

# Grüner Veltliner

FLX Grüner Grows Up

STORY BY LAURA WINTER FALK PHOTOS BY JASON KOSKI

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ver a decade ago, with Riesling well established throughout the Finger Lakes, a few wineries looking to diversify began to experiment with the planting of a lesser-known white grape called Grüner Veltliner. Indigenous to Austria, this varietal is the most important grape in that country, representing 31% of all vineyard plantings. Given the Finger Lakes' similar climate and soil characteristics, those who decided to plant it here knew the grape had potential.



It is clear that Grüner Veltliner is here in the Finger Lakes to stay. There are now 10 wineries across the region's three grape-growing lakes that are producing Grüner, with the amount under vine almost double what it was five years ago. With a solid decade of vintages from multiple producers under its belt, Grüner's personality in the Finger Lakes is beginning to shine through.

In Austria, Wachau is considered one of the best regions for growing Grüner Veltliner. Here they classify Grüner wines into distinct styles. The two most notable being Federspiel and Smaragd. Federspiel is a lighter, citrus- and mineral-driven wine with notes of fresh herbs and spice. Smaragd is the fuller-bodied style, with more concentrated fruit aromas, lees aging, dried herbs and spice, and the ability to develop richer honey and nutty characteristics with aging.

Here in the Finger Lakes, producers are finding that our terroir allows for both styles of Grüner to have a place in the region. With our temperature-moderating lakes and silty loam soils from our

glacial past, Finger Lakes Grüner tends to exhibit more fruitiness and less herbaceousness than its Austrian counterpart, but shares its signature expressive minerality and white-peppery finish. Most producers in the region are focusing on the lighter style to showcase the region's ability to produce beautiful crisp and mineral-driven wines, but a few are experimenting with the fuller-bodied version, taking advantage of prime vineyard locations for optimal ripening and incorporating lees aging, to produce concentrated wines capable of extended aging. 🍷

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Laura Winter Falk owns Experience! The Finger Lakes, a touring and events company. She holds a PhD in food and nutrition, is a Certified Sommelier and is an adjunct professor of wine at Tompkins Cortland Community College.

Jason Koski lives in Trumansburg and works up a voracious appetite by biking to various photo assignments in search of good food and tasty visuals.




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*Here is a list of available Finger Lakes Grüner Veltliner wines and the styles they belong to.*

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**Crisp, Lighter-Styled:**

- Hosmer Winery 2019 Grüner Veltliner (*new release*) – \$16
- Toro Run Winery 2017 Grüner Veltliner – \$10 (*sale price!*)
- Lamoreaux Landing Wine Cellars 2018  
Grüner Veltliner – \$19.99 ; 2020 Gruner Veltliner  
Vineyard Select (*new product release*) – \$19.99
- Zugibe Vineyards 2019 Grüner Veltliner – \$15.99
- Three Brothers Wineries & Estates 2018 Stony Lonesome  
Grüner Veltliner – \$16
- Fulkerson Winery 2017 Grüner Veltliner – \$14
- Fulkerson Winery 2016 William Vigne Grüner Veltliner  
(*special limited offering*) – \$10
- Weis Vineyards 2019 Grüner Veltliner – \$18.99

**Concentrated, Fuller-Bodied style:**

- Hazlitt 1852 Vineyards 2018 Grüner Veltliner – \$12.99
- Dr. Konstantin Frank 2018 Grüner Veltliner – \$14.99
- Heron Hill Winery 2017 Grüner Veltliner Reserve – \$19.99