



FÜRST
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THE WINE ADVOCATE REVIEWS OF FÜRST

What a great collection of 2022s Sebastian and Paul Fürst have managed to create! The reds—all Pinot Noirs—are, from the first (Tradition!) to the last (Hunsrück Grosses Gewächs), the finest and best I have tasted in Germany in 25 years. These wines have never been denser, finer, more flawless, generous and more beautiful. One cannot escape their delicate seduction and wishes they could be as perfect every year!

"The 2022s have a lot of energy and liveliness," says Sebastian Fürst at the tasting. "Above all, the wines don't taste like a hot vintage like the 2018s [did]. The reds have a beautiful, ripe body, but they are also lively and full of tension, similar to 2019."

The vintage fits into the series of warm vintages such as 2018, 2019 and 2020. But compared to those, what makes the 2022 vintage special is that the grapes were perfectly ripe and in perfect health. "The clusters and berries remained small and there were many seedless berries, and that's what makes the vintage so generous," says Fürst. In terms of texture and structure, the 2022 vintage differs from 2018 in that it is more classic. "The wines have power, freshness, mintiness and an incredible amount of drive, length and energy from the ripe year, but they also combine that with great subtlety. ... For us, 2022 is therefore a very special year, when quality actually fell into our laps," continues Fürst, who, however, puts his light under the bushel in the last point.

His vineyards are getting older, but they are also being renewed and improved, for example with a Burgundian concentration of 8,500 vines to 17,000 per hectare. Other work includes terracing the steep slopes and using grazing sheep in the winter months to avoid provoking erosion damage with soil work in spring. Anyone who is innovative and invests so much can certainly do something for the class of their wines. It was also provoked by 100% whole clusters in the fermentation, which until now had only been seen in 2018. Whole clusters already play a role in the Tradition wine, 65% of which comes from old vines below the Centgrafenberg and owes its captivating charm to the youngest vines in all the crus. It is a magnificently stimulating Pinot Noir for little money. The village wines also benefit from the beautiful ripeness of the grapes and the high proportion of whole clusters in the mash fermentation.

"2022 was a dry year, but not a stressful year," emphasizes Fürst. "The yield was moderate to good, partly because of the small fruit."

The stony red sandstone soils in Bürgstadt, Grossheubach and Klingenberg do not have high water-holding capacity, but there are the large forests of the Spessart and Odenwald nearby, and these are an "incredible balancing factor—our hydroelectric power station, so to speak," says Fürst. There is forest above every one of Fürst's vineyards. "That's why the vines always have a certain vitality despite the struggle, even in dry years." In any case, precipitation is not particularly high at 550 to 600 liters per year.

However, the resistance of his vines is also due to the extremely low yields of 20 to 40 hectoliters per hectare. The target for the Grosses Gewächs category is 30 to 35 hectoliters per hectare, but Fürst only achieves 20 to 35 hectoliters per hectare, which is maybe not surprising with only two to three bunches per vine. The final yield adjustments are made in July at the latest, if at all. In older vineyards, and Fürst has a great many of these, no further adjustments are needed at all. Paul and Sebastian Fürst have planted exclusively high-quality, mostly Burgundian genetics in the last 35-40 years; so, the low yields are usually natural. Only in 2023, due to the high winter humidity and the generous flower set, did the team halve many bunches and cut fruit on the ground. "But in 60% to 70% of the vintages, we don't have to thin out the majority of our areas at all," says Sebastian Fürst. Also, the shoots are never topped before July, so as not to oversupply the grapes with the upward striving force of the grape juices.

Compared to the open, generous 2022, the 2021 reds are still closed today. Their strength is their freshness and juicy red berry flavors. The year was difficult. Even the flowering was poor, reducing the yield by 20% to 30% from that moment on. But that was also needed in this stingy year to get enough strength into the wines. During the harvest, a lot of grapes still had to be sorted out and discarded because of acetic rot and botrytis. The 2020s, on the other hand, are much softer and perhaps don't have the depth of 2022. But then again, they don't have the rough edges of 2019 either. In the end, no two vintages are the same. Every one is different and that is what makes it so fascinating for Sebastian Fürst too. But it is clear that 2022 was a dream come true, because "if you could have wished for all the factors that ultimately make up the vintage, you would have wished for it exactly as it turned out in 2022," says Fürst.

Next year, we will take a closer look at the estate's excellent Chardonnay wines, which are among the very best in the country. By now, word should have spread that the Rieslings are outstanding, especially in the 2021 vintage (less so in 2022) and, I assume, also in 2023.

2022 R. Fürst Spätburgunder Bürgstadter Berg 1G - 95 Points

From plots within the Centgrafenberg (40%) and Hunsrück (60%) grands crus, the 2022 Spätburgunder Bürgstadter Berg 1G is deep, intense and elegant on the finely concentrated and fruity nose that shows aromas of ripe cherries, blackcurrant and nuances of woodruff combined with crunchy salts and ripe, finely grained tannins. This is Pinot as an event! Dense and generous yet open on the immediately conquering palate, this is another amazing 2022 from Sebastian Fürst. It is pure, fresh and saline, very delicate and spectacularly long and tensioned but never powerful or big. 13% stated alcohol. Natural cork. Tasted at the domaine in April 2024.



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2022 R. Fürst Spätburgunder Centgrafenberg GG - 96+ Points

The 2022 Spätburgunder Centgrafenberg GG offers a deep, fresh and spicy bouquet of ripe and concentrated sour cherries and crushed red sandstone with coolish and greenish or herbal notes. Full-bodied and lush yet also intense and refined on the palate, this is a silky textured, very elegant and finessed Pinot with crunchy tannins and stimulating salts on the long, intense and thrilling finish. As always, this is a great German Pinot Noir. It was bottled in March this year with 13% stated alcohol and a natural cork. Tasted at the domaine in April 2024.

2022 R. Fürst Chardonnay Astheimer - 94 Points

From younger vines in the Astheimer Karthäuser and cultivated on shallow, stony Muschelkalk soils, the 2022 Chardonnay Astheimer opens with a clear, intense and reductive, very mineral, burnt and chalky nose that represents not just superb terroir but also an impressive class of wine for a moderate price. Straight and fresh yet also refined and very elegant on the palate, this is a lush and beautifully balanced Chardonnay with savory lemon notes. The wine was aged on the gross lees for 18 months, of which 12 months were in small, mostly aged French barrels, whereas the final assemblage with all the lees was aged for another six months in stainless steel. This is a beautifully clear, pure and elegant Chardonnay of great class and style. The finish is fresh and stimulatingly salty, and the balance is out of this world. 12.5% stated alcohol. Natural cork. Tasted at the domaine in April 2024, one day after bottling.

2022 R. Fürst Spätburgunder Hundsrück GG - 98 Points

The 2022 Spätburgunder Hundsrück GG is coolish and intense on the spicy, fresh and peppery, beautifully concentrated nose that comes as a perfume and merges the characters of the Centgrafenberg and the Schlossberg. Earthy, herbal and coolish on the nose, with rose petal and black tea aromas, this is a silky, fresh, refined and energetic, pure, tight and textured as well as finessed Pinot with crunchy and spicy tannins and vital but fine and palate-tickling acidity and salinity. The wine is long, intense and complex, full of thrill and tension and hedonistic cherry fruit. 13% stated alcohol. Natural cork. Tasted at the domaine in April 2024.

2022 R. Fürst Spätburgunder Klingenberg - 94 Points

From younger vines in the Schlossberg lieu-dit and bottled in March this year after 17 months on the lees, the 2022 Spätburgunder Klingenberg delivers the most beautiful expression of red sandstone. The wine is pure, refined and very elegant on the finely flinty and peppery nose that reveals flinty, herbal and floral aromas and this beautifully lush and aromatic but oh so delicate 2022 fruit. What finesse! Mouth-filling and thrilling on the palate, this is a full-bodied, refined and elegant, perfectly balanced Pinot with highly delicate tannins and the mineral purity and finesse of the Schlossberg grand cru. The finish is finely intense, juicy and spicy and pretty long, with ripe and crunchy tannins still on the aftertaste. 13% stated alcohol. Natural cork. Tasted at the domaine in April 2024.

2022 R. Fürst Riesling Centgrafenberg GG - 93 Points

The 2022 Riesling Centgrafenberg GG is clear, very intense and floral yet also refined and mineral on the nose that shows broom and almond aromas and the purity of red sandstone. Full-bodied, intense and mineral on the palate, this is a tight and robust, concentrated and also lush Riesling that is less defined than the 2021 but another excellent GG for Fürst. 12.5% stated alcohol. Natural cork. Tasted at the domaine in April 2024.

2023 R. Fürst Riesling pur mineral - 92 Points

The 2023 Riesling pur mineral is intense and sexy on the nose that indicates fully ripe and lush fruit. Round and saline on the palate, this is a supple but pure, spicy and tensioned Riesling also for Burgundy lovers. It was sourced in the Centgrafenberg and aged on the lees for six months. 11.5% stated alcohol. Diam cork. Tasted at the domaine in April 2024, three days after the bottling.

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2022 R. Fürst Spätburgunder Schlossberg GG - 97 Points

The 2022 Spätburgunder Schlossberg GG is airy, ethereal and beautiful on the nose and the essence of Pinot and Schlossberg rather than materialized or textured wine, with ripe cherries, red berries, woodruff, underwood, toast, redcurrant, crushed stones and wet earth. The wine cannot become greater on the palate than it is on the nose you think, and then you take a sip and get a silky, velvety texture, great intensity and energy, fleshy, now materialized fruit, even sensuality, crunchy tannins and a long, intense yet ethereal umami finish. Absolutely fabulous. 13% stated alcohol. Natural cork. Tasted at the domaine in April 2024.

2022 R. Fürst Spätburgunder Tradition - 92 Points

The 2022 Spätburgunder Tradition is predominantly from old vines from below the Centgrafenberg and younger vines from the Centgrafenberg and Hundsrück "grands crus." The wine opens with a beautiful, intensely fruity bouquet of perfectly ripe cherries, blackberries, blueberries, raspberries and licorice nuances that intermingle with the classic red sandstone freshness and spiciness as well as sur lie and toasty aromas. Aged on the lees for nearly 17 months (in matured pièces) and bottled in early February this year, this is a dense, intense and spicy, beautifully aromatic and persistent Pinot with remarkably fine and spicy tannins. It is gorgeous, well structured, clear and fresh but also intense and fruity with class and style. 13% stated alcohol. Natural cork. Tasted at the domaine in April 2024.

2022 R. Fürst Spätburgunder Bürgstadter - 93 Points

From old vines cultivated at the bottom of the slope and younger yet not very young vines in the crus, the 2022 Spätburgunder Bürgstadter opens with a delicate, very fine, bright and rather floral bouquet of fleshy red and dark fruits intermingled with spicy-mineral and even crunchy stone and iodine notes. Silky, lush and very elegant on the palate, this is a full-bodied, tightly structured, fresh and concentrated Pinot with remarkable intensity, firm and spicy but finely grained tannins and a long, refreshing mineral finish. It was bottled in early March this year after 17 months on the lees. Natural cork. Tasted at the domaine in April 2024.

2022 R. Fürst Chardonnay >R< - 96 Points

From 25-year-old vines, the 2022 Chardonnay >R< is from the Astheimer Karthäuser and opens with deep, intense and concentrated, spicy-mineral and iodine notes with seed and herbal notes. It's fascinating in all its depth and complexity! Pure, fresh and saline on the palate, this is a frisky and playful, very elegant and stimulating Chardonnay with lemon bitters on the fresh and ethereal, intense and long yet not powerful finish. This is a classic Chardonnay from low-yielding genetics with very small berries and grapes. Due to a virus, yields are often around 22 hectoliters per hectare. 12.5% stated alcohol. Natural cork. Tasted at the domaine in April 2024 just two days after bottling.