

Zind Humbrecht

Produced from historic old vines planted in the 1920s and 1950s , this biodynamic wine highlights the depth and individuality of Hengst's terroir in a cool yet luminous 2021 vintage.

DOMAINE
ZIND-HUMBRECHT

97
James
Suckling



Gewurztraminer Hengst Grand Cru 2021

Alsace, France

Region and Vineyards

Hengst is one of Alsace's most celebrated **Grand Cru vineyards**, located near Wintzenheim in the Haut-Rhin. The name "Hengst," meaning stallion, evokes the site's strength and character. Its soils, composed of **iron-rich Oligocene limestone**, provide excellent drainage and retain warmth, allowing for **optimal phenolic maturity** in Gewurztraminer. This gives the wines their hallmark tannic grip and spicy austerity, sometimes reminiscent of a light red wine in texture.

The Zind-Humbrecht parcels lie on the **south to southeast-facing slopes** of Hengst. Two very old vineyards form the backbone of this cuvée: one planted in the 1920s, the other in the 1950s by Emile Zind. These massal selections of Gewurztraminer are deeply adapted to the terroir, producing berries of small size and high concentration. The combination of warm, dry ripening conditions and limestone soils explains why Hengst is renowned for **producing structured, ageworthy Gewurztraminers** of uncommon depth.

Winemaking

The **2021 vintage** posed challenges in Alsace: an April frost reduced yields, and mildew pressure during the wet summer further diminished the crop. Yet the surviving grapes were healthy and concentrated, harvested between September 15 and October 2. Lower sugar accumulation meant slightly reduced alcohol levels compared to warmer years, while fermentation completed fully dry.

The wine is made from **100% Gewurztraminer**, vinified with indigenous yeasts. Ageing occurred for **12 months in large oak foudres**, with **malolactic fermentation completed**. The final profile shows 14% alcohol, 6.9 g/L residual sugar, and bright acidity (3.6 g/L). Certified **organic and biodynamic**, the wine faithfully expresses the singular character of Hengst.

Alcohol :14,00 %

Composition: 100% Gewürztraminer

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Tasting Notes

- **Color:** Bright pale yellow.
- **Aroma:** Initially reserved, marked by complex spicy and peppery notes. With aeration, hints of exotic spice, citrus peel, and floral lift emerge.
- **Palate:** Intense and elegant, showing freshness and ripe acidity. The texture is subtly tannic, recalling a light red wine's grip, with spice and minerality shaping a long, harmonious finish. Still youthful and restrained, it promises greater depth with time.

Did you know?

The **syndicat of Hengst growers** has historically rejected chaptalization (adding sugar before fermentation), insisting on naturally ripe grapes. Minimum ripeness levels are set higher than in many other grands crus, a reflection of Hengst's reputation for **concentrated, powerful wines**.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Duck breast with five-spice:** The wine's tannic spine and exotic spice echo the dish's seasoning while cutting through richness.
- **Alsatian baeckeoffe:** Its layered spice and acidity pair beautifully with this hearty local casserole of meats and potatoes.
- **Roquefort and blue cheeses:** The touch of residual sugar balances the saltiness, while the structure prevents heaviness.
- **Tandoori chicken:** The peppery spice of Hengst finds resonance in the smoky, spiced flavors of the dish.

97 James Suckling

James Suckling (JS) : 97 Points (2021)

This has almost exactly the balance that I remember from the great gewurz of the late 20th century. Fragrant turkish delight character, rich yet dry with a wonderful interplay of ripeness, a mere hint of grape sweetness and complex spiciness. What a beautiful finish! From biodynamically grown grapes. Drink or hold.

94 vinous

Vinous (Antonio Galloni) (VN) : 94 Points (2021)

The 2021 Gewurztraminer Hengst Grand Cru is from Oligocene limestone with some clay. This is made from the two oldest plots the domaine owns, planted between the two World Wars. Old Gewurztraminer genetics are less aromatically overt than current selections. Here, an earthy reduction comes first. As it dissipates, peach and pear shine through, just edged with a touch of rose petal. The palate is juicy, rounded and generous, almost dripping with peach juice and Mirabelle, but dry. The structure comes from texture rather than acid, which is balanced and fresh. Lovely citrus pith bitterness defines the palate and the dry finish.