

## Hessische Staatsweingüter Kloster Eberbach

**Region:** RHEINGAU  
**Vineyards:** Erbach (Marcobrunn), Rauenthal (Baiken), Steinberger (monopole vineyard in parish of Hattenheim), Hochheim (Domdechaney), Rüdesheim (Berg Rottland, Berg Schlossberg), Assmannshausen (Höllenberg)  
**Varietals:** Riesling 85%, Spätburgunder (10%)  
**Owner:** State of Hessen  
**Director:** Dieter Greiner  
**Remarks:** great & classic Rheingau estate, the "birth-place" of Cabinet wines, member of the prestigious VDP group

The State Domaine (Staatsweingüter) of Hessen can claim to be the largest single owner of vineyards in Germany. Altogether some 197 hectares of vines are cultivated in some of the best sites of the Rheingau and the Hessische Bergstrasse areas. The central administration, cellars and bottling are now situated in Eltville, whereas the symbolic seat is the nearby world-famous monastery, Kloster Eberbach.

Kloster Eberbach dates back to 1136 and was initially built by monks of the Cistercian Order. At its height between the 12th and 13th Century, 200-300 monks dwelt at the monastery. A short distance away on the parish boundary of Hattenheim, and reaching up the slope to the Taunus woods, is where the monks built the famous Steinberg vineyard, a monopole site, which is encircled by a high Cistercian stone wall, covering about 24 hectares, similar to that of Clos de Vougeot in Burgundy. The monastery was finally secularized in 1803 by the Duke of Nassau, the State Domaine thus being founded. The monks used to mature and store their best wines in the monastery's Cabinet cellar. Hence the general use of Cabinet for wines of high quality. Since the 1971 wine laws, specific quality requirements are required for Kabinett wines.

The State Domaine wines reflect their terroir, peachy fruit flavours and a firm, robust structure. Up to the 1994 vintage, the wines are fairly dry in style up to Spätlese predicate levels. The 1995 vintage marks a change to more elegant wines, betraying slight sweetness, but nonetheless still very versatile with fine food. Since the 2009 vintage, wines are bottled with the Stelvin deluxe closure, and a new ultra-modern underground cellars has been built next to the Steinberg vineyard.

