

Introducing Riedel Winewings: A Striking New Wine Glass Collection from Georg Riedel

Introduction

Georg Riedel, in his long career as a glassmaker and glass designer, has shaped many functional glasses. Among his creations are glasses for soft-drinks, coffee and many glasses of different shapes for alcoholic beverages. Each glass is specifically designed to enhance the enjoyment of the liquid for which it is created.

Georg is the preeminent creator of varietal specific wine glasses. He strongly believes that a finely tuned glass shape enhances the perception of all aromatic beverages – and none more so than with those made through the fermentation of grape juice, where each varietal carries in its DNA its own unique flavor profile.

In Summer 2018, in the hot and sunny Tyrolean Alps, Georg found himself asked by a customer to create "the ultimate glass" for the "King of Grapes" – Cabernet Sauvignon - a glass which would become the inspiration for a new glassware collection, Riedel Winewings.

For Georg, the challenge was how to begin research for this new glass. It helped that he had long loved the specific wine for which he had been commissioned to design the glass. With passion and enthusiasm, and with a coffee in hand, Georg made a start. Sketching the old fashioned way, he aimed to create a new shape, something revolutionary and supremely functional, a shape never seen before which, while respecting the 2,000 year old art of glass-blowing, would eschew the egg-shape bowl developed by Claus Riedel and challenge the perception of how a modern functional wine glass should be.

Slowly, a new shape emerged: A flat-bottomed glass, wide and reminiscent of the wing of an aircraft, complete with winglets. As a new idea formed, Georg spent more than a year experimenting, tasting, sampling, benchmarking and fine tuning. By making changes to shape, size and rim diameter, through computer aided design and many prototypes, what began as one glass for one grape varietal developed into seven different glasses to represent the most popular grape varietals.

Riedel Winewings was born and was about to take flight!

Why a flat bottom?

In his own words, Georg Riedel describes the evolution and ultimate functionality of Riedel Winewings: "We make our first impressions by eye, when assessing our chosen wine in the glass, and then we smell, before we ever taste. I chose a flat and stretched bottom, with a wing-like shape to increase the surface between wine and air, which increases the levels of evaporation and develops a greater intensity of aroma. When positioning one's head to the glass, the nose is closer and is exposed to the wider surface of the wine. However, this alone would not fully deliver the optimal aroma of each grape variety and so, to capture the delicate layered aromas, it was necessary to curve the glass walls and to correctly calibrate the opening of each glass with its rim diameter."

How Many Glasses?

Riedel Winewings has seven glasses in total, three for red wines, three for white and one for Champagne and sparkling wines.

Why so Many Different Glasses? Some Only Offer One Glass for All!

“Consider the glass as the key to unlock the emotions captured in every bottle of wine. Or perhaps, more technically, view the glass as a tool which helps you to enjoy and appreciate your precious wine”, says Georg Riedel.

Grape Specific Glasses are complex. However, that complexity also rewards when tasting and enjoying wine. Sceptics are encouraged to try their favorite wine from the correct Grape Varietal Specific glass and from a generic wine glass. According to Riedel, “the satisfaction derived from the specific glass will certainly make you believe you drink the better wine”.

Grapes and Wines

Why have so many grape varieties been planted (and continue to be planted) and consumed, rather than just one popular grape dominating or perhaps a blend? As we know, there are more than one thousand different vinifera grapes!

Each grape has its own demands, its own strengths and weaknesses. The vintner must make his or her choice and take into account geography, geology and climate. Not only that, but also the specific vineyard (the difference between Grand Cru and Premiere Cru), altitude, soil composition, exposure to sun and many other variables, which combine into the concept of *terroir*. Not to mention that each grape carries its own varietal expression (DNA), and in your glass all of these elements show.

Then we have winemaking; the human intervention, as grape juice, with the help of yeast, is turned into wine. Should the wine be kept in stainless steel, or matured in oak, should it undergo malolactic fermentation? Each is both a choice and a variable.

The winemaker’s hand can generate a whole spectrum of flavors. And the question for the glassmaker is whether we can improve the perception of that wine, through a finely tuned glass as a tool. “You must taste the difference for yourself and then decide”, is the answer from Georg Riedel, as to why different glasses are required to give the best experience.

White Wine Glasses

“Let’s start with Riedel Winewings glasses for white wine, and I’ll aim to explain why we need three”, comments Georg. “Here, we are dealing with the three classic and most significant white varieties and each features different flavors and even a different mouthfeel, which we believe requires a different glass shape for each in order to truly appreciate their unique characteristics”.

AUSTRALIA | AUSTRIA | CHINA | FRANCE | GERMANY | NEW ZEALAND | ITALY | JAPAN | US | UK

WWW.RIEDEL.COM

Chardonnay – classic aromas of fresh yellow fruits and rich, buttery flavors when aged in oak barrels having undergone malolactic fermentation.

Riesling – powerful floral aromas, crisp with acidity and a touch of sweetness (no new oak, no malolactic fermentation).

Sauvignon Blanc – herbaceous notes, aromas of citrus, high acidity and minerality.

Red Wine Glasses

“Why three glasses for different red wines? Allow me to ask three questions and to explain,” states Georg.

1. Why is the color of the wine red?
2. Why are there different intensities of the color red?
3. Why does red wine often come with bitter tasting tannins?

“I have one answer to all three points,” says Georg. “Red wines are produced from the fermentation of skin and juice together, with the skin imparting the color and tannins. The thickness of the skin and size of the berry determines the intensity of color and the level of tannins.”

At Riedel, red wine glass design is based on the grape varietal and its attributes and, based on the impact the skin makes on the wine, all red wines’ intensity can be categorized as either mild, medium or powerful. To enhance the enjoyment of those profiles, we suggest three different glass shapes:

Mild; Pinot Noir – fruit forward, light to medium bodied, high perceived acidity and low tannins.

Medium; Syrah – earthy, toasty elements and smooth tannins

Powerful; Cabernet Sauvignon – Aromas of blackcurrant, full bodied and with high levels of tannin.

Red wine glasses from Riedel must harness the intense flavors and aim to harmonize them, while balancing these flavors with other, more powerful elements, in order to demonstrate each wine’s complexity first and foremost.

Champagne and Sparkling Wine

The Champagne glass in the Riedel Winewings collection is a true loudspeaker for this prestigious wine, which is made from Pinot Noir and/or Chardonnay grapes. With Champagne a second fermentation is triggered in the bottle by adding a fine, measured quantity of yeast and sugar to the still wine. Over time and under pressure, fine bubbles are created by this process.

The glass elevates the delicate aromas of sweet, toasted bread and enables a sensual mouthfeel, with the tiny bubbles expressing a lively, yet creamy texture of the palate. The rich taste is enhanced by low levels of residual sugar, allowing a long lasting and delicious expression.

AUSTRALIA | AUSTRIA | CHINA | FRANCE | GERMANY | NEW ZEALAND | ITALY | JAPAN | US | UK

WWW.RIEDEL.COM

Riedel Winewings

Riedel Winewings is a glass collection designed personally by Georg Riedel. It is pushing the boundaries of the conventional wine glass shape and is striking in its design and in the words of Georg Riedel is “inherently functional, helping the wines’ aromas and flavors take flight”.

As Georg Riedel says, as he launches his newest creation, “If your wine could choose a glass, it would be Riedel – and that glass would be Riedel Winewings!”