

Aoife Carrigy  
Drink



Okky is serving up tasty dishes at tempting prices on Aungier Street

## Let Austrian reds ease you into cosy autumn sipping

**A**ustrian red wines are a lovely choice at this time of year, straddling that spectrum between light, bright summer sippers and more rustic, autumnal styles but rarely moving into rich, wintry territory. Today's selection spotlights two of the leading local grape varieties that feature in red wines here: Blaufrankisch and Zweigelt.

Blaufrankisch is capable of producing elegant, well-structured wines, and producers increasingly do so in a style of winemaking that emphasises freshness and light extraction of delicate aromas, flavours and tannins. That's not to say that Blaufrankisch can't do power too. This versatility and ability to express the terroir it is grown in makes Blaufrankisch a rewarding grape for winemakers to play with. Not unlike Pinot Noir (or indeed Beaujolais' Gamay Noir, of which it is a parent), Blaufrankisch offers a signature freshness as well as both power and restraint, juicy red fruits and richer savoury-spicy character, depending on where it grows.

As a late-ripening grape, it does well in warmer, sheltered regions such as Burgenland, especially where it benefits from the warming effect of the large lake of Neusiedlersee. Clay-rich soils such as those south of the lake encourage a richer, more powerful style, while the cooler

sites and slate-limestone soils of Leithaberg coax a more restrained, taut style, as does the slate-rich terroir of Carnuntum, south of Vienna.

Zweigelt, meanwhile, is Austria's most widely planted red-wine grape. This cross between elegant Blaufrankisch and velvet-textured Saint Laurent tends to yield more melow expressions, with less nervy tension and more body. It ripens earlier than Blaufrankisch and produces higher yields, making it more pliable for value-focused wines but with the capability of producing finer styles too when grown with care and restraint. It's also grown in Burgenland and Neusiedlersee, and further north in Niederösterreich, Weinviertel and Kamptal. Depending on how it's handled, Zweigelt can range hugely from simple, fruit-forward styles to richer, more age-worthy expressions.

It's welcome to see Aldi showcase this leading Austrian grape in its seasonal cellar, and good timing to see it reappear for these last weeks of summer. Zull Zweigelt from Weinviertel (€19, O'Briens Wine) is a smart choice for a barbecue. Arndorfer Zweigelt from Kamptal (€22, Sheridans) bursts with cranberry, pomegranate and herbal charm in party-friendly one-litre bottles. And look out for Pittnauer's 'Heideboden' Zweigelt (€22.95, independents) with its earthy, savoury, spicy character.

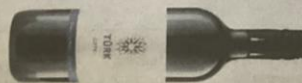
Dine & wine



**Specially Selected Zweigelt, Niederösterreich, Austria, 13pc, €8.99**  
This cracker comes in and out of stock in Aldi, so snap it up when you see it. Chill a little to emphasise its freshness and let its tangier redcurrant and raspberry notes sing with a late summer grazing platter, or serve at room temperature as a plummy, vanilla-spiced pairing for grills or hotpots.  
Aldi



**Dorli Muhr Prellenkirchen Samt & Seide Blaufrankisch, Carnuntum, Austria, 12pc, €30-€32**  
From 40-year-old vines, this is fragrant with sour cherry, leafy florals and stony minerality, yet juicy on the powerful palate with that sour cherry character and silky tannins bringing lift and structure. Gorgeous stuff. Red Island Wine, Blackrock Cellar, Ely Maynooth, Mitchells, Redmonds



**Türk Blauer Zweigelt Elegant 2021, Niederösterreich, Austria, 13pc, €22**  
An exclusive import from winemaker Franz Türk, this is perfect late-summer quaffing. Fragrant with wild berry, dried herbs and black tea notes, medium-bodied with juicy acidity and pleasant tannins for food-friendly structure. Pair with anything from sunny barbecues to warming tagines.  
Whelehans Wines; whelehanswines.ie



**Judith Beck Hunny Bunny Blaufrankisch, Burgenland, Austria, 12pc, €28-€29**  
Delicate Blaufrankisch from a biodynamic producer using a very light touch (short maceration, whole-bunch fermentation, large acacia oak barrels) to extract its pale cherry colour, elegant berry and herb aromas, light tannins and soft, juicy mouthfeel. Le Caveau, L'Attitude 51, Sweeney's D3, 64 Wine, lecaveau.ie

### Wine of the week

**Prieler Blaufrankisch Oggau, Johanneshohe, Burgenland, Austria, 13.5pc, €27.95**

From iron-rich loam soils of Johanneshohe, this fruit-forward expression shows a more extrovert side of Blaufrankisch with ripe blue and black fruits, power and spice beautifully framed by precise acidity and finishing dry, taut and pure. Any of Georg Prieler's Blaufrankisch are worth the treat, including his lean, crunchy yet gorgeously fleshy Leithaberg expression from Chablis-like soils (Redmonds, €52).  
The Corkscrew, Green Man Wines, Pinto Wines, Lillith, Higgins Off Licence, Ely Wine Store, Maynooth, Blackrock Cellar, Clontarf Wines, thecorkscrew.ie

