

# Food

READY TO PLAY?  
wp GAMES

In the News Carolyn Hax Holiday Guide Michaele Salahi Anonymous sources Airlines

Who runs the world? Beyoncé

Hera McLeod: After baby Prince died

Golden Globe Awards Nominees

Topicly Explore real-time news, visually  
LAND-ROVER

## Blaufrankisch, Austria's silky, savory red

By Dave McIntyre, [E-mail the writer](#)

Rumor has it there's a lake in eastern Austria that moderates the climate in the surrounding vineyards, thereby helping to produce the country's best red wines. This lake, called Neusiedl, or Neusiedler See in German, is about 23 miles long, eight miles across at its widest and less than six feet deep. It is possible to wade across it, I was assured when I visited the region last December.

I've seen Neusiedl on satellite imagery and in wine atlases. But during my two days in upper Burgenland, which straddles the border with Hungary, I never once laid eyes on it. Oh, I was shown a large puddle with boats floating on top, but I refused to believe that was *the* lake, as I could see only about five feet in front of me through a dense fog. I rather hoped some mystical lady would surface and toss me a corkscrew — though that wouldn't have mattered much because most of the wineries in that area bottle under screw caps.



### Join our live chat

Free Range on Food is a forum for discussion of all things culinary. Join us every Wednesday at noon.

### More from Food

#### Pumpkin recipes for fall

Soups, pies and more dishes from the Recipe Finder.

#### Apple recipes

Virginia cider, flavored by early America

Find more fall recipes

#### 20 healthful family dinners

Columnist Stephanie Witt Sedgwick's healthful recipes make perfect meals for the whole family.

#### Easy recipes for school-year meals

#### Apple recipes for a seasonal feast

Here are a few of our all-time favorite apple recipes from the Recipe Finder database.

#### 20 healthful family dinners

Digital subscriptions starting at 99¢  
SUBSCRIBE

I kept thinking about that body of water as I spoke with Leo Hillinger in his modernist winery in the nearby hamlet of Jois, about 30 miles southeast of Vienna. The building was all concrete and glass, designed to give visitors a spectacular view of Lake Neusiedl. Due to the atmospherics outside, however, we couldn't even see the parking lot.

"I am in love with our own Austrian grapes," Hillinger said, his theatrical voice booming through the cavernous tasting room bereft of tourists on a Sunday afternoon. I felt disoriented, as though I were floating in space.

Hillinger's wines brought me back to earth, especially his blaufrankisch grown in the new Leithaberg DAC, or Districtus Austriae Controllatus. Austria's appellation designation is named for the Leitha mountain range west of the lake, which I did manage to glimpse on the drive into the region, poking above the fog line.

Austria is best known for its white wines: stellar gruner veltliner and Riesling that would give Germany a run for its financial bailout money. Its most famous red is zweigelt, which is king in Burgenland. During my stay I fell more for the province's blaufrankisch. The wine offers bing cherry fruit and a savory sourness that turns peppery on the finish, not unlike cabernet franc from the Loire Valley in France or along the eastern U.S. coast.

### The Post Most: Lifestyle

#### Most Popular

1. Carolyn Hax: She's accommodating, but are her friends with kids taking advantage?
2. What can you do when your airline offends you? Not that much.
3. Ask Amy: Crush of family at Christmas creates stress
4. Miss Manners: Boss's invitation to auction is not a command performance
5. Carolyn Hax: Helping mom and daughter, 4, through a loss

#### Top Videos

#### Top Galleries

### Recipe Finder

That sourness renders blaufrankisch trickier to make than zweigelt. It can be exaggerated if the grapes are overcropped.

“At the premium level, blaufrankisch shines because you have the silky tannins,” says Claus Preisinger, who is best known for the zweigelt produced under his own label and says he has a fondness for blaufrankisch. His wines are electric, with an energy running through their core as if they were connected directly to the earth they were grown in.

“I cannot produce a blaufrankisch at the entry level at the same quality as a zweigelt,” he says. “It depends on your vineyard work, your yields.”

To balance the tartness with sufficient fruit, Preisinger says, he limits his blaufrankisch harvest to five tons per hectare. Yet he can produce a less expensive zweigelt harvesting 15 tons per hectare.

Blaufrankisch, said Georg Prieler as we sat in his modest kitchen in Schuetzen am Gebirge, “for me is like standing in the middle of the forest.” The Prieler winery is an extension of the family home, a traditional model slowly giving way to modern wineries such as Hillinger and Preisinger. Prieler proudly poured me a glass of another Burgenland specialty: pinot blanc, a gorgeous 1990 vintage made by his father.

“With blaufrankisch, you have these leafy aromas, a bit wet, woody,” he said. “Blaufrankisch translates the soil better than zweigelt. I like a variety that shows where it comes from.”

Prieler bottles blaufrankisch from his family’s Goldberg vineyard only in the warmest years. The 2009 was intense and round, gorgeous and seamless. The 1999 was beginning to show a hint of earthiness reminiscent of a Cote Rotie. In cooler years, the Goldberg grapes go into Prieler’s Leithaberg blend, which helped make the 2010 superb.

Lake influence or no, these were beautiful, sophisticated wines.

McIntyre blogs at [dmwineline.com](http://dmwineline.com). Follow him on Twitter: @dmwine.

**More from Food:**

[5 blaufrankisch wines to try](#)

[A bigger-picture approach to drinking locally](#)

[10 wineries worth exploring](#)

Digital subscriptions starting at 99¢ **SUBSCRIBE**

Reprints

[More food content](#)

**My recipe Box**

**My Shopping list**

About this feature

Plan dinner, try new foods or explore cuisines with **recipe Finder**, a database of recipes tested by The Washington Post.

**Ingredient or recipe Name**

**Course**

Go

**Browse recipes:**

- Beef** **kid-Friendly**
- Chicken** **Meatless**
- Fast** **Pasta**
- Fish** **Turkey**
- Greens** **Tofu**
- Slow Cooker** **Vegetables**
- Healthy**



**Upcoming food events**

**TUE, DECEMBER**

**Holiday Tea** Tudor Place Historic House and Garden, DC

**Gingerbread House Workshop** Tudor Place Historic House and Garden, DC

**SAT, DECEMBER**

**Date Night: Chef's Table** Workhouse Arts Center, A

**More food events**

**DC Restaurant Finder**

**By Tom Sietsema rating**

See how critic Tom Sietsema rated D.C. restaurants in the Going Out Guide.

**1-12 or fewer**

**2 Stars**

**3 Stars**

**4 Stars**

**Best Betting lists**

**Best burgers**

**Best cheap eats**

**Best pizza**

**Best romantic restaurants**

**Best steak**

**Featured Advertiser links**

Looking to buy a home? Visit TWP real Estate section for the latest open houses.

**Wireless Solves Parking Nightmare**

**Sponsored links**



**Rates expected to rise**

Homeowners need to take advantage of record low refinance rates now

<http://www.Mortgage-Connect.com>



**Seabourn luxury Cruises**

Take advantage of exceptional savings. Click here for special offers

[www.seabourn.com](http://www.seabourn.com)

[Buy a link here](#)



Show more

Top Lifestyle Stories

Most Popular Videos



ates expected to ise

Homeowners need to take advantage of record low refinance rates now  
<http://www.Mortgage-Connect.com>



Save p to 50 or More

Discover Europe on board a Seabourn Luury Cruise. Book now  
[www.seabourn.com](http://www.seabourn.com)

Buy a link here

The Washington Post

SUBSCRIBE

PostTV Politics Opinions Local Sports National World Business Tech Lifestyle Entertainment Jobs

More ways to get us

- Home delivery
- Digital Subscription
- Gift Subscription
- Mobile & Apps
- ewsletter & Alerts
- Washington Post Live
- Reprints & Permissions
- Post Store
- e-Replica
- Archive
- RSS
- Facebook
- Twitter

Contact Us

- Help & Contact Info
- Reader Representative
- Digital Advertising
- ewspaper Advertising
- ews Service & Syndicate

About Us

- In the community
- Careers
- PostPoints
- ewspaper in Education
- Digital Publishing Guidelines

Partners

- WP BrandConnect
- Capitol Deal
- Fashion Washington
- Washin@lasPost
- Service Alley
- El Tiempo Latino
- Bagatells
- Epress
- Find&Save
- Parade Magaine
- PostWiggleClub

---

washingtonpost.com