



**F. X. Pichler, Oberloiben.** The principal harvest here in 2002 only began in early November and lasted until early December. In estate-typical fashion, the Pichlers were able to let grüner veltliner hang longest (and healthiest), tending to harvest riesling just a bit sooner and at the point where enough botrytis had settled in to boost the overall concentration and ripeness. The quality of their collection is once again formidable. F. X. continues to be responsible for the day-to-day vineyard work, while son Lucas has assumed responsibility in the cellar over the past several years. (Vin Divino)

**2002 Grüner Veltliner Federspiel Frauenweingarten (\$30):** Sweet honey and banana along with a pungent cressy note on the nose. Clear and fresh, with a lovely continued sweet sensation of ripe fruit, although this wine has neither residual sugar nor high alcohol. Part of the fruit here was purchased on an emergency basis to compensate for portions of the riverside Frauenweingarten vineyard that were lost to the flood. 1 star. **2002 Grüner Veltliner Smaragd Loibnerberg (\$61):** Sweet herbs, tangerine, woodsmoke and white pepper on the nose. Creamy and polished in texture. Herbal essences, citrus cream and nut oil flavors, with pepper and smoke accents nicely folded in. This really clings. 2 stars. **2002 Grüner Veltliner Smaragd Kellerberg (\$89):** Grilled pineapple, peach, mango and banana aromas suggestive of enormous, roasted ripeness are joined to site-typical smoke and pepper. Creamy, voluminous and rich, with a tactile sense of sizzling peppercorn, tart but well-integrated fruit skin flavors, and salty mineral extract. Pretty nearly hides its 14% alcohol in the powerful finish. 2 stars. **2002 Grüner Veltliner Smaragd "M" (\$90):** This "M" is around three-quarters Loibnerberg and the rest from Kellerberg. Smoky, peachy, mocha-coffee aromas. Enormously rich and meaty in the mouth, with ripe, incipiently caramelized peach, mocha and carnal low tones. The minerality is sublimated or subsumed here, but the overall effect is certainly imposing. 1 star. **2002 Riesling Smaragd Oberhauser:** Gooseberry and blackcurrant aromas are followed by a palate rush of peachy fruit. The tart berry tones, subtle citrus element, and wet stone minerality in the mouth mark this almost as a dry Ruwer wine. Low-toned smoky, bitter fruit pit persistence. 1 star. **2002 Riesling Smaragd Von den Terrassen:** This year's Terrassen bottling is 100% from the Höllerin vineyard. Lichee and black fruits in the nose. Full and glossy on the palate; a bit warm. Satisfyingly black-fruited and salty in the finish. 1 star. **2002 Riesling Smaragd Steinertal (\$66):** Like Knoll's Schütt, the Pichler Steinertal is a site deeply piled with crumbled, weathered residues of Urgestein, allowing for deep root penetration and tremendous accumulation of extract and articulation of minerality. White peach, lemon and grapefruit aromas. Juicy and refreshing on the palate, yet with vivid pepper, smoke and mineral salt flavor adjuncts. Intensely stony, salty, bright and penetrating. 2 stars. **2002 Riesling Smaragd Loibenberg (\$78):** On the nose, pungently mineral and redolent of distilled pit fruits. Oily, smoky, brown spice, white pepper and fruit pit-saturated palate impression. Long, penetrating, almost bitter in its concentration. Potential 2 stars. **2002 Riesling Smaragd Kellerberg (\$96):** Grapefruit, pineapple, woodsmoke and mineral salts in the nose. Peachy richness driven across the palate by bright citricity, but carrying along low-toned tobacco and chocolate flavors as well. Potential 2 stars. **2002 Riesling Smaragd Unendlich:** This year's riesling Unendlich comes not from the Loibenberg but rather from the Kellerberg. Deep tropical and pit fruit, mineral and smoke aromas. Creamier and richer on the palate than the earlier-harvested riesling labeled Kellerberg, this is also subtler, clearer and more refined in flavor. White peach and mango are accented with subtle smokiness and chalk dust nuances. As the wine opens, its white pepper component becomes evident. The finish certainly comes close to satisfying the billing: endless. Pichler finds this the most harmonious of the three Unendlich bottlings he has thus far essayed, and I would not disagree. 2 stars. **2002 Riesling Smaragd "M" (\$99):** Now we are back visiting the Loibenberg. Pineapple, lemon, singed peach and pungent spiciness in the nose. While there is in fact a bit less alcohol here than in the riesling Unendlich, this "M" displays more aggressive tendencies, including the spicy, pungent penetration of botrytis and a sharp cut of citrus. 1 star. **Also recommended:** 2002 Grüner Veltliner Federspiel Klostersatz, 2002 Sauvignon Blanc Smaragd, 2002 Grüner Veltliner Smaragd Von den Terrassen.