

Wines of the Finger Lakes



Featured Selection

DR. FRANK 2011 GRÜNER VELTLINER

This year marks the 50th anniversary of a Keuka Lake operation that is arguably New York's most historically important winery: Dr. Konstantin Frank Vinifera Wine Cellars. An immigrant from the Ukraine, Dr. Frank was the first winemaker in the Finger Lakes to demonstrate that *Vitis vinifera* grape varieties could be grown in the region's cool climate. The many New York wineries currently producing fine wines from grapes such as Riesling, Chardonnay, and Cabernet Franc owe a great deal to his pioneering efforts.

Dr. Frank's entry into the New York wine industry was a job at the Geneva Experiment Station in 1953. Fred Frank, Konstantin's grandson, graduated from Cornell in 1979, and his sister is a 1983 graduate. The family continues to have a strong Cornell connection; two of Fred's daughters are alumnae and his son is currently an undergraduate.

Today, the winery continues to explore new territory under the leadership of Fred Frank. In 2007, he purchased a sixty-three-



acre parcel of land in Hector, on the east side of Seneca Lake. Due to the vineyard's favorable microclimate, Fred has made a firm commitment to growing a grape there that is not commonly seen in the Finger Lakes, Grüner Veltliner.

Grüner Veltliner is Austria's most widely planted wine grape. Fred developed a passion for it during visits to his aunt in Vienna during the Eighties, while studying winemaking in Geisenheim, Germany. He believes the variety will thrive in his Seneca Lake vineyard—so much so that he has planted ten acres. Fred produced 1,350 cases of Grüner Veltliner from the 2011 harvest—and it's a beauty, exhibiting a delightful mélange of flavors that hint at peach, herbs, and white pepper. It has thus far garnered three gold medals in national competitions. The Dr. Frank 2011 Grüner Veltliner retails for \$17.99 and can be purchased online at www.drfrankwines.com.

— Dave Pohl

Dave Pohl, MA '79, is a wine buyer at Northside Wine & Spirits in Ithaca.

Dr. Konstantin Frank

www.drfrankwines.com

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