



**RICHARD  
BÖCKING**

ESTABLISHED 1624

**DOSSIER**

TRABEN-TRARBACH  
MOSEL VALLEY  
GERMANY



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» The good thing about ProWein is that, while strolling through the aisles, you come across winegrowers whom you otherwise would never cross paths with, even if you read the most absurd bloggers, those who dig in the last niche and from there fire personal-tip salvos in the World Wide Web.

Such an operation is Weingut Richard Böcking in Traben-Trarbach on the Middle Mosel. And I must confess embarrassingly that I didn't know about this exceptional producer, which has a long history, including an overnight stay by the poet Goethe. What an oversight! «

Manfred Klimek in his Wine Column »The Country Needs New Riesling«  
Welt am Sonntag Nr. 14, 6. April 2014



## AWAKENED: WEINGUT RICHARD BÖCKING

### Renaissance of a Classic Mosel Estate

In 1623, the Böcking family, regional treasurers for the Prince of Palatinate-Zweibrücken, laid the foundation for their once immense influence in Protestant Traben-Trarbach with the establishment of a trade and exchange company (Handlungs-und Wechselcomptoir). Trading of fine princely goods, such as coffee, tea, silk, the finest spices, tobacco, and wine, along with their skills as bankers, shaped the family's preeminence amongst a growing population of businessmen and merchants, as well as Traben-Trarbach's future. The residence of the Böckings, an impressive Baroque villa, which today houses the Mittel-Mosel Museum, still bears witness to the splendor that once adorned the family name.

During Napoleon's reign, trade on the Mosel was liberalized, and the predominant feudal system was lifted. At the same time, his Code civil, or Napoleonic Code (Code Napoléon), decreed that property belonging to the nobility would pass to the bourgeoisie. This decree facilitated the passing of precious vineyards – like Ungsberg, Schlossberg, and Geierslay – to the Böcking family. Traben-Trarbach soon became a wine trade center of world renown. Recent research reveals that at least half of the Trarbacher Ungsberg vineyard was

already planted with Riesling – an unbelievable 120 years before the decree to uproot all inferior vines and replace them with Riesling by Prince Clemens Wenceslaus of Saxony, Archbishop-Elector of Trier (1768–1803). This event transformed the Mosel Valley into becoming the largest Riesling region in the world at that time and led to the ensuing triumphant success of Mosel Riesling.

The flourishing wine trade brought fame to Traben-Trarbach, equal to that of Bordeaux. With the town's new designation in the Prussian Rhine Province, the wine producers and merchants fought successfully for the retention of the Napoleonic Code. The Böckings decided to focus on the cultivation and production of the highest-quality Riesling wines. Although, by nature, the Riesling vine does not yield great quantities, it was foremost the quality of this variety that secured the economic prosperity of the wine estate. This entrepreneurial foresight led the Böckings to produce wines that achieved the highest prices on the market until the end of the 19th century.

Thus, the vineyards Ungsberg, Schlossberg, and Burgberg are found on the earliest Mosel vineyard maps, alongside those of the world-famous Brauneberger (today's Juffer and Juffer Sonnenuhr) and Scharzhofberger.

Even the German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe lauded the extraordinary Mosel wine when he took shelter and enjoyed the hospitality at the Böcking villa during a stormy night on the Mosel in 1792.

About 100 years after this memorable event, at the beginning of the 20th century, fortunes changed for the Böcking family. After ten generations of successful mercantilism, the entrepreneurial spirit of the family lapsed in 1903 with Adolph Böcking. With the marriage of his daughter, not only did most of the family's fortune pass into the ownership of the wine-trading dynasty of the Huesgen family, also the prized vineyard of Geierslay as well. Though the Trarbacher sites remained with the Böckings, they did not prosper during the historic and economic hardships that followed.

In 2010, a decision faced the descendants of the Böcking's: sell the traditional but marginally profitable winery and the accompanying vineyards, or pursue a new vision and awaken the winery to a new beginning?

The decision occupied the family; nostalgia and economics both needed consideration when reaching an agreement on the proper course to take. Several family members realized the potential of a restored winery and business operation, not only to honour the work of so many generations before them but also to realize the renaissance of Mosel Riesling, both in Germany and abroad. Besides the promises of a Riesling renaissance, the decisive factor was the magnificent, extremely steep vineyards – partially planted with precious ungrafted, old Riesling vines – which provide the foundation to produce superb Rieslings of international renown.

**So, at the beginning of the 21st century, Böcking descendant Baroness Leweke von Marschall, along with her cousins Denman Zirkle and his daughter Sigrid Zirkle Carroll, and with counsel from previous estate manager Ulrike Böcking, combined tradition and history with confidence and entrepreneurial vision to lead the family enterprise into the future and reestablish its valued following among wine devotees.**

# NATURE'S GIFT: IDEAL GROWING CONDITIONS



»We could not resist returning to the old traditions, but with new visions. Had we resisted, we would have abandoned the inheritance of these vineyards with ungrafted, old vines, and the family traditions would be pure nostalgia. They were almost forgotten, but have never lost their quality«

Denman Zirkle

## Nature's Gift: Ideal Growing Conditions

Riesling is the most valuable and most distinctive white wine variety in the world. In our eyes, it reflects the magic of wine like no other variety: personality, heritage, region, soil, microclimate, and vintage. In short: the terroir. And this you can taste, smell, and feel when you enjoy a Mosel Riesling.

Mosel Riesling enchants us in its youth with its lively, animating freshness and convinces us in its maturity with its great character. Yet, to unfold such capacities, the Riesling vine has the highest demands on its soil. It ripens slowly and late in relatively cool places, on slate soils, like in our Ungsberg, which, because of its 400-year history of cultivation, counts as one of the oldest Riesling vineyards on the Mosel. Ungsberg's slate slope offers a geographically ideal terrain for Riesling with a delicate, lively, freshness, clear mineral content, and distinctive aroma.

Ideal conditions to begin a new chapter of the Böcking estate and connect it to the heyday of the past.

»In every bottle we want to capture the natural substance of the vineyards. Only then can the wine reflect its very own history, characterized by tears, sweat, hope and joy, based on a proud and long tradition.«

Philipp Buchkremer, Vintner and Estate Manager Weingut Böcking

## Our Concept of Wine

The foundation for a healthy and lively wine is a healthy and lively vineyard. We understand nature as a complex, but perfect, dynamic system, which has all parts in alignment. To understand this system is the foundation of successful and sustainable vineyard cultivation.

This legacy, framed by the origin and experiences of its wines eons ago, teaches us not only patience and respect, but to trust in this process. And this trust does not cease in the vineyards; it is with us in the darkness of the cellar, where the juice of the grape undergoes its miraculous change.

Our utmost respect for this system is found in all of our work and thoughts: during the revitalization of our vineyards as the foundation of our vision of a natural cultivation, the minimal utilization of power equipment, use of spontaneous fermentation, and a minimum use of sulfur additives.

**This concept of winemaking underlies the philosophy of the new Böcking winery generation and marks the point to connect to the quality of the natural wines of our ancestors.**

## Core of our Philosophy: Old Vines

Our distinctive grand cru vineyards shape the character of our wines. And these vineyards give us the foundation to produce culturally inspired wines with character.

Our philosophy of the terroir is manifested in the recognition of the vineyards as a complete, living system that fascinates year after year with its own dynamic – a dynamic that gives the Riesling an expression like no other grape variety.

The English wine critic Jancis Robinson says:

»Riesling, Germany's great white wine grape variety, has the right to call itself the finest wine variety in the world because of the longevity of its wine and its capability to express the characteristics of the vineyard without relinquishing its inimitable Riesling-style.«

We are grateful for this precious gift, this unmatched combination of great vineyards and old vines. **The Böcking estate cultivated Riesling vineyards even before the grand Schloss Johannisburg was recognized for the prominence of its Rheingau Rieslings, and now Böcking stands with a new era of Mosel Rieslings.**

With our **Slow Food movement** we have spawned a sponsorship to preserve the steep slope vineyards in Germany and, step by step, we are re-cultivated a portion of our Ungerberg, one of the oldest Riesling plantings in the world. We hope to pass on to succeeding generations this old and vital culture of grape cultivation.

## REVITALIZED: OUR SLOPES

### The Vineyards of Richard Böcking

Our inspiration is to breathe new life into our vineyards, to return them to natural cultivation.

The vineyards are located on either side of two small side valleys that meet on the Trarbach side of the Mosel River: Schottbachtal (Schottbach Valley) and Kautenbachtal (Kautenbach Valley).

The wines from the vineyards in these two small valleys are found on some of the oldest Prussian Mosel vineyard maps. Their reputation as especially valuable sites reaches back to the beginning of the 17th century. Remarkable is the grand cru vineyard Ungerberg, with its extremely steep slope. To visit Ungerberg is to visit an unforgettable archive of the past. This almost forgotten treasure, along with the notable Burgberg and Schlossberg vineyards, motivates and encourages us to do all we can to reawaken this remarkable part of our heritage.

Our first vintage – the 2012 – provided an impressive collection of wines to prove that these inimitable vineyards have not lost any of their century old potential.

### Trarbacher Ungerberg

#### *Our magical vineyard with a soul*

The Ungerberg, with its mystical and complex nature, is a place full of secrets. Already, the name reveals one of the many enchantments of this old and unique site in a Mosel side valley, the Kautenbachtal. In fact, Ungerberg's name in the Celtic language translates to mean "hill of balm and medicinal herbs." And, of course, these herbal notes find their way into the wine that grows in Ungerberg. Its stony, meager soil also allows wild herbs to thrive, especially medicinal herbs.

Ungerberg's extremely steep slope of gray, blue, and brown slate, mixed with quartz elements, allows the Riesling vines to thrive and acquire a distinctive flavor. The meager soil in Ungerberg forces the roots of the grape vines deep into the ground to search for water and nutrition. The vines are, therefore, constantly absorbing nutrition, regardless of weather conditions. This constant nourishment provides strong, disease-resistant vines that produce small, loose bunches of grapes with an unusual concentration of fruit.

Located on the southerly slope of a geographic basin and protected from disagreeable winds, Ungerberg's sun exposure lasts from morning till evening, assuring the vines optimal ripening conditions. This well-placed vineyard provides vine growth well into November, assuring a harvest with grapes that have developed their full-fruit potential.

In the lower core section of Ungerberg is the Pfarrwingert, containing old vines that have consistently produced the finest grapes from Ungerberg. At the end of the 19th century, wines from Pfarrwingert were recognized for their mineral-rich, spicy, and full-bodied character by the renowned Trier wine auctions. The Pfarrwingert is the filet piece of Ungerberg. It is of modest size, only 3,000 square meters (0.74 acres). In English, Pfarrwingert means "the parish vineyard," a name given by the Lutheran parish in Trarbach – a standard practice of the church in 17th-century Germany for the production of Communion wine. In 2011, one of our first tasks was to replant half of Pfarrwingert with new vines. The replanting of this beautiful piece of Ungerberg was long overdue.

The „Trarbachische Ehren-Säul“ („Trarbach's honorary recognition“) recognized as early as the 17th century both Ungerberg and Schlossberg as most distinguished and valuable vineyards. At the end of the 19th century, the wines were listed in tax records with the highest value.

In the records of the Trier wine auction of 1896, Böcking's Rieslings were prominent. The wines from Ungerberg and Schlossberg were sold at 2,300 to 2,600 marks per Fuder, respectively. With these records, it can be established that Ungerberg is one of the oldest and most valuable vineyards on the Mosel – some 100 years before Prince Clemens Wenceslaus decreed Riesling as the predominant grape on the Mosel. And, in this unique vineyard, the Böckings arrived in Trarbach early in the 17th century to begin their viticulture venture.

Finally, it is interesting to note that Master Johann Hofmann, during his last year as Trarbach's school director in 1667, included Ungerberg and Schlossberg as the most prominent and valuable vineyards in his book on the wine trade in Trarbach.

#### *The magic of the Kautenbach Valley (Kautenbachtal)*

Across the small Kautenbach Valley is a thermal pool, whose natural spring provides the water for the Kautenbach, the stream that flows along the lower edge of Ungerberg into the Mosel River. This spring became known first in 1799, when the Böckings, before the thermal bath was established, operated a copper mine. As the story goes, the main part of the mine's water source branched directly from the warm spring, and then one day the stream suddenly became so strong that the mine was forced to close. In 1883, when the spring was finally tamed, the bathhouse was reconstructed, and the village of Bad Wildstein developed around the new thermal pool. The spa continues to operate today. When the new pool and the surrounding homes were being built, remains of an earlier Roman bath were discovered, indicating that the healing power of the spring was known centuries earlier!



We continue to be amazed that the original boundaries of Ungsberg remain the same through at least 400 years of its turbulent history, perhaps because of the magic of this vineyard site. In any case, we are thankful that it stands today as a testimony to the early winegrowing days of Traben-Trarbach and to the family that created it. When we walk the small, high footpath along the slope of Kautenbach, through the Ungsberg, we delight in the natural surroundings that brighten our day and remind us of our heritage.

#### Facts about Ungsberg

**Exposure:** South-facing slope  
60 to 100 percent (27 to 45 degrees) steepness

**Classification:** Grand cru  
“Class One Vineyard” according to the Prussian classification

**Height:** 150 to 250 meters (492 to 820 feet)

**Soil:** Gray, blue, and brown slate, with prominent quartz

**Vines:** Riesling, a large portion ungrafted

**Age of vines:** For single-vineyard wine (old vines): over 40 years old  
Pfarrwingert section: 4 to 12 years old

**Production:** 30 hl/ha (3.000 liters/hectare or 7.410 liters/acre)

**Surface:** 1,3 hectares (3,2 acres)

#### Trarbacher Burgberg

##### Our vineyard underneath the castle ruins

Located in the western part of the Schottbach Valley (Schottbachtal), directly to the north, behind Trarbach. On a steep climb from Trarbach up past Burgberg lie the ruins of the Grevenburg, a 14th-century castle ruin and once the residence of the Counts of Sponheim.

Burgberg has gray and blue slate and, in the winter, has the advantage of being close to the Mosel River. The once existing medieval town wall of Trarbach, which was originally built from the town gates deep into the Schottbach Valley, were directly adjacent to Burgberg. The name originates from a consolidation and reallocation of the Trarbach vineyards by the German Wine Law of 1971; prior to 1971, Burgberg was part of Schlossberg.

The wines of the Burgberg have a cool, smoky, and salty character, with a solid structure.

#### Facts about Burgberg

**Exposure:** West-facing slope  
50 to 60 percent (23 to 28 degrees) steepness

**Classification:** Grand cru  
“Class One Vineyard” according to the Prussian classification

**Height:** 140 to 240 meters (459 to 787 feet)

**Soil:** Blue and brown slate with quartz

**Vines:** Riesling, mostly ungrafted

**Age of vines:** For single-vineyard wine (old vines): 40 to 75 years old  
Other vines 15 years old

**Production:** Old vines: 30 hl/ha (3.000 liters/hectare or 7.410 liters acre)  
Other vines: 60 hl/ha (6,000 liters/hectare or 14,830 liters/acre)

**Surface:** 1,6 hectares (4 acres)

#### Trarbacher Schlossberg

##### Our noble vineyard with the oldest, ungrafted vines

A southwest-facing hillside and bordering to the east of Burgberg, Schlossberg also lies in the Schottbachtal. According to the old records, the Böcking portion of the vineyard is found in the the most valuable part of Schlossberg. Our oldest, ungrafted vines are located here.

The predominately gray slate in Schlossberg is quite decomposed, the composition being fine and easily broken. This gives wines a distinctive fruit and mineral character and a delicate structure.

#### Facts about Schlossberg

**Exposure:** Southwest-by-southeast facing slope  
30 to 60 percent (15 to 28 degrees) steepness

**Classification:** Grand cru  
“Class One Vineyard” according to the Prussian classification

**Height:** 160 to 230 meters (525 to 755 feet)

**Soil:** Gray and brown slate

**Vines:** 90 percent Riesling, some grafted, 10 percent Spätburgunder (Pinot Noir)

**Age of vines:** For single-vineyard wine (old vines): 50 to 80 years old  
Other vines: 8 to 35 years old  
Pinot Noir: 19 years old

**Production:** Old vines: 30 hl/ha (3,000 liters/hectare or 7,410 liters/acre)  
60 hl/ha (6,000 liters/hectare or 14,830 liters/acre)

**Surface:** 2 hectares (4,9 acres)

#### Trarbacher Taubenhäuser

##### Our modernist

Facing predominately to the southwest, Taubenhäuser lies directly across from Trarbacher Burgberg and Schlossberg, along the Kautenbachtal, which extends eastward from the town. The 10-hectare (24.7-acre) vineyard is managed by the Taubenhäuser Wine Cooperative, as a result of the renovation of the vineyards through an E.U. and German Department of Agriculture project that reconfigured the steep slopes for efficient cultivation. Vineyard management on steep slopes is very challenging and this pioneering project was one of the first of its kind.

The Böcking parcels are in different locations throughout this hillside vineyard. Our Böcking Riesling is made predominately from grapes grown in Taubenhäuser.

#### Facts about Taubenhäuser

**Exposure:** Southwest-facing slope  
30 to 60 percent (15 to 28 degrees) steepness

**Classification:** Village wine, partly premier cru

**Height:** 160 to 230 meters (525 to 755 feet)

**Soil:** Gray and blue slate

**Vines:** 90 percent Riesling, some grafted, 10 percent Spätburgunder (Pinot Noir)

**Age of Vines:** 16 years old

**Production:** 80 hl/ha Riesling (8,000 liters/hectare or 19,760 liters/acre)  
60 hl/ha Spätburgunder (6,000 liters/hectare or 14,830 liters/acre)

**Surface:** 1.4 hectares (3.5 acres)

## REAWAKENED: OUR WINE



»We want our wines to be as natural as possible. They are magical, just as they are.«

Philipp Buchkremer, Estate Manager

### Our wines: Coming-Into-Being

We raise our grapes by hand, and bring them from the vineyard to the bottle, **unadulterated, with an originality that can be produced only in a natural vineyard environment.** From this tenet springs our fundamental philosophy – a philosophy of allowing a wine to develop naturally.

In our steep slope vineyards, this philosophy means that we cultivate the small vineyard parcels individually. Our prized ungrafted, old vines are found in many different parcels. From these old vines, we select the ripest and healthiest grapes, at just the right time.

Most of our wines are bottled in July and August. Until then they are fermented with ambient yeasts. For our grand cru Rieslings, we use the traditional 1,000-liter Mosel Fuder casks. For Böcking Riesling we use steel tanks, and for Devon Riesling both casks and steel tanks. For our more structured wines, we often use smaller wooden barrels such as older 225-liter barriques.

Then follows the time for observation. We patiently wait until the fermentation begins. We accompany the fermentation process with continual tasting and observation. We trust the natural processes of the wine. We leave the fermentation in nature's hands to allow the new wine to reach its innate goal. And, after a long time on the lees, the wine will be treated with a minimum dose of sulfur, then filtered and bottled.



### OUR WINES IN DETAIL:

#### THE BÖCKING COLLECTION

In 2015 a new by-the-glass selection was created from newly-acquired parcels in the Taubenhaus vineyard, our off-dry Böcking Riesling.

The same year, the Böcking Pinot Blanc (German: Weissburgunder) was announced. This off-dry wine is a blending of wines from selected vineyards along the Middle Mosel. The formulation of this blend is directed by our winemaker.

A third wine in the collection is the Böcking Pinot Noir (Spätburgunder) Rosé, a dry wine produced from parcels in our Schlossberg and Taubenhäuser vineyards. These three wines are not only fruity, fresh, and delicious, but always fit perfectly everywhere. Our secret weapons for carefree wine pleasure!

## OUR ESTATE COLLECTION

These Rieslings are of unquestioned originality, reflecting our philosophy of natural vineyard cultivation.

The wines from our first vintage in 2012 were quickly sold out. This resulted partly from the relatively small, weather-related, harvest of that year, experienced as well in 2013 and 2014, a situation that challenged wineries on the Middle Mosel. The addition of parcels in the Taubenhäuser and Schlossberg in 2014, along with significantly improved harvests in the area, helped us produce bumper crops in 2015 and 2016.

Additionally, the acceptance of our 2012 wines was spurred by several international recognitions:

- Vinum, July, 2014: Distinguished our 2012 Alte Reben Trarbacher Ungerberg (Old Vine)
- Vinum Riesling Champion 2014: Distinguished with three certificates for our 2012 Old Vines
- Wine & Spirits, December, 2014: Distinguished our Alte Reben Schlossberg (90) and Devon Riesling (92) in the article „Year’s Best German Riesling“
- Wine Enthusiast, December, 2014: Awarded on 2012 Devon Riesling (89) and Alte Reben (91)
- SAKURA competition (Japan), January, 2015. Highest award „Double Gold“ for our „M“ Trarbacher Ungerberg Kabinett – the only Double Gold awarded German wine – and the Silver award for 2013 Devon Riesling.

Our subsequent vintages have won additional awards:

- Wine & Spirits, December, 2015: One of 12 “Wineries to Watch in 2016”
- Decanter, 2016 and 2017: Top 50 wines in U.K. (Devon Riesling)
- Wine Enthusiast, December, 2017: Ungerberg Riesling (90)
- Mundus Vini Spring Tasting 2017: GOLD to 2015 Ungerberg Riesling and M Schlossberg Riesling Spätlese SILVER to 2015 Schlossberg Riesling and Devon Riesling

The wines from our 2017 vintage will be available in mid-2018.

## Devon Riesling

This entry-level Riesling is a cuvée from the early harvest in our three Grand Cru vineyards. It is a dry wine with an energising nose of grapefruit, gooseberry, lemon, pear and floral elements. Smooth, direct, and delicate on the palate.

The first bottling of our first (2012) Devon Riesling was sold out by the end of 2014. The success of our Devon confirmed our commitment to light, drier Rieslings grown on Trarbach’s steep slopes. Our goal is to make this wine consistent from year to year – what you might call a Böcking specialty that will be influenced only by annual growing conditions.

## Prädikat »M«

These are traditional fruity, late-harvested wine from the steep slopes of the Trarbacher Ungerberg and Schlossberg vineyards, with blue and gray slate, as well as quartz. The name of the wine exemplifies the new, modern generation of traditionalists. The “M” is a poignant tribute to our home in the lovely Mosel valley. This wine is typically a Kabinett and/or a Spätlese, made from the late harvest grapes. These wines are creamy, juicy Rieslings with a fruity, animating finish. Wines that need time.

## Wines from our Top Trarbach Vineyards – »Gran Cru«

### Ungerberg

From the Grand Cru vineyard with a soul – the Ungerberg, where Riesling was already cultivated as early as the beginning of the 17th century. This magical vineyard is situated in the mystical tributary valley, the Kautenbachtal. This vineyard distinguishes itself by a warm mineral quality and herbal spices, nearly ethereal notes reminding of camomile and saffron. The name of the vineyard originated with the Roman-Celtic era and refers to the healing and salve herbs growing on this slope.

This soil contains blue, green, and brown slate, as well as some quartz.

From this top vineyard comes a wine with an elegant structure, wonderful luster, complex aromas of yellow fruit, and a ripe, delicate acidity. Especially, the spicy and herbal notes give this wine its distinct flavor and character. The old, ungrafted vines in Ungerberg are over 40 years old. This is a dry wine.

### Burgberg

Our steep Burgberg slope lies directly below the medieval Grevenburg Castle in Trarbach. This old Grand Cru vineyard belongs to our oldest and best vineyard sites and is characterized by blue and gray slate, as well as quartz. Largely planted with over 75 year old ungrafted Riesling vines, it gives us a wine with enormous complexity and concentration. This is a dry wine.

### Schlossberg

The steep Schlossberg vineyard in Trarbach is characterized by gray and blue slate, as well as quartz. Situated high above Trarbach, the vineyard is planted with over 80 year old ungrafted vines.

This Grand Cru vineyard lies directly next to our neighbouring Burgberg and is characterized by its very brittle slate.

The Romans who cultivated grapes in this region left behind an old and still intact Roman road which leads through this ancient vineyard site giving us an idea of the importance of this wine-growing area.

These wines are characterised by a flowery bouquet. Lusty and zesty. This is an off-dry (medium dry) wine.

Story of Providence:

Our History

»... an old but handsome building, under which one finds a double cellar, wherein the princely wines lie.«

Master Johann Hofmann about the manor, »Trorbachische Ehren-Säul«, 1669



# THE STORY OF PROVIDENCE: OUR HISTORY

## The Böcking's — Tradition and Future

The entrepreneurial story of the Böckings began at the onset of the 17th century, with the formation of their trade and exchange company ("Handels und Wechselcomptoirs").

At the beginning of the 18th century, the successful businessmen and financiers expanded into iron smelting and lumbering industries. Their growing reputation was enhanced by successful trading in wine, spices, coal, and salt, which led in the 18th century to a trading monopoly negotiated with the Electorate of Trier for the area including Nassau-Saarbrücken and Pfalz-Zweibrücken: the upper reaches of the Mosel and the Saar. The Böckings, however, also attained a lucrative and dominant banking operation, a business that began with their position as the regional treasurer ("Landeskassierer") for the Prince of Palatinate. Vestiges of their prosperity can still be seen in Trarbach today, like the magnificent family residence overlooking the Mosel that Johann Adolph Böcking (1695-1770) built in 1750. Today it is home to the Mittel-Mosel Museum.

It was in the 18th century, when the prosperity of the Böcking family was at its zenith, that the family had its greatest influence on the wealth of Traben and Trarbach. (The two towns were joined together in 1898 with a bridge that spanned the Mosel River and unified the two into a single municipal government in 1904.) The fact that Traben-Trarbach was a Protestant enclave amidst a sovereign Catholic region made it the first connection for the wine trade with England, the Netherlands, the Protestant Church, and Friedrich Wilhelm IV of Prussia, with whom Heinrich Böcking had a personal relationship.

In the middle of the 19th century, the wine trade became a stable and self-sustaining industry. Nevertheless, the Böckings did not lose interest in viticulture. On the contrary, they concentrated on it even more and expanded their vineyard holdings on the Mosel.

Around this time, the family acquired Uingsberg and Schlossberg, in Trarbach, and Geierslay, in Wintrich – all vineyards with a reputation for exceptional quality, commensurate with the vineyards in Brauneberg (that is, the present-day Juffer and Juffer-Sonnenuhr)

The well-known 14th-century "Kaisersaal," or Rittersaal (great hall), is the largest secular building from the Middle Ages on the Mosel, which is today the seat of the Böcking Winery. This building, erected as a wine cellar for the vineyards located just below the Grevenburg Castle, was under the ownership of Louis Böcking and Franz Langguth. In the middle of the 20th century, the Langguth's part of the building was purchased by the Böckings and today it is used for wine storage, guest events, and as an administrative office of the winery. After the devastating town fire in 1857, the foundation and walls of the 400 square meter (4,306 square foot) building remained, but the roof had to be rebuilt. Despite its age, the building still has a mystical, romantic ambiance of yesteryear. Today, the Rittersaal stands as the center of the Böcking winery operation, and is an historic legacy of the Böcking family, as well as the town's once mighty wine trade.

An indication of the immense scope of the Böcking ventures on the Middle Mosel is found in an 1869 list of the family's great vineyard sites, which included Trarbach, Wintrich (plus Geierslay), Brauneberg, Kröv, Minnheim, Emmel, Horvath, and Karlholz. These holdings had a total value of 520,000 marks! The various Böcking estates and vineyards would be valued at about 10 million euros today. The final testament from Adolph Böcking of 1903, a scant 30 years later, valued the Böcking wealth at 900,000 marks, or 18 million euros today. With Adolph's death at the beginning of the 20th century, this heritage began to wither as the entrepreneurial spirit left the family after more than ten generations of success.

Yet, with the purchase of the winery and vineyards by family descendants Baron Wolf von Marschall and his sister Leweke, and later the Zirkles, Weingut Richard Böcking has entered a new renaissance – and, with the top vineyards of Uingsberg, Schlossberg, and Burgberg, also the renaissance of the highest-quality, traditional Mosel Rieslings.

## Riesling and Traben-Trarbach: An Exceptional Alliance

For many years, wine and the Mosel have belonged indivisibly together. They depend on each other. Because of the Mosel River's immense importance for transport, the smaller cellars above the town became less useful. Count Johann III, whose Grevenburg Castle was situated high above the town, had a cellar capacity of only 50 Fuder casks. He, therefore, built a cellar in the valley from 1363 until 1364. The so-called „Magazin auf dem Schottbach," soon became known as the „Kaisersaal" (King's Hall), later to be named the „Rittersaal", and the seat of the Böckings.

The region prospered, thanks to the Mosel, and the building, after 1370, stored the wine for the „drink-happy castle men." Glittering festivals were celebrated, and legal judgments pronounced, probably both in wine-joyous harmony.

### *From Joyous Celebrations to Careful Cultivation*

The first attempts at permanent cultivation of the Riesling grape were recorded in 1464/1465. But long ripening periods and small harvests let some time elapse until the grape could hold its ground on the Mosel. The rudimentary cultivation changed during the period of the Protestant Reformation. After the Thirty Years' War, the Peace of Westphalia ended those turbulent times in 1648. The two towns, Traben and Trarbach, became one of the few Protestant enclaves in the middle of the Catholic Mosel region. While the wine trade otherwise was controlled by the Roman Catholic Church or, on the Rhine by the nobility, the Protestant Church was open for free, profitable trade.

### *The Triumphant Ascent of Riesling*

Riesling slowly but steadily became more popular in the region. Master Johann Hofmann, the rector of the Latin school in Trarbach, praised the Riesling and used it as a standard for other contemporary wines in his 1669 paper, "Trorbacher Ehrensäul":

»Alongside the Riesling, another grape variety named the Klemmbeer (Elbling) can be found, one that is larger and produces much wine but by far cannot match the strength and goodness of the Riesling.« Hofmann described the Uingsberg, the Aalfang, the Mungenrot, and even the Mühlrecherberg and Landfuhrberg as the finest vineyards in Trarbach and suggested that, because of the exquisite taste and aroma, the Riesling should henceforth be renamed Rösling (referring to roses).

Though the Elbling grape predominated until the 17th century, the noble Riesling grape slowly overpassed it. The change accelerated when the Archbishop-Elector of Trier Prince Clemens Wenceslaus decreed, „in place of the grapes planted on the Rhine that are known to be reprehensible, the vastly more suitable Riesling vine is to be planted on the Mosel." For Prince Wenceslaus, it was manifest that Riesling was preeminently more suitable and of substantially better quality than, for instance, the Elbling. Thereafter, all vineyards were to be replanted with Riesling. Soon, wine buyers from England and the Netherlands imported Mosel Rieslings directly from the producers, not only to avoid middlemen but also to ensure the best quality. Traben and Trarbach prospered and enjoyed world renown.

Furthermore, technical innovations put the town at an advantage. In 1887, Traben-Trarbach was the only town in Germany, besides Berlin, to have its own power station, which helped to optimize hygiene in the cellars. This, in turn, enhanced the fermentation of the wines. Where candles had been the only source of light in the cellars, because gas or oil lamps gave off too much odor, electricity initiated standards that are still in place today.

### **20th Century Challenges of the Middle Mosel as a First-Class Wine Region**

Just as the political and economic conditions on the Middle Mosel were once a blessing to the wine trade, they later became a curse. The decline began with the end of Prussian rule. Two World Wars at the beginning of the 20th century brought many growers and merchants lucrative wartime contracts, but later reparation payments and the world economic crisis dissipated the wartime benefits.

The vintages 1917 and 1921 were superb in quality, and the most expensive 1,000-liter Fuder was auctioned for an unimaginable 100,000 marks. Yet, due to the growing competition of imported wines and subsequent years of low quality and poor harvests, the pre-First World War level would not be reached again. The end of the Second World War was accompanied by the “economic miracle” (Wirtschaftswunder), and marked the beginning of mass consumption of wine. Simple and medium-quality wines were in demand and stocked in the large, new supermarkets. The European Economic Community (now the European Union) ushered in lower tariffs throughout Europe, allowing more inexpensive wines to flow into Germany, primarily from Italy and Spain. Many producers in Traben-Trarbach succumbed to the new market and those few wine estates that adhered to the traditions of the past were overtaken. The descent was accelerated in the 1970s and 1980s following stock market and economic declines in the U.S. and the devaluation of the U.S. dollar, as well as the glycol wine scandal in 1985.

### **Recent Developments on the Middle Mosel**

For many wine lovers and connoisseurs, the reason for the post-war opportunities for top Mosel producers lies partly in the immense success of the world’s wine market. The preservation of old steep slope vineyards with their distinctive terroir long faced adverse economic prospects. But the longing for the distinctive grape that is capable of portraying the characteristics of climate and soil, along with the development of technical equipment, has since the 1990s spurred many vintners to bring the steep slope Riesling wines back to the top of the international wine lists. The efforts of single growers to re-cultivate the steep slopes of the Mosel brought forth obvious increases in quality. Nevertheless, the renaissance of the steep slope vineyards on the Mosel remains challenging. The new generation of Riesling growers continues to fight for their vineyards, thereby preserving the distinctive Riesling wines of the past.



## **OUR TEAM**



**Denman Zirkle – Managing Partner**  
**Philipp Buchkremer – Estate Manager**  
**Sigrid Zirkle Carroll – North America Marketing**  
**Christopher Weiss – Administrator**

### Denman Zirkle – Managing Partner



Denman Zirkle's first visit to Traben-Trarbach was in October 1971, just after the birth of his daughter Sigrid in Frankfurt. During this visit, he was intractably and emotionally tied to the Böcking vineyards. He returned with his family to the United States in 1974 to continue a professional career with I.B.M. Later on, his work took him to Franklin Templeton Investments, where he was an executive in finance and marketing. During a visit in 2011 with Ulrike Böcking, at that time the Estate Manager, he became aware of the increasing sentiment to place the vineyards under new family ownership and to move them forward with a new vision. In early 2014 he left his position as executive director of a Virginia foundation to begin working directly with the winery in Traben-Trarbach. In 2015 he was named Managing Director of the winery. Denman was married to the late Dagmar von Maltzahn, a granddaughter of Kurt Böcking (1886-1976). He was

educated at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and received his M.B.A. degree from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

### Philipp Buchkremer – Estate Manager: Vineyards and Winemaking



Born in 1982 to a vintner family on the Mosel, Philipp has winemaking blood in his veins. A love of the art of winemaking stayed with him throughout his childhood in neighbouring Enkirch. During his childhood and teenage years, Philipp worked the vineyards of his father and grandfather. The thrill of these early experiences led him from an early career in electrical construction back to his roots—this time at Böcking. In 2014, Philipp was named assistant at Richard Böcking to then-Estate Manager and childhood friend Simon Trös. At the beginning of 2015, he was appointed Estate Manager.

Ambition, challenge, and the opportunity to apply his skills to a new opportunity, all have been grasped successfully by Philipp. With his love for cultivating and making wine, his goal for his wines to be recognized at the top of their class.

The success of the 2015 and 2016 vintages indicates that Philipp is on the right track.

### Sigrid Zirkle Carroll – Director of North America Marketing

In October 1971 – an excellent vintage, by the way – Sigrid was born in Frankfurt to Dagmar von Maltzahn and Denman Zirkle. She is a direct Böcking descendent through her mother, a granddaughter of Kurt Böcking. After she moved to the United States at the age of three, her early memories of the vineyards had undoubtedly become a part of her. She returned regularly to Traben-Trarbach, first with her parents and siblings, later when she was 15 and 16 years old to work summers in the vineyards. Sigrid was fascinated by the involvement of the entire community in the wine business, including the retail outlets and restaurants, where she also worked. Her passion never flagged, and she was pulled back to the distinctive culture and landscape of the Mosel. When the transformation to the new Böcking ownership was underway, she became a member of the management team, not only opening markets in the U.S. but also providing her own investment capital. Sigrid graduated from Sweet Briar College and received an M.B.A. degree from the College of William & Mary, both in Virginia. After graduation, she worked in the retail division of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in New York, then as the chief marketing executive for Antenna Audio in North America.



**»It is exciting to work with my father and our winemaker and vineyard manager, Philipp, to bring the family estate to new heights—for us in the near future and for future generations.« she says.**

# MARKET POSITION

## A portrait of ourselves

We draw from the experiences of the highs and lows of more than ten generations, and we portray our team as having the spirit and determination to recreate the greatness of the Böcking wines. The new interpretation of our wines is tied directly to the traditions of this past, while adapting to modern demand and winemaking prowess. We have an understanding that our Riesling wines possess a quality of their own that allows us the self-confidence to introduce our wines with both modesty and self-expression.

## We have a straight-forward approach

We strive for a clean design with reverence for our legacy and the terroir. Our labels, for example, honor the past with the core emblem from the Böcking coat of arms, while reducing all other information to the bare essentials. As a result, we have a clean presentation, retaining the traditional family colors of blue and gold.

This is how we want to market ourselves: A producer with wines of character and a clean, noble design.

Our approach is to market to select clients with superior products.

Our primary market is select importers, wine merchants, restaurants, and private clients.

All of our wines are bottled in classic 750-ml Mosel bottles. Our Grand Cru and Prädikat wines are presented in long-neck bottles, antique blue in colour.

Our trade and restaurant prices are geared to each individual market.

## Recent Developments at Richard Böcking

Having recognized the growing worldwide demand for the highest quality Riesling, the new management of the Richard Böcking Winery began a scheduled program of revitalization of its steep slope vineyards, as well as the addition of new parcels that were either contingent to, or near, existing vineyards. Along with the revitalization, additional vineyard parcels were purchased 2014 in the Traber Schlossberg, Ungsberg, und Taubenhau vineyards. These acquisitions have increased production of our Böcking Riesling selection.

# THE SHORT STORY: FACTS AND FIGURES

<b>First cultivation:</b>	1669, on the Trarbacher Ungsberg, noted in the "Trarbacher Ehrensäul" by Johann Hofmann
<b>Cultivated area:</b>	2011 management transition: 3.5 hectares (8.6 acres) 2018: 7 hectares (15 acres)
<b>Vineyards (all steep-slope):</b>	Ungsberg, grand cru Schlossberg, grand cru Burgberg, grand cru Taubenhau, premier cru and village wines (Ortswein)
<b>Cultivation/Fermentation:</b>	Natural cultivation and fermentation Sensitivity to nature in vineyards and cellar Maceration with grape skin contact Fermentation primarily in Mosel Fuder casks Barrique barrels used for Rosé and special wines Spontaneous fermentation with natural yeasts Minimum sulfur additives Controlled movement Gentle filtration
<b>Style:</b>	Dry and off dry, with a discrete phenolic structure
<b>Basic Wines:</b>	Böcking Collection: Riesling (dry), Pinot Blanc (off-dry), Pinot Noir Rose (dry)
<b>Estate Wines:</b>	Devon Riesling (cuvée) (dry), Ungsberg (dry), Schlossberg (off-dry and Spätlese), Burgberg (dry and Kabinett)
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## A LOOK AT THE PAST: HERITAGE OF THE MOSEL VALLEY



**»To be honest, when talking about the Mosel, my thoughts immediately turn to Riesling. These wines are marked by a lightness and filigree delicacy that remind me of pillars in a Gothic cathedral. Both are incredibly slender and delicately chiseled. But, in spite of their tenderness, they possess immense strength.«**

Natalie Lumpp, Sommelière

### Middle Mosel Region

The Mosel is one of Germany's oldest wine regions, as well as the world's largest region of steep slope vineyards. The region encompasses the Mosel Valley and reaches from France, across Luxembourg, north to the Rhine River, as well as to side valleys of the Saar and Ruwer rivers.

The region is home to the meandering Mosel River, a spectacular landscape distinguished by traditional viticulture on the steep cliffs, or slopes, of the valley. It is a landscape so stark that it sometimes is compared to the steep slopes in the "wild west" of America.

The Mosel region claims 23,500 acres of vineyards under cultivation. It is the largest Riesling area in the world, with the variety being cultivated on 60% of the vineyard areas. The southernmost city, Trier, was founded by the Romans and is the oldest city in Germany. The area, indeed, presents a rich, ancient culture, with beautiful surroundings.

### The History of Viticulture on the Mosel

The history of vineyard cultivation began in approximately 500 B.C. At the time, the Celts began to plant vines first on the steep slopes of the Mosel Valley. Afterwards, wine was used as pay for the Roman legions, which increasingly continued the cultivation of wine.

Mosel Riesling was officially mentioned for the first time in the mid-15th century in a book of the St. Jacob's Hospital in Trier: The sale of "roislynck reffen" (Riesling seeds) was noted.

In 1787, Prince Clemens Wenceslaus of Saxony, Archbishop-Elector of Trier (1768–1803), issued a decree that, in the district of Trier, Riesling was to be principally cultivated during the ensuing seven years. This decree set the stage for what would later become the largest Riesling region in the world.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, Traben-Trarbach developed into the largest wine trade center in Germany's history and the second largest in Europe, after Bordeaux. At the beginning of the 20th century, German Riesling was as highly and sometimes even more highly valued as the most prized red wines of France, namely claret and Burgundy.

At the beginning of the 20th century, a significant development took place for the Mosel's wine culture. It was during this period that the flat land along the banks of the river that had been used for grazing cattle, growing crops, or planting orchards was converted into vineyards, which lacked the distinctive qualities of Riesling grown on the steep slate slopes. Later on, with the ensuing increase of agricultural mechanization, many workers in the steep slopes were recruited to work in the reclaimed flat lands, resulting in a significant amount of steep slope acreage going fallow.

This decline in the production of wines from the steep slopes was abetted by the fall in the value of the U.S. dollar in the 1970s and 1980s and by the increased competition from imported wines, concomitant with the rise of the Common Market (European Economic Community).

At the beginning of the 1990s, winegrowers began to assess the negative influences of the past 30 years and made a recommitment to top-quality Mosel wine. It was recognized that the reputation of the Mosel had been built on the steep slopes planted in Riesling – a renaissance was in the making.

## Climate of the Mosel Valley

Due to the perfectly angled exposure of the steep slate slopes along the Mosel Valley, maximum exposure to the sun is attained. This exposure produces an optimal warming of the ground during the day that, along with heat retention of the slate, moderates the chilly night temperatures. This microclimate tends to lengthen the growing season on the Mosel, allowing late harvests, long after the grapes of other regions have been picked and pressed.

A cool autumn is the norm, providing a stark contrast to the Mosel's location along the latitude of 50th, parallel north, one of the northernmost grape-growing regions of the world. An average annual precipitation of 900 millimeters, or 35.4 inches, assures an ample water supply to a meager slate surface.

During the day, the Mosel reflects sunlight, offering the slate vineyards even more warmth. In the early mornings, the river is often covered with a blanket of fog that, along with other conditions, encourages botrytis, making possible late harvests that produce delicious noble sweet wines.

Supplementing the autumnal cool growing season is the protection from cold winds afforded by the Eifel and Hunsrück hills to the west and east, respectively. This protection helps to achieve a microclimate where even Mediterranean plants thrive.

## Geology of the Steep Slope Riesling

Our landscape is part of the Rhenish Slate Mountains. The geological development of this massif dates back to when slate formed and the earth was approximately 400 million years old, a period known as the Devonian Age. During these years, the area was underwater, and for millions of years untold amounts of mud, mixed with sand and clay, were collected from the dryer areas in the north, east, and southeast. Under the pressure of the water, today's slate was formed at the bottom of the waterbed. Tectonic movement of the earth in this area over the years created today's Rhenish Slate Mountains.

At the same time, about one million years ago during the glacial period, further tectonic upheavals created the meandering path of the future Mosel River. This river valley rose in the south to become the Vosges Mountains, in France, at a height of 715 meters (2,346 feet) above sea level, to the confluence of the Mosel and Rhein rivers at Koblenz, known as Deutsches Eck ("German Corner"), at a height of 54 meters (177 feet) above sea level, a distance of 544 kilometers (388 miles).

The meandering Mosel River, with its steep slopes and curving topography, creates optimal winegrowing conditions around the town of Trarbach, on the west bank of the river, where two small side valleys are located with soils of gray and blue slate.

A few vineyards on these side-valley slopes, for example, Trarbacher Ungsberg and Trarbacher Burgberg, also contain notable quartz deposits in the soil.



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