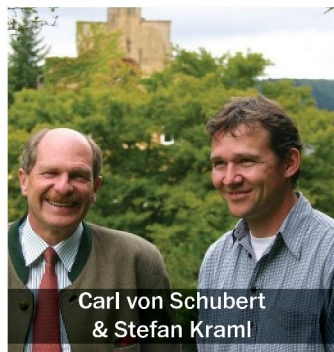


## C. von Schubert

Carl von Schubert  
& Stefan Kraml

**Founded:** 966  
**Winemaker/viticulturist:**  
 Stefan Kraml  
**Owner:** Dr. Carl von Schubert  
**Acres owned:** 85  
**Annual production:** 18,000 cases  
**Estate grown:** 100%  
**Importer:** Loosen Bros. USA,  
 Salem, OR  
**Website:** vonschubert.com

This is C. von Schubert's 12th appearance as a Top 100 Winery, its wines again proving the special character of its land alongside the Ruwer River.

**Deep Roots:** Vines have grown on the slopes of this Mosel tributary since Roman times. In the Middle Ages, it was the monks of the Abbey of Saint Maximin who named these vineyards and made them famous: Herrenberg fruit went to make wines for the choirmasters; the Abtsberg supplied the abbot, while the Bruderberg wines—from the smallest parcel—went to the brothers. Today, the estate is run by Carl von Schubert, whose family has managed to keep it intact for five generations.

**Exemplary Basics:** Perhaps the best test of a vineyard—not to mention a winemaker—is a challenging vintage. That was 2014, plagued by the coolest, dampest August in decades, and heavy rain in early October. Von Schubert and winemaker Stefan Kraml chose not to make anything above Spätlese-level ripeness. And those Spätlesen represent some pretty great fruit: The Herrenberg, for example, is completely delicious, bursting with juicy flavor in shades of yellow fruit, its floral and herbal notes accenting the ethereal feel of the wine. And at the often overlooked QbA end of the spectrum, Abtsberg's old vines, planted on a steep slope of blue Devonian slate, gave an Alte Reben QbA Trocken that's as profound in its sense of minerality as it is zesty and bright.



**Superior:** Since Kraml came on in 2004, he's weaned the vines off of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, dropped yields and moved to ambient yeast fermentations, many of which he does in traditional, large oak *fuder* made from the estate's own trees. He's also introduced the "Superior" wines, made in a traditional feinherb style, fermented in fuder and bottled with a little residual sugar. In 2014, the treatment seems to magnify the character of each vineyard, and lends the wines extra strength. The Abtsberg, for instance, emphasizes the filigreed delicacy and peach scents common to the fruit off its cool blue slate, as well as the profundity of its mineral flavors. It's not recognizably sweet; rather, this is sugar as muscle, making the best of a vintage short on sun. —T.Q.T.

## TOP-SCORING WINES

- 93 '14 Maximin Grünhauser Herrenberg QbA Superior \$60 (12/15)
- 92 '14 Maximin Grünhauser Herrenberg Spätlese \$38 (12/15)
- 92 '14 Maximin Grünhauser Abtsberg QbA Superior \$65 (12/15)

## Domdechant Werner



Michael Bott

**Founded:** 1780  
**Winemaker/viticulturist:**  
 Michael Bott  
**Owner:** Dr. Franz Werner Michel  
**Acres owned:** 32  
**Annual production:** 9,000 cases  
**Estate grown:** 100%  
**Importer:** Slocum & Sons,  
 New Haven, CT; Langdon Shiverick,  
 Los Angeles, CA  
**Website:** domdechantwerner.com

Domdechant Werner anchors the eastern end of the Rheingau with a portfolio of cask-fermented rieslings that reflect the rich soils and protected sites along the River Main.

**The Dean's Wines:** The Werner family has run this estate in Hochheim since 1780, when Johann Baptista Werner purchased it. His eldest son, Franz, was the *domdechant* (dean) of the Mainz Cathedral, and oversaw its restoration after it was ransacked in the Siege of Mainz in 1793. Today, Dr. Franz Werner Michel, the seventh generation, runs the estate with his daughter Catharina Mauritz, overseeing 32 acres of vineyards along the Main River. One of their most prized parcels is the Hochheimer Domdechaney, a south-facing slope with deep loam-loess soils that was once reserved for the church deans. Highly regarded for its ability to weather heat and drought, the vineyard also handled the wild temperature swings of 2013 well, turning out an electric Auslese, its lemon and spice flavors structured for aging.

**Great Vineyards:** The Werners are one of the largest landholders in the Hochheimer Kirchenstück, a south-facing slope of light, sandy soil protected at the top by the high walls of the Church of St. Peter and Paul. In 2012, it grew a standout Grosses Gewächs, savory in its mineral intensity, lasting with a salty mouthwatering quality.



**Patience:** Michael Bott has managed Werner's cellars and vineyards for 25 years, maintaining the estate's reputation for cask-fermented wines. He and his crew rely more on handwork than chemicals to control disease in the vines; in 2013, they were in the vineyards constantly, pruning short branches, dividing clusters and picking out any sunburned or botrytised berries. The work paid off, especially in the Hochheimer Kirchenstück Riesling Beerenauslese. Harvested in numerous passes through early November, the fruit came in healthy and intensely ripe. The wine is as rich in golden color as it is in dark, toasty flavors, the botrytis lending a buckwheat honey tone to the candied-orange finish. It glows with warm spice, while the acidity sweeps the wine along, leaving the palate surprisingly clean for all that weight. —T.Q.T.

## TOP-SCORING WINES

- 94 '13 Hochheimer Kirchenstück Riesling BA \$323 (12/15)
- 93 '13 Hochheimer Kirchenstück Riesling QbA Trocken \$38 (12/15)
- 93 '12 Hochheimer Kirchenstück Riesling GG \$52 (12/15)