



LITWAN WEIN

Elplingen Rüeget

Situated in Northern Switzerland, the Aargau is a land of rolling farmland with hills topped with forests. It is a quietly bustling canton of small towns and villages and an ideally bucolic place for commuters working in the surrounding cities of Basel, Zürich, and Luzern. The geology of Aargau is a fascinating study of the interaction between rocks being built and weathered. Underneath most of the canton is Jurassic limestone of the same age as found in Baden, Jura, Neuchâtel, and Burgundy. With its hills topped with trees providing a multitude of microclimates and exposures, is it any wonder that a young winemaker with a passion for unique terroir expression would set up his cellar in the Aargau?

Tom Litwan didn't start out intending to be the rising star of Pinot Noir in Switzerland, having first worked as a mason after graduating from school. A brief stay in Chablis, where he worked at a guesthouse, resulted in a friendship with Samuel Billaud. Together they spent a fair amount of time exploring Samuel's family cellar, where Tom was introduced to the greatest bottles of Grand Cru Burgundy. Next, Tom returned to Switzerland to study winemaking at the Center of Viticulture in Wädenswil, focusing on biodynamics since all his favorite growers in Burgundy had already converted to biodynamic farming. He worked with Jean-Daniel Schlaepfer of Domaine des Balisiers in Geneva alongside biodynamic consultant Pierre Masson. His embrace of biodynamics resulted in a transfer to French-speaking Switzerland to complete his studies in a place where biodynamics was not quite as controversial.

ORIGIN
Switzerland

APPELLATION
Aargau

SOIL
Clay, Marl, Jurassic limestone

AGE OF VINES
30-35+

ELEVATION
500 meters

VARIETIES
Pinot Noir

FARMING
DEMETER certified organic and
biodynamic

FERMENTATION
Hard harvested, natural yeast fermenta-
tion in neutral 228L French oak
barrels

AGING
12 months in neutral 228L French oak
barrels, vegan

In 2006 Tom settled in the Aargau and began acquiring small parcels of vines in some of the canton's most prestigious sites. Despite his extensive background, Tom prefers to see biodynamics as one vital step in growing grapes with vitality and a pure expression of place rather than all the mystical marketing talk that so frequently surrounds this farming practice. While this altitude might not seem extreme, the proximity to the Alps and the surrounding forests make these sites some of the last sites to ripen in the Aargau. He prefers heritage clones and massale selection, harvests by hand, and fermentations are spontaneous. His wines age in well-seasoned French oak barrels undisturbed until bottling with only a tiny amount of SO₂ for stability.

Rüeget is a parcel of 30-year-old Pinot Noir situated in a small hollow at an elevation of 500m on a hill near the village of Elplingen. Rüeget tends towards a high-toned, floral, and delicate expression of Pinot Noir with nervy and bright cherry fruit – a classic Fricktal style of Pinot in comparison to his Pinots from Schenkenbergertal.

ACCOLADES

- 93+ – 2020 Elplingen Rüeget – Wine Advocate
- 92 – 2019 Elplingen Rüeget – Wine Advocate
- 92 – 2017 Elplingen Rüeget – Wine Advocate

