

The German Pinot Report

December 2006 Issue – Volume 1

Dear Reader,

This is the first of many German Pinot Reports. The fan base of German Pinots is growing quickly in the U.S., but there is little information available about German Pinots. This quarterly report will inform you about these great wines and familiarize you with the areas from which these wines come. This issue will provide an introduction to the Pinot-growing region of Baden and its wines, as well as a look at the 2006 Baden harvest.

Baden

Baden is the southernmost wine region in Germany. It is a long strip of vineyards that runs approximately 250 miles from north to south along the French border. Baden is comprised of nine districts: Bergstrasse, Bodensee, Breisgau, Kaiserstuhl, Kraichgau, Markgraeflerland, Ortenau, Tauberfranken and Tuniberg. Vineyards cover about 38,000 acres of Baden, compared to the 45,000 acres that cover Napa. About half of Baden vineyards are planted with Pinot varieties.

Baden Pinot Noir is closely related to Burgundian Pinot Noir. Terroir is a word that comes to mind when tasting these wines. Winemakers take advantage of the great soils that this area has to offer and make wines that are well-balanced, showing the characteristics of the area. Baden Pinot Noir can easily compete with the Pinots of Burgundy, California and Oregon. However, they have not seen the recent price increases that Burgundian and American Pinot have, making them an excellent value.

Due to its close proximity to Alsace, Baden's Pinot Gris more closely resembles French Pinot Gris than Italian Pinot Grigio, having more body than its Italian counterparts. Similarly to the Pinot Noir, German Pinot Gris can compete with the best of French and American Pinot Gris at a lower price.

Currently, there is very little German Pinot available in the U.S. Many people are unaware that they even exist. In recent years, however, a few importers have begun to recognize the quality of these wines and their potential to do well in the American market. The coming months and years should see an increase in the availability of these fine German Pinots across the country.

Oberbergen

Oberbergen is a good example of a typical Baden wine village. Traveling to this small town of only 996 people is almost like traveling back in time. The culture centers around winemaking, just as it has for centuries. Nearly every family grows vines on the terraced

hillsides that surround the village, and the winemaking tradition has been passed down from generation to generation. Locals are very proud of their wine and their long history as a winemaking community.

2006 Baden Harvest

After a warm summer, rains forced the Baden harvest to be completed very quickly. It lasted three to four weeks and was very labor intensive. Because the wineries had the manpower to react so quickly, the rainfall had little effect on the harvest. While the total volume will be slightly less than in 2005, winemakers expect the quality of the wines to be higher than usual.



Handpicking grapes in Baden

We hope you enjoyed the first issue of the German Pinot Report. Please email us at PinotReport@ingeniumwines.com and send us some feedback. We would love to hear from you. If you would like to receive upcoming issues of The German Pinot Report please email us and write "subscribe" in the subject field.

We wish you all a wonderful Christmas season and hope you enjoy many German Pinots over the holidays!

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