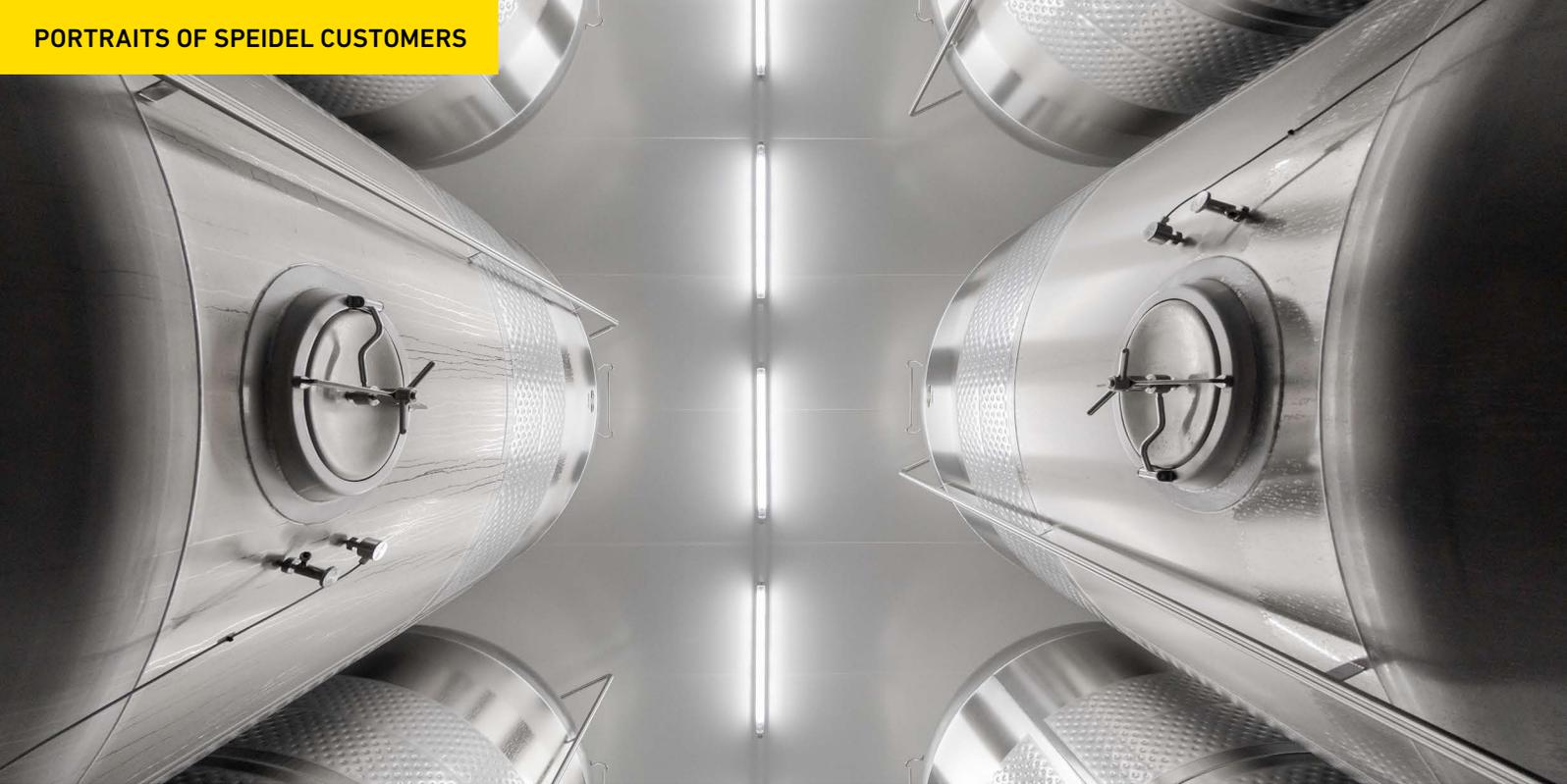


Portraits of Speidel customers

» **Staffelberg-Bräu, Bad Staffelstein – Loffeld**





» From butcher to brewer

Staffelberg-Bräu, Bad Staffelstein – Loffeld



Karl-Heinz Wehrfritz in his own hop garden

Franconia is known for good beers. One of the outstanding breweries in the area is Staffelberg-Bräu. Since 1856 beer has been brewed here. But unfortunately you will look in vain for this Franconian beer with the dwarf on the label in the beverage markets across the rest of Germany, because the sales area is regionally limited.

How does the dwarf get into the logo? Legend has it that dwarves used to live in Staffelberg. They often helped the people, and every now and then they stole a potato dumpling for it. So the dwarf is a positive figure and that's why he was the brewery mascot at some point. When you sit in the brewery restaurant in the beer garden and enjoy the delicious Franconian cuisine there, you can immediately guess why the one or other potato dumpling disappeared.

The connection between brewery and restaurant is a very special one. Karl-Heinz Wehrfritz, the boss, was formerly a professional butcher. But when he met his future wife Helga and then married into the family, he also trained as a brewer. Brewing has now become his profession, sausage he makes now only as a hobby.

That Wehrfritz is also a true master in brewing beer is shown by the awards he has received for his beers. In 2010 he received the first "European Beer Star" for his Doppelbock, to date a total of six times. But several other of his beers have also scored internationally. The last time he received the gold medal for the pale full-bodied beer was in 2019.

Wehrfritz works with classical open fermentation, which has become a rarity. In his four brewing cellars, Pils, wheat beer, cellar beer, Bock and other specialties mature.

A special feature are the two brewing kettles. They are not, as usual, made of conical, but of shaped stainless steel and are real gems. Anton Geldner, the father-in-law of Karl-Heinz Wehrfritz, proved farsightedness and in 1970 he decided to use stainless steel kettles, which were just beginning to appear at that time. In 1959 he also developed the brewery's own mountain spring, the water of which has been used for brewing ever since.

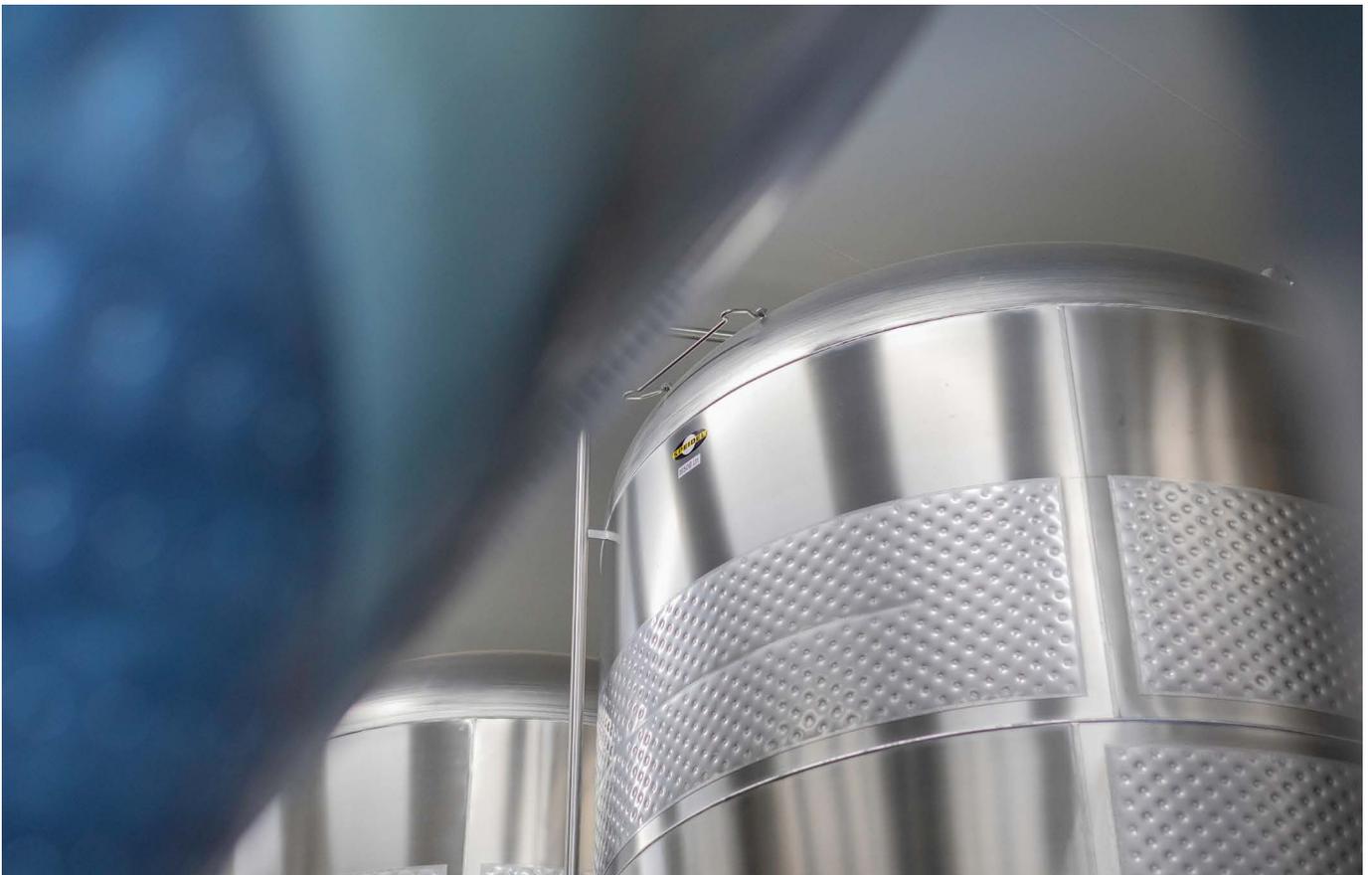
The first tanks from Speidel were two pressure tanks in 2016. At a brewing fair Karl-Heinz Wehrfritz received a Speidel catalog in his hands and was immediately impressed by how well you can plan with it. Wehrfritz was able to configure the diameters, the dimensions, the add-on parts, all of this by himself.

This was important to him, because the tanks had to fit through a relatively narrow door and yet should each hold 6,000 litres. Because they are standard tanks and not custom-made, they were also cheaper and could be delivered faster. "That's exactly my tank!" he is still happy today.

Wehrfritz is enthusiastic about the craftsmanship, the proverbial Speidel quality. He also took a look at China tanks at the brewing fair, he reveals. At first glance, they looked good and were also cheaper, but on closer inspection, Wehrfritz was horrified. Especially the welding seams were terribly bad. "You can mess up your whole beer with such a crappy weld," Wehrfritz says bluntly. The welding seams of the Speidel tanks, on the other hand, "are laid around the tank like butter" and the tanks look like new after cleaning, he says about the workmanship.

After an insulated fermentation tank for non-alcoholic beer and other containers, the expansion of the fermentation cellar was scheduled for 2019. Again, Wehrfritz looked through the catalog and configured exactly the fermentation tanks he needed. The six cooling-jacketed cylinder blocks together hold 120,000 litres. They were installed in spring 2020 and have been in use since then. With their three cooling-jacket zones, the fermentation process can be precisely controlled.

Wehrfritz' son Jakob joined the brewery in 2017. He has worked on the new fermenting room from the very beginning, helped to lay the pipes and knows every screw. It is nice to see that the brewery is now in its sixth generation with new Speidel fermentation tanks.





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