



BLANKEN HORN

A 200-YEAR-OLD STARTUP

Weingut Fritz Blankenhorn KG
Martin Männer
Basler Straße 2
D-79418 Schliengen

Estate and Wine Shop:
Mo-Fr: 9am-12pm and 14 pm-17pm
Closed on Wednesday afternoon
First Saturday of the month: 10am-14pm
FRITZ Weinbar:
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SINCE 1847, THE BLANKENHORN ESTATE
HAS STOOD FOR TERROIR-DRIVEN WINES FROM
THE MARKGRÄFLERLAND.

I'VE BEEN HERE SINCE 2014.

IT'S THE ADVENTURE
OF MY LIFE.

MARTIN MÄNNER

THE RESOLUTION

In 2013, my family sold our mid-sized company in the Kaiserstuhl region to a large American corporation. Around that time, I realized I wanted to take my professional life in a new direction: away from producing high-end injection molding tools – and toward a product that was just as refined, but that I could accompany through the entire production process, all year long. I wanted to become a winemaker. Through my uncle, who cultivated vines as a side business, I developed a deep and emotional connection to viticulture.





THE DEPARTURE

So how does one become a winemaker? Konrad Salwey, from the renowned Kaiserstuhl estate that bears his name, advised me to start small — with a few vines and a garage press. I cheerfully ignored that advice: I didn't want to start from scratch. I was looking for an established winery I could shape according to my own vision.

I started asking around and heard about an estate in the Ortenau region, which ultimately didn't go up for sale. Then I heard Roy Blankenhorn was considering selling Weingut Blankenhorn. When her negotiations failed to come to a close, I reached out to Roy.

THE RUIN

Roy Blankenhorn was convinced she was passing on a fully functioning winery. Soon after taking over however, I had a somewhat different impression: For the type of wine I envisioned, the existing infrastructure was unsuitable. Much of it would need to be rebuilt or completely restructured. I knew this wouldn't be easy. However, I hadn't anticipated the scale of the challenge. I now owned a winery. But did I nevertheless have to start from scratch? On some days, it felt like I was wandering through a ruin. Throughout the entire renovation period, wine production continued — including all the strain it placed on our great team at Blankenhorn.





THE FAREWELL

I began the stylistic reorientation of the winery together with Yvonne, whom I met in 2015. She's a trained oenologist from the German region Pfalz (Palatinate), and has had a strong influence on the elegant character of our wines and on our transition toward sustainable wine production. But in 2024, we came to realize that while wine had brought us together in many ways, there were also things that began to set us apart.



THE STAIRWELL

After a long construction pause, caused by many complications, I first heard rumors: »Did Martin run out of money?« Since then, I regularly am told the most intriguing stories about me and the estate. All of them share one small flaw: None of them contains a single grain of truth.

Eventually, construction resumed — and so did the surprises. Some of them were delightful: During restoration, the staircase revealed itself to be an original tower stairwell from around 1600 (Blankenhorn became a wine estate in 1847). Restoring the estate house to its historical form still brings me a sense of joy every day.





OUR SOILS

About 170 million years ago, what is now the Markgräflerland region lay in the warm, shallow waters of the Jurassic Sea – rich in lime and tropical in character. In these waters, tiny spheres of pure calcium carbonate (calcite) formed, called ooids. Over time, they settled on the sea floor and created vast dune landscapes. Later, geological processes compressed them into layers up to 300 meters thick: the Hauptrogenstein formation.

About 130 million years later, as the earth's crust began to rise and fall in our region — the Upper Rhine Rift sinking while the Black Forest massif rose — layers of this Hauptrogenstein resurfaced. Gravity and erosion carried the rock down from the Black Forest hills to the lower regions. Over time, thick layers of limestone gravel, limestone rubble and calcareous sandstone developed, interspersed with marl layers of clay and lime — an inexhaustible source of nutrients in our soils.

These layers are especially pronounced in our Sonnenstück site and geologically closely related to the soils of the Côte d'Or in Burgundy, France. Their origin lies in the same Hauptrogenstein formation — which is found only in our region, in parts of Switzerland and of France.

OUR VINEYARDS

Trees and shrubs grow in our vineyards. They provide shade, cool the air, and enliven the landscape. They attract birds, insects, and other small creatures that loosen the soil and enrich it with nutrients. We are one of the first wine estates in our region (Südbaden) to participate in the research project »Vitiforst«, which studies the impact of trees on vineyard ecosystems.

Integrated vegetable plots between the vine rows also contribute to a diverse, loose, nutrient-rich soil. Our vineyards are green-covered which protects against erosion and prevents the loss of valuable humus. The quality of our soils can be tasted in our wine – you can drink it and sense it.

All vineyard work – shoot thinning, pruning, canopy management, yield reduction, and harvesting – is done carefully almost entirely by hand. Our year-round vineyard management helps prevent disease and fungal infections as much as possible. For crop protection, we rely solely on organic materials. We work with environmental awareness, conserve resources, and will complete our conversion to certified organic viticulture in 2026.



OUR SITES

◀ BAD BELLINGEN UND ISTEIN

THE ESTATE

1 SONNENSTÜCK

2 ROGGENBACH

3 ÖLACKNER

4 KIRCHBERG

AUGGEN ▶

OUR SITES

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1 THE ESTATE
2 SONNENSTÜCK
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AUGGEN ▶

OUR SITES

◀ BAD BELLINGEN UND ISTEIN

THE ESTATE

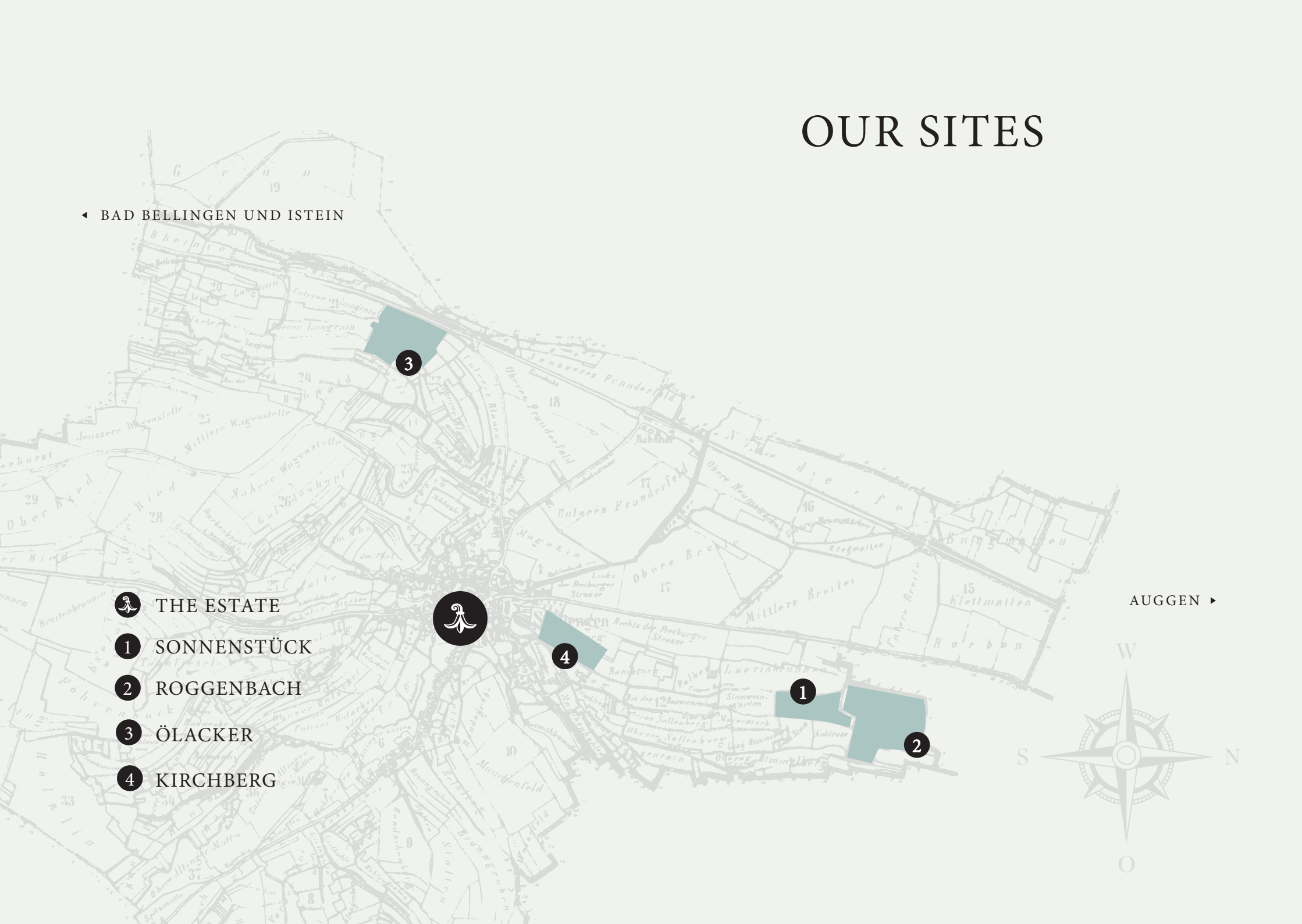
1 SONNENSTÜCK

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AUGGEN ▶



VDP.GROSSE LAGE®

SONNENSTÜCK

Varieties: Pinot Noir and Chardonnay

With the German Wine Law of 1971, the designation of the premium parcel Schliengener Sonnenstück was extended to a much larger site (Großlage) in Schliengen, which now also encompasses this exceptional vineyard. What once denoted exclusivity was broadened. Yet we continue to produce in the premium segment: on the prime site VDP. GROSSE LAGE® SONNENSTÜCK.

The parcel lies at about 250 meters above sea level, facing west to southwest, with slopes of up to 20 percent. The soils are largely (70 percent) derived from the limestone strata of the Hauptrogenstein whose fragments and ooids (see »Our Soils«) are their unmistakable hallmark. Here, our more than 30 years old Pinot Noir vines thrive, alongside Chardonnay and Gutedel.

VDP.ERSTE LAGE®

ROGGENBACH

Variety: Pinot Gris

Directly adjoining our VDP.GROSSE LAGE® SONNENSTÜCK site lies the VDP.ERSTE LAGE® ROGGENBACH whose soils are as well shaped by the limestone layers of the Hauptrogenstein. With its westward orientation and generally higher slopes, this site is somewhat cooler and more exposed to the wind, ensuring excellent ventilation of grapes and foliage. Our 20-year-old Pinot Gris vines benefit immensely from these conditions.

VDP.ERSTE LAGE®

ÖLACKER

Varieties: Pinot Noir and Pinot Blanc

Our VDP.ERSTE LAGE® ÖLACKER is located in the Schliengen hills, above the road to Bad Bellingen. This west-facing slope opens towards the »Belfort Gap«. The soil is dominated by marlstone whose geological formation is closely linked to that of the Hauptrogenstein. Limestone with a loess topsoil provides ideal conditions for both Pinot Noir and Pinot Blanc.

VDP.ERSTE LAGE®

KIRCHBERG

Variety: Gutedel

The single vineyard Kirchberg, part of the Schliengener Sonnenstück, begins just behind the church and is classified as VDP.ERSTE LAGE®. Its soil, as well, is shaped by the limestone layers of the Hauptrogenstein. The vineyard's cross-row layout ensures moderate sun exposure, imparting freshness and elegance to the grapes.

ISTEIN

Site: Isteiner Kirchberg | Variety: Pinot Noir

This vineyard, located a good 12 kilometers from our estate, lies on the Isteiner Kirchberg in Efringen-Kirchen. Facing south-southwest with slopes of up to 40 percent, it benefits from intense sunshine and a distinctly Mediterranean climate. The dominant bedrock here is cream-colored, medium-grained calcareous sandstone, geologically much younger than the Hauptrogenstein. This more open-structured terroir enriches the flavor spectrum of our wines with additional, highly intriguing nuances and aromas..

OUR WINE

Wine is a gift of nature that, through gentle human guidance, matures into something truly exceptional. We craft our wines as naturally as possible, allowing them to evolve with only the most careful and deliberate touches. Every small intervention we make serves a single purpose: to reveal the unique expression of the terroir.

The term terroir encompasses the character of the soil in each vineyard, the subtle interplay of its microclimate, and their combined influence on taste. It also reflects the distinctive personality of the vines that grow there and the climatic nuances that shape each vintage.

When it comes to aging, we differentiate carefully: From stainless steel tanks to small oak barrels, every batch of wine is given exactly the vessel it needs to mature. Whenever possible, we ferment using naturally occurring yeasts. In most cases, our wines clarify on their own. They are given the time they need. They are not rushed to market through interventions that might accelerate but ultimately compromise quality.

During bottling and distribution, we strive to minimize our environmental impact. We conserve resources by using lighter bottles. The traditional tin capsules have been replaced with paper seals. Our labels are sustainably certified, as are the materials we use for shipping and office work.

We have been a member of the renowned Verband deutscher Prädikatswinzer (VDP) since 1987. In 2015, we were the first winery in Baden to join Fair'n Green, an association promoting sustainable agriculture and nutrition.





THE MEETING

In our spacious tasting room, you can sample our wines and talk to us about how they're made and what gives them their character. At our regular events, the FRITZ wine bar is also open. It's available for your private gatherings, too, just like our other flexible event spaces. We can accommodate groups of ten. Or of 200. Feel free to reach out with any questions, ideas, or requests.



THE JOURNEY GOES ON

On some days I wonder why I so quickly dismissed Konrad Salwey's advice to start small. But at the same time, I'm grateful — and even a little proud — that I didn't let myself be discouraged by the many challenges following the purchase of Blankenhorn. What helped was knowing, right from the beginning, what I wanted: to create a place for exceptional wines, crafted carefully and in harmony with nature. A beautiful place, where people feel welcome — and that by its design contributes positively to its surroundings.

My journey into wine is far from over — but what we've achieved so far feels pretty good already. Weingut Blankenhorn invites you to visit us at this special place and to discover and enjoy our wines.

