiration, mind you, but in various comparative blind tastings it has come out on top. Grüner is planted mainly around the cool climate conditions north and northwest of Vienna, in the Wachau, Kamptal, Kremstal and Weinviertel.

Grandpa Grüner

Chatting with Laurenz Maria Moser V or Lenz for short, Grüner is clearly in his DNA. Wine has been in the family since 1124 but it was really just two generations ago when “Grandpa Grüner” or Lenz Moser III put his stamp on the world map.

In the 1920’s Grüner accounted for a mere 1% of plantings. Lenz III was designing a trellising system to help train his perfect Grüner grape, or perhaps it was the perfect grape to match his trellising system.



Whatever the truth, Grüner now stands at 40% of plantings, due in no small part to Grandpa Grüner’s endeavours. It would be easy to dismiss this trellising system, but it radically improved modern viticulture, allowing for better canopy management and ultimately better wine. You’ll still see this trellising system in vineyards today.

Bob Mondavi

So Grandpa Grüner is clearly a role model in Laurenz V’s life. Another key figure is the late Robert Mondavi, the Napa legend with whom Lenz spent some of his formative wine years. Laurenz took two lessons back to Austria from his time with Mondavi.

The first is focus – do one thing and do it well. Laurenz V is the only producer in Austria to focus solely on Grüner.

The second lesson was about making wine less scary for the consumer.

Both lessons are embodied in the wines. His labels are distinctively clean, minimalist and attractive, nicely differentiated from each other in look, price and style, from the approachable styles of “Sunny” and Singing through to the Friendly, then the more complex and rewarding Charming.

Lenz describes the flavour profile of his Grüners in simple terms too. Having the floral perfume of a German Riesling, the refreshing zip of a Loire Sauvignon Blanc and the luscious texture of a good Pinot Grigio from northern Italy.

The wines



While the Singing, Sunny (named after daughters Sophie and Anna) and to some extent, the Friendly, offer wonderfully refreshing and zesty whites, it's the Charming which really, well, charms.

It's made from a selection of the best vineyards in the Kamptal and stays on its lees for 6 months and is showing itself to be very capable of ageing. I asked Lenz if it was just a summer wine. Not just as a refresher, but also a perfect food wine, what he describes and the chameleon of wine which means it fits almost any food, apart from perhaps Hungarian goulash.

Across the Charming vintages, as the wines age, you get a deeper more complex wines. The 2005 stood out as the bigger of the older vintages. But with about an hour in the glass the 2004 really opened up and surprised me with a wonderful minerality coming through.

Overall

With any of the Sunny, Friendly or Charming levels you're likely to be satisfied albeit it for different reasons. And this is the art of the Laurenz V range – matching occasion, price and style wonderfully, all in an accessible upfront manner.

Grüvy.