



Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Issue No 26 – October 2014

Mosel Fine Wines

The aim of Mosel Fine Wines is to provide a comprehensive and independent review of Riesling wines produced in the Mosel, Saar and Ruwer region, and regularly offer a wider perspective on the wines produced in other parts of Germany.

Mosel Fine Wines appears on a regular basis and covers:

- Reports on the current vintage (including the annual auctions held in Trier).
- Updates on how the wines mature.
- Perspectives on specific topics such as vineyards, Estates, vintages, etc.

All wines reviewed in the Mosel Fine Wines issues are exclusively tasted by us (at the Estates, trade shows or private tastings) under our sole responsibility.

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Principles

Drinking window

- The drinking window provided refers to the maturity period: Mosel Riesling has a long development cycle and can often be enjoyable for 20 years and more. Like great Bordeaux or Burgundy, the better Mosel Riesling generally goes through a muted phase before reaching its full maturity plateau. At the end of each tasting note, we provide a drinking window, which refers to our estimation of the maturity period for the wine. This maturity period consists of the 'fruit' and 'terroir' phases defined in our introduction on Maturing Mosel (which can be found [here](#)).
- Without further reference, all wines are assumed to have in addition a drinking window of 1-3 years after the vintage: Top Mosel Riesling is also extremely enjoyable in its primary fruit phase, which typically lasts 1-3 years after the vintage. This primary fruit drinking window always applies and is therefore not referred to in each individual tasting note.

Scoring Approach

The use of scores to evaluate a wine is often debated and has its advantages (communicating a perspective) and its disadvantages (in particular in reducing such a complex and fascinating matter as Riesling wine to a number). We believe that the advantages outweigh the drawbacks as long as a score is put in perspective of a tasting note and all our scores should be seen in that context.

We believe that Riesling is not about "more is better" but rather about seeking a combination of the following:

- Intrinsically complex and balanced: Great Riesling should be complex and multi-layered, and offer a perfect balance between acidity, flavor intensity and alcohol as well as sweetness for wines with some residual sugar.
- Expression of a terroir: Any wine should carry the signature of its unique terroir into the bottle. An Ürziger Würzgarten should not taste like a Scharzhofberger or vice-versa.
- True to its wine style: German Riesling has the incredible richness of coming in different styles, which vary in terms of degrees of residual sugar or in terms of flavor profile and intensity (i.e. Kabinett, Spätlese, Auslese, etc.). Great Riesling should glorify its declared style.

A great Kabinett, which remains true to its style, can therefore get a higher score than, say, an average Spätlese or Auslese.

We rely on a 100 point scale with the following overall principles:

95-100	Classic: A true classic that sets the standards for its style and terroir. Only few wines make it into this "super-class" of Riesling and no stone should be left unturned to find them.
90-94	Outstanding: Stands out as distinctive example of its style and terroir. It will offer immense pleasure and should be actively looked out for.
85-89	Good to very good: Is a good to very good wine with special qualities. It will be delicious and is worthy of any cellar, especially if the price is right.
80-84	Solid to good: Is technically correctly made and will be enjoyable in its simple solid way. Price is the key driver for the decision to buy.
Below 80	Not worth it: Does not show any distinction and may even have some flaws. Given the currently still quite reasonable price level for Mosel Riesling, there is no reason to bother.

Riesling is an aromatic grape that rarely goes through malolactic fermentation. Therefore, bottling generally occurs six to nine months after the harvest, which allows us to generally taste bottled wines. Some wines may however not yet be bottled at the moment of our tastings. In such an instance, we provide a tasting note based on a cask sample and only a score range (instead of a firm one).

Nomenclature

Nomenclature: please note that we are using the following simplifying principles in any wine description:

- No Prädikat in the name of a wine means that it is bottled as QbA.
- GG stands for Grosses Gewächs and EG for Erstes Gewächs.



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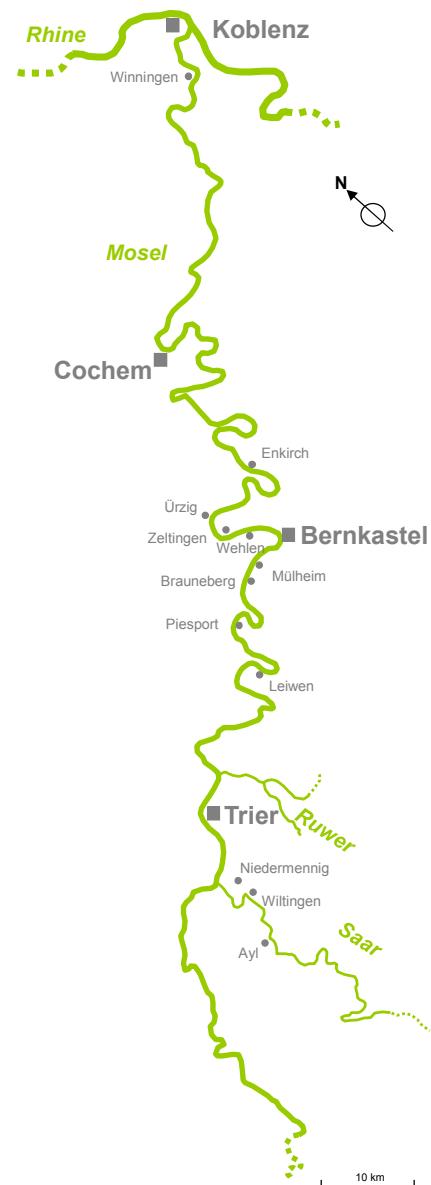
By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

The Vintage Report 2013: Review by Estates [Part II]

We provide here part II of our comprehensive vintage 2013 report. We tasted most top wines several times over the last months in order to avoid that particular tasting conditions (a standard risk when tasting wines early) affect our opinions.

NB: Auction wines are not reviewed here but are part of the dedicated Auction Guide which we released in August.

Hofgut Falkenstein	Niedermennig
Fritz Haag	Brauneberg
Reinhold Haart	Piesport
Heymann-Löwenstein	Winningen
Immich-Batterieberg	Enkirch
Peter Lauer	Ayl
Dr. Loosen	Bernkastel
Alfred Merkelbach	Ürzig
Markus Molitor	Wehlen
Egon Müller	Wiltingen
"O."	Traben-Trarbach
Joh. Jos. Prüm	Wehlen
Max Ferd. Richter	Mülheim
Selbach-Oster	Zeltingen
Günther Steinmetz	Brauneberg
St. Urbans-Hof	Leiwen
Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch - Erben Thanisch	Bernkastel
Van Volxem	Wiltingen
Vols	Ayl



Part I of the "Review by Estates" (with 17 Estates covered)
can be found in Issue No 25 published in June 2014



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Weingut Hofgut Falkenstein

(Niedermennig – Saar)

For those of you not familiar with this Estate, here a quick overview: Erich Weber set up his own Estate in 1981 with holdings from his wife, a girl from Krettnach, as well as from the Falkensteiner Hof Estate, which he managed to acquire from the Friedrich-Wilhelm-Gymnasium. He increased the Estate over the years and oversees today 8.5 ha spread over Niedermennig, Falkenstein and Krettnach, which he tends together with his son Johannes. Winemaking is very traditional (in line with his motto: "We do nothing, except controlling the processes"): no pre-fermentation maceration, fermentation with ambient yeasts and only in cask. Bottling is largely done cask by cask, which means that some bottlings may only differ through the AP numbers.

Erich Weber, who despite having lived through the 1980s, is quite frank about 2013 being one of the most difficult vintages ever: "The growing conditions were uneven and above all we had quite some rain in September and October. The tough weather pushed us to our limits. The key was not to panic and wait. Not only did the acidity levels go down in October, also the proportion of tartaric acidity ("the good one") in the total acidity increased by the day. This is why we started our harvest late, on October 22 and it took us a full three weeks to complete it. This allowed us to bring in fruit ranging from 80° to 95° Oechsle and to produce a full range of dry and off-dry wines as well as a fruity Spätlese from the Hofberg and an Auslese from the Euchariusberg."

This superb collection of wines underlines nicely the stated aim of Erich and Johannes Weber to produce "fine, light and elegant Saar wines." The wines shine through brightness, freshness and racy intensity, and will appeal to lovers of feather-weighted Riesling. The off-dry wines are particularly successful in the vintage, with the Herrenberg Spätlese Feinherb AP12 among the most exciting we have tasted in the vintage. The gorgeous, subtly fruity Euchariusberg Auslese underlines nicely the all-round abilities of the Estate. Why this Estate is not better known is a mystery to us.

2013er Hofgut Falkenstein

Krettnacher Euchariusberg Riesling Auslese

06 14

92

This Auslese came from the prime Gross Schock sector in the vineyard, which is exposed to the south (and not to the west as much of the vineyard). The wine offers a great balanced touch of cassis, herbs, white flowers, grapefruit and spices. The wine is quite racy and focused, a trait reinforced by the acidity, but leaves a nice sweetish sweet-sour feel in the finish. Once it will have integrated its residual sugar, this refined medium-bodied Auslese should offer some graceful pleasure, with some dessert or on its own. 2023-2038

2013er Hofgut Falkenstein

Falkensteiner Hofberg Riesling Spätlese

09 14

90

This quite attractive wine delivers clean and slightly grassy scents of herbs, cassis and whipped cream nicely framed by a good dose of zesty acidity on the palate but also quite a feeling of power intensity (no doubt from high levels of dry extracts) in the finish. This nice Spätlese has quite some "Auslese character" at this stage but should prove delicious in a decade or two. 2023-2038

2013er Hofgut Falkenstein

Niedermenniger Herrenberg Riesling Spätlese Feinherb

12 14

92

This wine was made from an old-vine parcel situated in the Zuckerberg sector, situated in the western part of the vineyard which is not as steep as the rest of the Herrenberg but enjoys a full south exposure with also a slightly higher proportion of earth. This stunning beauty among the finest of its type in 2013 delivers great Saar steeliness and aromatic purity on the nose with lime, slate and grapefruit paired with ripe scents of mirabelle and greengage. What sets this apart is the incredibly nicely integrated silky creaminess on the palate which brings the whole thing to life. The finish is airy and seemingly endless. There is this fascinating austere purity that seems the hallmark of this Estate but it is just incredibly charming as well and just slightly off-dry in taste. Lucky Germans, as this wine was completely sold onto that market. 2015-2023

2013er Hofgut Falkenstein

Niedermenniger Sonnenberg Riesling Spätlese Feinherb

08 14

91

Bottled late, this flint stone driven wine is still marked by *sponti*, the typical off-putting signs of reduction from spontaneous fermentation, yet delivers also pear, apple and herbs as well as a riper scents of apricot tree blossom and mirabelle. It is superbly elegant and racy on the palate and leaves a very pure and focused feel on the palate and the classic balance of top *Naturrein* wines from the old pre-1971 days. This is a gorgeous wine with loads of complexity still slightly hidden behind the seemingly straightforward wine. 2016-2023

2013er Hofgut Falkenstein

Niedermenniger Herrenberg Riesling Spätlese Feinherb

03 14

90

This wine was made from an old-vine parcel situated in the original Herrenberg sector, situated in the eastern part of the vineyard which is steeper, with little earth, but enjoys a slightly south-western exposure. The wine is quite hard to resist with its fresh-ripe tension on the nose coming from apple, greengage and smoke, good creamy structure balanced out firm acidity on the palate and a long mouth-watering and deliciously salty finish. The balance is impeccable is slightly on the sweet side now and we would rather wait a few years to fully appreciate this wine. 2018-2028



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Weingut Hofgut Falkenstein

(Niedermennig – Saar)

2013er Hofgut Falkenstein

Niedermenniger Sonnenberg Riesling Spätlese Trocken

07 14

88

This offers some discreet smoky and herb-infused scent of lime, grapefruit, mirabelle on the nose, which lead to a firm and firmly racy palate but also a nice, razor-sharp feel in the finish. The low level of alcohol (11%) makes this remain airy even if quite intense and tart in the finish. This is again a gorgeous wine for admirers of highly sprung and acid-driven wines. The wine could gain in complexity with some bottle age. 2015-2019+

2013er Hofgut Falkenstein

Niedermenniger Herrenberg Riesling Kabinett Trocken

01 14

87

This delivers a gorgeous racy and backward nose of lime, citrus and spices. The wine is firm, assertive and verging on hard on the palate but, then miraculously, the raciness transforms into airy flavors and some firm tart tannins, as the alcohol is delightfully light 10.5%. This is precise and nicely complex but really for lovers of razor-sharp acid-driven wines. Despite the acidic backbone, we wouldn't be surprised if this could evolve positively over a few years' in the bottle. Now-2017



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Weingut Fritz Haag

(Brauneberg – Middle Mosel)

Oliver Haag sees 2013 as a very good vintage: "It is of course not the vintage of the century, but there is good acidity, the wines are deliciously spicy and there was even good botrytis to produce quite some dessert wines. We did suffer from the hail in June in our vineyards in Mülheim, where we harvested a total of two casks out of 2 ha! However, overall, I cannot complain with our yields of 40 hl/ha, especially when I hear some of my colleagues. We harvested from October 14 until November 8 and were even able to bring in a BA (at 148° Oechsle) from the Juffer-Sonnenuhr and a TBA (at 165° Oechsle) from the Juffer."

The Estate produced its classic portfolio of wines, including the usual set of Auslese (AP06 and AP10) and Auslese GK (AP09 and AP12) from the Juffer-Sonnenuhr as well as one BA and one TBA. Oliver only adapted his winemaking slightly to the vintage: "The only thing I did not do in 2013 was to rely on pre-fermentation maceration on some of my dry wines as there was already quite some natural dry extract in the wines anyway."

The ideal situation of the Brauneberger hill paired with the delicate style that has made the Fritz Haag success worked wonders in 2013. Oliver Haag produced a stunning collection of wines which completely defy the vintage, with juicy fruity-styled wines (above all the gorgeous Juffer-Sonnenuhr Spätlese) among the best of the vintage, stunning dessert wines and, perhaps more surprising, some superb bottlings of GG, made in the deliciously light yet intense style that only the Mosel can deliver. In fact, this is an Estate which did as well in 2013 as in 2012, if not often better than 2012!

NB: The Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr BA and Brauneberger Juffer TBA were not yet ready for tasting.

2013er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese GK	12 14	95
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Harvested at 120° Oechsle, this offers a slightly sorbet-styled nose of grapefruit, pineapple and greengage, melted into a sea of acacia honey, apricot and herbs. The creamy side on the palate brings balance to superb racy flavors on the palate and a captivately long and multi-layered finish. What a beautiful bottling of Auslese GK! 2028-2043

2013er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese GK	09 14	93
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Harvested at 120° Oechsle, this delivers a gorgeous nose of peach, pear, pineapple, apricot and honey as well as a superb creamy feel on the palate. The finish is nice, long and beautifully well balanced, leaving one with just an airy feel of classy complexity. 2023-2043

2013er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer Riesling Auslese GK	22 14	92
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This offers a superb nose of greengage, grapefruit, peach and spices as well as quite a round and elegant feel of spices and even a minty side in a long and deliciously complex and multi-layered finish. This slick, racy and quite simply fascinating wine is very easy to drink. 2018-2033

2012er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese	10 14	92
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This is all about complexity as pear, apricot, mango and star anise are blended into some oregano and whipped cream. The wine shows a definite "GK" character on the palate but a nice kick of acidity brings freshness and liveliness to the long and subtle finish. 2018-2033

2013er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese	06 14	92
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This delivers a telltale complex yet airy feel of apricot, pineapple and grapefruit. A touch of cream brings balance to the palate and gives way to a clean feel of apricot and papaya in the finish. This is nicely complex and, above all, superbly well balanced. 2018-2033

2013er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer Riesling Auslese	20 14	91
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This wine shows some superb expression of botrytis as lime, pineapple and star anise provide structure to a spicy body of wine. There is quite some weight and intensity here but everything is kept light and alive through a nicely integrated kick of acidity. This is very nice and long. 2018-2033



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Weingut Fritz Haag

(Brauneberg – Middle Mosel)

2013er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese	07 14	93
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This is quite a success as superbly complex flavors of apricot, spice, pineapple, grapefruit and other delicately exotic fruits come out of the glass. The wine is nicely racy yet also creamy on the palate, with more apricot to boot. But it is the quality and racy and complex balance of the finish which turns this into something quite special. This is plain gorgeous and a textbook Juffer-Sonnenuhr Spätlese which screams Haag. 2018-2033

2013er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer Riesling Spätlese	05 14	91
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This Spätlese was harvested with 88° Oechsle and it shows in the deliciously crisp and inviting nose which plays on grapefruit and yellow peach on the nose but with an almost Auslese intensity on the palate (due to the high level of dry extracts). The finish is a tad sweet at the moment but give this beauty a decade in the bottle and it will handsomely reward you with a gorgeous glass of true Spätlese Mosel Riesling. 2018-2028

2013er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Riesling Kabinett	03 14	89
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This Brauneberger Kabinett is made solely from the Estate's holdings in the Brauneberger Juffer and Juffer-Sonnenuhr. This delicately fruit-styled Kabinett (it "only" boasts 50 g/l of residual sugar, despite high acidity levels) is driven by grapefruit, flowers and chalky minerals. The wine is gorgeously vibrating on the palate and leaves a nicely clean and mouth-watering feel in the finish. This is a very nice Kabinett made in a crisp style. 2018-2028

2013er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer Riesling Feinherb	19 14	89
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A touch of earthy spices brings depth to scents of apple, pear and mirabelle and give way to a powerful feel of smoke and zesty cream on the palate, where some CO2 still needs to dissolve. The finish is quite nicely balanced and leaves a complex yet racy feel of herbs and fruits in a long after-taste. 2015-2018

2013er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Riesling Kabinett Feinherb	04 14	87
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The Brauneberger Riesling (the denomination Kabinett Feinherb is added on the back label to indicate that it is not chaptalized) is made solely from the Estate's holdings in the Brauneberger Juffer and Juffer-Sonnenuhr. This backward wine delivers direct scents of apple, mirabelle and smoke as well as some creamier banana-infused scents of fruits on the palate. The finish is crisp and firm. Now-2018

2013er	Fritz Haag	Riesling	01 14	86
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The off-dry Estate bottling is mainly made from the Estate's holdings in the Brauneberger Klostergarten, Burgener Römerberg and Mülheimer Sonnenlay. This delivers a nice feel of peach, pear, spices and herbs as well as a slightly broad yet nicely firm feel on the palate. Now-2018

2013er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling GG	08 14	91
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Unlike other vintages, the 2013 Juffer-Sonnenuhr GG did not see any pre-fermentation cold soak as Oliver Haag felt that the wines had already enough stuffing. Well, this seems a brilliant decision because the 2013 version is much better balanced and structured than the comparatively linear 2012. The wine offers a very attractive and ripe nose of grapefruit, pineapple, white peach and mirabelle, which lead to a lean and delicate feel on the palate. The finish is nicely crisp and lean with enough complexity to grab attention. This will never shine in large comparative tastings but it will on a nice dinner table. Now-2018

2013er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer Riesling GG	24 14	90
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This delicious wine delivers a touch of whipped cream, spices and smoke on the nose as well as great smoky feel on the palate and the finish. The balance in this deliciously light wine is superb. 2015-2018



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Weingut Fritz Haag (Brauneberg – Middle Mosel)

2013er Fritz Haag

Brauneberger Riesling Trocken "J"

17 14

88

The Brauneberger Riesling Trocken "J" is made from Spätlese level fruit in the Brauneberger Juffer and Juffer-Sonnenuhr. This attractive wine delivers subdued yet inviting scents of smoke, apple, mirabelle, conference pear and oregano as well as a hint of banana, which adds a delicately round touch to the nose. A softly tickly acidity comes through on the palate and gives the whole thing a mouth-watering feel in the after-taste. This is nicely made. Now-2018

2013er Fritz Haag

Riesling Trocken

02 14

85

The dry Estate bottling is mainly made from the Estate's holdings in the Brauneberger Klostergarten, Burgener Römerberg and Mülheimer Sonnenlay. This is driven by smoke, greengage and delivers a simple slightly herby feel on the palate and a round and direct feel of crisp spices in the finish. Now-2016



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Weingut Reinhold Haart

(Piesport – Middle Mosel)

Johannes Haart replied with a short and to-the-point "surprisingly satisfied" to the question on his impression of the vintage before providing some explanation to this statement: "Honestly, I was fearing the worst when we came to the hot period of the harvest. We wanted to wait for the acidity to come down but we had no choice as the grapes, which are mostly trained on wire, started to take on a brown color, sometimes overnight (!) and this threatened to jeopardize our whole harvest. I would not have believed anyone who would have told me the delicious result we got out of those grapes! We did the harvest in two waves, a first *Vorlese* from October 15 to October 23, during which we brought in the bulk of the fruit, and then a second, for the top wines, from October 27 until November 2, during which we also brought in a small amount of highly botrytized fruit. As a result, we were able to save some of the fruit and ended of course with low yields (of 40 hl/ha) but, at least, we had some yields! The fermentation (done with ambient yeasts) was quicker than usual. In order to give the wines more body, we decided to leave the dry wines on their fine lees, without sulfur, for a short period of time, and more generally left the wines longer than usual on their fine lees. Furthermore we only bottled between end of May and mid-June." Theo Haart compares the vintage to his 1991 ("1991 was also quite high in acidity and we had some issues of rot ... and at the end the vintage turned out much better than initially expected!") while Johannes sees more parallels with their 1996 (NB: a quite successful vintage at this Estate).

Despite much lower yields than usual, the Estate produced its usual portfolio of wines except for its Kabinett Feinherb from the Grafenberg, which was simply not possible given the quantities. The portfolio includes small quantities of Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Auslese GK harvested at 108° Oechsle which was sold via the Auction in September (see the tasting note of this great Auslese in our Auction Guide).

We were also positively surprised by the overall quality of the collection produced by the Haart Estate in 2013, which includes some remarkably good and even outstanding dry wines. However, the real stars of the collection are the fruity-styled Spätlese bottlings, in particular the impressive Goldtröpfchen Spätlese GK and the Auslese.

2013er	Reinhold Haart	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Auslese	15 14	92
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This rich wine delivers quite subtle flavors of grapefruit, citrus, almonds and banana on the nose. A delicately creamy feel on the palate provides the necessary buffer to a firm but well-framed acid structure and one is left with a superb impression of subtle multi-layered complexity in the long, powerful but airy finish. 2023-2043

2013er	Reinhold Haart	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Spätlese GK	11 14	92
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This small selection (of no more than 500 liters) of prime fruit from a coveted parcel in the Goldtröpfchen ("Hinter den Häusern", behind the houses, which benefits from a warm micro-climate) was bottled separately given its intermediary character between a Spätlese and an Auslese. Well, this is a great idea as the wine combines refined and precise flavors of great Auslese (in this case peach, pear, mirabelle and cassis) with the youthful zesty side of a Spätlese on the palate. This textbook "drinking Auslese" is still a bit hard in the finish but this will mellow away nicely at maturity, leaving one with a modern day version of a 1990 or 1996. This is a gorgeous wine! 2023-2038+

2013er	Reinhold Haart	Wintricher Ohligsberg Riesling Spätlese	12 14	91
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This gorgeous wine develops a stunning cocktail of strawberry, bergamot, green gage, pear and banana on the nose and leaves a long and lasting feel of power on the palate. The whole balance, aromatic profile and intensity is that of a fully grown Auslese, and a nice one! 2023-2038

2013er	Reinhold Haart	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Spätlese	13 14	90+
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This delivers a gorgeous and quite complex nose of cassis, yellow peach, pear, greengage and mirabelle. A gorgeously playful touch of acidity comes through on the palate which adds intensity and gives the finish an irresistible mouth-watering touch, despite the intensity and power of the aromatics captured by this Spätlese. This is very nice indeed, with quite some upside potential if develops finesse with age. 2023-2033

2013er	Reinhold Haart	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Kabinett	10 14	89
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Harvested with 88° Oechsle, this Kabinett was made with a touch of botrytis-affected fruit and it shows on the palate, where the more typical scents of pear, yellow peach and cassis are joined by some more exotic pineapple, apricot tree flower and ginger. The wine is quite powerful and shows a lot of presence (for a Kabinett) on the palate but the finish has the airy and racy side of Kabinett wines. 2021-2033



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Weingut Reinhold Haart

(Piesport – Middle Mosel)

2013er	Reinhold Haart	Piesporter Grafenberg Riesling Kabinett	09 14	87
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Harvested at approx. 88° Oechsle with part of the grapes affected by botrytis, this delivers intense and powerful scents of pear, pineapple, peach and melon framed by quite a kick of acidity on the palate. However, the fruity side is always there and the wine leaves a firm but mouth-watering feel in the finish, which is not as "sweet" as usual given the acidity. 2018-2028

2013er	Reinhold Haart	Piesporter Riesling (Haart to Heart)	04 14	85
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This is still very primary and delivers scents of peach, cassis and white minerals on the nose. A quite firm touch of acidity comes through on the palate and sets the tone right through the nearly dry-tasting finish. This robust wine should at best next year and offer nice drinking pleasure for a few more years. 2015-2017

2013er	Reinhold Haart	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling GG	07 14	90+
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A single cask of this wine was made out from clean fruit harvested in the central part of the Goldtröpfchen vineyard, in a sector called Zwei Kreuzer. A gorgeously subtle fruity side emerges from the glass and engulfs one into a sea of red berry fruits, cassis, peach and pear. The aromatic precision and finesse are remarkable as the wine glides on the palate. The acidity is there and is of course firm, but it is also already quite nicely integrated and just lifts the aromatics up. The finish is mouth-watering and smoky. This is a gorgeous wine in the making but also one which needs some time in the bottle to develop aromatically. It could then surpass our expectations! 2015-2018

2013er	Reinhold Haart	Wintricher Ohligsberg Riesling GG	06 14	89
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This wine produced from a selection of clean grapes delivers a great and subtly exuberant nose of grapefruit, cassis, yellow fruits and brown sugar. The wine is quite powerful and intense on the palate and leaves a floating sense of vanilla and limey fruit in the quite opulent finish. This is very nicely done in a forceful and intense style. 2015-2018

2013er	Reinhold Haart	Piesporter Kreuzwingert Riesling GG	05 14	88+
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The wines from the Kreuzwingert are among the most backward and slow developers of the Mosel and this 2013 version is no exception, on the contrary. The wine is driven by minerals, herbs, spices and a surprising and intriguing fleeting scent of vanilla. A shy but quite attractive fruity side, with grapefruit, citrus and star anise, makes a fleeting appearance on the palate before an austere and herb-driven side comes through in the finish. This should gain in presence with bottle age and develop into a quite outstanding piece of dry Mosel Riesling if the fruity side manages to get the better of the currently defining touch of vanilla. 2016-2020

2013er	Reinhold Haart	Wintricher Riesling Trocken	08 14	88
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This wine made from young vines fermented in half-casks delivers a clean and spicy nose of white fruits, tangerine (there is a touch of botrytis) and herbs as well as a delicate hint of vanilla coming through on the palate, which adds a complex note without any undue weight. The finish is tannic and structured and this wine needs another year or so to shed off its youthful energy and find its inner balance. 2015-2017

2013er	Reinhold Haart	Piesporter Riesling Trocken	02 14	85
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This peach driven wine is driven by racy scents of earthy spices on the palate. The finish is quite backward but long, with a tannic structure providing some buffering to the electrifying kick of acidity coming from the 11 g/l of total acidity. This may prove too much for many palates but lovers of racy wines will get their kick out of this wine. 2015-2016

2013er	Reinhold Haart	Riesling Trocken	01 14	86
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This dry Riesling was made from the Estate's holdings in the upper parts in the Piesporter hill (Falkenberg and Günterslau) as well as from declassified grapes from its main vineyards. The wine offers an inviting nose of white fruits and white flowers paired with good zest on the palate and a lasting and clean feel in the racy and medium-long finish. The wine still needs a few months of bottling before blossoming but should then prove quite enjoyable for a few years. This is quite nicely made in a racy, zesty and unpretentious style. 2015-2017



Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Heymann-Löwenstein

(Winningen – Terrassenmosel)

Reinhard Löwenstein was all smile (he has one of the most communicative smiles in the Mosel) when we saw him: "I am very positively surprised at how good the wines turned out. Quite honestly, the grapes were almost all affected by botrytis and almost brown in color, but fortunately did not show any vinegary sign as the botrytis was still only in its early development phase and had not yet affected the aromatic profile of the grapes. We actually did very little grape or berry selection, and this was only done in the vineyard, if at all. Of course yields were very low, at only 26 hl/ha, but, with hindsight, it proved beneficial as it allowed us to reach the ideal maturity."

The Estate started its harvest on October 16 and completed it by November 3. Almost all grapes came in with at least 100° Oechsle, but the acidity levels were comparatively low, something which Reinhard particularly appreciated especially for the production of his dry wines. Unlike recent vintages, the dry-tasting wines from the top vineyards ("Grosse Lage") were all fermented to legally dry levels and were therefore bottled as GG (read more about GG, Grosse Lage in the article at the end of this Issue). Due to the small yields, the Estate refrained from producing a Hatzenporter Stolzenberg, declassifying the fruit into its basic Schieferterrassen bottling. Two sweet wines were produced, a Schieferterrassen Auslese and an Uhlen R BA, and both are sold via the regular channels. These wines were bottled end of March (together with the wines kept on their lees for 18 months), whereas all the others were bottled at the end of July.

After two more challenging vintages (in which high ripeness led to rather blousy wines), Reinhard Löwenstein stuns us with a show-stopping collection of wines in 2013, delivering not one, but several of the finest dry wines made in the vintage. All wines have the typical complex character which has made the success of the Estate over the years, but deliver this with lightness and elegance packed in comparatively moderate alcohol levels. It is quite simple, all wines are highly recommended.

NB: The Blauschiefer as well as the two sweet wines were not tasted. The 2013er Uhlen R will, as always, only be released later (in spring 2015) and will be covered next year. We cover the 2012 version here, which was released in spring 2014.

2013er Heymann-Löwenstein

Winninger Uhlen L Riesling GG

11 14

93

This is all about finesse and elegance, as the nose offers plenty of complex flavors of fresh fruits, spices and smoke as well as a delicate touch of oak-induced nut and vanilla. The wine is zesty on the palate and at the same time packed with rich yet fresh flavors of smoke and spices. This is superbly intense and present and yet at no moment does it give the impression of being powerful. The spicy long and fresh finish is superbly dry and clean. What a gorgeous bottle of dry Riesling! 2016-2023+

2013er Heymann-Löwenstein

Winninger Uhlen B Riesling GG

10 14

92

A somewhat ripe yet pure nose of spices, smoke, apricot and citrus zest leads to a well-structured, for the moment slightly compact and energetic palate. Sweet fruits give some roundness to the experience, yet the smoky finish is long and animating. This is superbly balanced wine which lives from the smoky complexity. 2016-2023

2013er Heymann-Löwenstein

Winninger Röttgen Riesling GG

09 14

91

A very smoky and pure nose gives way to riper flavors of apricot, peach, ground spices and mint on the comparatively soft, creamy and deliciously silky palate. Before anything could start to get broad, great zesty and spicy flavors come through in the finish, bringing focus and liveliness to the wine. This is a superb effort, made in the typically more exotic style of the Röttgen. 2015-2021

2013er Heymann-Löwenstein

Hatzenporter Kirchberg Riesling GG

08 14

90

This shows a quite restrained, cool and complex nose of infused flavors including smoke, white mint and peach. This does not show much fruit on the palate at this stage and lives from a fascinatingly spicy and slightly phenolic structure. The finish is long, dry and refreshing. 2015-2020

2013er Heymann-Löwenstein

Riesling Trocken Schieferterrassen

06 14

88

The wine is still slightly reduced and only gradually reveals attractive scents smoke, thyme, ginger and peach rapidly. The wine is comparatively subtle and light on the palate where zesty flavors of grapefruit and lime add a superb playful side to this fully dry tasting wine. 2015-2020

2012er Heymann-Löwenstein

Winninger Uhlen R Riesling GG

01 14

89

This ostentatiously wine delivers nut, candied fruits, spices and rich flavors of fruits on the palate. The finish is long and well made, and leaves some pear and marzipan in the powerful and nearly blousy after-taste. This is really a red wine in every aspect but color. Now-2017



Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Immich – Batterieberg

(Enkirch – Middle Mosel)

Gernot Kollmann is quite brutally honest about the vintage and his early fears: "2013 was never going to be a beauty, I had this feeling right after flowering came so late. The rain just before the harvest made us suffer from rot, in particular in deeper and less well drained soils such as in our Enkircher Steffensberg. We brought the harvest forward and juggled between the spells of rain from October 21 until October 30, going as much as four times through each parcel to get the grapes we wanted. But even then, when I saw what came in, my heart sunk: the grapes were brown and looked everything but nice. But the miraculous thing was that the juice which run out of the press was completely clear! And from there, things went up and look at the wines now: I think they have great precision and zest! We did not overdo any pre-fermentation maceration, which we limited to not more than 3-4 hours."

The extremely low yields of 18 hl/ha and the difficulties in the Steffensberg made the Estate declassify the whole harvest from this vineyard into the Escheburg, the "Second Vin" of the different single-vineyard bottlings, as Gernot Kollmann puts it. Bottling happened during the first week of July for the simpler C.A.I. and on August 22 for the better bottlings, excepted for the Batterieberg, which was still fermenting in September.

This is an astonishingly good collection of wines which follows seamlessly into the footprint of the impeccable 2012 one. Year after year, this Estate has been producing great and characterful dry-tasting Riesling, which can age superbly well, as nicely underlined by a smashing 2009er Batterieberg tasted recently at the Estate. In particular, the Estate was able to maintain the high standards of its Estate bottling, which is always the signature wine of any good Estate.

NB: The Enkircher Batterieberg was still fermenting and not ready for tasting.

2013er	Immich-Batterieberg	Enkircher Ellergrub Riesling	05 14	91
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This delivers a gorgeous nose of greengage, anise, brown sugar, pear and spices which lead to a beautifully focused and nicely layered feel on the palate and great precision in the long and still slightly tart and powerful finish. However, everything is here to make for a gorgeous dry-tasting Riesling in a few years' time. 2016-2023

2013er	Immich-Batterieberg	Enkircher Zeppwingert Riesling	04 14	90
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This rich wine delivers a round and hugely attractive nose of pear cream, white flowers and some fine spices. It manages to come over as elegant and delicate, and yet intense and full of energy on the palate. The finish is airy and persistent, with some delicately honeyed fruits adding a slight feeling of sweetness at this stage (the wine has only 10.5% of alcohol). This is a great wine to enjoy in a few years' time, when the little touch of sweetness will have mellowed away. 2017-2023

2013er	Immich-Batterieberg	Riesling Escheburg	02 14	89
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The Enkircher Escheburg (named after the original name of the Estate) is made from de-classified fruit from the Estate's un-grafted holdings in Enkirch (usually a blend of Ellergrub, Batterieberg and Steffensberg). In 2013, the complete fruit of the Steffensberg was de-classified into this bottling and this no doubt explains its high quality. The wine delivers a rich and ripe nose of greengage, apricot, spices and plum and leaves a powerful but nicely tart feel on the palate and the finish, without any undue acidity trying to take the upper hand. The citrusy finish is intense and fully dry in taste. This is really in need of some rest and will only deliver upon its potential as of next year. 2015-2019

2013er	Immich-Batterieberg	Riesling Kabinett C.A.I.	01 14	88
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The C.A.I. bottling is essentially made from purchased grapes (including from Wiltingen, Oberemmel, Wolf and Dron) as well as from the Estate's holdings in the lower and flatter part of the Batterieberg. The wine offers nice fleeting scents of white fruits, smoke and herbs, all delivered in a firm but attractively juicy structure on the palate. The comparatively high level of residual sugar (24 g/l) is completely hidden away behind some succulent acidity. This is a gorgeous Estate wine and quite a success, especially considering the challenges of 2013. 2015-2018

2012er	Immich-Batterieberg	Enkircher Monteneubel Spätburgunder	08 14	87
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The grapes for this red wine were not de-stemmed and the maceration time was extended to 30 days. The wine was then matured in 225 liters oak casks. At 11.6% of alcohol, this light wine delivers some attractive even if direct scents of macerated and cooked red berry fruits. These are nicely balanced out by a touch of green freshness from the stems as well as a nicely tense and delicately racy side in the finish. This is quite enjoyable thanks also to a well-managed use of oak. Now-2016



Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Peter Lauer

(Ayl – Saar)

Florian Lauer has quite some words to say about the vintage: "2013 was the longest harvest we have ever done at the Estate. There were actually two strategies we could have used for the harvest. The first one was to wait and hope that the berries would be fully ripe at one point, but this could lead us to run out of patience as the weather conditions were, let's face it, quite difficult as regular patches of rain threatened the quality of the grapes. In addition you could easily see that we were losing bunches of grapes by the day. Waiting until October 20 for instance would have meant that 30-40% of the berries were already on the ground, and thus lost. We therefore opted for the other plan: bring in the fruit as early as October 8. I really did not want to lose these berries. However, to compensate and maintain the overall quality, we went up to 4 times through each vineyard and did very strict selections. This means that our team had to carefully select the grapes and even berries each time we were out in the vineyards. As a consequence, the harvest was one of the costliest ever, but, with hindsight, it was really worth it. I'm very happy with the result."

Harvest started on October 8 and was only completed in the first week of November. Even if the Estate did start early to save as much fruit as possible, yields were low. Sugar levels were not very high and did barely exceed 90° Oechsle, but, as Florian underlines it, "we were able to produce good quality wines with very moderate alcohol levels, and they show high concentration and tension." He adds that all dry wines were in Fuder and the off-dry and fruity wines were in stainless steel. In addition, the acidity levels were down as a result of the precipitation of tartaric acidity, and even more of the malolactic fermentation which is commonly used at the Estate. The finished wines have acidity levels of around 7-8 g/l for the dry wines and 10-11 g/l for the rest. Bottling started at the beginning of June and was completed by July.

This is a very classy collection of wines, which highlights the strengths of the Saar valley: fine, light and fresh wines. Although the wines cannot match the extraordinary high levels of the 2012s, they are still worth looking for, especially in the upper range of the off-dry wines (Kern, Stirn and Neuenbersch). The fruity-styled wines are models of Saar refinement, and shine through their freshness and lightness and the GGs are among the classiest of the vintage. What more does one want?

2013er Peter Lauer

Ayler Kupp Riesling Auslese Fass 10

92

Only 250 liters of this beautiful fruity wine were made. It exhibits lovely ripe fruits, lots of spices and honey. The wine is juicy but at the same time it offers quite some zest and freshness, so that it maintains a pure and clean balance up to the very pure and long finish. This is quite a fine Saar Auslese which should be at peak in a decade and more. 2021-2033

2013er Peter Lauer

Ayler Kupp Riesling Spätlese Fass 7

90

The Fass 7 is a fruity-styled Spätlese made from parcels in the original front-part of the Ayler Kupp hill (this comes from the south-west and west facing parts of the hill, whereas the auction Spätlese Fass 23 comes from the east facing side). It shows some nice fruity flavors including yellow peach and pineapple, and flows in a light-weighted structure on the palate. The wine is full of freshness, mint and zest. This is a superb drinking Spätlese which offers a lot of pleasure. 2018-2028

2013er Peter Lauer

Ayler Kupp Riesling Kabinett Fass 8

89

The Fass 8 is a Kabinett made from parcels in the original front-part of the Ayler Kupp hill. It was harvested at a cool (yet Kabinett conform) 79° Oechsle. The first nose is slightly marked by some reduction. Yeasty notes, bacon and smoke give way to a fresh and herbal spectrum including white peach and green apple. The wine has a very nice citrus-driven energy, and the finish is clean, off-dry and mouth-watering. This is rather for the short term as the acidity is on the high side. 2016-2025

2013er Peter Lauer

Ayler Riesling Kern Fass 9

92+

This off-dry wine comes from a south-west facing parcel still planted with old vines raised on single pole on the main western part of the Ayler Kupp hill, which shows high temperature differences between day and night. This offers a great nose not unlike that of a fruity Auslese, with tons of exotic flavors including mango, passion fruit, coconut cream, pineapple and grapefruit. The wine is then quite electrifying on the palate as it delivers very intense aromatics packed into a most attractive tension and grapefruit-driven acidity. The finish is all about a superb bitter-sweet interplay, and leaves a clean, pure and very long finish. This fiery wine could even prove to be better than initially expected if it manages to settle down and gain in finesse. This is quite a treat! 2018-2028

2013er Peter Lauer

Ayler Riesling Stirn Fass 15

92+

The Fass 15 is an off-dry wine made from a parcel of old vines situated in the upper part of the Ayler Kupp hill, which is dry, cool and rather windy. Harvested in the very last week of October and in the first days of November, this offers a very fine and fruity nose of mango, orange, pineapple, white and yellow peach and some dried fruits. The wine is subtle and creamy on the palate, and the zesty side is very well-integrated. The finish is off-dry in taste, and very long. This is a superb Riesling. 2016-2028



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Weingut Peter Lauer

(Ayl – Saar)

2013er Peter Lauer

Ayler Riesling Neuenbersch Fass 17

92

The Fass 17 is an off-dry wine made from a prime parcel situated in the central part of the Ayler Kupp hill (in what was formerly known as Neuberg). This has a quite refined and fruit-driven nose with yellow peach, apricot, a touch of pear, honey and citrus. The wine is zesty and delicate, and has a very mineral finish which is almost bone dry in taste. It leaves a feeling of restrained power and weight in a very long and smoky finish. This is quite a superb wine! 2015-2023

2013er Peter Lauer

Ayler Riesling Unterstenbersch Fass 12

90

The Fass 12 is a dry-tasting wine made from the Unterstenbersch (referred as Unterstenberg internally at the Estate) situated in the lower part of the Ayler Kupp hill. As usual, the Unterstenbersch proves the most powerful and Auslese Trocken in style in the portfolio. Made from clean berries which underwent a 12 hours skin contact, this is initially rather restrained and only gradually reveals complex flavors of smoke, candied fruits, mint and blueberry. The wine really shows its richness and power on the open and expressive palate. The density is impressive as well as the acidity, and, although this has 11 g/l of residual sugar, the sweetness if any is hardly noticeable. The citrus-driven finish is full of dry extract with a slight touch of phenol and earthy flavors. This is a superb dry-tasting Riesling, which will particularly please lovers of concentrated and mighty version of this type of wines. 2015-2020

2013er Peter Lauer

Ayler Riesling Fass 3

89

The Fass 3 is fermented off-dry from holdings in the east-facing part of the Ayler Kupp hill. This offers a quite attractive and cool aromatic profile, with flavors of smoke, mint, citrus and cassis. Although this is not dry, the balance on the palate is driven by zesty notes, precision and tension. This leads to a sharp finish with lovely notes of candied ginger and salt. This very good off-dry to dry tasting Riesling will pair superbly well with some light dishes. Now-2019

2013er Peter Lauer

Ayler Riesling Fass 6 Senior

89

The Fass 6 is a dry-tasting wine made from holdings in the western part of the Ayler Kupp hill. This flagship bottling of this Estate offers a fresh and pure nose including stone fruits, freshly cut pineapple, grapefruit, cherry and mint. A good presence thanks to a generous extract leads to a mouth-coating and ripe fruit-driven mid-palate. The finish is zesty and long. This is a very good Riesling. Now-2018

2013er Peter Lauer

Ayler Riesling Fass 4

87

The Fass 4 is fermented off-dry from holdings situated in the Ayler Sonnenberg and in the Ayler Scheidterberg, two side hills separate from the main Ayler Kupp hill. This is quite smoky aromatically and shows as well some citrus and yellow fruits. The wine has good presence on the palate with fruity and creamy notes. The zest is coming through in the finish so that this is easy and nice to drink. Now-2017

2013er Peter Lauer

Saar Riesling Feinherb Alt Scheidt

19 14

86

The Alt Scheidt is fermented off-dry from holdings farmed by local winemakers under grape-purchase contracts on the original parts of the Ayler Scheidterberg. The nose mixes some fresh herbal notes, mint, gooseberry and cucumber with spices and peach stone. The wine has a nice presence on the palate and is driven by zest and mint. The finish is dryish in style. Now-2016

2013er Peter Lauer

Ayler Kupp Riesling Fass 18 GG

91

The Ayler Kupp GG is made from a prime parcel planted in 1956 situated mid-slope in the original front part of the Ayler Kupp hill (and is the successor of what was known as Kupp 56 until 2011). This offers an incredibly attractive and subtle nose of ginger, apple and fresh spices which lead to a gorgeously well-balanced feel on the palate. The wine is superbly well made and leaves a gloriously long after-taste, with a touch of zest but no searing acidity. This is a very classy effort. 2015-2023



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Weingut Peter Lauer

(Ayl – Saar)

2013er Peter Lauer

Riesling Schonfels Fass 11 GG

91

The Schonfels vineyard oversees the Saar River and is situated next to the Saarburger Fuchs. The parcel is planted with over 80 years old ungrafted vines. This GG delivers a quite juicy nose of grapefruit and herbs, enhanced by an exotic scent of coconut and spices. The wine is quite closed and backward on the palate but the overall balance is simply superb. This has quite some potential, even if it probably more for lovers of very pure and racy wines. 2016-2023

2013er Peter Lauer

Ayler Riesling Trocken Fass 25

87

The Fass 25 is fermented dry from holdings situated in the Scheidterberg and the Rauberg. An open and ripe nose is quite attractive and offers tangerine, orange, red apple and pear with a touch of freshly cut grass. The wine is nicely fruity and easy going initially, however it is more focused on the palate as it goes straight to a long finish with some dried spices and earthy notes as well as zesty grapefruit skin. Now-2017

2013er Peter Lauer

Ayler Riesling Trocken Fass 2

87

The Fass 2 is fermented dry from holdings situated in the central part of the Ayler Kupp hill (formally known as Neuberg). A fresh nose of gooseberry, apricot flower, grapefruit and tangerine leads to a comparatively lean and zesty wine. The wine gains in volume and power in a slightly herbal and bitter finish. This needs a year to find its balance. 2015-2016

2013er Peter Lauer

Saar Riesling Trocken Fass 16

87

The Fass 16 is fermented dry from holdings farmed by local winemakers under grape-purchase contracts in vineyards in Saarburg, Wiltingen, Wawern and Ayl. A smoky nose is lifted by some nice and fresh floral notes, mint, banana, ginger and thyme. The wine hits the palate with great zest and tension, and ends in a long and spicy finish. This is very dry in taste and offers a fine salty after-taste. Now-2016



Mosel Fine Wines

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By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Dr. Loosen – Johannishof

(Bernkastel – Middle Mosel)

Erni Loosen confirms that 2013 was definitely a very complicated vintage but he is very happy with the results: "Of course acidity levels were high, and in a way 2013 reminded me of the 2010 vintage. But you have to remember that the acidity is a dear friend for all our fruity-styled and off-dry wines. We did some short maceration to reduce acidity levels but quite honestly, we also de-acidified some of the dry wines, as I do not see the point of 10 g/l of acidity in dry wines. We harvested from October 1 until November 1 and our team had to do quite a lot of selections in the vineyards to harvest clean and ripe grapes. It was a very demanding vintage but in the end it was really worth the extra effort as we were able to produce our usual range of wines, even if in lower quantities than usual. But hearing my colleagues, our yields were still ok so I will not complain. We even managed to produce a BA and a TBA from the Wehlener Sonnenuhr as well as a TBA from the Prälät."

Besides its range of 2013 wines, the biggest news is that the Estate will now start to release some "Reserve GG" and "Grand Reserve GG" from previous vintages, which have been aged extensively in barrel before bottling. This exciting new development deserves some background and explanation as it will impact the portfolio going forward. We also included a full set of tasting notes in this report.

Here is the story how the quest to produce age-worthy dry wine "the way they used to do" let Erni to leave some wines for much longer in oak: "My grandfather Wilhelm Loosen had been producing essentially dry wines until the 1950s and I remember him saying that he kept his wines for quite some time in oak, sometimes up to 8 years, as in the 1920s, and this benefitted the wines. I had myself made a similar experience with a 1981er Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling, which, after 24 years in barrel (!) proved remarkably fresh and not tired at all. This led us to experiment with leaving some of the wines for much longer in oak. In general, our GG were bottled already later, i.e. the summer after the vintage, as of 2008. But the large 2011 vintage proved ideal to push our ideas even further. We decided to hold back some casks of GG, which we left for 24 and respectively 36 months in casks before bottling. As the wines developed well, we have applied this on every vintage since. Also, we will leave the wines for at least an additional year in bottle, to give them time to integrate and rest, before sending them onto the market."

What does this imply in terms of portfolio, going forward? In addition to the "regular" GGs kept 12 months on their lees, the Estate now also produces three "Reserve" (from their three flagship and yet very different terroirs) and one "Grand Reserve" bottlings of GG:

- The three "**Reserve GG**" (Erdener Prälät, Ürziger Würzgarten and Wehlener Sonnenuhr) spend 24 months on their gross lees before being bottled and another year in the bottle, i.e. they will be typically released three years after the vintage.
- The "**Grand Reserve GG**" (Ürziger Würzgarten only) spends 36 months on its gross lees before being bottled. This wine (a "Hommage to my grandfather" as Erni puts it) will be released much later, at a time deemed suitable by the Estate.

This is the structure as of the 2012 vintage. The 2011 vintage, from which the "Reserve GG" bottlings will be released soon, was still a ramp up year and the Estate only produced two Reserve wines.

Frankly speaking, we were left speechless after having tasted through the whole range of regular, Reserve and Grand Reserve GGs from 2013, 2012 and 2011. The 2013, which spent "only" 12 months on their gross lees, were already very good if not outstanding, but the 2012 "Reserve" and 2011 "Grand Reserve" clearly were the stars of the show. The extra time in cask allowed the wines to gain in complexity, finesse and precision. The 2011 Ürziger Würzgarten Grand Reserve GG is a truly great wine in the making. These wines overshadowed somewhat the truly gorgeous range of 2013 fruity-styled wines, which are all remarkably fresh, light and intense and great successes in their own right. The Erdener Treppchen Kabinett is really delicious and, besides some great auction wines, the collection is topped by a most graceful and remarkably complex Prälät Auslese GK.

NB: The Estate bottlings (Blauschiefer / Blue Slate, Rotschiefer / Red Slate and Satyricus) were not tasted.

2013er	Dr. Loosen	Erdener Prälät Riesling Auslese GK	51 14	(92-95)
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This delivers a gorgeous nose of cassis, saffron and lush pineapple which lead to a glorious palate with stunning fruits and finesse. The finish is long and well-balanced, and the wine is superbly well made. This is a superb piece of winemaking! 2023-2048

2013er	Dr. Loosen	Erdener Treppchen Riesling Auslese	54 14	(91-93)
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This has a superb nose of smoke, anise, yellow peach and pineapple. Captivatingly juicy and honeyed fruits coat the creamy and intense palate and leave a great airy but also sweet feel in the finish. This superb Auslese will prove superb in a decade, when it will have gained in finesse. 2023-2038

2013er	Dr. Loosen	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese	52 14	(90-92)
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The nose shows mirrors the ripeness and richness of the grapes, as the aromatics include almond cream, pineapple, apricot and honey. All these flavors are amplified on the palate as more honeyed fruits add to the sensation of smoothness. The finish is very clean and long, and this only needs time to reveal its playful acidity. 2023-2038



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By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Dr. Loosen – Johannishof

(Bernkastel – Middle Mosel)

2013er	Dr. Loosen	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Auslese	53 14	(90-92)
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This lives from a clean and elegant nose of smoke, peach, pineapple and grapefruit. A gorgeously juicy and zesty side comes through on the palate, as well as a quite intense Eiswein-like touch of acidity, which adds to the compact and powerful feel in the finish. This is a superb drinking Auslese, full of life and tension. 2020-2033

2013er	Dr. Loosen	Erdener Treppchen Riesling Spätlese	43 14	90
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This is driven by superbly fresh, almost green flavors of apple, spices and smoke. This sense of freshness carries over onto the lean and zesty palate. The high levels of dry extracts make the wine gain in intensity and presence in the very long and energetic finish. 2023-2033

2013er	Dr. Loosen	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Spätlese	23 14	91
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Mango, papaya, apricot cream and honey clearly show some light botrytis impact which adds depth and complexity to the wine. A powerful yet clean touch of acidity joins the party on the palate and adds a superb playful side to this Spätlese. This racy yet complex Spätlese is already delicious at this early stage but should prove even better in a decade or two. 2023-2033

2013er	Dr. Loosen	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese	45 14	90
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Fine fruits and complex flavors quickly develop in the glass, pushing aside the initial reduction. Creamy fruits give the wine a round and smooth side on the palate, but the wine always retains refinement and elegance. Freshness and well-integrated acidity nicely frame the slight sensation of residual sugar in the long and clean finish. This is nicely made in a direct and zesty style. 2023-2033

2013er	Dr. Loosen	Erdener Treppchen Riesling Kabinett	35 14	90
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This offers a superb and complex nose of smoke, yellow peach, grapefruit and orange. The wine is nicely balanced on the palate with good fruit intensity and well-integrated acidity. The wine is truly Kabinett in style and, quite simply put, delicious. Year after year, this bottling has been one of the most delicious examples of this style. 2018-2023+

2013er	Dr. Loosen	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Kabinett	37 14	89
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A fresh and minty nose of complex notes of grapefruit, spices, peach and apple leads to a well-structured and balanced feel on the palate, with high levels of dry extracts adding to the presence and intensity. The finish is grapey, clean and fresh, with green fruits and zest giving the wine an off-dry rather than sweet feel in the after taste. This is really easy to knock down. 2018-2023

2013er	Dr. Loosen	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Kabinett	10 14	88
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This has a quite present and direct nose of smoke, white peach and orange. The wine is also direct and straightforward on the palate, with notes of zest and green apple. It gains in presence thanks to some nice creamy and fruity notes and the finish is medium long and round. This does the trick. 2017-2023



Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Dr. Loosen – Johannishof

(Bernkastel – Middle Mosel)

2013er Dr. Loosen

Erdener Prälat Riesling Alte Reben GG

64 14

(90-93)

The Prälat GG is made from very old un-grafted vines. It is fermented with ambient yeasts and aged in oak for 12 months. This exhibits an expressive and almost powerful nose of smoke, dried spices and exotic fruits as well as tangerine, anise and banana. The wine is juicy and coats the palate with creamy and spicy fruits. This impressive presence leads to a very long and focused finish. This is quite superb, and could turn out to be a truly great dry Riesling if the fruits remain fresh after some years in bottle. 2015-2021+

2013er Dr. Loosen

Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Alte Reben GG

62 14

(90-92)

The Würzgarten GG is made from parcels of very old un-grafted vines in the prime Urglück, Maxberg, Layenhaus and original Würzgarten sectors. It is fermented with ambient yeasts and aged in oak for 12 months. This quite refined wine offers subtle, complex and above all fresh notes of dried flowers, smoke and mint. This leads to a spicy, zesty and fine palate which gains in presence thanks to delicious creamy structure. The great finish is superbly smoky and intense. 2016-2023

2013er Dr. Loosen

Erdener Treppchen Riesling GG

63 14

(90-92)

The Treppchen GG is made from very old un-grafted vines in the prime Onnerts and Herzlay sectors (situated just above and next to the Prälat). It is fermented with ambient yeasts and aged in oak for 12 months. The nose offers superb, fresh and complex flavors of smoke, anise, green apple, mint and a touch of pear. The wine impresses through its silky and refined texture on the palate as well as a rather shy and restrained but superbly well-balanced feel in the long, salty and deliciously tickly finish. This is quite an impressive GG. 2016-2023

2013er Dr. Loosen

Graacher Himmelreich Riesling GG

60 14

(88-91)

The Himmelreich GG is made from very old un-grafted vines in the prime Stablay and Humberg sectors. It is fermented with ambient yeasts and aged in oak for 12 months. This offers a gorgeous and deep nose of minerals, white fruits and quite some laurel-driven herbs on the palate. A nice creamy feel on the palate provides the right balance to the acidity and the finish is long and airy. 2015-2021

2013er Dr. Loosen

Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling GG

61 14

(88-90)

The Sonnenuhr GG is made from very old un-grafted vines in the prime Laychen (central part) and Sandpichter (near Zeltingen) sectors. It is fermented with ambient yeasts and aged in oak for 12 months. The wine is initially intensely smoky but this gives gradually way to fresh and clean scents of grapefruit, zest and fresh pineapple as well as a touch of almond. The good acidity provides a nice frame to this medium-structured wine which offers rounder and riper fruits in the finish. 2015-2020

2013er Dr. Loosen

Bernkasteler Lay Riesling GG

59 14

(87-89)

The Lay GG is made from holdings in the Haargarten sector (surrounding the Loosen Estate). The wine is fermented with ambient yeasts and aged in oak for 12 months. This delivers an attractive nose of yellow peach and pear blended into some hearty herbs. Nicely tickly acidity brings freshness to the palate and leads to a medium-long and quite tart even if somewhat direct finish. 2015-2019

2013er Dr. Loosen

Graacher Riesling Trocken

29 14

87

The dry Graacher bottling comes exclusively from grapes out of the Himmelreich. The 2013 version offers an elegant and spicy feel, with great freshness and balance. The wine is nicely made, with quite some fruits and herbs and delivers a long fresh feel in the finish. This drinks easily in a direct and fresh style. Now-2017



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Erdener Prälat Riesling Alte Reben Reserve GG

(93-96)

The Prälat Reserve GG is made from very old un-grafted vines. It is fermented with ambient yeasts and aged in oak for 24 months before being bottled. This catches one's attention right from the start with some captivating smoky flavors, floral nuances and not much fruit (something often found early on, in top young dry white wines by the likes of Koehler-Ruprecht or Trimbach). The wine then gradually offers some cassis, pineapple and a touch of mango all wrapped into a fresh minty side. Although this has great presence on the palate, the zesty and spicy elements lead to a feeling of focus, intensity and purity. Everything seems already at the right place now, but we would however opt to wait a few more years before getting the full potential of this little gem. Rarely have we been able to taste a young dry wine with so much potential from the Mosel. It is that impressive. 2017-2022+

2012er Dr. Loosen

Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Alte Reben Reserve GG

(91-94)

The Würzgarten Reserve GG is made from parcels of very old un-grafted vines in the prime Uргlück, Maxberg, Layenhaus and original Würzgarten sectors. It is fermented with ambient yeasts and aged in oak for 24 months before being bottled. The wine is initially rather closed and only reveals some diffuse notes of vanilla, yellow peach and almond paste. However, it is on the palate that the greatness of this wine already starts to show as it develops a most wonderful creamy, round and juicy side which is well balanced by some tickly and zesty acidity. The finish is superb, being long, spicy and fresh. This will need quite some time but the raw material at play here is of great quality. 2017-2022+

2012er Dr. Loosen

Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Alte Reben Reserve GG

(90-93)

The Sonnenuhr Reserve GG is made from very old un-grafted vines in the prime Laychen (central part) and Sandpichter (near Zeltingen) sectors. It is fermented with ambient yeasts and aged in oak for 24 months before being bottled. This shows a very concentrated and lively nose of fruits including quince, candied fruits, tangerine and sour orange. The wine coats the palate with a dense and a creamy texture. The finish is zesty and smoky and leaves a clean fully dry feel in the after-taste. This is quite an expressive dry Riesling. 2015-2022+

2011er Dr. Loosen

Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Alte Reben Grand Reserve GG

(93-96)

The Würzgarten Grand Reserve GG is made from parcels of very old un-grafted vines in the prime Uргlück, Maxberg, Layenhaus and original Würzgarten sectors. It is fermented with ambient yeasts and aged in oak for 36 months before being bottled. This is quite open for business and shows very complex and aromatic flavors of pineapple, grapefruit and citrus. The wine is superbly focused and straight on the palate with a completely unique combination of freshness and tension. There is quite some body on the palate (as if the level of dry extracts was high) but the wine remains fine and very spicy, and the finish seemingly endless. What is really surprising here is that this wine was produced from ripe grapes and from a ripe vintage, but the extended ageing in cask has added a lot of tension and finesse to the structure. This is simply breathtakingly beautiful and we can not wait to taste this little jewel at maturity. 2015-2026+

2011er Dr. Loosen

Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Alte Reben Reserve GG

86 13

93

The Würzgarten Reserve GG is made from parcels of very old un-grafted vines in the prime Uргlück, Maxberg, Layenhaus and original Würzgarten sectors. It is fermented with ambient yeasts and aged in oak for 24 months before being bottled. This has a rather reserved, elegant and smoky nose. After some airing it shows a broader aromatic profile with anise, mint, yellow peach and a touch of toffee (a sign of reduction). The wine is however full of freshness and elegance on the palate and leaves a gorgeously spicy and salty imprint in the very long and pure finish. This is a great dry Riesling which is probably slightly in a closed-down phase, so our advice would be to wait a few more years or bottle it well in advance. 2016-2021+

2011er Dr. Loosen

Erdener Prälat Riesling Alte Reben Reserve GG

87 13

92

The Prälat Reserve GG is made from very old un-grafted vines. It is fermented with ambient yeasts and aged in oak for 24 months before being bottled. A cool, smoky and powerful complex nose of quince, mint and flowers provide the sensory frame for a quite powerful and intense wine. A superbly silky feel on the palate gives way to a light and airy finish, adding to the fascinating contrast between the (imposing) attack on the palate and the (fresh) finish. This is quite a treat even if it is best left alone for a few more years. 2016-2021+



Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Alfred Merkelbach

(Ürzig – Middle Mosel)

Even though the 2013 vintage conditions were not that easy, the Merkelbach brothers (Rolf and Alfred) still had their usual smile on their face as they talked about the vintage and the wines: "2013 was definitely a difficult vintage and we only harvested 11 casks, whereas we usually have something like 20 casks. So this is only half a harvest! But this is nature and we know that we cannot change it. We suffered from hail damage in the Kinheimer Rosenberg on June 20, but with hindsight it was not harmful. Acidity levels were on the high side as were the Oechsle degrees. This reminds us in a way of our 2010 vintage. And even if quantities are low, we are very happy with the finished wines."

Harvest started on October 21 and was completed by November 4. As the acidities were on the high side, the Estate decided not to produce any dry wines, and has only one off-dry and one Kabinett (both from the Ürziger Würzgarten). The rest of the collection is composed of Spätlese and Auslese bottlings. Bottling was done on April 17. As quantities were low, the Estate did not bring any of its casks to the auction.

This is a superb set of wines, showing great aromatics and precision. The wines do generally show quite some opulence and presence on the palate, as the Estate fermented the wines to a slightly higher level than usual (in the 9-10% of alcohol range) so as to keep residual sugar low, something which they also did in 2010. The Würzgarten Spätlese AP09 as well as the Auslese AP07 are especially worth looking for.

2013er	Alfred Merkelbach	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Auslese	07 14	92
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This is still very primary in flavors and only gradually reveals superb and complex notes of mango, pineapple and spices. The mouth-coating exotic fruits and honey are quite powerful, yet the wine quickly gains in freshness thanks to some grapefruit-driven acidity. The finish offers great length and smoky flavors. This is a superb Auslese. 2018-2033

2013er	Alfred Merkelbach	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Auslese Urglück	08 14	91
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This was harvested at 103° Oechsle from this privileged parcel in the Würzgarten and fermented to 10% of alcohol. The nose offers almond cream, pineapple, yellow and honeyed fruits, mirabelle, quince as well as some smoke. The wine is comparatively refined and complex on the palate as the residual sugar and the dry extracts buffer off the slightly earthy spices. 2017-2023

2013er	Alfred Merkelbach	Erdener Treppchen Riesling Auslese	03 14	89
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Harvested at 99° Oechsle, this offers plenty of exotic and ripe fruits including pineapple, quince and mirabelle. The wine is structured and rather powerful on the palate, with dried fruits, herbs and a touch of earthy spices. There is a light touch of alcohol coming through (this has 9.5% of alcohol and less than 50 g/l of residual sugar) so that this old-styled Auslese is best enjoyed with some hearty food. 2016-2023

2013er	Alfred Merkelbach	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Spätlese	09 14	92
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This is all about refinement and floral notes. The wine then develops great scents of spices, yellow peach and orange peel with some airing. It is pure on the palate and offers plenty of mouth-coating fruity flavors. The finish is very long, complex and fresh. This is a very playful and classic Spätlese. 2021-2033

2013er	Alfred Merkelbach	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Spätlese	11 14	90
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This offers a superb nose of dried fruits, pineapple, mango and a touch of quince. With some airing it even hints at vanilla cream, ginger and smoke. The wine is quite spicy on the palate, which is well structured, slightly hearty and powerful (this fruity Spätlese has 9.5% of alcohol). This leads to an off-dry tasting yet focused finish. We would opt to drink this rather in its youth. Now-2020

2013er	Alfred Merkelbach	Erdener Treppchen Riesling Spätlese	04 14	90
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A finely smoky nose with notes of flowers, anise and pineapple leads to quite some finesse and freshness on the palate, where more pineapple, peach cream and dried spices are nicely framed by earthy flavors. The finish is quite subtle and very long. This is a deliciously fresh Spätlese. 2018-2028

2013er	Alfred Merkelbach	Kinheimer Rosenberg Riesling Spätlese	02 14	90
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This offers a very fine and fruity nose made of grapefruit, anise, yellow peach, mango and rose. The wine offers good density on the palate where more exotic flavors kick in. However some zesty notes quickly join the party. This leads to a long finish, with superb tension and precision but also quite some power and structure (at least by Merkelbach standards). 2018-2028



Mosel Fine Wines

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By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Alfred Merkelbach

(Ürzig – Middle Mosel)

2013er Alfred Merkelbach

Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Kabinett

06 14

90

This has quite a superb and complex nose which oozes at freshness and purity. Some white peach, grapefruit and white flowers lead to a great fruity presence on the palate. Yet the zesty side of the wine as well as the relatively decent amount of residual sugar gives this Kabinett a racy side in the finish. This is plain delicious. 2018-2028

2013er Alfred Merkelbach

Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Spätlese Feinherb

05 14

88

This is quite direct in style and offers some really nice and enticing flavors of peach and flowers as well as whipped cream, orange and grapefruit. The wine impresses through its presence on the palate which shows a comparatively high dry extract level and a pure zesty long finish. This has still a touch of CO₂, and will be at best from next year on. 2015-2018



Mosel Fine Wines

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By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Markus Molitor – Haus Klosterberg

(Wehlen – Middle Mosel)

Although Markus Molitor is quite relaxed when speaking about his wines, he is less so when describing the growing season: "After the harvest, we were very nervous as we had to invest much time and effort into this vintage. Nature started late and bud break and flowering were days if not weeks behind schedule. But then, in July, nature sort of exploded, so that by the end of the summer all seemed rather set back to normal, with a prospect of good yields. But then rain hit the region at the end of September. Normally, this should not have affected our berries so much, but the rapid development during the summer had led to thinner skins than usual. A lot of berries burst open under the pressure and botrytis was quick to affect these berries, which as a consequence shriveled rapidly. This reminded me of the 2006 vintage. Fortunately, we have a large team of full-time employees and we could bring forward the harvest to October 10 but we had to do a lot of selections and we did not finish before mid-November. We had to set priorities, so that I first focused on the Middle Mosel, close to base, and only later sent my team to my Saar vineyards. In the end, it proved the most expensive harvest of all time at our Estate. But I feel it was worth it when I taste the resulting wines today."

Despite low yields ("1/2 of that of 2012 and only 1/3 of 2011!" as Markus points out), the Estate was able to produce a wide range of wines, from bone dry to luscious sweet, with a clear heavy-loading on the sweet side. The Estate produced no less than 6 TBAs (two TBA * from the Zeltinger Sonnenuhr and the Wehlener Sonnenuhr and 4 TBA *** from respectively the Ürziger Würzgarten, Bernkasteler Lay, Wehlener Sonnenuhr and Zeltinger Sonnenuhr), two BAs (one "no star" from the Lay and a * from the Zeltinger Sonnenuhr). Of these, the Zeltinger Sonnenuhr TBA *** and Zeltinger Sonnenuhr BA * are held back for a future auction (on top of the "usual" special cask of Auslese *** and Spätlese from the same vineyard reserved for auction). Did you follow?

This mind-boggling collection is quite a *tour de force*. The number of wines, despite minuscule yields, remains extremely high. We were particularly impressed by the dry wines, which show superb freshness and lightness as well as superbly well integrated acidity, nonetheless than the gorgeous Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Auslese **, a strong contender for dry wine of the vintage. The off-dry wines are probably richer, fuller and more exotic than ever but the fruity-styled wines are simply superb, especially as of Auslese upwards. The regular Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Auslese ***, the Graacher Himmelreich Auslese *** and the Bernkasteler Lay BA are stunners, and this not only in the so-called "context of the vintage."

NB: The Estate uses a clever system of indicating the type of wine (dry-tasting, off-dry or fruity) via the capsule color: white for dry, green for off-dry and gold for fruity-styled. In addition there is some wording on the back label. In order to avoid confusion, we indicate the color of the capsule in parenthesis in the description of each wine. Readers should be aware that this is not found on the label nor referred to as such by the Estate internally.

*NB: The TBAs and the Haus Klosterberg (Green Capsule) were not available for tasting. Also the auction bottlings of Zeltinger Sonnenuhr BA *, Auslese *** and Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Spätlese will be reviewed when released at Auction.*

2013er Markus Molitor

Bernkasteler Lay Riesling Beerenauslese

64 14

98

This offers a hugely intense nose not unlike that of a TBA, with stunningly intense yet refined and elegant notes of pineapple, raisin, smoke and fig. The palate is in line with the nose with great complexity, liqueur, honey and sweet exotic fruits. The honeyed flavors are packed into an airy structure in the long and smooth finish. This is quite spectacular! 2033-2073

2013er Markus Molitor

Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese *** (Golden Capsule)

28 14

96

Initially slightly reduced, this starts off with canned peach, anise and flowers but gains significantly from airing. The wine comes over as round and creamy on the palate, with quite some intense flavors of honeyed fruits. The smooth long finish has the intensity of a BA, with quite some whipped cream, yet remains beautifully airy. This BA-styled wine will make for a great dessert wine at maturity. 2028-2063

2013er Markus Molitor

Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese *** (Golden Capsule)

49 14

92

This is quite reduced at first and only gradually reveals its rich aromatic profile which includes apricot, peach and honey. The wine is comparatively light and soft with some ripe fruits on the palate and gains in intensity and smoky flavors in the long and smoky finish, which leaves a fleeting scent of brown sugar in the after-taste. This is easy to enjoy in a rather direct and easy style now but the wine will gain in complexity with aging. 2028-2053

2013er Markus Molitor

Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Auslese *** (Golden Capsule)

39 14

95

This is quite impressive from the first whiff on, as the smoky profile is enhanced by most refreshing flavors of cassis, vineyard peach and herbs. The wine offers more honey, yellow fruits as well as powerful zesty flavors on the palate and leaves a ripe taste of mango, passion fruit and grapefruit in the long finish. This is a gorgeous Himmelreich Auslese. 2028-2053



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Weingut Markus Molitor – Haus Klosterberg

(Wehlen – Middle Mosel)

2013er	Markus Molitor	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Auslese *** (Golden Capsule)	21 14	94
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A superb fresh nose of anise, white peach, bergamot and pineapple leads to a playful and intense structure on the palate. The wine is well balanced even if on the sweet side at this early stage. However the long and gorgeously spicy finish is just incredibly impressive. This just needs time to find its balance. But then, it will be a smasher of a wine. 2028-2053

2013er	Markus Molitor	Bernkasteler Lay Riesling Auslese *** (Golden Capsule)	53 14	93
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This developed a great and quite open nose of grapefruit, yellow peach, apricot, laurel and bergamot. The wine lives from a great feeling of tension on the palate yet remains airy and structured. The finish is intense, smoky and long. This is quite a treat! 2023-2038

2013er	Markus Molitor	Kinheimer Hubertuslay Riesling Auslese *** (Golden Capsule)	47 14	91
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Some bakery notes from the spontaneous fermentation are still present, but give way with some airing to fine scents of flowers, yellow peach, anise and quince. The wine is really nicely pure and focused on the palate, and remains quite airy despite all the intensity and power at play. This needs at least a decade to integrate the noticeable levels of residual sugar which come through in the medium-long finish. 2023-2038

2013er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Schlossberg Riesling Auslese ** (Golden Capsule)	48 14	92
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An expressive nose including pear, anise and spices is wrapped into some ripe honeyed fruits. This leads to a juicy palate with quite some honeyed fruits at the forefront. A zesty touch of acidity comes out on the mid-palate, and provides freshness to the long, intense and grapefruit-driven finish. 2023-2038

2013er	Markus Molitor	Kinheimer Rosenberg Riesling Auslese ** (Golden Capsule)	46 14	91
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A light and subtle nose of anise, pear and earthy flavors leads to a comparatively light and juicy wine, which is well balanced thanks to a playful acidity. The finish is focused, spicy and quite long. This is still quite backward but hints already at the pleasure of drinking this at maturity. 2021-2033

2013er	Markus Molitor	Erdener Treppchen Riesling Auslese ** (Golden Capsule)	37 14	89+
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The initial touch of sulfuric reduction gives way to earthy flavors, dried fruits, quince and red apple on the nose. The wine develops a more exotic side but still nicely juicy side on the palate, with rich mango-driven honeyed fruits and mango preceding a rather soft, round and creamy finish. This has quite some upside potential if it manages to gain in freshness and shed of its sulfuric side. 2023-2033

2013er	Markus Molitor	Ockfener Bockstein Riesling Auslese ** (Golden Capsule)	87 14	90
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This offers a direct and expressive botrytis-infused nose of apricot, passion fruit, pineapple and coconut. The wine is initially rather compact on the palate, with more botrytis-induced flavors including apricot, pineapple and dried fruits, with quite some grip and presence in the earthy and powerful finish. This full-blown dessert wine should age nicely. 2021-2033

2013er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese (Golden Capsule)	22 14	91
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This rich and opulent wine delivers complex scents of anise, pineapple, apple, yellow peach and some bakery products on the nose. The feeling on the palate remains airy and zesty, but also loaded with Auslese GK-styled whipped cream, almond and coco cream. The zesty side then takes over in the finish and provides a sensation of lightness to this gorgeous but overall rather powerful wine. 2021-2033

2013er	Markus Molitor	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese (Golden Capsule)	18 14	90
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This needs quite some airing to give way to some notes of quince, pineapple and mint. The wine is quite present on the palate, where it developed however an Auslese profile, with rich, juicy and honeyed flavors of fruit. The finish is powerful and long. 2021-2033



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(Wehlen – Middle Mosel)

2013er Markus Molitor

Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Spätlese (Golden Capsule)

25 14

89

This rather closed and shy wine only gradually reveals yellow peach, apricot, honey and pineapple. The wine coats the palate with rich fruits but the round and fruity structure on the mid-palate is nicely wrapped into zesty and spicy flavors in the long and clean finish. 2023-2033

2013er Markus Molitor

Saarburger Rausch Riesling Spätlese (Golden Capsule)

16 14

90

This delivers a quite attractive nose of smoke, mint and yellow peach. The wine is nicely juicy, but also comparatively soft and light bodied on the palate. It comes however into its own through some classy smoky flavors in the fresh, zesty and very long finish. This needs some time to develop its aromatics, but the underlying material is first class. 2021-2033

2013er Markus Molitor

Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Kabinett (Golden Capsule)

33 14

90

A very fine and elegant nose full of fresh flavors including mint, white peach and some spices leads to a juicy and fruity feel on the palate, where flavors of apple and peach, but also of more exotic coconut cream, are wrapped into some nice zesty acidity. The finish is however quite powerful, in the style of a full Spätlese, with a slightly earthy, rich and soft side coming through. This full-blown Spätlese should drink nicely at maturity. 2023-2033

2013er Markus Molitor

Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Kabinett (Golden Capsule)

04 14

87

A quite intense and fruit-driven nose of apricot, yellow peach, anise, spices and a touch of tar gives way to a juicy and apricot-driven feel on the palate. The rather soft and creamy and rather straightforward finish reinforces the feeling of power and sweetness in this Spätlese in all but name. 2019-2028

2013er Markus Molitor

Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese ** (Green Capsule)

59 14

89

This is quite a rich and opulent off-dry wine. Ripe notes of apricot, yellow peach, smoke and some floral nuances are freshened up by minty flavors. The wine starts zesty and comparatively light on the palate but significantly gains in volume and richness towards the finish, which proves powerful, somewhat linear and surprisingly rich. 2015-2019

2013er Markus Molitor

Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Auslese ** (Green Capsule)

45 14

89

This is quite open and attractive with some rich flavors of yellow orchard fruits, spices and a touch of exotic fruits. Intense exotic and juicy fruits lead to a round, creamy and quite sweet feel on the palate and some rich exotic flavors from botrytis in the finish. This will require a few years to integrate its richness and find its balance. 2017-2023

2013er Markus Molitor

Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Spätlese (Green Capsule)

13 14

88

Slightly reduced at first, this opens up to show yellow peach, smoke, apple and a touch of earthy flavors. The aromatics are slightly diffuse at the moment, and the wine is round, soft and offers ripe fruits including apricot in the powerful and long finish. 2016-2021

2013er Markus Molitor

Bernkasteler Badstube Riesling Spätlese (Green Capsule)

58 14

90

Earthy smoke, laurel and a touch of pineapple are some of scents emerging from the glass of this wine. The wine is focused and zesty on the palate and this zest provides the necessary balance to the Auslese-level sweetness coming through. More pineapple and peach lead to a long, spicy and zesty finish. This is a delicious off-dry wine. Now-2021

2013er Markus Molitor

Zeltinger Himmelreich Riesling Kabinett (Green Capsule)

44 14

88

An open and expressive yet elegant nose of white flowers, apricot and almond cream also offers riper flavors, at least for Kabinett standards, of exotic fruits. This is direct and very attractive on the palate as the fruits and cream give the wine a lot of charm. Now-2017



Mosel Fine Wines

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By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Markus Molitor – Haus Klosterberg

(Wehlen – Middle Mosel)

2013er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese *** (White Capsule)	40 14	92+
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This offers a stunning nose with a lot of complex flavors. It is very pure and smoky with fine notes of vine peach, dried flowers, mint and white pepper. The feeling of purity continues on the palate as light and fine zesty flavors of citrusy fruits blend miraculously well into creamy peach and almond. The finish is airy, deep and pure. This is clearly a strong candidate for best dry wine of the vintage, it is that impressive! 2016-2023+

2013er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese ** (White Capsule)	43 14	91
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This elegant and refined wine offers delicate floral scents on the nose, some zesty mint and white peach wrapped in smoke on the palate and a juicy, clean and smoky long finish. The aromatics become riper and more powerful as the wine gains in airing but the whole thing lives from great balance and finesse. This is a gorgeous dry Mosel. 2016-2023

2013er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese (White Capsule)	19 14	89
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Attractive scents of yellow fruits, juicy peach, pineapple and apple lead to a direct and zesty feel on the palate. This fresh side then gradually gives way to creamy round fruits in the long and dry finish. 2015-2020

2013er	Markus Molitor	Saar Riesling Alte Reben (White Capsule)	54 14	87
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This is still quite primary and only reveals flavors of spontaneous fermentation and smoke under quite a mantle of sulfur. Some flavors of green fruits and apple come through on the palate, which lead to a ripe, soft and round finish. This needs a good year to find its balance and develop crisp Saar Riesling flavors. 2015-2018

2013er	Markus Molitor	Mosel Riesling Alte Reben (White Capsule)	24 14	87
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Ripe fruits mixed with herbal flavors lead to a fresh, zesty medium bodied wine on the palate. A touch of cream balances out the slightly earthy notes in the finish and makes this thoroughly enjoyable. 2015-2019

2013er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Kabinett Fuder 6 (White Capsule)	41 14	89
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This offers an attractive and complex nose of yellow fruits including peach and pineapple as well as a touch of apricot. The wine is quite refined and elegant on the palate with a creamy and comparatively smooth yet long finish. This is a very good dry Riesling. 2015-2021

2013er	Markus Molitor	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Kabinett (White Capsule)	06 14	89
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Fresh and initially restrained aromatics lead to a very elegant and fine wine with notes of almond cream and vine peach. It is nicely balanced on the palate, with creamy fruits enhanced by some zesty and spicy tension. The fully dry finish is long and delicious. 2015-2021

2013er	Markus Molitor	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Kabinett (White Capsule)	05 14	90
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Superb notes of spontaneous fermentation give way to fresh aromatics including white peach, mint, flowers and banana. This superb and well-delineated nose leads to a rounder feeling on the palate. Zesty flavors of fruits and smoke provide the necessary balance in the very long and precise finish. This is a superb light dry Riesling! 2015-2021

2013er	Markus Molitor	Erdener Treppchen Riesling Kabinett (White Capsule)	34 14	89
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A very fine, spicy and fresh nose made of yellow peach, blueberry and lavender lead to a direct and zesty feel on the palate, with fresh flavors of gooseberry, lime and herbs. The acidic tension and very dry finish are remarkable but make this really a wine for lovers of focused and zesty wines. 2015-2018

2013er	Markus Molitor	Riesling Schieferstein (White Capsule)	10 14	87
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Subdued scents of apricot, smoke and some floral elements lead to a comparatively smooth and creamy feel on the palate and attractively smoky and fresh flavors in the finish. 2015-2018



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"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Markus Molitor – Haus Klosterberg

(Wehlen – Middle Mosel)

2013er Markus Molitor

Riesling Haus Klosterberg (White Capsule)

35 14

87

This starts off with only a rather subdued nose of anise, peach, herbs and smoke. The wine is however quite direct on the palate, with zesty and fresh flavors leading to a slightly rich yet well-structured finish. 2015-2018

2007er Markus Molitor

Bernkasteler Lay Riesling Spätlese Edition 7 (White Capsule)

50 08

90

This offers the telltale flavors of the 2007 vintage with cream and toffee flavors, yet it remains quite playful and subtly elegant as the aromatics blend harmoniously in the very long, creamy and smoky finish of this gorgeous dry wine. Now-2017



Mosel Fine Wines

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Weingut Egon Müller

(Wiltingen – Saar)

The tone was immediately set when only five samples (including two auction bottlings!) were set out for tasting on the side table at the entrance of the Estate. Anticipating the question, Egon Müller just smiled and said: "The battle between ripeness and yields gave me two options: Either have some quantity but little quality, or have little quantity and some quality. I think you can guess which option I went for", before adding some background information: "The cold September did not play in our favor and the grapes were late to ripen. What I feel we really missed was botrytis, which never really developed, and this could have helped to raise sugar levels. We did try to go for BA or TBA, and we were actually able to bring in fruit with 140° Oechsle at the beginning, but the quantities were simply not there. We started our harvest on October 21 but were already finished by early November, as we brought in a meager 10 hl/ha. We did have some small harvests in the recent past, notably in 2005 and 2010, but 10 hl/ha is still a record in our modern days." The vintage reminds him actually of 2010 and 1994, "only without botrytis."

The ridiculously low yields had the Estate made some tough decisions, including that to not produce any wine from the Wiltinger braune Kupp. Instead, the fruit went into the Scharzhof Estate. Besides this, the Estate produced a Scharzhofberger Kabinett and Spätlese sold via the regular trade, a Scharzhofberger Kabinett Alte Reben and a Scharzhofberger Auslese GK, both sold via the auction (see our Auction Guide for more details on these two wines).

Egon Müller put a very brave face to what must have been a frightful experience in the cellar when only 16 casks were produced on a total 16 ha (40 acres) of vineyards. But the result is remarkably good, with some gorgeously precise and subtly complex bottlings of Scharzhofberger. However, the bottling that really hit the bull's eye is the "mere" Scharzhof Estate Riesling, which transcends the vintage and delivers incredible complexity, even by the bottling's usual high standards. The decision to declassify the complete production of the braune Kupp really paid off. In our eyes, this is one to go for in 2013!

2013er Egon Müller

Scharzhofberger Riesling Spätlese

04 14

92+

This delivers an undercooled yet exotic touch of pineapple, greengage, grapefruit, lime, mint and herbs, which gradually transform into riper scents of cream, apricot and melon. The wine is quite firmly zesty yet leaves a gorgeously complex and multi-layered tart and spicy feel in the long finish. This is already quite enjoyable now, in its primary phase, but really deserves to be given some time in the bottle to give the wine the chance to develop its complexity. It could then actually surprise us all! 2020-2033+

2013er Egon Müller

Scharzhofberger Riesling Kabinett

02 14

91

Gorgeous scents of smoky grapefruit, mirabelle and spices, enhanced by a delicate whiff of whipped cream on the nose lead to a gorgeously zesty feel on the palate. The aromatic precision is simply superb and the whole thing leaves a nice tart feel in the finish. This is still on the austere side of life but should blossom in a few years' time. 2018-2028

2013er Egon Müller

Riesling Scharzhof

01 14

90

The Estate Scharzhof is usually based on the Estate's holdings in Saarburg, Wiltingen (Braunfels), Wawern and Oberemmel. In 2013, it got a boost by including the whole harvest from the Wiltinger braune Kupp and this shows on the quality of the wine, which oozes juicy and primary scents of pear, apple and subtle herbs on the nose. The wine is incredibly dense and "serious" on the palate, with a glorious touch of creaminess bringing the necessary smoothness to a zesty experience. The finish is long and refined. This transcends the notion of Estate wine and is not far off the quality of the stunning 2011 (of course in a completely different and fresher style). This is that good! 2015-2023+



Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut "O." – Olaf Schneider

(Traben-Trarbach – Middle Mosel)

This Estate is maybe less known to some, so a few words: Olaf Schneider, the owner of Weingut "O.", has been working this tiny Estate of no more than 0.6 ha composed of prime parcels of very old vines in the Trarbacher Ungsberg following organic principles since the mid-2000s.

Olaf sees the vintage 2013 as challenging but also underrated: "It was clearly not an easy vintage but I feel that, as so many recent vintages which were talked down early, this has quite some potential. My wines have developed and gained focus and presence nearly by the day". He harvested from October 10 until November 1. This may sound long for such a small Estate but Olaf draws to the attention the fact that the small size of his Estate allowed him to remain flexible and juggle between the spells of rain in order to bring in good grape selections.

However, as everyone else, Olaf Schneider suffered from low yields, which led him to not produce any Kabinett Feinherb this year. However, he was able to produce an Auslese harvested at 110° Oechsle from largely botrytized fruit. Bottling happened as usual, i.e. before the summer, for the fruity-styled wines and in August for the dry-tasting Ungsberg.

This tiny Estate has been crafting deliciously intense and racy wines since years and probably its small size has not yet put it on the international radar screen. However, the 2013 wines follow nicely in the footsteps of the gorgeous 2012s and deliver telltale crisp, elegant and deliciously airy wines which have made the success of the Estate over the years.

2013er	"O."	Trarbacher Ungsberg Riesling Auslese	04 14	93
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Made from 90% botrytized fruit harvested at 110° Oechsle, this gorgeous Auslese oozes white peach, white minerals and some elegant spices as well as exotic fruits (mango and pineapple). The wine is nicely creamy and zesty on the palate, with great tension and focused presence in the finish. And as if not enough, one is left with a lingering touch of acacia honey and apricot in the after-taste. This is gorgeous! 2023-2043

2013er	"O."	Trarbacher Ungsberg Riesling Kabinett	03 14	90
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Mirabelle and yellow fruits wow for presence in this still quite backward wine which lives at the moment from a rather simple sweet-sour tension on the palate. The residual sugar is however well integrated and this still smoky and racy wine should expand nicely at maturity. 2018-2028

2013er	"O."	Trarbacher Ungsberg Riesling	06 14	89
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This forceful wine delivers some attractively subtle scents of white flowers, yellow fruits and smoky slate on the nose. The long maceration (of over 2 days) comes through on the palate, providing some buffer to the firm acidity but also dominating the structure at the moment. The long finish is tart without being bitter. All this needs is some time in the bottle to find its balance and then it will please lovers of intense, zesty yet complex dry wines. The high acidity would make us opt to drink this in the first five years of its life, but this could prove conservative. 2015-2018

2013er	"O."	Trarbacher Ungsberg Riesling Trocken Bikiniblick	01 14	86
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This wine fermented with ambient yeasts in traditional casks provides a surprisingly ripe aromatic spectrum on the nose, ranging from quince to greengage. Zesty acidity provides focus to the palate and the medium long finish. This should be quite enjoyable as of next year, as a summer drink. 2015-2017



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Weingut Joh. Jos. Prüm (Wehlen – Middle Mosel)

Katharina Prüm sees the vintage as a quite successful one, despite the trouble they had during the harvest: "I do not want another harvest like this any time soon! Everything was late in 2013 and we feared the worst as acidity levels were high but rain led to botrytis and rapidly dwindling yields. We stopped gambling for late harvesting and started on October 23 and continued to harvest until November 12. We had to juggle between our vineyards, always going back and forth between our various sites. This was nerve-wracking but I am extremely happy with the results, which I find, show great balance and finesse!"

The high level of botrytis and ripeness left the Estate with no option but to forfeit the production of any Kabinett and Spätlese, except for one cask of Estate Riesling Kabinett (only offered to the German market) and an auction Spätlese from the Wehlener Sonnenuhr. Simply put, all wines bottled at the Estates were Auslese upwards, including some BA / TBA fruit from both the Wehlener Sonnenuhr and the Graacher Himmelreich for some future Auction. The bulk of the production was bottled at the end of July.

This is a brilliant collection produced by this Estate with some exciting wines coming out from this cellar. These behave like a fresher and livelier version of 2007, i.e. a "pumped-up" version of a ripe vintage rather than a riper version of an acidic vintage (as was the case at many other Estates). The Wehlener Sonnenuhr and Graacher Himmelreich Auslese as well as the Wehlener Sonnenuhr GK are classics in the making. The Bernkasteler Badstube Auslese is probably the best ever from the Estate. All wines have complexity, ripe acidity and the telltale airiness of the Estate, but packed into a stunningly intense structure. The decision to not try to bend Auslese wines into Spätlese and Kabinett (which several other Estates, under understandable commercial pressures, unfortunately did) is the right one as the resulting wines are true to the Prädikat and the stylistic direction of the Estate.

NB: The Estate Kabinett was not tasted.

2013er	Joh. Jos. Prüm	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese GK	96
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This delivers a stunningly pure and airy nose of pear, apple and almond which are joined by more exotic fruits on the palate, all bedded in a most silky and racy structure. Despite the utter simplicity and balance, there is incredible depth and complexity at play here and all this ends in a grand finale, in which almond and honeyed apricot woe for attention. What a beautiful dessert wine! 2033-2063

2013er	Joh. Jos. Prüm	Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Auslese GK	93
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Initially quite restrained, this offers quite some rich and honeyed fruits paired with mirabelle, almond and apricot. The wine is quite zesty and focused, but also remarkably intense and racy. The spicy, almost salty, finish is quite impressive. 2023-2043

2013er	Joh. Jos. Prüm	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese	94
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This offers a most gorgeous nose of yellow peach, white minerals and flowers as well as a remarkably focused and intense feel on the palate. The finish is quite long and multi-layered. This is a gorgeous effort, retaining some of the classic airiness of the Estate, but repackaging it into a nearly oily yet razor-sharp and focused structure on the palate and the finish. What a stunning effort! 2028-2043

2013er	Joh. Jos. Prüm	Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Auslese	94
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This delivers a subdued nose of smoke, fresh pear, a hint of red berry fruits in the background and plenty of lively, juicy and racy fruits on the palate, with quite some tartness in the finish. This is still in infancy but should make for a stunning piece of winemaking at maturity. 2028-2043

2013er	Joh. Jos. Prüm	Bernkasteler Badstube Riesling Auslese	93
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This delivers a gorgeous nose of pear cream, some herbs and plenty of creamy yet juicy fruits on the palate. The wine is easy to drink and yet packed with multi-layered herb-infused complexity, making one go magically back to the glass, and this despite the GK-styled concentration and intensity. This is a great Bernkasteler Badstube Auslese! 2023-2038

2013er	Joh. Jos. Prüm	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese	92
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This offers a rich nose of yellow fruits, dried herbs driven by caraway and laurel on the nose, with quite ripe and amply creamy flavors on the palate and the finish. The wine lives from the sweet-acid tension, which brings freshness and precision to the long and intense finish. 2023-2043



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By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Max Ferd. Richter

(Mülheim – Middle Mosel)

Constantin and Dirk Richter do not beat around the bush about 2013: "It was for sure a difficult vintage. It started with quite some rain and low temperatures in March, April and May. When the summer eventually made its appearance mid-June, the temperatures quickly rose to really high levels, up to 35°C, so that we got hit by quite some hailstorms. Fortunately, July and August were ideal but then rain, combined with mild weather conditions, settled in from September 7 onwards. Actually all looked quite good up to the beginning of October, but the humid weather led to an outbreak of botrytis and rot, and a strong rise of Oechsle degrees by the day, something similar to what we experienced in 2010 and 2006. We had first planned to start our harvest on October 21 but eventually moved the date forward to October 14. The levels of sugar, extract and acidity give the wines concentration, complexity and vivacity. In a way 2013 reminds us also of our 1996 vintage."

Harvest started on October 14 and was completed by November 3. The yields did not exceed 30 hl/ha, something not seen here since 1980! The Estate lost two thirds of its berries in Mülheim and Veldenz, in particular due to the June hail, whereas yields were normal on the Brauneberger hill, which always does well in wet vintages. The acidity levels were on the high side so the Estate decided to produce only few dry and off-dry wines, and only slightly de-acidified some basic wines. Botrytis was clean and acetic acid was rare. "We however had to be very quick, all berries had to be brought in as quickly as possible", said Dirk Richter. He also added that "we could have easily produced 10 different Auslese bottlings, had we had enough time to do selections." The Estate was able to harvest up to a Beerenauslese out of the Brauneberg hill, but refrained from producing any Eiswein as the yields were too low to risk leaving out fruit for an elusive frost.

This is a very good set of wines with, at its top, two superb Auslese and a Beerenauslese. However readers should be aware that all wines appear far higher in Prädikat than what is written on the label as the Estate decided to heavily declassify the grapes (something which we see always with suspicion for fruity-styled wines as the consumer does not get "more", but rather "something different"). Even taking this into account, we would recommend to wait at least the beginning of our drinking window provided for each tasting notes, so as to give the residual sugar a chance to better integrate with the acidity. But then, there will be some delicious wines to be enjoyed!

2013er Max Ferd. Richter

Brauneberger Juffer Riesling Beerenauslese

20 14

93

Harvested at 170° Oechsle, i.e. already well into TBA territory, this offers superbly honeyed flavors of apple, rhubarb and yellow peach, all lifted by a touch of volatile acidity. The wine juicy on the palate before developing ample and rich honeyed and exotic fruits as well as mirabelle. The feeling of liqueur is intense and refined, and leads to an intense and extracted feel in the long, juicy and powerful finish. This is quite treat! 2023-2053

2013er Max Ferd. Richter

Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese

13 14

94

This offers a hauntingly complex and exotic nose of rich and honeyed fruits, mango, pineapple and toffee. The wine hits the palate with a superb juicy and mouth-coating structure including fine botrytized and exotic flavors. However the acidity is quick to join the party and adds depth and freshness to the experience. The finish is consequently full of tension with some grapefruit and lime notes. This is quite a superb wine as it combines richness of flavors with freshness and purity. 2021-2033

2013er Max Ferd. Richter

Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Auslese

16 14

94

Made with up to 80% of botrytized fruit, this offers a most beautiful nose mixing botrytis complexity and smoky freshness. Tangerine, grapefruit and yellow peach lead to whipped cream and a multi-layered feel on the palate. The wine offers very intense and complex flavors in the long finish which is almost weightless despite all the extract and intense flavors at play. This is a great and gorgeously refined Auslese. 2021-2038

2013er Max Ferd. Richter

Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese

12 14

92

Rather closed at first, this gradually develops complex yet fresh flavors of gooseberry, smoke, flowers and apricot. Juicy and creamy notes of fruits give way to a heavier, strongly botrytized and round feel on the palate. Yellow fruits, including peach, precede a concentrated and rather compact finish. This behaves more like an Auslese GK than a Spätlese, but as an Auslese GK, it is an impressive effort. 2023-2038

2013er Max Ferd. Richter

Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese

19 14

91+

Initially slightly reduced, this reveals anise, yellow peach, honey, toffee and some vanilla cream on the nose. High levels of dry extracts accentuate an overall rich, creamy and intense palate. The finish is rather round and mouth-coating, with just a touch of zest in the after-taste. This delicious Auslese in all but name could even prove to be better than initially anticipated at maturity. 2020-2033



Mosel Fine Wines

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By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Max Ferd. Richter

(Mülheim – Middle Mosel)

2013er Max Ferd. Richter

Brauneberger Juffer Riesling Kabinett

14 14

91

This offers a superb nose of smoke, apricot, dried fruits, plum and a touch of tar. The wine is very juicy, fruity and appears initially rather soft in style as the intense cream and residual sugar are quite noticeable. Some apricot and red berry fruits tend to enhance this feeling but are quickly replaced by a most fresh, focused and vibrating touch of acidity. This is an impressive fruity-styled wine, if one bears in mind that this has the weight of at least a Spätlese if not an Auslese on the palate. 2021-2033

2013er Max Ferd. Richter

Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Kabinett

24 14

91

Made out of the coveted Goldwingert parcel, this has quite a superb aromatic profile which offers some yellow vineyard peach, flowers, infused smoke, earl grey tea and a touch of vanilla cream. The wine is juicy and offers intense flavors of peach and other juicy fruits, all wrapped into a most fresh and spicy structure. This is clearly Spätlese in style but, as such, a superb wine. 2020-2033

2013er Max Ferd. Richter

Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Kabinett

18 14

90

This offers a rather rich aromatic profile for a Kabinett, a feeling which is magnified by quite some scents of honeyed fruits, apricot and mango (no doubt coming from botrytis). Rich and exotic fruits join a creamy structure of at least Spätlese depth and intensity on the palate. This is quite intense in fruity flavors and has quite some complexity. This needs time to integrate its residual sugar but should then provide outstanding drinking pleasure ... as a Spätlese. 2021-2033

2013er Max Ferd. Richter

Veldener Elisenberg Riesling Kabinett

23 14

90

This is the only bottling out of this vineyard made in 2013. The wine offers expressive scents of yellow fruits, peach, quince, tar and licorice. It starts off as rather refined and zesty on the palate, yet gains in intensity and cream in the rich, fruity and honeyed finish. This is easily Spätlese in style, and quite a nice wine. 2021-2033

2013er Max Ferd. Richter

Riesling Richter Estate

28 14

89

You may frown your eyebrows when seeing a "mere" Estate wine being rated so high in 2013. There is a reason: This is made above all from "declassified" parcels in the Erdener Treppchen, Graacher Domprobst and Himmelreich and Veldener Elisenberg. The nose shows notes of pineapple, peach skin, ginger spices, grapefruit, a touch of smoke and apricot. This nice and open aromatic leads to a creamy wine which has a nice presence and freshness. The finish is long and more off-dry in taste than sweet. This is a great success for a "humble" Estate wine! Now-2021

2013er Max Ferd. Richter

Mülheimer Sonnenlay Riesling "Zeppelin Label"

03 14

87

This wine is made with 80% of purchased fruit. Initially smoky and slightly reduced, this offers after some airing nice notes of anise and peach cream. The palate shows some creamy and juicy notes with good underlying acidity which adds tension and freshness. This is a nice easy-going Riesling to enjoy over the next years. 2015-2018

2013er Max Ferd. Richter

Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Kabinett Feinherb

07 14

88

This golden colored wine exhibits a really rich aromatic profile with lots of exotic fruits, ripe pineapple, mango, orange and exotic fruits. Delicately honeyed fruits coat the palate and give the wine a rather soft structure at first, but the acidity quickly joins the party. The slightly earthy and phenolic feel at this stage in the finish makes us opt to drink this Spätlese-structured wine (both in terms of aromatics and richness) from next year on. 2015-2020

2013er Max Ferd. Richter

Mülheimer Sonnenlay Riesling Kabinett Trocken

15 14

89

This is made mainly out of the Johannisberg sector, with the rest coming from 50 to 60 year-old vines in the central part of the original Sonnenlay sector. The wine exhibits subtle scents of smoke, anise, earl grey tea, peach skin and grapefruit. The wine is nicely refined and elegant on the palate with a light-weighted structure and zesty acidity in the fresh finish. This lively wine is superb. Now-2018



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Weingut Max Ferd. Richter

(Mülheim – Middle Mosel)

2013er Max Ferd. Richter

Mülheimer Helenenkloster Riesling Spätlese Trocken

21 14

87

Only 1 Fuder of this wine was made of this rather linear wine which will please lovers of bone-dry Riesling. A nice and flowery nose driven by fruit zest, mint and pineapple gives way to more zest on a light-to-medium weighted palate. The finish is marked by lime and grapefruit, and this acidic profile leads to a very dry feeling in the comparatively long finish. Now-2017

2013er Max Ferd. Richter

Brauneberger Juffer Riesling Kabinett Trocken

22 14

87

Made from clean grapes out of the Hasenläufer, this exhibits quite intense notes of smoke, apricot, yellow peach with a touch of toffee. The structure is initially lean but gains in presence as the extract level is rather high for a Kabinett. Smoke, earthy flavors and dried spices are present in the good and slightly phenolic finish. 2015-2018

2013er Max Ferd. Richter

Riesling Classic

25 14

86

Smoke, fresh and slightly green fruits, gooseberry, mint, white peach, thyme and grapefruit are part of a nice and comparatively complex array of scents on the nose. The structure on the palate is rather round with good and juicy fruits. This is just off-dry in taste and the finish is spicy and salty. This direct wine does the trick. Now-2016

2013er Max Ferd. Richter

Weissburgunder Trocken

06 14

85

A rich and aromatic nose is made of almond cream, toffee, peach kernel and honeyed fruits. The wine is quite dense and rich on the palate, with some sweet fruits, toffee and vanilla cream. This is rather powerful expression of Weissburgunder pairs the aromatics of Chardonnay with the taste of Riesling. Now-2017



Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Selbach-Oster

(Zeltingen – Middle Mosel)

Johannes Selbach, his usual self, did not beat around the bush and was blunt about the vintage: "This was a difficult vintage for the winemaker and I do not need another one like that soon. Cold winter, no spring, a turbo summer and then more miserable weather as of September with only one week of "Golden October". The miraculous thing was that the grapes were still remarkably healthy by early October but the cold and wet weather forced us to throw our original plan (harvest start around October 21) over board and start a week earlier, on October 14, with a severe negative pre-harvest, cleaning out badly affected grapes. Except for a glorious week of sunshine at the end of October, we had to juggle between the spells of rain and only completed the harvest on November 8. The vintage yielded two types of wines at our Estate: on one side clean grapes with quite low sugar levels suited for dry wines and Kabinett and Spätlese, and on the other side botrytis-affected grapes for super-rich but also highly acidic wines. Despite all the pressure, we had actually no problems to produce small quantities of TBA."

The Estate yields were at a low ("uneconomically low" as Johannes is quick to underline) 30 hl/ha. The Estate decided to restructure somewhat its portfolio and to no longer produce any single-vineyard bottlings from the Zeltinger Himmelreich (with the exception of the Kabinett Halbtrocken, which has a serious following among its customers). It will use this fruit as basis for an extended series of dry, off-dry and fruity-styled Estate bottlings. The range of block-harvested wines will not include any "Rotlay" in 2013, as Johannes Selbach felt the resulting wine to be too powerful and lacking the finesse he expects from this vineyard (he honestly admitted getting it wrong: "I probably waited too long with my harvest in this plot"). Also, the low quantities in 2013 means that no separate bottling of Graacher Himmelreich will be produced. The portfolio is crowned by a Zeltinger Sonnenuhr TBA. In addition, the bigger of its two 2011er TBA completed its fermentation in spring and will be commercialized this year, and therefore we include the tasting note in this report.

The Estate produced an impressively good collection of wines with great consistency throughout the whole portfolio and a set of bottlings, alas made in tiny quantities, which are among the absolute highlights of the vintage (including the Domprobst Feinherb "Ur" Alte Reben, the "Schmitt", the TBA and a glorious Domprobst Auslese *). Concerning the dry and off-dry bottlings, these commendable wines are very nicely made but, even more so than at other properties, we urge our readers NOT to open these this year (also not the Estate ones!) but wait until at least next year: They do not show much charm now and absolutely need a year in the bottle to show their potential.

NB: The Estate Riesling Spätlese as well as bottlings from the Wehlener Sonnenuhr and a further Auslese from eh Graacher Domprobst were not yet ready for tasting.

2011er	Selbach-Oster	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese	27 14	96
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This thickest of two TBAs produced at this Estate in 2011 was harvested at over 220° Oechsle and only stopped its fermentation by mid-2014. The wine delivers a gorgeous nose of candied fruits (apricot, pineapple and fig) and delivers a great feeling of balance and complexity on the palate. The fact that this was fermented to 8.5% alcohol (a deliberate move by Selbach to avoid it being cloyingly sweet) makes it already remarkably approachable at this stage, even if it is firmly into sweet dessert wine territory. The finish is lingering, airy and yet also fiery, with some of the power of the Zeltinger Sonnenuhr ready to play. 2021-2051

2013er	Selbach-Oster	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese	28 14	95
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This little gem harvested at 200° Oechsle at the end of October delivers quite subtle scents of candied pear, cooked pineapple, honey and juicy dried apricot. A beautiful mouth-coating yet zesty feel of orange peel and more apricot come through on the oily yet intensely focused texture on the palate. The wine glides right through the finish, leaving a sweet yet tart feel of nougat-infused smoke. This is a quite extraordinary effort, especially in the context of the vintage, in which few Estates had the opportunity (and nerves!) to make a TBA. 2028-2053

2013er	Selbach-Oster	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese **	10 14	90
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A whiff of volatile acidity gives way to an engaging and nicely complex nose of herbs, spices, coconut and apricot. The wine is rich and round, without any unduly over-powering acidity, and leaves a rich, almost overwhelming feel in the long and smooth finish. 2023-2038

2013er	Selbach-Oster	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese *	06 14	94
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This stunning beauty immediately catches one's attention through a most fascinating nose of gorgeously sweet yellow fruits, green apple, coconut and caraway. Its delicate creaminess paired with a nice underlying touch of zest makes it simply irresistible despite being a big botrytis-affected Auslese. The finish has a gorgeously sweet and airy feel of zesty yet gorgeously sweet fruits. This is a stunning success at this Estate! 2023-2038



Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Selbach-Oster

(Zeltingen – Middle Mosel)

2013er	Selbach-Oster	Zeltinger Schlossberg Riesling "Schmitt"	13 14	93
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The "Schmitt" is a fruity Auslese-styled wine made from old vines block-harvested in a prime south-facing sector in the lower part of the main Zeltinger Schlossberg hill. The 2013 version was harvested at a whopping 105° Oechsle at the very end of October. It delivers a gorgeously broad yet complex nose of honey, apricot, herbs and caraway. Clean yet sweet fruits come through on the palate and the zesty acidity in the finish lightens up the whole experience and brings tension to the mouth-watering and citrusy finish. What a gorgeous wine! 2023-2038

2013er	Selbach-Oster	Zeltinger Himmelreich Riesling "Anrech"	11 14	92
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The "Anrech" is a fruity Auslese-styled wine made from old vines block-harvested in a prime nearly south-facing sector high up the steep hill part of the Zeltinger Himmelreich. The 2013 version was harvested above 100° Oechsle towards the end of October, during the short period of "Golden October". The wine delivers a telltale flowery nose of lily flower, water lily and daisy paired with some white-yellow fruits, spices and herbs. The delicious sweet-sour tension turns this powerful Auslese into a playful kitten and gives a great mouth-watering side to the juicy finish. 2023-2038

2013er	Selbach-Oster	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese	08 14	91
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This Auslese harvested at a whopping 110° Oechsle delivers lively yet complex scents of yellow peach, pineapple and oregano as well as, at this stage, a whiff of volatile acidity. The wine is fiery and firmly zesty, yet also creamy and intense on the palate. A firmly dessert wine structure and exotic set of aromatics come through in the spicy and mouth-watering finish of this hearty and fascinating Auslese. 2023-2038

2013er	Selbach-Oster	Bernkasteler Badstube Riesling Auslese	15 14	90
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This still quite reduced Auslese delivers somewhat austere even if ample scents of quince, greengage, laurel and caraway. The powerful side of the wine is underlined by quite some creamy fruits on the palate. This leads to a rather zesty and deliciously mouth-watering finish, which is in quite a contrast to the palate opulence at the moment. This needs some time to develop its inner balance but should turn into a lively and zesty Auslese at maturity. 2023-2038

2013er	Selbach-Oster	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese	12 14	89
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Delicate and tantalizing scents of pear, quince, spices and herbs lead to a robust and quite manly feel on the palate, magnified by some sweet-zesty tension. The finish is nicely tart and fruity with quite some powerful scents of mint and pear infused smoke in the after-taste. 2021-2033

2013er	Selbach-Oster	Zeltinger Schlossberg Riesling Spätlese	16 14	88
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This offers a nicely fragrant nose of peach, mint and star anise which sits in contrast to a quite powerful and creamy feel on the palate and a quite sweet feel in the finish. This "Spätlese by nose and Auslese by taste" should develop nicely in this "in-between" style. 2021-2033

2013er	Selbach-Oster	Zeltinger Schlossberg Riesling Kabinett	09 14	90
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This delivers an attractive nose of pear, mint, cassis and oregano as well as gorgeously zesty fruits on the palate. The finish shows some of the ethereal lightness of good Kabinett and the wine leaves an airy fragrant mouth-watering feel in the aftertaste. 2021-2033

2013er	Selbach-Oster	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Kabinett	14 14	89
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This delivers an under-cooled nose of mint and cassis and a nice mouth-feel underlined by attractive scents of peach and spices on the palate. The finish lives from a firm sweet-sour tension. This is nicely made in a direct and forward way. 2021-2033

2013er	Selbach-Oster	Riesling Kabinett	22 14	87
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The Estate Kabinett comes essentially from the holdings in the Zeltinger Himmelreich (which are all situated in the steep hill part of this vast vineyard) as well as possibly in Graach and Kinheim. This offers a delicious and fragrant nose of white flowers, minerals, ginger and almond as well as a refreshing gooseberry and mint-driven balance on the palate and in the after-taste. This is quite nice and easy to knock down. 2015-2021



Mosel Fine Wines

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By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Selbach-Oster

(Zeltingen – Middle Mosel)

2013er Selbach-Oster

Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese Feinherb "Ur" Alte Reben 30 14

(90-92)

This wine was made from very old vines ("ur-alte" means extremely old) situated in Kackert, one of the best parcels in the Sonnenuhr which had been the pride of the historic Freiherr von Schorlemer Estate for nearly a century. This delivers a gorgeously juicy and intense nose of yellow peach and thyme. The wine transcends the vintage through its rich and inviting feel on the palate and a gorgeously and subtly zesty and playful feel in the off-dry finish. This is a superb effort in the making! 2015-2023

2013er Selbach-Oster

Zeltinger Himmelreich Riesling Kabinett Halbtrocken

19 14

88

This offers an inviting nose of pear, quince, mirabelle and brown sugar. A playful touch of acidity buffers off nicely some intense fruity flavors which give a delicately touch of cream and depth to the mid-palate. Pear-infused smoky scents are left in the after-taste. This is, as usual, a very nicely made wine which will gain in presence with further bottle age. 2015-2018

2013er Selbach-Oster

Riesling Feinherb

26 14

86

The Estate Riesling Feinherb (bottled in 75cl) is essentially made from the Estate's holdings in the Zeltinger Himmelreich (which are all in the hilly part of the vineyard). Some subdued scents of mirabelle, herbs and fruits give way an attractive sweet-sour tension on the palate and a satisfyingly lemony and tart off-dry feel in the finish. 2015-2018

2013er Selbach-Oster

Riesling Halbtrocken

18 14

85

The off-dry Estate Riesling (bottled in 100cl) is essentially made from the Estate's holdings in the Zeltinger Himmelreich (which are all in the hilly part of the vineyard). It offers a rather golden-color as well as good hearty flavors of green herbs, gooseberry and ground spices. This is quite manly and firm on the palate and leaves a straightforward tart sense of minerals and lemony fruits in the after-taste. Now-2016

2013er Selbach-Oster

Zeltinger Schlossberg Riesling "Bömer"

29 14

(89-91)

The Bömer is a dry-tasting wine (it stopped at 12 g/l of residual sugar, i.e. it is not "legally" dry) first produced in 2011 from a prime parcel situated behind the village in the lower central (south-west exposed) part of the main steep hill of the Schlossberg and planted with over 30 year-old grafted vines. This golden-hay colored wine delivers a great full-bodied feel of pear, grapefruit and herbs. As much as this coats the palate with layers of zesty fruits and herbs, it remains gorgeously lean and spicy in the long dry-tasting finish. This is a potentially outstanding piece of winemaking in the making. As with many dry wines from 2013, this is also likely to need quite some rest in the bottle before showing the goods. 2016-2021

2013er Selbach-Oster

Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese Trocken

23 14

89

A whiff of vanilla quickly blends into a sea of juicy ripe pear and earthy spices. A crisp acidity is well balanced out by the natural inner intensity and weight of the wine, which gives the whole experience a nice creamy touch. This is a very attractive dry Mosel wine made in a naturally airy style. 2015-2018

2013er Selbach-Oster

Zeltinger Schlossberg Riesling Spätlese Trocken

25 14

87

Still marked by some residues of fermentation, this already hints at nice scents of cassis, gooseberry, pear and apricot tree flower as well as a whiff of vanilla which only wait to blossom over the coming months. This is nicely made in a simple and slightly lean style. 2015-2018

2013er Selbach-Oster

Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Kabinett Trocken

21 14

87+

Harvested with 87-88° Oechsle, this delivers mineral-infused scents of grapefruit, pear, gooseberry and cumin. The wine is nicely crisp on the palate, with zesty scents of lemony fruits and minerals carrying over right into a subtly complex and tart finish. This could develop nicely over the coming months and should be at its best only as of next year. 2015-2018



Mosel Fine Wines

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Weingut Selbach-Oster

(Zeltingen – Middle Mosel)

2013er Selbach-Oster

Riesling Trocken

24 14

87

This Estate Riesling (bottled in 100cl) is essentially made from the Estate's holdings in the Zeltinger Himmelreich (which are all in the hilly part of the vineyard). The wine delivers attractive scents of peach, spices, mirabelle and cassis as well as a tickling and not unduly aggressive touch of acidity. The finish is loaded with minerals, tart and a quite mouth-watering freshness. This will gain in presence over the coming months, so it is best left alone until Spring-Summer of next year. 2015-2017

2013er Selbach-Oster

Riesling Trocken

07 14

85

This Estate Riesling (bottled in 75cl) is essentially made from the Estate's holdings in the Zeltinger Himmelreich (which are all in the hilly part of the vineyard). The round and direct wine exhibits some subdued scents of mirabelle and smoke, which lead to a rather full-bodied feel on the palate. It is not unduly acidic and leaves a satisfying feel in a crisp and not very long finish. Now-2016

2013er Selbach-Oster

Weissburgunder Trocken

03 14

87

The Weissburgunder Trocken is made from the Estate's five parcels planted with this grape (situated in the Zeltinger Himmelreich, Zeltinger Schlossberg and Wehlener Klosterberg) and fermented half-half in stainless steel and old casks. The 2013 version delivers quince, mango, star anise as well as a hint of vanilla pod. The wine is nicely inviting and light-bodied on the palate and leaves a racy and airy feel in a slightly straight but very enjoyable finish. Now-2017



Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Günther Steinmetz

(Brauneberg – Middle Mosel)

Stefan Steinmetz is quite happy about the vintage was it not for the yields: "The acidity was not a major issue as my wines undergo some malolactic fermentation. What really did hurt was the hailstorm at the beginning of June, which affected some of our vineyards and the fact that yields were so low. For instance, we harvested only two casks (i.e. 2,000 liters) of Veldener Grafschafter Sonnenberg on our 1.5 ha parcel! We started our Riesling harvest on October 10, rather early, and it lasted until October 30. We brought in fruit ranging from 80° Oechsle right up to above 100° Oechsle in our top parcels."

The Estate reduced somewhat its portfolio of wines in 2013 as yields were too low to warrant for a Dhroner Hofberg "GW", for any separate bottlings out of the Mülheimer Sonnenlay and for any fruity-styled or dessert wines. In addition, the bottling of Piesporter Falkenberg Terrassen has now been "replaced" by a Piesporter Treppchen "Von den Terrassen", made from a secluded steep hill part of this vineyard (read more about the wine and its vineyard in the tasting note here below). The bulk of the wines were bottled as usual around June, but some wines were still fermenting when we visited the Estate in July. In addition to the 2013 wines, the Estate also only recently released its 2012er Dhroner Hofberg "GD" as well as its 2007er Veldener Grafschafter Sonnenberg Alte Reben. We therefore included both of these "late releases" into our reviews.

This is a superb collection of dry-tasting wines produced by this Estate, which pair great aromatic intensity with a stunning sense of airiness transcending the vintage. All wines, including the "humble" Rivanner, are at least very good if not outright outstanding. However, more so than in recent years, many of the wines are still being quite backward and austere at this stage and they really need some bottle age to show their charm.

NB: The Kestener Paulinshofberg and Brauneberger Juffer "HL" / Devon were not yet ready for tasting.

2013er	Günther Steinmetz	Brauneberger Juffer Riesling Kabinett Feinherb	04 14	89
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Made from parcels high up on the main part of the Brauneberger hill, this offers a nicely aromatic nose of cassis, mint and spices and delivers this in a superbly elegant and racy style. The wine is nicely balanced and delivers good fresh scents of herbs on the palate. The deliciously mouth-watering finish makes one naturally go for more. Now-2020

2013er	Günther Steinmetz	Piesporter Treppchen Riesling "Von den Terrassen"	15 14	(91-93)
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For those knowing a little bit of the Mosel, Piesporter Treppchen on the label has usually been a turn-off as much of this vineyard is on non-saying alluvial soil yielding simple Estate wines. However, the Piesporter Treppchen also includes a former single vineyard, called "vor dem Berg" (before the Mountain) before 1971, referring to the fact that it was situated just before the Wintricher Ohligsberg "mountain". This vineyard is situated on very steep hill on a similar quartzite-infused blue slate soil as the one on the Wintricher hill. This is where this wine comes from. This beauty made from over 90 year-old un-grafted vines situated high up the hill is quite a wine in the making. It offers a superb nose of fresh white and yellow peach, quince, bergamot and many other subtle spices on the nose as well as great creamy complexity driven by William pear on the palate. The finish is long, complex and intense, and yet retains a great sense of airiness. 2015-2023

2013er	Günther Steinmetz	Wintricher Geierslay Riesling Sur Lie	08 14	91
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This shows the telltale "green" aromatics of the vineyard with mint, herbs and bergamot providing energy to the fruity base of ripe pear and quince mixed with a hint of apricot. The wine is delicately off-dry on the palate and leaves a gorgeously spicy and smoky, almost Saar, feel in the finish. This is a superb individualistic wine in the making which will prove hard to resist at maturity. 2016-2023

2013er	Günther Steinmetz	Wintricher Ohligsberg Riesling "GW"	06 14	91
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"GW" stands for "Grosser Wintricher" and is the Estate's (tongue in cheek) answer to the GG movement. Despite having been harvested at a whopping 104° Oechsle, this fully dry-tasting wine (it only has 10 g/l of residual sugar) only boasts a surprisingly moderate 12.5% of alcohol and this shows on the balance of the wine, which delivers gorgeously complex scents of peach and tangerine immersed into a sea of earthy spices. The wine is creamy on the palate and yet the whole thing remains airy and as light as a feather. The finish is nicely zesty, without any hardness, and leaves a clean and deliciously salty feel in the after-taste. This is a gorgeous wine and a great success in the vintage. 2015-2023

2013er	Günther Steinmetz	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling	11 14	90+
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Made from a parcel situated in the south-west facing Niederemmель part of the hill, this wine is driven by quite some minerals and herbs, without much fruit at this early stage (something quite usual from this part of the Piesporter hill). The wine is however impeccably balanced on the palate and leaves a gorgeously complex and not unduly racy feel in the long spicy finish. This really needs quite some time to develop but could turn into an even better piece of Mosel Riesling than expected in a few years' time. 2016-2021



Mosel Fine Wines

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By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Günther Steinmetz

(Brauneberg – Middle Mosel)

2013er Günther Steinmetz

Veldenzer Grafschafter Sonnenberg Riesling Alte Reben

10 14

88

Made from over 60 year-old and still largely un-grafted vines, this wine was harvested at a refreshingly low 85° Oechsle and delivers great minerals, spices and a hint of herbs in a dry-tasting Kabinett-style. A racy side is gently framed by aromatics and smoothness from well-blended sweetness, which gives the wine depth and balance on the palate. The finish is clean and mouth-watering. Now-2018

2013er Günther Steinmetz

Brauneberger Riesling

03 14

87

The Brauneberger bottling is made essentially from fruit out of the Brauneberger Mandelgraben as well as occasionally de-classified cask from the Brauneberger Juffer. In 2013, the low yields means that the wine only comes from the Brauneberger Mandelgraben. This off-dry wine made with a low 10.5% of alcohol by volume delivers a still wild nose of minerals, grapefruit, mirabelle, earthy spices and smoke. The wine is quite lean and firm on the palate and leaves a Saar-styled aristocratic austere, focused and racy feel in the finish. This is best left alone for at least year, to give the currently hard side of the after-taste a chance to mellow away. 2015-2018

2013er Günther Steinmetz

Riesling

07 14

86

The Estate Riesling is commercialized in liter bottles and comes from the holdings in Mülheim and Veldenz, with possibly some de-classified fruit from Kesten added to the blend. The wine offers a quite satisfying nose of white peach, pear, grapefruit and telltale scents of smoke and herbs coming from slate grown Riesling. This nicely does the job it is designed to do: easy to knock down and put a big smile on the face. Now-2017

2013er Günther Steinmetz

Rivaner (vom Schieferhang)

09 14

87+

The Rivaner (labelled as "vom Schieferhang" by its main German reseller) is a cask-fermented bottling of Müller-Thurgau (Rivaner is a synonym of Müller-Thurgau often used in the Mosel and Luxembourg) made from vines planted in 1999 in a steep part of the Veldenzer Grafschafter Sonnenberg hill on a soil blending grey slate and quartzite. Forget your run-of-the-mill easy going, gently fruit-driven Müller-Thurgau: This is a completely different animal all together. Still marked by pungent firmly reductive scents of spontaneous fermentation, i.e. with ambient yeasts (also sometimes called "sponti stink" by the locals), this Rivaner hints at quite an attractive even if wild character in which minerals try to gain the upper hand on more straightforward scents of fruits. This looks like a fascinating wine to follow (and one with quite some upside potential!) but should really be left alone for a year or two (or opened as much as days in advance) to give it a chance to shine. 2015-2018

2012er Günther Steinmetz

Dhroner Hofberg Riesling "GD"

29 13

91

"GD" stands for "Grosser Dhroner" and is the Estate's (tongue in cheek) answer to the GG movement. The 2012 version, only released in 2014, delivers a great nose yellow fruits, brown sugar and infused quince which leads to a gorgeously complex and rich feel on the palate made in a slightly overripe Auslese Trocken (some would say GG) style. As so often with the wines from this Estate, the intrinsic opulence and complexity of the wine are nicely integrated into an airy structure. Now-2018

2007er Günther Steinmetz

Veldenzer Grafschafter Sonnenberg Riesling Feinherb Alte Reben

19 08

89

Made from over 60 year-old and still largely un-grafted vines, this delivers a gorgeous even if still quite smoky nose of herbs (bergamot), spices and some delicately ripe fruits. The wine is nicely mineral and backward in the finish and delivers a straight and beautifully balanced feel of more minerals and fruits in the finish. This is simply gorgeous and, while fully mature now, should offer much pleasure for many years to come. Now-2020



Mosel Fine Wines

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By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut St. Urbans-Hof

(Leiwen – Middle Mosel)

Nik Weis summarized the vintage as "short, cold and wet", before adding: "This was quite a vintage as the growing season was in fact rather short and the weather conditions were far from being ideal. However, I am very happy that we bunch thinned the vines very early on and I am convinced that this was the foundation for us being able to harvest ripe grapes without unduly high levels of acidity. Another factor which played a major role is the fact that many of my top vineyards are still trained on single pole. These grapes actually better withhold the wet and cold climate than the others. We had initially planned to start our harvest on October 21 but as the date approached it was clear that it would have been too late, so we did start already by mid-October. However, we delayed the harvest as much as possible in our top vineyards and only finished it on November 8. Despite the less than ideal growing conditions, we were able to harvest an Auslese as well as a full 80 liters of TBA at 170-175° Oechsle, both in the Piesporter Goldtröpfchen."

The Estate decided not to produce any dry wine besides a small quantity of Estate Riesling as it felt that the material was not right for dry wines. Also, more remarkably, none of the wines was de-acidified, as Nik Weis was adamant to stress: "We have never acidified or de-acidified since I am heading this Estate and I was not going to start in this vintage", before adding, tongue in cheek: "For me, the best de-acidification method is residual sugar!" The Estate did produce its usual portfolio of off-dry and fruity-styled wines right up to the said TBA, which is earmarked for next year's auction.

The St. Urbans-Hof has produced a hugely impressive collection of wines, in which every single wine is at least very good (including the widely available Estate Riesling from Old Vines) if not outright superb. Hardly any wines show the acidic hardness so often found in this vintage and all wines share the gentle racy side of textbook Mosel Riesling. One just needs to give the wines a little bit of bottle age for them to harness their intensity and power, and then enjoy!

2013er	St. Urbans-Hof	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Auslese	25 14	93
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This powerful yet still quite closed wine hints at deliciously exotic flavors of pineapple, apricot tree flower and fine spices. The wine is superbly precise and airy on the palate, despite quite some cream and structure, and leaves a long and powerful imprint in the after-taste. This is a gorgeous dessert wine in the making. 2028-2043

2013er	St. Urbans-Hof	Schodener Saarfeilser Marienberg Riesling Spätlese	22 14	92
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An inviting nose of bergamot, white peach and herbs leads to a gorgeously zesty and spicy feeling of fruits and minerals on the palate as well as a multi-layered touch of smoke in the finish. This is a great success in the vintage. 2023-2043

2013er	St. Urbans-Hof	Ockfener Bockstein Riesling Spätlese	17 14	92
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This wine was made from holdings in the prime former single vineyard Zickelgarten, at the heart of the original Bockstein sector. And boy is this a beautiful wine! Juicy yellow fruits are rounded up by a touch of almond, caramel and herbs to deliver a full-bodied but enormously bright and delicately flowery feel on the palate, and a delicious subtle touch of creaminess in the finish. This is quite powerful but also incredibly fascinating and easy to knock down, despite a near Auslese structure. 2023-2043

2013er	St. Urbans-Hof	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Spätlese	21 14	90+
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This delivers quite some tropical fruits (including pineapple, mango and passion fruit) nicely framed by an elegant touch of smoke. A touch of acidity brings a nice mouth-watering side to a rather Auslese-styled creamy finish. There is power but also quite some multi-layered finesse at play here. This is a gorgeous wine in the making, and one with upside potential if it gains in precision. 2023-2043

2013er	St. Urbans-Hof	Leiwener Laurentiuslay Riesling Spätlese	24 14	90
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This delivers a gorgeous nose of oregano, yellow fruits, herbs, grapefruit and candied lemon delivered in a zesty and delicately creamy feel on the palate. The finish is nicely balanced with good complexity and nice slate-infused smoky notes. 2023-2033

2013er	St. Urbans-Hof	Ockfener Bockstein Riesling Kabinett	20 14	91
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Made from a parcel situated in the former Neuwiese single vineyard, this offers the telltale bright and flowery side of this sector of the hill, with elderflower, red berry fruits and herbs. The wine is ravishingly spicy on the palate and leaves a gorgeous mouth-watering feel in the finish. This is plain delicious and quite frankly very hard to resist. 2023-2038



Mosel Fine Wines

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By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut St. Urbans-Hof

(Leiwen – Middle Mosel)

2013er St. Urbans-Hof

Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Kabinett

19 14

89

This rich and round wine delivers a gorgeous nose of yellow fruits including pear, quince and pineapple with some smoky slate and quite some powerful intense zesty fruits on the palate. The finish is nicely mouth-watering, with the zest of a Kabinett and the presence and power of a Spätlese. This is a gorgeous wine in the making. 2023-2038

2013er St. Urbans-Hof

Riesling from Old Vines

14 14

87

The off-dry Estate Riesling from Old Vines is a more or less equal blend of fruit harvested in the Leiwen Klostergarten and in the Wiltinger Schlangengraben. The wine delivers a simple but hugely satisfying nose of ginger, spices, grapefruit, quince and pear juice as well as a gorgeous off-dry balance (with approx. 40 g/l of residual sugar) which buffers off very nicely some playfully ticking acidity. The finish is juicy and hearty, delivering plenty of Mosel character. Now-2018

2013er St. Urbans-Hof

Leiwener Laurentiuslay Riesling Feinherb

10 14

90

Made from the parcel situated in the Ritsch sector (a steep hill and nearly fully south-orientated sector high up the hill), this delivers a spicy feast of peach, mirabelle, and vanilla on the nose as well as some lovely freshness (but not much fruit at this stage) on the palate. A touch of acidic zest in the off-dry finish brings tension and makes this an utterly playful yet powerful experience. This is a gorgeous wine which needs just a little bit of bottle aging to develop on the palate. 2015-2023

2013er St. Urbans-Hof

Wiltinger Riesling Kabinett Feinherb Alte Reben

06 14

89

The Wiltinger Alte Reben (Kabinett Feinherb is added on the official back label) is an off-dry wine which comes from a 1.5 ha parcel in the Schlangengraben still planted with what is thought to be over 100 year-old vines, most likely by its original owner, the Huesgen-Böcking Estate, at the turn of the 20th century. A great nose of broth, ginger, grapefruit, spices, pear and smoke leads to a bright and nicely balanced wine, with quite some aromatic presence but enough depth to give it a playful and elegant finish. 2015-2023

2013er St. Urbans-Hof

Mehringer Riesling Alte Reben

07 14

88

The Mehringer bottling is a dry-tasting wine made from old vines in the prime Layet sector in the Mehringer Blattenberg. Harvested very late, on November 8, this delivers ripe scents of pear, citrus and dried herbs on the nose as well as a great juicy and well-balanced feel on the palate. There is quite some complexity at play here in the long and well-rounded finish. Now-2023

2013er St. Urbans-Hof

Riesling Trocken

05 14

87

The Estate Riesling Trocken comes from the Leiwen Klostergarten. This fresh and easy-going wine delivers attractive scents of ginger, spices, grapefruit and slate-infused smoke. The wine is nicely balanced on the palate, where it leaves a clean and moderately zesty feel. This is a gorgeous "simple" wine for summer days. Now-2018



Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Thanisch

(Bernkastel – Middle Mosel)

Sofia Thanisch was quite upbeat about the vintage, “small but good” was her short summary. She then added that “the growing season started late, as did flowering, but the grapes held up actually quite well. It was only in October that we had to rush things as wind was making the grapes fall off the vine. We started our harvest on October 18 and completed it on November 8. As everybody else, we had to pay our toll to yields but, thanks probably also to our old vine material, we still managed to bring in 35 hl/ha, which is ridiculously low but still ok when I hear my colleagues. Do not misunderstand me, I do not want another vintage like this soon but we brought in good sugar levels, which ranged from 90° right up to 125° Oechsle and I find the resulting wines very good.”

The low yields led the Estate to focus its portfolio in 2013, at the expense of the Lay, as Sofia explained: “We did not produce any separate bottle from our old vines in the Lay because there was simply too little juice for doing so and because we wanted to maintain the quality of our Badstube bottlings.” The Estate did produce however a full portfolio of Doctor bottlings including a GG, a Kabinett, a regular and an Auction Spätlese and an Auslese. Bottling occurred comparatively late, in May and June.

This is another impressive collection by this Estate with, as usual, Estate bottlings amongst the most enjoyable of the whole region and fruity-styled Badstube bottlings possibly even “better” than in 2012 (no doubt thanks also to the addition of the fruit of the Lay). Also, the Doctor bottlings look particularly impressive but here we need to provide some background as these wines may end up being overlooked. Whoever will open a bottle of 2013er Doctor in the coming months will get a backward, possibly bulky and even boring wine. This is “normal” and should not be a worry: Our experience has shown us that these traditionally-made wines blossom and develop focus and precision at maturity, producing some of the finest and most complex expression of Mosel Riesling that we know off. Few reviewers (be it in Germany or internationally) are aware of this “miraculous” transformation and we feel this being the reason that this Estate does not get the credit it deserves. As we would hate this traditional style of winemaking to be sacrificed on the altar of instant gratification (we declare a self-interest here as we wish to be able to continue to buy these wines privately as well!), we urge our readers to look beyond the early un-charming phase and have the patience to let these splendid classic wines time to mature.

2013er	Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Thanisch	Berncasteler Doctor Riesling Auslese	09 14	91+
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Harvested with a whopping 125° Oechsle, this wine is more backward than usual (even for Doctor wines from this Estate) as smoke and minerals dominate the aromatics at this early stage, making the wine seem diffuse and broad. We mention this because there is quite a subtle complexity waiting to blossom at maturity, driven by honey, spices, almond, pineapple, pear, apple and apricot. As so often with Doctor wines, this will “unfortunately” need plenty of time to gain focus and develop its aromatic complexity, but should eventually turn into a modern day version of the gorgeous 1998 or 1989 at maturity. 2028-2043

2013er	Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Thanisch	Berncasteler Doctor Riesling Spätlese	07 14	91
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Slightly golden in color, botrytis immediately sets the aromatic tone in this wine, with yellow peach, mango, honeyed fruits, mirabelle, anise and some smoke. The palate is a mix of smoke, round and ripe fruits, and yet the finish is infused with smoke and is very long. This is quite “bulky” at this stage and needs a good decade to show its best and gain in finesse, as usual for Doctor bottlings. 2023-2038

2013er	Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Thanisch	Bernkasteler Badstube Riesling Spätlese	10 14	91
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The gorgeous 2013 Badstube Spätlese obviously benefited from the fact that the Estate did not bottle separately the produce from its old un-grafted vines in the best part of the Bernkasteler Lay this year. The wine is all about orange, pineapple, herbs and caraway-driven dried spices. The balance on the palate is rich and round and the finish is long and gorgeously round and fruity, with quite some subtle complexity coming through in the aftertaste. 2023-2038

2013er	Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Thanisch	Berncasteler Doctor Riesling Kabinett	06 14	90+
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More so than in recent years, the 2013 Doctor Kabinett is firmly backward at this early stage and only delivers somewhat diffuse yet subtly exotic scents of almond, honey, pineapple, peach and herbs. The mouth-feel and depth on the palate are there, but completely covered by sweet-sour tension, minerals and smoke. It is only in the finish that one gets a hint at what this will eventually turn into at maturity, namely a gorgeously complex, Spätlese-styled expression of Doctor. As usual with Doctor wines from this Thanisch Estate, this Kabinett is not for early enjoyment but one for the cellar. 2023-2038



Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Thanisch

(Bernkastel – Middle Mosel)

2013er	Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Thanisch	Bernkasteler Badstube Riesling Kabinett	02 14	90
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The 2013 version obviously benefited from the fact that the Estate did not bottle separately the produce from its old un-grafted vines in the best part of the Bernkasteler Lay this year. The wine delivers a deliciously backward nose of grapefruit, peach and dried herbs which lead to a gorgeously tense and zesty feel on the palate, where a hint of botrytis complexity still needs to be integrated. The finish is long and mouth-watering. This traditionally-made wine will need a few years in the bottle to find its balance but should prove a gorgeous piece of wine drinking in a decade or so. 2021-2033

2013er	Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Thanisch	Riesling	03 14	89
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This Estate Riesling is made in a fully fruity-style (with approx. 30-40 g/l of residual sugar in function of the vintage) essentially from the Estate's holdings in Kues, as well as some de-classified fruit from the Bernkasteler hill. This delivers a gorgeous nearly Ruwer-styled nose of grapefruit, mint and apple which lead to a nicely juicy feel on the palate, where a delicate touch of cream adds the necessary balance to buffer off the firm acidity. This is, once again, how an Estate wine should be: juicy, joyful, easy to drink and yet subtly complex. While enjoyable now, this is still quite primary and will benefit from a few years of bottle age to cut the roughest of edges away. 2016-2028

2013er	Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Thanisch	Riesling Kabinett	01 14	87
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The Riesling Kabinett is made for the export market in a slightly off-dry style (with typically 15-20 g/l of residual sugar) from the Estate's holdings on the Kueser hill, with in addition, some de-classified fruit from the Bernkasteler hill. This delivers an invigorating nose of mint, green herbs and spices. The wine is nicely crisp and juicy on the palate and a touch of sweetness brings the required balance to buffer off the acidity. This is very nice in a racy style. 2015-2018

2013er	Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Thanisch	Berncasteler Doctor Riesling GG	05 14	90+
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The Bernkasteler Doctor GG is still extremely backward at the moment, with a whiff of volatile and quite some smoky minerals on the palate. However, the after-taste hints already at apricot blossom, pear, citrusy fruit and almond, which reminds us of the glorious 1989 Spätlese Trocken at this Estate (which was still stunningly delicious in 2011). This traditionally-made dry wine will need a few years of bottle rest to show its true potential and develop the focus and finesse of Doctor wines from this Estate. We would not be surprised if it would then even exceed our high expectations. 2018-2023+

2013er	Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Thanisch	Riesling Trocken	04 14	87
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The Riesling Trocken is essentially made from vineyards on the Kueser hill, with in addition, some de-classified fruit from the Bernkasteler hill. This inviting yellow-green colored wine delivers fresh yellow peach, cassis, thyme and mint all wrapped in an attractive medium-bodied structure, with just enough acidic zing in the finish for making it mouth-watering and crisp. This nicely made and easy-going wine should provide much enjoyment over the coming few years. Now-2016



Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Van Volxem

(Wiltingen – Saar)

Roman Niewodniczanski was quite blunt about the vintage: "It is a catastrophic vintage! Yes, I am pleased with the resulting wines but what does it bring me, if I have hardly any wine to sell. The only consolation that I have is that all the production is already sold out. Our yields were a completely meager 12 hl/ha. Not only did we hardly harvest any fruit, but getting the quality of fruit made it also the costliest harvest ever. We delayed everything as much as possible in order to get ripe fruit and only started on October 22 but, during the whole harvest which lasted until November 5, we had to pass up to four or five times through the vineyards in order to select the clean and best grapes and discard the others."

As a result, the Estate drastically reduced its portfolio of wine and did not bottle any separate wine from the Kanzemer Altenberg nor from the Wiltinger Gottesfuss, and did only one bottling out of the Braufels (no Volz) and Scharzhofberger (no "P."). The produce from Volz, Wiltinger Gottesfuss and the Kanzemer Altenberg all went into the Alte Reben. Except for the Saar Riesling, the wines were kept on their fine lees until end of September 2014.

We feel with Roman and the difficulties he faced, which resonate with the short article we published in our June Issue on the hardship felt in the Saar. However, we are here to provide advice to our readers and the advice is very clear: the resulting wines are quite impressive but they are extremely backwards at this stage, a result of the very traditional growing and very late bottling. We urge our readers to be patient as we would not be surprised if these wines would turn out even more backward shortly after bottling and would, in no way, reflect the potential we see in them. These traditional beauties should be laid down for at least a year if not two in order to give them a chance to develop and show their potential. And then, we would not be surprised if they would even surprise us!

NB: The Schiefer Riesling and the Weissburgunder was not tasted.

2013er Van Volxem

Riesling Kabinett Rotschiefer

(88-90)

This wine is made from the Estate's holdings in Wawern and in the Wiltinger Kupp. The wine delivers a gorgeous nose of raspberry, cassis and spices nicely balanced out by some smoky herbs and spices. The wine is quite energetic on the palate but leaves a nice multi-layered but also racy feel in the long and powerful finish. This traditionally made wine will need some time to develop. 2015-2021

2013er Van Volxem

Scharzhofberger Riesling

(90-92)

The 2013 version, boosted by the fruit usually reserved for the Scharzhofberger P., is still completely backward at this stage but hints already at very elegant scents of lime-driven fruits, anise, smoke and flowery herbs. The wine is firmly austere on the palate and desperately needs time in the bottle to develop its softer and more enjoyable side. But then lovers of Saar wines will be in for a gorgeously complex experience. 2016-2021

2013er Van Volxem

Wawerner Goldberg Riesling

(89-91)

This wine made from a brutal selection of clean fruit delivers telltale scents of pear, star anise and brown sugar bathing in a sea of herbs and smoke. The powerful and broad structure on the palate buffers off nicely the acidity but also this wine is in desperate need of rest and bottle aging. 2016-2021

2013er Van Volxem

Riesling Alte Reben

(88-90)

In addition to its usual old vine fruit, the Riesling Alte Reben benefited the fruit from the old vines in the Kanzemer Altenberg, Wiltinger Gottesfuss and Volz in 2013. This is easily the most approachable bottling in the 2013 collection as the wine delivers a subtle nose of white peach, lime, greengage and dried herbs. A more reduced and backward side still dominates the palate but the finish is impeccably balanced if very racy. Give this a year and it should turn into a gorgeous even if aristocratically austere piece of Saar Riesling. This is a huge success for this bottling. 2015-2019

2013er Van Volxem

Wiltinger Braufels Riesling

(87-90)

The 2013 version of the Braufels, despite a quite austere and backward structure at this stage, shows unusual character and complexity. The impact on the palate is firm and intense and the finish is austere, but also quite complex and airy. This is a nice wine to enjoy as of a year or two. 2015-2018



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Weingut Van Volxem

(Wiltingen – Saar)

2013er Van Volxem

Saar Riesling

01 14

87

This quite austere and backward wine delivers a crisp nose of reduced smoke, some green herbs and lime as well as grapefruit. The feel on the palate is sharp but also hugely captivating thanks to the complexity at play. The finish is somewhat backward but should develop with a little bit of bottle age. 2015-2018



Mosel Fine Wines

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By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Vols

(Ayl – Saar)

Helmut Plunien is quite stoic about his 2013s: "I like the wines a lot as they have character and acidity. However, I do not like the yields, which were low but thankfully not frightfully low (we still managed 40 hl/ha). We started our Riesling harvest mid-October (with Vorlese only) and in earnest as of October 21 and finished it early November. It was quite a stress to get the grapes we wanted, as my purpose is to produce clean wines without any botrytis impact. We got there in the end and some of the wines will be really exciting in a few years' time, you will see. As I did not want to correct the acidity, I mainly produced off-dry wines in 2013 in order to have some sweetness to balance the acidity."

Forfeiting largely on dry wines allowed the Estate to produce its usual portfolio of wines, including the Spätlese Schlangengraben S, Schonfels, Vols I, Vols II and Ayler Kupp. This year, Helmut Plunien also made the wines from the Arbustum project launched by a series of local winemakers in Ayl from fruit trained on trees, like in the Roman days. We also included these wines in the review.

This Estate produced yet another remarkable collection of wines which, of course, show some of the acidity of the vintage, but also gorgeous flavors and the telltale lightness and aromatic transparency which has made the success of this Estate over the years. This is top notch effort from an Estate which does not yet get the recognition it deserves. This is highly recommended!

NB: The Ayler Kupp Spätlese and the non-Riesling bottlings (other than the Arbustum "S") were not tasted.

2013er	Vols	Riesling Spätlese Vols I	08 14	91
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The Vols I is a fruity-styled wine made from 40 year-old vines in the prime Volz sector in the Wiltinger Braufels. Bright yellow-green in color, this backward and smoky wine offers good inner balance with some ripe fruity aromatics driven by pear and quince. The wine exhibits quite some body and power on the palate, but some ripe zesty acidity brings balance to the creamy side. The wine is long and still very backwardly smoky. The fruity side only come through in the form of some sweetness providing balance to the zesty and intense finish. This is very nicely made in a more forceful style than usual at this Estate. 2023-2033

2013er	Vols	Riesling Spätlese Vols II	09 14	90
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The Vols II is a fruity-styled wine made from 40 year-old vines in the Wiltinger Braufels and Rosenberg. This delivers a typical flowery and Saar version of an Erdener Treppchen, with some herbs, brown sugar and gorgeous peach. The wine is nicely balanced on the palate and leaves a gorgeously clean and nice finish. A touch of sweetness comes through in the finish which still needs to integrate, so this is best left alone for at least a decade. 2023-2033

2013er	Vols	Ayler Kupp Riesling Kabinett	11 14	91
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Harvested with 88° Oechsle, the Ayler Kupp Kabinett is made in a fruity-style from parcels on the main Ayler hill (in the Stirn and the Unterstenberg). This smoky and still somewhat reduced beauty is driven by peach, mirabelle and lime on the nose. Despite quite some dry extract which adds a chewy side to the wine, it remains deliciously light on the palate and delivers a great multi-layered feel to the very long and classy finish. It is steely and there is quite some acid coming through, but it is not harsh and will even soften with bottle age. Give it enough time and it will be a smasher of a wine. 2021-2028

2013er	Vols	Wiltinger Schlangengraben Riesling Spätlese S	07 14	92
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This wine is made in an off-dry style from 90 year-old vines in the Wiltinger Schlangengraben (hence the S). Fresh peach, herbs and a hint of mint give this wine an irresistible kind of Ruwer style to this quite open and nicely balanced wine. The stunningly complex and multi-layered finish is quite superb. What a wine, which transcends the vintage! Now-2021

2013er	Vols	Riesling Spätlese Schonfels	13 14	90
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The Spätlese Schonfels is made in an off-dry style from 50 year-old vines in the Schonfels vineyard which is technically in the Ayler Kupp, but in practice completely different as it oversees the Saar and is situated in the continuation of the Saarburger Fuchs. This 2013 version offers a gorgeously open nose driven by minerals, citrus, grapefruit, white flowers as well as a hint of mirabelle. It is simply irresistibly juicy on the palate and leaves a nice mouth-watering feel in the medium long finish, with only a tad of sweetness in need of some further integration. This is deep and comparatively complex and yet also incredibly easy knock down. 2016-2023



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Weingut Vols

(Ayl – Saar)

2013er	Vols	Wiltinger Kupp Riesling Kabinett	10 14	90
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The Wiltinger Kupp Kabinett is an off-dry wine made from 45 year-old vines. Harvested with Oechsle degrees in the mid-80s, this delivers a deliciously racy and yet subtly complex nose of peach, apple, mint and some dried herbs. An electrifying tension comes through on the palate and leaves one with a gloriously racy and light feel of fruits, minerals and herbs in the finish. This is very nicely made and a great success in the vintage. More please! Now-2023

2013er	Vols	Wiltinger Riesling Kabinett	05 14	90
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The Wiltinger Kabinett is an off-dry wine made from the Estate's holdings in the Rosenberg and Klosterberg, which replaces the Wiltinger Trocken in 2013, as Helmut Plunien felt it unfit to ferment dry. And he is completely right as this really hits the bull's eye with gorgeous scents of granny smith apple, a touch of pink grapefruit and a juicy dollop of creamy lime. The wine is deliciously fruity on the palate, with quite some zest but also a stunning feeling of freshness. Only the slightly light finish betrays the vintage, but nothing to worry, this is simply too easy to knock down. What a little beauty in the making! Now-2018

2013er	Vols	Saar Riesling Feinherb	02 14	86
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This Riesling Feinherb is a 70-30 blend of holdings in Ayl (former Scheidterberg and Rauberg) and in Wiltingen (Rosenberg and Klosterberg) fermented to over 25 g/l of residual sugar. This delivers a racy and steely pack of Riesling, with fortunately enough sweetness to buffer off some of the overzealous acidity. The wine is refreshing, easy and will please lovers of highly sprung Riesling. Now-2017

2013er	Vols	Ayler Riesling Feinherb	04 14	89
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Fermented to a higher 25 g/l of residual sugar to balance out the acidity of 2013, this gorgeous wine is a huge success as it delivers the telltale flowery scents of fresh white orchard fruits, a hint of lime and some mint on the nose and a dead gorgeous balance on the palate. While not hugely complex, this is simply stunningly easy to knock down. Now-2018

2013er	Vols	Saar Riesling Trocken	01 14	84
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The Riesling Trocken is a 70-30 blend of holdings in Ayl (former Scheidterberg and Rauberg) and in Wiltingen (Rosenberg and Klosterberg). Bright yellow-green in color, this wine delivers grapefruit, lemongrass and white minerals on the nose but is let down by an unduly hard, nearly metallic feel on the palate. There are some fruits and airiness in the finish but this is one for purism freaks: People sensitive to acidity should stay clear of this. Now

2013er	Arbustum	Arbustum "R"	06 14	88
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The Arbustum "R" comes from Riesling vines co-planted with trees (like in Roman days) on the Rauberg hill (technically in the Ayler Kupp). This overtly fruity rather than smoky wine is all about grapefruit, granny smith apple and juicy pear. Some white minerals and flowery scents come through on the palate which give way to more citrusy fruits in the off-dry yet mouth-watering finish, leaving one with an herb-infused side after-taste. This is nicely made in a quite direct and straightforward style, but, in this style, it is quite irresistible. Now-2017

2013er	Arbustum	Arbustum "S"	16 14	87
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The Arbustum "S" comes from Sauvignon Blanc vines co-planted with trees (like in Roman days) on the Rauberg hill (technically in the Ayler Kupp). This offers a quite grassy nose of herbs, eucalyptus, orchard fruit, lime and spices underlined by a delicately off-dry touch of roundness on the palate, which makes this a New Zealand Sauvignon made with the balance of the Cuvée Spéciale by Cotat. The wine is long and nicely made in a direct and fresh style. Now-2016+



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The Vintage Report 2013: Other Noteworthy Wines

This section includes noteworthy wines tasted during the year from other Estates as well as additional wines from Estates featured in Part I and not available for tasting by June. This concerns in particular tasting notes of GG bottlings, which, according to VDP rules, cannot be tasted professionally before September 1 (a strange rule ... imagine if one would not be allowed to taste Bordeaux or Burgundies before their commercial release). All wines reviewed in this section are recommended.

Bastgen
Blees-Ferber
Richard Böcking
Clemens Busch
Ernst Clüsserath
Martin Conrad
van Elkan
Reinhold Franzen
Grans-Fassian
Willi Haag
Alice Hartmann
von Kesselstatt
Knebel
Milz-Laurentiushof
von Othegraven
Paulinshof
Schloss Saarstein
Andreas Schmitges
Später-Veit
Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch - Erben Müller-Burggraef
Vereinigte Hospitien
Dr. Wagner
Wegeler
Dr. F Weins-Prüm

von Hövel (Complement)
Karthäuserhof (Complement)
Schloss Lieser (Complement)
Vollenweider (Complement)
Weiser-Künstler (Complement)

Monzel
Piesport
Traben-Trarbach
Pünderich
Trittenheim
Brauneberg
Mertesdorf
Bremm
Leiwen
Brauneberg
Grevenmacher (LUX)
Morscheid
Winningen
Trittenheim
Kanzem
Kesten
Serrig
Erden
Piesport
Bernkastel
Trier
Saarburg
Bernkastel
Wehlen

Oberemmel
Eitelsbach
Lieser
Traben-Trarbach
Traben-Trarbach





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Vintage Report 2013: Other noteworthy wines

Weingut Bastgen

(Monzel – Middle Mosel)

2013er	Bastgen	Kestener Paulinshofberg Riesling GG	12 14	89
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This opulent and direct wine is driven by yellow and white fruits as well as the typical caraway and laurel of GG power on the palate. The finish is however delicately fruity, clean and direct. 2015-2018

Weingut Blees-Ferber

(Piesport – Middle Mosel)

2013er	Blees-Ferber	Piesporter Gärtnchen Riesling Auslese	19 14	92
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This delivers a stunningly captivating nose of mirabelle, fresh apricot, grapefruit sorbet and acacia honey. The wine is zesty and elegant on the palate and only lacks a little playful side in the finish for being truly grandiose. Still, this is a great success in this vintage and one which offers much drinking fun at the moment in its intensely spicy yet racy style, but should age beautifully well. 2023-2038

2013er	Blees-Ferber	Piesporter Gärtnchen Riesling Spätlese Feinherb	11 14	90
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This immediately catches one's attention through a tantalizing nose of mango, star anise, pineapple, banana, kiwi and juicy pear which gives way to a full-bodied and surprisingly round feel on the palate. There is however huge complexity at play here, which paired with the intrinsic exotic fire of great Piesporter wines, makes one go back again and again to the wine. The finish is long and fully off-dry, i.e. made in the old Naturrein style, which means that this should age quite nicely as well. This is a nice surprise from an Estate which we did not have on our radar screen so far! Now-2023+

2013er	Blees-Ferber	Trittenheimer Apotheke Riesling Spätlese *** (Green Label)	15 14	89
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This off-dry wine (it is not written as such on the label) offers a rather subdued nose of gooseberry, lime, grapefruit, greengage and pear. The wine is quite nicely balanced on the palate with a kick of acidity coming through in the powerful finish. It gains significantly from airing and develops a great intensely fruity and spicy side which offers great balance to the acidity. 2015-2018

Weingut Richard Böcking

(Traben-Trarbach – Middle Mosel)

2013er	Richard Böcking	Trarbacher Burgberg Riesling Alte Reben	07 14	88+
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This backward wine made from a 20 hour pre-fermentation maceration delivers peach and bergamot as well as quite a pungently phenolic. This gives the wine grip and body, and yet the finish is long and quite airy. This serious juice requires aging to show its potential and could surpass our initial rating in a few years' time. 2016-2020

2013er	Richard Böcking	Riesling Devon	02 14	87
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The Devon Riesling is made primarily from the Estate's holdings in the Trarbacher Taubenhaus as well as from pre-harvest fruit from its other vineyards. The 2013 version offers a quite backward nose of herbs, spices as well as good grip and presence on the palate. The whole thing is driven by minerals, with some shy scents of pear and grapefruit coming through in the bergamot-infused finish. 2015-2018



Mosel Fine Wines

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Weingut Clemens Busch

(Pünderich – Middle Mosel)

2013er Clemens Busch

Pündericher Marienburg Riesling Spätlese GK

08 14

91

Rich and savory scents of exotic fruits, quince and anise are nicely toned down by some cooler and fresher flavors on the palate. The wine is juicy but delivers its goods with Auslese level creaminess and richness. A nicely energizing touch of acidity makes the long finish fresh and refined. 2021-2038

2013er Clemens Busch

Pündericher Marienburg Riesling Spätlese

07 14

91

This offers a very fine and smoky nose with quite some pure yellow fruits and just a touch of exotic fruits in the background. The wine lives from a superbly clean touch of acidity on the palate which makes the wine refined, pure and airy. The finish is quite focused, very long and loaded with zesty flavors. This is a delicious Spätlese. 2020-2033

2013er Clemens Busch

Pündericher Marienburg Riesling Kabinett

06 14

90

A nice aromatic nose of peach, quince and other yellow fruits gives way to a ripe but juicy wine on the palate with mouth-coating cream. The finish is in full contrast to this, offering an almost Eiswein-like zesty acidity. This is clearly of Spätlese intensity but the vibrant and almost piercing acidity gives it the drinkability of Kabinett as one magically goes for another sip. 2018-2028

2013er Clemens Busch

Pündericher Marienburg Riesling GG Fahrhay

26 14

91

This offers a gorgeously fresh nose of cassis, mint, blue fruits and white peach. The wine starts off on a rather round and creamy side on the palate but rather rapidly, some spices and vibrant acidity join the party and bring freshness to the pure and earthy finish. This superb dry wine is still somewhat compact and restrained in the after-taste at this stage one is better off to give it one or better two years to blossom. 2016-2021

2013er Clemens Busch

Pündericher Marienburg Riesling GG Rothenpfad

25 14

90

A very refined and initially restrained nose opens up to reveal fresh flavors of anise, yellow peach, cassis and earl grey. The wine hits the palate with an intense and zest-driven structure. Although the alcohol level is not exceeding 12.5%, there is a feeling of power here which the acidity carries over right into the long finish. We would opt to enjoy this in its youth rather than to wait too long and let the acidity dominate the wine. 2015-2018

2013er Clemens Busch

Pündericher Marienburg Riesling GG

24 14

90

The nose is quite attractive with some fresh flavors of smoke and mint as well as riper notes of apricot and yellow fruits. The wine offers good tension and freshness on the palate, and the finish is long and focused. A phenolic side adds the necessary depth and power to balance out the zesty acidity and flavors. 2015-2018

2013er Clemens Busch

Pündericher Riesling vom roten Schiefer

23 14

88

Yellow peach, cherry, dried apricot and smoke emerge from the glass and lead to a comparatively light weighted wine. This fully dry tasting Riesling leaves an attractively racy and fresh feel of acidity in the finish. 2015-2018

2013er Clemens Busch

Pündericher Riesling vom grauen Schiefer

22 14

87

The slightly reductive nose develops only gradually some refined and fresh flavors of grapefruit, tangerine and white peach. The wine is well structured and shows a slightly phenolic side in the finish, with some earthy spices coming through in the fully dry after-taste. 2015-2017



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Weingut Ernst Clüsserath

(Trittenheim – Middle Mosel)

2013er Ernst Clüsserath

Trittenheimer Altärchen Riesling Kabinett Feinherb Emma-Marie

08 14

88

This white-green colored wine exhibits an austere minty nose of gooseberry, grapefruit and white flowers. A firm kick of acidity on the mid-palate gives this wine a somewhat hard side at the moment. The finish is quite assertive and just off-dry in taste, but offers the telltale flowery side of good Altärchen wines. 2015-2018

2013er Ernst Clüsserath

Trittenheimer Apotheke Riesling Kabinett Trocken

05 14

87+

Made from a parcel in Olk, in the flatter part of the Apotheke vineyard, this green-yellow colored wine offers a satisfyingly direct nose of gooseberry, grapefruit and mint, with a hint of riper flavors driven by pear and thyme lurking in the background. The finish is slightly short and somewhat sharp on day one but gains significantly in balance on day two. This needs some bottle rest and is best enjoyed as of next year. 2015-2017

Weingut Martin Conrad

(Brauneberg – Middle Mosel)

2013er Martin Conrad

Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling GG

15 14

89

Quite backward at first, this delivers a gorgeous nose of spices, herbs and yellow fruits. Telltale apricot flavors provide a gorgeous background for some attractive spices. The finish is nice, rather powerful and long. 2015-2018

Weingut van Elkan

(Mertesdorf – Ruwer)

2013er van Elkan

Kaseler Nies'chen Riesling Spätlese Feinherb

03 14

90

This delivers gorgeous slate-infused scents of gooseberry, pear, mint and other herbs. There is great tension on the palate, with quite some intensity, giving the wine an almost Auslese structure. The finish is dry-tasting but gorgeously mouth-watering. As so often with 2013, this really needs a good year to find its balance but should offer much pleasure for a few years (and maybe more) after that. 2015-2018+

2013er van Elkan

Riesling Schiefer Feinherb

02 14

88

This offers a delicious nose of white flowers and herbs, cassis and spices. A delicate touch of sweetness balances out the firm acidity and makes it already quite enjoyable now. This is very attractive and too easy to drink. Now-2017

Weingut Reinhold Franzen

(Bremm – Terrassenmosel)

2013er Reinhold Franzen

Bremmer Calmont Riesling GK GG

13 14

91+

This gorgeous wine delivers a superb nose of slightly infused orchard fruits, grapefruit and earthy spices. The wine is long and elegant on the palate and a delicate touch of acidity underlining the zesty side of the wine leaves one with a fresh, fine and complex feel in the long finish. This is a great success with plenty of development potential ahead. 2015-2023



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2013er Reinhold Franzen

Neefer Frauenberg Riesling GK GG

12 14

89

This delivers a quite attractive and delicately creamy nose of yellow fruits, brown sugar and herbs. The wine is rich and satisfactorily round on the palate and leaves a long mouth-watering feel in the finish. This is a gorgeous dry wine. 2015-2021

Weingut Grans-Fassian

(Leiwen – Middle Mosel)

2013er Grans-Fassian

Dhroner Hofberg Riesling GG

02 14

91

This rich and ostentatious wine delivers white minerals, white flowers, some spices and herbs and reveals its fruity side only on the palate and in the long and nicely attractive finish. This is very nicely made in an approachable but honestly quite irresistible crowd-pleasing style. This is a major success at this Estate! 2015-2019

2013er Grans-Fassian

Leiwener Laurentiuslay Riesling GG

04 14

89+

This is still very much reduced yet delivers some flavors of herbs, white fruits, mirabelle and spices. There are quite some ripe fruits on the palate yet the finish remains outstandingly airy. This could easily surprise with age! 2015-2019

2013er Grans-Fassian

Trittenheimer Apotheke Riesling GG

03 14

89

This delivers an attractive scent of spices and herbs and a nice quite slick presence on the palate and the finish. It is nicely made, in a somewhat direct but very enjoyable style. This needs a year to find its balance and should prove quite enjoyable in a flinty and restrained style for several years. 2015-2018

Weingut Willi Haag

(Brauneberg – Middle Mosel)

2013er Willi Haag

Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese

05 14

90

Made from parcels in the prime Falkenberg sector within the Juffer-Sonnenuhr, this delivers a great nose of pear, mint and spices. The feel on the palate is one of grapefruit and fresh herbs. The finish is rich yet saline. This is a gorgeous wine to enjoy over the coming years. 2023-2033

2013er Willi Haag

Brauneberger Juffer Riesling Spätlese

08 14

90

A quite superbly fresh and complex nose of anise, white peach and grapefruit leads to a fine, juicy and fruity palate. The wine combines fruit intensity, creaminess and dynamic zest in a long and pure finish. This is a gorgeous and rather subtle Spätlese in the making. 2020-2033

Domaine Alice Hartmann

(Grevenmacher – Luxembourg)

This leading Estate in Luxembourg, whose cellar master is Hans-Jörg Befort, has started to diversify its portfolio into other areas, including into the neighboring Mosel, where it tends two prime parcels today, one in the original part of the Trittenheimer Apotheke and another in the Scharzhofberg, leased from the von Hövel Estate. Both wines are made by Max von Kunow at his von Hövel Estate. We only tasted the Apotheke bottling in 2013.

2013er Alice Hartmann

Trittenheimer Apotheke Riesling Auslese

120 14

93

Made from over 50 year-old vines in the original part of the Apotheke, this offers a delicious nose of rich scents of pear, mirabelle, pineapple and honey, paired with the telltale scents of tea and dried herbs so characteristic for this part of the Apotheke vineyard. The acidity makes this utterly delicious on the palate, despite showing the quite honeyed side of more Auslese GK wines. The finish is rich, smooth and long ... but above all calls for more! This is a great surprise and one which should develop nicely. 2023-2043



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Weingut von Kesselstatt

(Morscheid – Trier-Ruwer)

2013er von Kesselstatt

Josephshöfer Riesling Spätlese

25 14

91

The 2013 version of this Spätlese is quite a successful one, even if it is really an Auslese for all but label. This being said, it delivers gorgeous scents of cassis, some dried herbs, a dash of brown sugar and a hint of fine spices. The wine is impeccably well balanced on the palate with great presence and tension and leaves one with a big smile in the long finish. It is very hard not to enjoy this wine now, but believe us, it will be even better in a solid decade! 2023-2043

2013er von Kesselstatt

Kaseler Nies'chen Riesling GG

32 14

90+

This gorgeous dry Ruwer wine delivers subdued and very subtle scents of cassis, white mint and grapefruit. The fleeting scents carry over on a delicately zesty palate, with enough smoothness for making one go magically for another glass. This could easily exceed our wildest expectations as the wine gains in body and presence with bottle age. This is a typical example of a sleeper of the vintage! 2015-2019

2013er von Kesselstatt

Scharzhofberger Riesling GG

31 14

89

This backward wine delivers a nice and elegant nose of grapefruit, lime and white flowers still straightened by a corset of smoky reduction. The nice balance on the palate, with however a touch of acidity coming through, and the long and focused finish already hint at the pleasure of drinking this wine in a year or two. 2015-2018

2013er von Kesselstatt

Wiltinger Riesling Trocken

05 14

88

The Wiltinger bottling is made exclusively from prime holdings in the Braufels as well as some declassified fruit from the Scharzhofberger. The 2013 version delivers a gorgeously complex nose of herbs and spices, with, at this early stage, only a hint of yellow and white peach and pear in the background. The wine is nicely balanced and leaves a long and clean feel in the finish. 2015-2018

2013er von Kesselstatt

Riesling Alte Reben Trocken

06 14

88

The Alte Reben is made this year mainly from old vines holdings in the Niedermenniger Herrenberg (60%) and only for part from old vines in the Kaseler Nies'chen (40%). This wine is driven by minerals and is all about fresh herbs and spices at this stage. It then develops quite a powerful mineral structure on the palate. It is only in the nicely firm yet balanced finish that some fresh mirabelle and pear infused fruits come through. This needs a little while to show its potential. 2015-2018

2013er von Kesselstatt

Kaseler Riesling Trocken

03 14

87

The Kaseler bottling is made exclusively from prime holdings in the Kehrnagel and the Herrenberg. This subdued wine delivers a nice and easy feel of fresh herbs, spices and cassis. The overall structure is quite lean on the palate and the finish is clean and beautifully focused. Now-2017

Weingut Knebel

(Winningen – Terrassenmosel)

2013er Knebel

Winninger Röttgen Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese

05 14

95

Harvested from the strictest of selections at a whopping 190° Oechsle (among the highest ripeness level we have seen in the Mosel in 2013!), this delivers a typical nose of dried fruits, pineapple, passion fruit but also shows this stunning purity which has been the hallmark of the sweet wines of this leading Estate. The finish is focused, clean, sticky yet airy and complex, with a nice touch of acidity coming through. 2023-2043



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2013er Knebel

Winninger Uhlen Riesling Beerenauslese

04 14

96

Harvested at over 150° Oechsle, this deliciously complex wine offers rich and hugely satisfying scents of creamy pear, apricot, dried spices and dried herbs. The feel on the palate is that of the really great dessert wine, being delicate, superbly focused and yet long and intense. Beate Knebel (who can spend nights selecting the berries for the BA and TBA bottlings) has not lost any of her magical touch: This is a stunning dessert wine in the making! 2023-2043

2013er Knebel

Riesling von den Terrassen

01 14

87

The von den Terrassen is a dry-tasting wine made essentially from parcels in the Winninger Hamm and the terraced parts of the Domgarten as well as declassified casks from the Winninger Uhlen and Röttgen, in particular from parcels near the river or high up near the forest. The 2013 version offers a rather open and inviting nose of pear, apricot tree flower and spices as well as a whiff of volatile acidity. The wine delivers a quite ripe mouth-feel, with herbs, minerals and a hint of infused pear coming through in the finish and giving the wine a powerful and ripe touch which will please lovers of hearty and forceful wines. 2015-2018

Weingut Milz-Laurentiushof

(Trittenheim – Middle Moselle)

2013er Milz-Laurentiushof

Trittenheimer Leiterchen Riesling Auslese

06 14

91

This thick Auslese made from this Monopole vineyard of the Milz-Laurentiushof Estate situated in the original part of the Apotheke offers an elegant nose of pear and star-anise which is enhanced by apricot and brown sugar. The wine is long and quite fresh and delivers a superbly spicy feel in the finish. This is a quite a success with plenty of life ahead. 2023-2038

2013er Milz-Laurentiushof

Trittenheimer Leiterchen Riesling

07 14

89

This off-dry equivalent of a GG comes from a Monopole vineyard of the Milz-Laurentiushof Estate situated in the original part of the Apotheke. The wine delivers an attractive nose of spices, white and yellow fruits packed into a nice sea of smoke and silk. The finish is smooth more than overtly sweet. This is very nicely made and should offer much pleasure in a few years' time. 2015-2023

Weingut von Othegraven

(Kanzem – Saar)

2013er von Othegraven

Ockfener Bockstein Riesling Spätlese

05 14

92

This delivers great flowery scents of white and yellow fruits, a hint of apricot and exotic fruits which carry over seamlessly into a gorgeously tense and creamy yet zesty feel on the palate. The finish is long, classy and energetic. However, one needs to take into account that this has the balance of an Auslese and needs to be served as such, now or at maturity. 2023-2038

2013er von Othegraven

Kanzemer Altenberg Riesling Spätlese

04 14

91+

Upon putting the nose into the glass, one is engulfed into a sea of yellow fruits, caraway and fresh herbs. This gives way to more a more exotic side on the palate, with creamy fruits being only partially balanced out by fine acidity. The finish is incredibly easy to knock down at the moment and yet this Auslese in all but name is really one for the cellar, to give it time to gain in focus and eat up its residual sugar. It could then surprise us all. 2028-2043

2013er von Othegraven

Kanzemer Altenberg Riesling Kabinett

06 14

91

This little beauty is all above clear white fruits, a hint of smoke and fine spices and a most inviting feel on the palate, which is both easy and complex. The power and presence in the finish is clearly that of a Spätlese or a light clean Auslese, but what a beautiful effort. 2023-2033



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2013er von Othegraven

Ockfener Bockstein Riesling Kabinett

08 14

90

This is a rather powerful and intense expression of Kabinett which most would consider stylistically a Spätlese. However, as a Spätlese, this is a gorgeous effort with loads of fine spices and a delicate blend of white and yellow orchard fruits on the nose and a good complex and tense feel on the palate. The finish is nicely balanced as zesty acidity brings tension to the touch of sweetness. This drinks nicely now on its primary fruit but will gain from aging. 2023-2038

2013er von Othegraven

Kanzemer Altenberg Riesling GG

15 14

89

Some smoke, grapefruit, quince and yellow peach lead to a comparatively creamy yet well-balanced feel on the palate. The racy finish adds length and freshness to the wine and one is left with a very nice smoky side in the after-taste. This is a very good dry Riesling. 2015-2020

2013er von Othegraven

Ockfener Bockstein Riesling GG

13 14

88

Initially slightly reduced, this needs a few minutes in the glass to develop some fresh flavors of green fruits, apple, quince and a touch of smoke. The wine is comparatively linear on the palate with fresh flavors of lime paired with spices, smoke and some salt. The finish is medium long and fully dry in taste. 2015-2018

Weingut Paulinshof

(Kesten – Middle Mosel)

2013er Paulinshof

Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling GG

29 14

90

This openly fruity wine delivers some spice apricot, yellow fruits and herbs on the nose as well as a delicate touch of whipped cream on the palate, which continues right through to the finish. The wine is delicious and will offer quite some pleasure for the years to come. 2015-2021

2013er Paulinshof

Kestener Paulinshofberg Riesling GG

25 14

90

This rich and yellow fruits driven wine delivers great earthy complexity on the palate and the telltale kick of which has made the success of this Estate over the years. This is a very attractive wine with superbly well-integrated power. 2015-2021+

2013er Paulinshof

Trittenheimer Apotheke Riesling GG

38 14

90

This delivers great freshness underlined by white orchard fruits and fine spices on the nose as well as a great complexity on the palate and a gorgeous touch of well-integrated zesty acidity in the finish. The wine is smooth and elegant. 2015-2021

2013er Paulinshof

Brauneberger Kammer Riesling GG

16 14

89

This delivers ripe scents of apple, herbs and smoke, to which more yellow fruits are added on the palate. The whole thing is still very primary but hints at a very good piece of dry Riesling at maturity. 2016-2021

Weingut Schloss Saarstein

(Serrig – Saar)

2013er Schloss Saarstein

Serriger Schloss Saarsteiner Riesling Spätlese

10 14

91

Made from fruit harvested with not more than 88° Oechsle i.e. levels many Estates would not deem sufficient for even Kabinett, this clean and fresh wine delivers a gorgeous feel of spices, herbs and flowery spices. The wine is gorgeously juicy on the palate, with a touch of cream rounding off the edges of some firm acidity. This is outstandingly well made in a refreshingly light and delicate style which remains true to the Spätlese label. 2023-2038



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2013er Schloss Saarstein

Serriger Schloss Saarsteiner Riesling Kabinett

09 14

91

Made with a comparably low 40 g/l of residual sugar from fruit not exceeding 80° Oechsle, this airy wine is a little of jewel of lightness fragrance and delicacy delivered in the crisp style that has made the success of the Estate over years. This real Kabinett (something rare enough to mention it these days) is all about white minerals, flowers and some delicate scents of grapefruit. The wine is steely on the palate (this is the Saar after all) but in a superbly fruity and friendly manner. This has quite some development potential! 2018-2028

Weingut Andreas Schmitges

(Erden – Middle Mosel)

2013er Andreas Schmitges

Erdener Prälat Riesling GG

16 14

89

This wine delivers an attractive nose of yellow fruits, almond and fine spices. A quite energetic and linear structure forms the palate and leads to a further sense of power, partially from the alcoholic strength, in the finish. This wine will please lovers of full-bodied wines. 2015-2021

Weingut Später-Veit

(Piesport – Middle Mosel)

2013er Später-Veit

Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Spätlese "Jupp"

10 14

90

The "Jupp" bottling owes its name to "uncle Josef" (Jupp is the local slang for Josef) from whom the Estate has this prime 0.1 ha parcel in the Taubengarten, a prime full south-facing sector of the Goldtröpfchen. This wine is all about pear, mirabelle and a hint of riper yellow fruits. It offers a quite spicy even if, at this early stage, somewhat linear feel on the palate. The finish is long, mouth-watering and nicely powerful. The deeper soils of Goldtröpfchen provide an outstanding buffer to the acidity. This is a gorgeous Spätlese in the making, which should blossom already early (with 9% of alcohol). 2018-2028

2013er Später-Veit

Piesporter Falkenberg Riesling Kabinett Trocken

06 14

89

This offers a racy and smoky feel with quite some acidity but also enough aromatic intensity (driven by minerals more than fruits at the moment) to eat up the tart feel which comes through in the finish. This is a gorgeous wine in the making, but one which requires a little bit of patience. 2016-2018

Weingut Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Müller-Burggraef

(Bernkastel – Middle Mosel)

NB: This Estate often brings its dry wines onto the market only two years after the vintage. We included in this year's report those bottlings which are released now or have been recently.

2013er Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Müller-Burggraef Berncasteler Doctor Riesling Auslese

11 14

91+

This big Auslese GK styled wine is driven by apricot, yellow and exotic fruits, honey, almond and herbs. The wine is still quite robust and sweet on the palate, as so often with Doctor wines, and in need of a good decade to develop its inner balance and integrate its richness. But then, this could surprise us all! 2023-2043

2013er Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Müller-Burggraef Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese

16 14

91

This thick wine, made in tiny quantities, delivers quite a gorgeously flowery nose of fresh herbs as well as quite some white and yellow orchard fruits. It is still quite reduced on the palate but hints at gorgeous complexity and a playful side on the palate. The finish is quite powerful and still somewhat squared but again, nothing bottle age will not cure. But it will require patience. 2023-2038



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2013er Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Müller-Burggraef Bernkasteler Lay Riesling Auslese

10 14

90

This develops a fascinating intense nose of yellow fruits, spices and slate-driven smoke. The wine is quite powerful and intense on the palate and leaves an attractively zesty feel in the finish. 2023-2038

2013er Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Müller-Burggraef Bernkasteler Graben Riesling Spätlese

05 14

90

This elegantly spicy wine is driven by yellow fruits and dried herbs on the palate. An exotic coconut, almond and lime driven side (from botrytis) then comes through in the finish. This is quite complex but also quite sweet at the moment, and still needs a bit more integration but nothing time could not cure! 2023-2038

2013er Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Müller-Burggraef Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese

17 14

90

This offers a rich yet subtly interesting nose of spices, herbs, yellow fruits, apricot blossom and spices. The "big" Auslese in all but name starts off on the powerful side on the palate yet leaves a great mouth-watering feel in the after-taste. 2023-2038

2013er Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Müller-Burggraef Berncasteler Doctor Riesling Kabinett

15 14

89

Harvested at well above 90° Oechsle, this powerful and quite intense wine delivers yellow fruits, good scents of caraway and other fine spices. The wine is quite firmly racy on the palate and leaves a somewhat bulky and broad feel in the finish, as Doctor wines often do in their youth. This really needs a lot of time to integrate its richness. 2023-2043

2013er Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Müller-Burggraef Bernkasteler Badstube Riesling Kabinett

13 14

87

This big full-bodied wine behaves really more like a powerful Spätlese than a Kabinett. As such, it offers satisfying flavors of yellow fruits, some exotic scents from a clear botrytis impact and a joyful rich but zesty finish. 2018-2028

2013er Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Müller-Burggraef Riesling Spätlese Trocken

18 14

88

The dry Estate Spätlese is made from its holdings in Lieser and Kues, to which the odd de-classified cask from the Bernkasteler main hill could be added. This powerful wine delivers a good fresh nose of spices, herbs and mirabelle-driven fruits. The wine is long and intense on the palate and leaves a clean even if full-bodied feel in the finish. Now-2017

2012er Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Müller-Burggraef Wehlenener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese Trocken

19 14

89

This offers some fresh scents of herbs, some yellow-driven fruits as well as a quite intense, slightly phenolic and full-bodied feel on the palate, which however comes from dry extracts and not from alcohol. The finish is still backward but very nice. Now-2017

Weingut Vereinigte Hospitien

(Trier – Trier-Ruwer)

2013er Vereinigte Hospitien Scharzhofberger Riesling Kabinett

19 14

88

This offers a quite attractive nose of earthy spices, fresh white fruits and herbs. The wine is delicately racy on the palate, where still backward reduction gives it a slightly broad touch. However, this should prove quite attractive in a few years' time. 2018-2028

2013er Vereinigte Hospitien Piesporter Schubertslay Riesling GG

27 14

88

This offers a quite fruity and direct nose of apricot, vanilla cream and yellow peach. It also shows some creamy flavors on the palate but quickly manages to show a more racy and zest-driven finish which is completely dry in taste. 2015-2018

2013er Vereinigte Hospitien Riesling Trocken S

21 14

88

Made from de-classified fruit from the Estate's holdings in the Scharzhofberger (hence the S), this wine is quite firm and tart (no doubt a result of pre-fermentation maceration) at first but the acidity is nicely buffered off and well integrated into a graceful and well-rounded sea of bergamot and grapefruit. Now-2017



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2013er Vereinigte Hospitien

Serriger Schloss Saarfeiser Riesling Kabinett Durchgegoren

18 14

87

This wine fermented to dry levels ("Durchgegoren" means "fermented through") delivers a round and well-balanced feel on the nose and on the palate. The finish is spicy and comparatively long. This is nicely made in a direct and fresh style. Now-2017

Weingut Dr. Wagner

(Saarburg – Saar)

2013er Dr. Wagner

Ockfener Bockstein Riesling Spätlese

10 14

91

This offers a gorgeous nose of flint, mirabelle, white fruits and spices. The wine is quite racy yet packed with fruity minerals on the palate and the finish is satisfactorily long and zesty. This is another superb Bockstein Spätlese offered by this Estate! 2021-2033

Weingüter Wegeler

(Wehlen – Middle Mosel)

2013er Wegeler

Bernkasteler Doctor Riesling Auslese

02 14

92

This offers a most beautiful nose of grapefruit, apricot and spices and delivers the goods with great finesse and class on the palate. The wine, which was still quite bulky earlier in the year, is gaining in focus by the day and should make for some great dessert wine in a decade or so. 2023-2043

2013er Wegeler

Bernkasteler Doctor Riesling GG

11 14

89+

This develops rich scents of apricot, botrytis, apple and mirabelle which lead to a rather elegant even if intense and powerful palate. The finish still shows some of the "Doctor diffuseness" but this should disappear within a year or two. It could then turn into a positive surprise. 2016-2023

Weingut Dr. F. Weins-Prüm

(Wehlen – Middle Mosel)

2013er Dr. F. Weins-Prüm

Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese

03 14

91+

Harvested at a whopping 122° Oechsle, this "Lange GK"-styled Auslese delivers rich exotic scents of fruits and herbs as well as spicy and fresh fruits. The feeling on the palate is nearly oily (it has over 35 g/l of dry extracts!), but thankfully the lightness of Sonnenuhr and the zest of 2013 save the day, turning all this intensity into a great multi-layered show in the after-taste. There is quite some upside potential in this rich Auslese! 2023-2043

Weingut von Hövel

(Oberemmelsbach – Saar)

Complement

2013er von Hövel

Kanzemer Hörecker Riesling

07 14

90

This off dry equivalent of a GG delivers a quite elegant and classy nose of pear, mirabelle and a fleeting scent of white flowers and chalky minerals. The wine is nicely clean and slick on the palate and leaves a deliciously complex feel in the finish. It is not a load or extreme wine, just one which is well made and waiting to accompany some food. 2015-2021



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Weingut Karthäuserhof

(Eitelsbach – Ruwer-Trier)

Complement

2013er Karthäuserhof

Eitelsbacher Karthäuserhofberg Riesling GG

12 14

89+

This completely primary animal delivers superb scents of white flowers, mint and lime-infused fruits. The feel on the palate is however dominated by quite some acidity at this stage and reminds us of a backward version of the 2001. This needs quite some time to shed its austere shell but will always remain a wine for admirers of highlight sprung expressions of dry Riesling. 2018-2023+

Weingut Schloss Lieser

(Lieser – Middle Mosel)

Complement

2013er Schloss Lieser

Lieserer Niederberg Helden Riesling GG

07 14

90

This proves a delicately scented wine, with some white chalk and a hint of ripe mirabelle. The zest on the palate is nicely buffered off by subtle fruits and the finish is still quite tart, but very promising. Give this a year or two, and it will turn into a delicious wine! 2015-2018

Weingut Vollenweider

(Traben-Trarbach – Middle Mosel)

Complement

2013er Vollenweider

Wolfer Goldgrube Riesling

11 14

89

This dry wine, made from the oldest vines of the Estate, delivers a gorgeous and impressively complex nose of yellow fruits, some herbs and spices but also a remarkably zingy touch of acidity on the palate which also comes through in the finish. This will need some time in the bottle to flesh out and gain in presence but is likely to always be a wine made for lovers of structured and highly zesty wines. 2015-2018

2012er Vollenweider

Riesling Schimbock

13 14

92+

This wine is made using ancient methods from 60 year-old un-grafted vines in the Schimbock, a west-facing sector in the continuation of the Wolfer Goldgrube (but technically in the Trabener Würzgarten) and typically released 24 months after the vintage. The 2012 version is characterized by gorgeous and complex scents of peach, pear and spices on the nose. These are enhanced by some mouth-watering and zesty whipped cream on the palate and a superbly long and smooth feel in the finish. This wine, made in the classic "Naturrein" style of the old days, will be a smasher at maturity! 2022-2032

Weingut Weiser-Künstler

(Traben-Trarbach – Middle Mosel)

Complement

2013er Weiser-Künstler

Enkircher Ellergrub Riesling Trocken GE

07 14

89+

This delivers a gorgeous nose of white peach, mirabelle, spices and a hint of sorrel. The wine is firmly acidic on the palate and leaves quite tart scents of apple in the long finish. This wine needs time to flesh out and gain in presence and body but will always be one for lovers of acidic, structured and focused wines. 2015-2018+



Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Auctions 2014 Look Back: New Heights

Overall, prices have gone up, but not more than one would expect from scarcity.

Prices were overall on the up at both Auctions, and this at rates faster than inflation, also due to the scarcity of wine available in 2013. However, some Estates did not want their prices to go through the roof and, quite gentlemanly, threw in bottles from the family reserve to keep prices moderate. One should note here in particular Willi Schaefer, who does this year after year, to keep its Spätlese in the €40-50 price bracket. Other prized Spätlese went for €50-60, with the Joh. Jos. Prüm one hitting €83. The top Auslese bottlings were more in line with their recent price levels.

Some Estates achieved remarkably high prices at the Bernkasteler Ring Auction.

Philipps-Eckstein, one of the three newcomers at this year's Auction, fetched €60 for his Auslese and €175 per half bottles of TBA, which are very high prices for a "first year" at the Auction. Clüsserath-Eifel was probably the most successful Estate, as its 2013er Auslese fetched €100, its 2005er Auslese €80 and its 2013er GG a staggering €60! Also the 2012er Martin Conrad GG was hammered off at €60. In the off-dry segment, the Kallfelz Estate did very well at €50 for its 2010er Urgestein. These prices are all remarkably high.

There was quite some interest for the mature wines auctioned off by the Bernkasteler Ring.

Some mature wines were hammered off and prices showed the interest of the buyers for those wines. For instance, the 1990er Bauer Spätlese reached €29, the 1990er Ernst Clüsserath Auslese achieved €50 and the 1999er von Beulwitz Eiswein went up to €130 per half bottle.

Fortunately, savvy buyers could still make great bargains at the Bernkasteler Ring.

Those readers who had a close look at our reviews could see that the 2013er Kerpen Spätlese was one of the most accomplished wines to be auctioned off this year, and those who bid on it are in for a great QPR wine, as it went for "only" €11! However, also the late releases of 2003 and 2004 auction wines by the Johann Peter Reinert Estate proved great buys, as they went for €20-€22.

The biggest surprise at the Grosse Ring / VDP was surely the Egon Müller Kabinett, which sold for a staggering €113.

We had been warned when talking to commissioners that "Egon's Kabinett is hot" and hot it was. It went for €113, making it probably the most expensive ex-cellars price for a Kabinett ever, nearly 50% up on the 2012 version. Strong demand and the scarcity of the offer (due to the ridiculously low yields of the Estate) most certainly played a role in this.

The wines by the Peter Lauer Estate represented probably the bargain of the Grosser Ring / VDP Auction.

The Peter Lauer wines proved complete bargains, with the Kabinett and the Spätlese hammered off at €21.50 and €25 respectively, and the perfect TBA, one of the best young TBAs we have ever tasted, for "only" than €215. While we feel with Florian Lauer as his wines are "worth more", those smart enough to go beyond "name buying" have now some stunning wines for comparatively little money in their cellar!

NB: All figures mentioned in our summary above refer to the hammer prices and do not include any commissions, VAT and shipping costs.

Tasting notes update

We add here tasting notes for a further three recommended auction wines, which we were not able to review before the Auctions (and, hence, were not covered in our Auction Guide issued in August).

Weingut Joh. Jos. Prüm

Complement

2013er Joh. Jos. Prüm

Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese lange GK

24 14 Auction 93+

Reductive and smoky at first, this light-colored wine only gradually develops ripe scents of quince, pear, raisin, apricot, dried fig and whipped cream. Juicy and ripe exotic fruits make for a rich and surprisingly round (for a 2013) on the palate. The wine is smooth and delivers a clean, comparatively light and delicately earthy feel in the tart finish, in which airy almond are the only giveaways of botrytis in this quite fruit-driven wine. 2028-2048

Weingut Wegeler

Complement

2013er Wegeler

Berncasteler Doctor Riesling Auslese GK

13 14 Auction 90+

This intense and quite aromatic wine offers a juicy nose of apricot and dried fruits paired with smoke and fresher scents of white and yellow orchard fruits, all wrapped in a touch of volatile acidity. A nice whiff of acidity comes through on the palate and brings some freshness to the quite powerful aromatics. The finish is moderately long, somewhat straightforward and earthy. This could surprise us all in a decade if it gains in finesse. 2023-2038



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Weingut Werner

Complement

2013er Werner

Trittenheimer Apotheke Riesling Auslese

13 14 Auction 91

Very light in color, this delivers a gorgeous nose of white flowers, honey, anise, pear and some exotic fruits. The wine comes over as quite playful feel on the palate and exhibits the telltale sweetness and lushness of this Estate in the finish. This is a great wine which lives from gorgeous botrytis-impacted fruits paired with zesty acidity. 2023-2038



Mosel Fine Wines

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The Bernkasteler Ring Auction 2014 – The results

Wine			Hammer Price *			
			37.5cl	50cl	75cl	150cl
2012er	Martin Conrad	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling GG			60	
2012er	Richard Richter	Winninger Brückstück Riesling Reserve "auf der Feinhefe gereift"			17	
2013er	Clüsserath-Eifel	Trittenheimer Apotheke Riesling 1745 GG			60	
2011er	Reinhold Franzen	Bremmer Calmont Riesling Calidus Mons			26.50	
2013er	FJ Regnery	Klüsserather Bruderschaft Riesling Spätlese Feinherb Edition Michelskirch			15.50	
2010er	Kallfelz	Merler Fettgarten Riesling Urgestein			50	
1990er	Bauer	Mülheimer Sonnenlay Riesling Spätlese			29	
2013er	Kees-Kieren	Erdener Treppchen Riesling Spätlese			13	
2013er	Kanzlerhof	Mehringer Blättenberg Riesling Spätlese			11	
2013er	Kerpen	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese *			11	
2013er	Meulenhof	Erdener Prälat Riesling Spätlese			18.50	
2013er	Richard Richter	Winninger Röttgen Riesling Spätlese Alte Reben			15	
1990er	Ernst Clüsserath	Trittenheimer Apotheke Riesling Auslese			50	100
1995er	Karp-Schreiber	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese			49	
1999er	Erben von Beulwitz	Kaseler Nies'chen Riesling Auslese			55	
2000er	FJ Regnery	Klüsserather Bruderschaft Riesling Auslese			32	
2003er	Johann Peter Reinert	Ayler Kupp Riesling Auslese			20	
2003er	Johann Peter Reinert	Wiltinger Schlangengraben Riesling Auslese			22	
2003er	Karl Loewen	Leiwener Laurentiuslay Riesling Auslese	26			
2004er	Johann Peter Reinert	Wiltinger Schlangengraben Riesling Auslese			20	
2005er	Clüsserath-Eifel	Leiwener Laurentiuslay Riesling Auslese			80	
2006er	Paulinshof	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese			29	
2013er	Clüsserath-Eifel	Leiwener Laurentiuslay Riesling Auslese			100	
2013er	Rebenhof	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Auslese Fass 10			23.50	
2013er	Bauer	Mülheimer Elisenberg Riesling Auslese			27	
2013er	St. Nikolaus-Hospital	Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Auslese ***			30	
2013er	Philipps-Eckstein	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese ***	30		60	
2013er	Werner	Trittenheimer Apotheke Riesling Auslese			18.50	
2013er	Kerpen	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese ***	15		60	
2013er	Albert Gessinger	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese *** Alte Reben			14	28
2013er	Kees-Kieren	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese	20		40	
2010er	Dr. Pauly-Bergweiler	Bernkasteler Johannisbrünncchen Riesling Eiswein			95	
1999er	Erben von Beulwitz	Kaseler Nies'chen Riesling Eiswein			130	
2010er	Gebrüder Ludwig	Thörnicher Ritsch Riesling Beerenauslese			50	
2005er	Leo Fuchs	Pommerner Zeisel Riesling Beerenauslese			112.50	160
2011er	Andreas Schmitges	Erdener Prälat Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese			175	
2011er	Philipps-Eckstein	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese			185	
2011er	Kerpen	Bernkasteler Bratenhöfchen Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese "Celsius -15°"				

* Hammer prices are expressed in euros (€) and exclude any commissions, VAT and shipping costs, and converted to the bottle format sold. Please note that the **hammer prices at the Bernkasteler Ring are traditionally given for an equivalent 75 cl bottle**, irrespectively of the size of the bottles being sold.



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The Grosser Ring Auction 2014 – The results

		Wine	Hammer Price *			
			37.5cl	75cl	150cl	300cl
2013er	Von Hövel	Oberemmeler Hütte Riesling Spätlese		33	58	
2013er	Egon Müller	Scharzhofberger Riesling Kabinett Alte Reben		113		
2013er	Egon Müller	Scharzhofberger Riesling Auslese GK	350	655	1,520	
2013er	Peter Lauer	Ayler Kupp Riesling Kabinett Fass 5		21.50		
2013er	Peter Lauer	Ayler Kupp Riesling Spätlese Fass 23		25		
2013er	Karthäuserhof	Eitelsbacher Karthäuserhofberg Riesling Spätlese Nr. 26		29	65	
2013er	Dr. Loosen	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Spätlese GK		41	76	
2013er	Dr. Loosen	Erdener Prälat Riesling Auslese lange GK	205	370		
2013er	Reinhold Haart	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Auslese GK	55	118		
2013er	Thanisch – Erben Thanisch	Berncasteler Doctor Riesling Spätlese		38	72	
2013er	Wegeler	Berncasteler Doctor Riesling Auslese GK	66	140		
2013er	Schloss Lieser	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese		60	137	560
2013er	Schloss Lieser	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese GK	190	245	670	1,400
2013er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese		53	151	360
2013er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese lange GK	151	335	800	
2013er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Spätlese		41	132	
2013er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese	78	150	300	
2013er	Joh. Jos. Prüm	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese		83	150	
2013er	Joh. Jos. Prüm	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese	70	110	260	
2013er	Joh. Jos. Prüm	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese GK	80	200	560	
2013er	Joh. Jos. Prüm	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese lange GK	275	560	1,210	
2008er	Geltz-Zilliken	Saarburger Rausch Riesling Eiswein	290	470		
2010er	Karthäuserhof	Eitelsbacher Karthäuserhofberg Riesling Beerenauslese Nr. 25	140	265		
2011er	Peter Lauer	Ayler Kupp Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese	210			
2011er	Reinhold Haart	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese	235	460		

* Hammer prices are expressed in euros (€) and exclude any commissions, VAT and shipping costs.



Mosel Fine Wines

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Mosel Perspectives: The Bumpy Road to a Vineyard Classification

Introduction – why this article ? Why bother ? Why is it so complex ?

Why this Article? Anyone tasting German wines will, by now, have come across the names Grosse Lage, Grosses Gewächs, Erste Lage or Erstes Gewächs. We all seem to roughly “get” what it is about (GG is about a “dry” wine, or a “better” wine as we sometimes hear!) but few really understand what the classification is all about. Here some of the questions we have been asked over the years:

- Is it only the VDP?
- What is the difference between Grosse Lage and Grosses Gewächs?
- How can I recognize a GG or now a Grosse Lage?
- What about Estates not in the VDP, can they use it?

To make things seemingly even more complex, the State of Rhineland-Palatinate passed a new labelling law which allows the equivalent of a Lieu-Dit on the label. While this may seem surprising, this new law was largely driven by the current classification initiatives. And only a few days ago, the Koehler-Ruprecht Estate in the Pfalz, an icon of dry Riesling and founding member of the VDP Pfalz, left the association after 85 years. Here also, the classification is at the heart of the debate.

All this led us to structure the basics into an in-depth article to help lovers of German wine to understand the reasons and issues of the classification (including the reasons for the Koehler-Ruprecht Estate to leave the VDP) and to be able to decipher its wine labels.

Why bother? You may say “they can all get lost with their classification” and we would have a lot of sympathy with this attitude. However, as lovers of Mosel and German wines, the classification is now (both “thankfully” and “unfortunately”!) at the heart of winemaking and wine labelling and, as in Burgundy, is now a key factor to master in order to get the maximum pleasure out of one’s bottles. So bear with us!

Why is it so complex? As you will see, this article has over 15 pages, which is a lot, and you may wonder why it has to be so complex. The reason is a combination of the fact that vineyard classification is still a “young concept”, very much work in progress, and that it is driven by both public and private initiatives confronted with the legal legacies and boundaries of the past:

- Vineyard classification only came very late to Germany. But, we hear you already scream: “We thought there was a classification through the taxation maps since the 19th century!” This is correct, these maps were published as of the 1860s and regularly updated as the fate of vineyards went up or down. But these maps, based on official taxation data, were published in books by authors, albeit then well-known ones, but still “only” authors, not authorities! Never until the late 20th century was there any wine label stating something equivalent to “Forster Ungeheuer Grand Cru” or “Graacher Himmelreich Grand Cru”. The first attempts at classification date only from the 1980s and early 1990s.
- In the Rheingau, the resulting classification is part of the regional wine law. After much debate and initiatives in the 1980s, the public authorities of the State of Hessen took the bull by the horn and formally classified its vineyards and have embedded this into its wine law in the late 1990s.
- Outside of the Rheingau, the initiative was largely left to the VDP and Grosser Ring and, in addition in the Mosel, to the Bernkasteler Ring. Having private quality oriented organizations drive the classification can be seen as a good thing. However, the classification by a private association has also two drawbacks, as you will read: it needs to accommodate the needs of all its members (and find an all-encompassing solution) and it needs to work within the boundary of a wine law which was not specifically designed for this.

“VDP” Stands for “Verband Deutscher Prädikatsweingüter”, and is a large national private grower association (with 202 members by October 2014) and includes many of the very best Estates in Germany.

“Grosser Ring” The name of the VDP association in the Mosel. It was founded in 1908 and has 31 members by October 2014. Some of its members sell their best casks every year at the Auction in Trier in September.

“Bernkasteler Ring” A grower association in the Mosel founded in 1899. It has 35 members by October 2014. It also uses the GG concept for its top dry wines. Each year, some of its members sells their best wines at the Auction in Trier in September.



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Here the key facts at a glance:

2000S – A FIRST CLASSIFICATION OF VINEYARDS STRUCTURED AROUND “GROSSES GEWÄCHS” (GG) (AND ERSTE LAGE)

The VDP actually first created the “Grosses Gewächs” (GG), which is the dry wine from a top vineyard, as this was central to the new “dry” wine trend in Germany. The GG was given a high profile by being a single dry wine with stringent quality requirements and later release dates from a set of formally approved vineyard plots called (strangely enough) “Erste Lage” and to be sold as QbA without any indication of Prädikat (Kabinett, Spätlese, ...) on the label. The Bernkasteler Ring followed suit and introduced a similar GG logic, but based on “certified sites”, in the late 2000s.

THE GG WAS A GREAT SUCCESS BUT THE UNDERLYING CLASSIFICATION PROVED UNTENABLE FOR VDP MEMBERS

The GG proved a huge success, if only by creating a new interest for “top dry German wine” in the eyes of the German public. However also internationally, the GG has boosted the recognition and appreciation of dry German Riesling, including from the Mosel. Why did the story not end with the GG? Simply because the situation created was not tenable, logically and above all commercially for VDP members.

2012: EXTENSION BY THE VDP TO A TWO-LEVEL (ERSTE LAGE / GROSSE LAGE) CLASSIFICATION OF VINEYARDS

The VDP set up a new two-level classification based on Premier Cru (Erste Lage) and Grand Cru (Grosse Lage) sites, with the GG being the dry wine from the Grand Cru site. This solution neatly accommodated much of the issues raised by its members even if, from a layman’s point of view, it created some unnecessary complications. However, not all things are smooth yet, as shown by the fact that the iconic Koehler-Ruprecht Estate leaves the VDP.

MOST REGIONS IMPLEMENTED THE DOUBLE LEVEL CLASSIFICATION ... BUT THE MOSEL STICKS TO ONE LEVEL

In most regions, the local VDP associations adopted the double-layer system (Erste Lage and Grosse Lage), and are busy implementing it. The Grosser Ring decided to not introduce the additional classification layer of Erste Lage in the Mosel and sticks to one level only. Also, the Bernkasteler Ring has stuck to its initial logic based on a GG level only.

THE CURRENT WINE LABELLING LAW STANDS IN THE WAY OF THE PROPER IMPLEMENTATION OF GROSSE LAGE VINEYARDS

There is a clear trend among the VDP regional associations to limit its Grosse Lage (Grand Cru) sites to small well-defined areas, which makes sense from a terroir perspective, but also from a commercial perspective. However, the official vineyards defined after 1971 are often not homogeneous and hence not fit for such classification purposes. Therefore, defining small areas as Grosse Lage rapidly conflicted with the German wine law, which only allows official vineyard names on the label. In order to bypass the current law, some rely on the newly defined system of DPO (or g.U. in German) introduced at European Union level but this proves tedious and complex. In the meantime, winemakers found great “naming” subterfuges to bypass the current law. But, structurally, this is not a viable solution and the VDP started to advocate the change of the wine labelling law.

2014: A NEW WINE LABELLING LAW IN RHINELAND-PALATINATE COMES TO THE RESCUE, OFFERING THE POSSIBILITY TO ADD A LIEU-DIT ON THE LABEL

The new winemaking law in Rhineland-Palatinate allows Estates to use a “Lieu-Dit” (Gewann Name in German) on the label, in addition or instead of the associated vineyard. It is not clear that it will lead to many new “Lieu-Dit” names as the most pertinent ones are de facto already in use (and tolerated) today. The first list of Gewann names underlines the interest shown by the VDP to the concept but, for the Mosel, does not lead to “new names.”

DECIPHERING WINE LABELS STILL REQUIRES SOME CONNOISSEURSHIP AND MAY REQUIRE TO LEARN MANY NEW TERMS

GG and Erste Lage / Grosse Lage wines are identified as such on the bottle but the non-harmonized approach between Estates and the fact that any classification labelling is still against the law hamper label clarity. Unfortunately, some further label confusion may still exist over the coming years in regions without a changed vineyard law. Also, there could be a new set of vineyard names to be learned as estates in the Rhineland-Palatinate implement the “Gewann Name” logic especially, if “Gewann Name” becomes the new “fancy” thing to do to sell wines and to recognize of terroir.

DESPITE THE RISKS AND COMPLEXITY, THESE REMAIN STEPS INTO THE RIGHT DIRECTION EVEN IF THE ULTIMATE SOLUTION LIES IN A NATIONAL LAW

Despite the reigning critic and cynicism voiced in the press and online, we continue to believe that these are important steps in the right direction. However, the fact that the classification is driven by both public and private initiatives will continue to create confusion for the consumer and, long-term however, a classification which would encompass all regions (including Rheingau and its Erstes Gewächs) is unavoidable. Such a classification should be given a legal basis, if only to allow for proper labelling and put quality boundaries to the new labelling law. It should be done by style: dry, off-dry or sweet, as not all sites are suited for all styles.



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1. 2000s – A first classification of vineyards structured around “Grosses Gewächs” (GG) (and Erste Lage)

The VDP first created the “Grosses Gewächs” (GG), a dry wine from a great vineyard, as this was central to the new “dry” wine trend in Germany. The members of this VDP started by asking themselves the question: “What do we classify: a wine or a vineyard?” This sounds abstruse as a question to wine lovers familiar with Burgundy (baring for color, white or red, the two concepts form essentially one in Burgundy), but the question has been at the heart of the confusion in Germany since the start. The leading force behind the VDP classification were regions whose strength had been dry wine and argued: “In Burgundy, one talks about the Richebourg Grand Cru from Anne Gros, Méo-Camuzet or Domaine de la Romanée-Conti. Well in Germany, we should talk about the Forster Ungeheuer from von Buhl or the Jesuitengarten from Bassermann-Jordan or the Würzburger Stein from Juliusspital (to give an example outside Pfalz) to refer to the Grand Cru wine from these Estates out of these vineyards”. It was “one dry wine”. This decision to focus on a dry wine was also made easy by the fact that the baby boomer generation in Germany had turned their back on what they perceived as the “sweet swill” drunk by the previous generation and favored dry wines, supported in this by a new generation of cooks whose new style of cuisine was better suited to dry wines.

The GG was given a high profile by being a single dry wine ...

So, right from the start, the VDP pushed the GG concept which referred to ONE legally DRY wine made from top vineyards. The fact that any Estate would only be allowed to produce ONE dry wine out of each of its top vineyards may seem surprising as this is not required in Burgundy, the region which served as inspiration to much of the logic. The key reason seems to be that the VDP felt that “forcing” its members to allow only one GG per site would reinforce the profile and avoid the risk of “dilution” if the members would start to produce some “Second Vin”.

... with stringent quality requirements and later release dates ...

Any GG was to meet some stringent criteria to underline its high quality:

- It would need to meet higher quality requirements (in terms of grape variety, yields, minimal ripeness, etc.) than normal wines.
- It would only be commercialized as of September after the vintage.
- It would have to be sold above a minimum price (although this criterion was quickly retracted officially due to the risk of having competition authorities classify this as price fixing).
- It would come from an approved list of top sites for dry wines.

... from a set of formally approved vineyards called (strangely enough) Erste Lage ...

In an attempt to recognize terroir, the vineyards from which these GG wines were made were eventually called “Erste Lage” (Premier Site) ... which already created some confusion. The natural thing to do would have been to call them “Grosse Lage” (i.e. Great Site) but, at the time, seemed too risky as the term could be confused with “Grosslage”, an abomination in the German wine law which refers to a whole area of sometimes hundreds or even thousands of hectares disguised as a vineyard name (e.g. Michelsberg, Münzlay, etc.). In 2003, the first list of approved vineyards was set out in the Mosel. One should note that the contours of some of these Erste Lage sites did sometimes only concern sub-parts of a vineyard, e.g. only some parts of the Saarburger Kupp are classified (still today).

... and to be sold as QbA without any indication of Prädikat (Kabinett, Spätlese, ...) on the label.

The wine law of 1971 has introduced the possibility to differentiate dry wines through Prädikat if certain sugar levels were met and this led Estates to bottle, often from the same vineyard, a Kabinett Trocken, a Spätlese Trocken or an Auslese Trocken. The VDP members felt that, in today's world of climate change and better winemaking, sugar levels are no longer a real indicator of the quality of dry wines. Combined with the desire to produce only ONE GG per site, this led to the decision to require the GG to be bottled as simple QbA. More generally, the VDP also pushed its members to only use the Prädikat scale for the fruity-styled wines and to abandon any designation such as Kabinett Trocken or Spätlese Trocken for its dry wines.

The Bernkasteler Ring followed suit and introduced a similar GG logic, but based on “certified sites”, in the late 2000s.

The Bernkasteler Ring members decided to also embrace the GG logic and introduced a rather similar logic, in which the sites suitable for GG are called “Zertifizierte Lagen” (and not Erste Lage as for the VDP), which means “certified sites”, which include the fact that the parcel needs to be on steep hill (something not formally required by the VDP). As for the VDP, the classification is done at “parcel” level within the vineyard and so not full vineyards are classified. Until 2009, the GG bottlings from the Bernkasteler Ring were not required to be legally dry, but as of 2010, the Bernkasteler Ring aligned itself on the VDP concept and all wines are legally dry.



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2. The GG was a great success but the underlying classification proved untenable for VDP members

The GG proved a huge success, if only by creating a new interest for “top dry German wine” in the eyes of the German public. The VDP set up a quite efficient marketing machinery, with a formal presentation of the GG bottlings in Berlin at the beginning of September, with the press being given a sneak preview at the end of August, and this created the necessary buzz for triggering the interest of the public, much like in Bordeaux, during the *En-Primeur* season. The German public started to talk about these wines and more generally, took pride again in its own wines. This led leading restaurants to set these wines on their list, something which would have been unthinkable only a decade before. Suddenly, after two decades of drinking French, Australian and above all Italian wine, the German wine lover was (also) drinking German again!

“Grosses Gewächs” Means “great growth” in German. It is the term used for a producer’s dry wine from a classified Grosse Lage (equivalent to “grand cru”) vineyard. Many refer to these growths simply as “GGs.” Members of the VDP and the Bernkasteler Ring are the main users of this principle. However, given its success, also producers outside of these organizations often refer to this, formally or informally.

However also internationally, the GG has boosted the recognition and appreciation of dry German Riesling, including from the Mosel. While the GG movement was primarily a national one at first, the appetite for dry German Riesling has also risen outside of Germany as German winemakers increased the proportion of dry wines in their portfolio over the last decade in order to meet the increasing local demand. This also concerns the Mosel, where almost all Estates told us that the demand for dry wine has increased significantly outside of Germany, and this even in countries such as the United States, which were traditionally buying off-dry and fruity-styled wines.

Why did the story not end with the GG? Simply because the system set up by the VDP was not tenable, philosophically and above all commercially. Despite the success of the GG in terms of branding and positioning of dry German wines, the classification solution developed by the VDP based solely on the GG concept posed three main head-aches to its members:

- What about non-dry wines? For some regions, and in particular the Mosel, non-dry wines are still, commercially speaking, as important if not more important, than dry wines. Referring to the “Grand Cru” as only their dry wine from a particular site was a hard sell in terms of terroir: why would a Spätlese from the Scharzhofberg be less of a Grand Cru than the dry wine from the same site? And if it would be treated like a Grand Cru, would this mean that also the Kabinett, a typical summer wine, could only go on sale in September, as the GG did? This was commercially (and logically) untenable.
- How to commercialize huge holdings in Erste Lage sites? In some regions, in particular in Franken, Estates such as the Juliuspital hold huge parcels in Grand Cru vineyards (some as much as 30 ha in the Würzburger Stein!). The basic GG rule (one wine per site) would have meant that the Juliuspital would have to either sell 30 ha worth of Grand Cru (at Grand Cru prices) or declassify the fruit into non-vineyard specific bottling. This seemed like a waste of terroir and commercial suicide.
- Chaptalization – friend or foe? The GG logic required to bottle the wines under the simple QbA label. What seems like a rational thing to do opened a Pandora box because a QbA wine can legally be chaptalized, while Prädikat wines cannot. And, indeed, the VDP did formally allow chaptalization, not only for red wines but for all wines, under the principle that: “if done, it would be mild and supportive of quality.” Chaptalization may sound to the layman as a complete non-issue (after all, Burgundy, Bordeaux and all other major “world wine” regions) allow it so why is this a Pandora box? Because at its origin, the VDP was called VDNV, the “Verband Deutscher Naturweinversteigerer”, which translates in effect to the “association of German natural [i.e. un-chaptalized] wine auctioneers”. In the 19th century and early 20th century, when wine fiddling was raging in Germany, being able to assert that one’s wines were “un-chaptalized” (Naturrein or Naturwein in German) was a defining factor of quality. Still today, especially at some traditional Estates in the Mosel, this topic will instantaneously heat up any discussion!

(NB: There were other issues regarding among others Kabinett and off-dry wines but we leave these for a – possible – sequel article).



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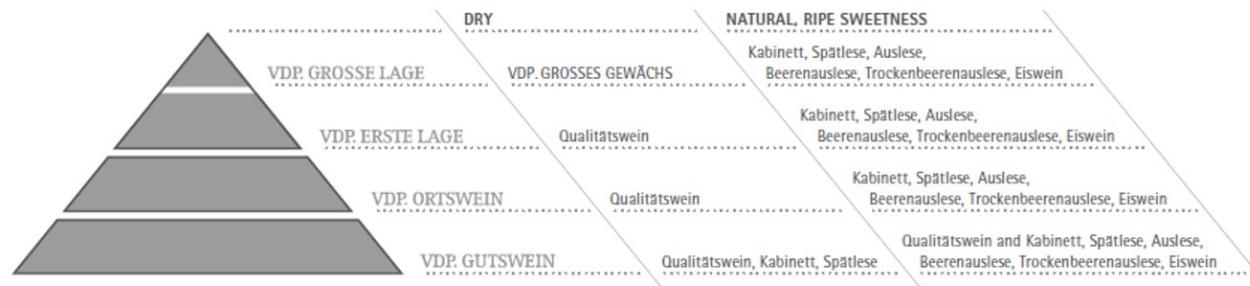
By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

3. 2012 : Extension by the VDP to a two-level (Erste Lage / Grosse Lage) classification of vineyards

The VDP set up a new two-level classification based on Premier Cru and Grand Cru sites, with the GG being the dry wine from the Grand Cru site. Making a long story short (and this is now quite a bit of a shortcut for the sake of simplicity), the above issues have been resolved as follows:

- The concept of "Grosse Lage" (literally translated "great site" or "Grand Cru") is introduced to refer to the best sites, irrespective of the style of wine made from them, thereby finally acknowledging the greatness of the terroir.
- The "Grosses Gewächs" becomes the "dry wine from a Grosse Lage".
- The scale of vineyard classification is refined and the notion of "Erste Lage" (Premier Cru) is allowed next to "Grosse Lage" now, but it is left to each regional VDP association to decide whether to implement this double tier vineyard classification or not.

VDP Classification Pyramid



Source: VDP / Grosser Ring

"Erste Lage" A "first site" in German. It is a term used by producers to refer to the vineyards classified in this category. There is no legal ground behind the term (in principle any winemaker can decide to call any of his vineyards "Erste Lage"). The VDP, who uses the denomination VDP.ERSTE LAGE which it had trademarked, installed a formal internal classification mechanisms designed to ensure that only remarkable sites from their members are classified. This denomination appears then at the bottom end of the capsule. Not all VDP regional associations use Erste Lage: Mosel does not. The VDP uses the denomination VDP.ERSTE LAGE which it had trademarked.

"Grosse Lage" Means "great site" in German. It is a term used by producers to refer to their greatest vineyards. There is no legal ground behind the term (in principle any winemaker can decide to call any of his vineyards "Grosse Lage") but the VDP and the Bernkasteler Ring installed formal internal classification mechanisms designed to ensure that only remarkable sites from their members are classified. The VDP uses the denomination VDP.GROSSE LAGE which it had trademarked.

In addition, the commercialization rules were adapted as follows: the Grosses Gewächs continues to be released as of September after the vintage (i.e. this remains unchanged) but all other wines from classified vineyards (i.e. non-dry wines from a "Grosse Lage" or any wine from an "Erste Lage") can be commercialized as of April after the vintage.



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This solution neatly accommodated much of the issues ...

After reading through the first section of the article, it is now clear why this solution found the approval of all members of the VDP:

- The notion of "Lage" (i.e. site) met the needs and requirements of the Mosel, as did the requirements to be able to commercialize the fruity-styled wines from Grosse Lage as of April.
- The double level ranking in Grosse Lage and Erste Lage met the commercial need to close the commercial gap between GG and village wines for such regions as Pfalz or Rheinhessen, through introducing new Premier Cru sites.
- The fact that dry wines from Erste Lage site could be commercialized as of April met also the needs of such regions as Franken, whose wines are essentially dry and needed quality wines on the shelves in time for the summer.

... even if, from a layman's point of view, it created some unnecessary complications.

The solution relies however on two "unnecessary" complications, at least from a layman's perspective:

- Why bother giving the dry wine from a Grosse Lage a separate name, i.e. GG? Why not call it Grosse Lage Trocken? The answer is simply that the GG concept was, by then, already so well-established and central to many winemakers' marketing, with presentation end of August and release early September, that it was unthinkable to kill it.
- If the dry wine from a "Grosse Lage" has to be called a GG, why is then the dry wine from an "Erste Lage" not called an "Erstes Gewächs"? Well this is legally not possible, courtesy of the Rheingau region. As we explained at the beginning, in this region, which belongs to the Hessen Regional State, the classification had been cast into the State's wine law in the 1990s and its premier wines were called Erstes Gewächs. Therefore, as long as the Rheingau does not change its regional wine law (and there are unfortunately no signs for this at the moment), the term "Erstes Gewächs" is "off limits" for any other use throughout Germany.

"Erstes Gewächs" A "first growth" in German. This term has a clear legal meaning: it refers to a dry-tasting Rheingau wine with max. 13 g/l of residual sugar from a vineyard classified by the regional authorities. Until 2011 included, also the member Estate from the VDP Rheingau commercialized their top wines as Erstes Gewächs. As of 2012, and the implementation of the internal Erste Lage and Grosse Lage VDP classification, the VDP Rheingau does no longer produce any Erstes Gewächs wines: They sell their dry wine from a Grosse Lage as "VDP.Grosses Gewächs" and any dry wine from Erste Lage simply under Trocken (even though, in some cases, they could have technically used the Erstes Gewächs label!).

However, not all things are smooth yet, as shown by the fact that the iconic Koehler-Ruprecht Estate leaves the VDP.

Although there is a clear overall consensus within the VDP regarding the way forward, the resulting logic still creates some debates, which is understandable given the size of the changes that it implies. Just as we were finalizing this article, the iconic and historic Koehler-Ruprecht Estate in the Pfalz announced that it is to leave the VDP association by year-end on differences of view regarding two key provisions of the VDP classification:

- The possibility of chaptalization of GG wines (the Pandora Box we described in the previous chapter!).
- The constraint of only one dry wine per classified site, while the success of the Koehler-Ruprecht Estate has been based largely based on the mythical R and RR bottlings out of the Kallstadter Saumagen.

This is a sad evolution as the Estate was an historical member of the VDP and is one of its greatest ambassadors for the production of dry Riesling wines in the world (the 2004er Kallstadter Saumagen Riesling Auslese Trocken R is for instance a reference wine in the world of fine dry Riesling as readers can see from our tasting note in Issue No 24).



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4. Most regions implement the double level classification, Mosel sticks to one level.

In most regions, the local VDP associations adopted the double-layer system (Erste Lage and Grosse Lage), and are busy implementing it. Most regional VDP associations decided to adopt the double-layer (Erste Lage and Grosse Lage) principle and are now busy reviewing their structure. This process is still on-going, as Robert Haller, the Estate Director of the Bürgerspital Würzburg Estate in Franken in charge of the classification process for the VDP Franken explains: "It takes time because we want to do things right and also use this opportunity (in which things are put back on the table) to make a full review of all sites and incorporate the benefit of a decade of experience." As a result, the regional associations have published some information online on their list of classified sites, but the published lists remain often somewhat vague at this stage regarding the ranking, i.e. is a site a Grosse Lage or an Erste Lage (but also for legal reasons: more on this in the next section!).

The Grosser Ring decided to not introduce the additional classification layer of Erste Lage in the Mosel region and stick to one level only. The VDP did not make it mandatory to introduce Erste Lage. The Grosser Ring used this flexibility to not introduce this additional classification layer, and all its vineyards are classified as Grosse Lage. This decision result most certainly from the fact that only a small proportion of its production from the top sites is dry and hence the issues of over-production of dry wines (one of the commercial drivers for the other regions to introduce Erste Lage) did not exist. Why "declassify" some great vineyards as "Erste Lage" without reason? However, as a result, the consumer is faced with a different classification philosophy in this region than in the others and the flat classification in the Mosel puts Scharzhofberger and Braufels into the same category, which is not very intuitive. Here the official list of Grosse Lage from the VDP for the Mosel:

VDP: List of VDP.GROSSE LAGE ® – Mosel-Saar-Ruwer (2014)

Village	SITE	Village	SITE	Village	SITE
Winningen	• UHLEN • RÖTTGEN	Lieser	• NIEDERBERG HELDEN	Wawern	• GOLDBERG • HERRENBERGER
Hatzenport	• STOLZENBERG • KIRCHBERG	Brauneberg	• JUFFER • JUFFER SONNENUHR	Kanzem	• HÖRECKER • ALTENBERG
Pünderich	• MARIENBURG • NONNENGARTEN	Wintrich	• OHLIGSBERG	Oberemmel	• HÜTTE
Erden	• TREPPCHEN • PRÄLAT	Piesport	• DOMHERR • KREUZWINGERT • GOLDTRÖPFCHEN • SCHUBERTSLAY • GRAFENBERG	Wiltingen	• HÖLLE • BRAUNE KUPP • KUPP • SCHARZHOFBERGER • GOTTESFUSS • BRAUNFELS
Ürzig	• WÜRZGARTEN	Dhron	• HOFBERGER	Schoden	• SAARFEILSER
Zeltingen	• SONNENUHR	Trittenheim	• APOTHEKE • LEITERCHEN • FELSENKOPF	Ayl	• KUPP • SCHONFELS
Wehlen	• SONNENUHR	Leiwen	• LAURENTIUSLAY	Ockfen	• BOCKSTEIN
Graach	• JOSEPHSHÖFER • HIMMELREICH • DOMPROBST	Eitelsbach	• KARTHÄUSERHOFBERG	Saarburg	• KUPP • RAUSCH
Bernkastel	• LAY • GRABEN • DOCTOR • ALTE BADSTUBE AM DOCTORBERG • BADSTUBE • JOHANNISBRÜNNCHEN	Kasel	• NIES'CHEN • KEHRNAGEL	Serrig	• SCHLOSS SAARFELSER SCHLOSSBERG • SCHLOSS SAARSTEINER • WÜRTZBERG • HERRENBERG
		Trier	• AUGENSCHEINER		
		Filzen	• PULCHEN		

Source: VDP / Grosser Ring



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Also the Bernkasteler Ring has stuck to its initial logic based on a GG level only.

The Bernkasteler Ring has stuck to its initial logic and classifies only a set of "certified vineyards" which are suitable for GG. Here the list as it stands for 2013 (there will be additions in 2014, if only because the association took on three new members):

Bernkasteler Ring: List of Classified vineyards – Mosel-Saar-Ruwer (2013)

Village	SITE	Village	SITE	Village	SITE
Pommern	• ROSENBERG • ZEISEL	Graach	• HIMMELREICH • DOMPROBST	Trittenheim	• APOTHEKE
Bremm	• CALMONT	Bernkastel	• GRABEN • ALTE BADSTUBE AM DOCTORBERG	Klüsserath	• BRUDERSCHAFT
Neef	• FRAUENBERG	Brauneberg	• JUFFER • JUFFER-SONNENUHR • KAMMER	Thörnich	• RITSCH
Erden	• TREPPCHEN • PRÄLAT	Mülheim	• ELISENBERG	Pölich	• HELD
Ürzig	• WÜRZGARTEN	Piesport	• GOLDTRÖPFCHEN	Schweicher	• ANNABERG
Zeltingen	• SONNENUHR	Kesten	• PAULINSHOBERG	Kasel	• NIES'CHEN
Wehlen	• SONNENUHR			Kanzem	• SONNENBERG
				Wiltingen	• KLOSTERBERG

Source: Bernkasteler Ring



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5. The current wine labelling law stands in the way of the proper implementation of Grosse Lage vineyards

There is a clear trend among the VDP regional associations to limit its Grosse Lage (Grand Cru) sites to small well-defined areas.

Through discussions with different Estates in different regions, there is a clear trend emerging, which we illustrate on the following example from Franken:

- Large top vineyards (such as Würzburger Stein or Escherndorfer Lump) would be classified as a whole as "Erste Lage" and only sub-parts within those vineyards be classified as "Grosse Lage" (e.g. "Hundsrück" in the Centgrafenberg, "am Lumpen 1655" in the Lump, etc.).
- Smaller and hence inherently more homogeneous top vineyards, such as for instance the Casteller Schlossberg or the Würzburger Stein-Harfe are likely to be classified as Grosse Lage as a whole.

Defining Grosse Lage as small areas makes sense from a terroir perspective, but also from a commercial perspective.

Classifying large vineyards such as the Stein or Lump as Erste Lage would make sense not only logically (claiming dozens of 50 ha Grand Cru vineyards is a tall order) but also commercially. If you remember, wines from Erste Lage can be sold as of April after the vintage. To take our example of the Juliusspital, this Estate can now sell its Würzburger Stein Silvaner Trocken (Erste Lage) as of April, ready for the summer season, and only bring its Würzburger Stein Silvaner GG (from a Grosse Lage parcel still to be denominated) in September. Although nobody seems ready to formally confirm this, we understand that the same logic of classifying large quality vineyards to "Erste Lage" and only retaining the best sites for "Grosse Lage" is being applied in other regions as well. In addition, some Estates (such as Weingut Robert Weil in Kiedrich and its Turmberg vineyard) recognize that not all their vineyards are Grand Cru and decided to "declassify" some of their sites to Premier Cru (Erste Lage).

However, the official vineyards defined after 1971 are often not homogeneous and hence not fit for classification purposes.

The wine law of 1971 consolidated the large number of small single vineyards but, in the process, some vineyards had been extended to the level of non-recognition. As a result, the reputation of some of the finest names was tarnished, including that of the Erdener Treppchen, Trittenheimer Altärchen, Wintricher Grosser Herrgott, etc. All these stood for a fine vineyard and were extended to include lesser and sometimes outright very humble vineyards on completely different soil structure, often including some flat land on the other side of the river. This is probably nowhere as absurd as in Ayl, where the Ayler Kupp, originally a small 3 ha parcel in the central part of the main Ayler hill, now stands for 95% of all 70 ha vineyards on Ayler soil, on hills sometimes kilometers apart! This non-homogeneity of the post 1971 vineyards clearly stands in the way of a proper classification as these mix vineyards with different:

- Style: Many of the agglomerated post-1971 vineyards mix very different terroir. For instance the Winninger Uhlen is a blend of many different terroir, some with red slate, some with blue slate, giving completely different character to the wine. The Marienburg in Pünderich faces the same issue and the
- Quality level: i.e. how to communicate that this comes from the best part of the vineyard, say the main Ayler Kupp hill (worthy of Grand Cru classification), rather than the side hill on deep soil, which are often worthy of village classification at best.

Therefore, defining small areas as Grosse Lage rapidly conflicted with German wine law, which only allows official vineyard names on the label.

Implementing this logic of selecting small prime areas within larger vineyards as Grosse Lage is a very laudable one. However, this approach followed by the VDP rapidly faced an issue. The name of vineyard subparts, such as "Hundsrück" or "am Lumpen", or, in the case of the Mosel, Schonfels in Ayl, despite being found on legal cadaster maps, are, by law, not allowed to be used on wine labels. In an attempt to eradicate all complexity and potential misuse of the label, the wine law of 1971 explicitly forbade essentially any designation other than grape, vineyard and village on the label (in addition to the legal ones).

To bypass the current law, some rely on the newly defined system of DPO (g.U.) introduced at EU level but this proves tedious and complex.

The European Union introduced the concept of a Denomination of Protected Origin (DPO or *geschützte Ursprungsbezeichnung* – in short "g.U." – in German). A DPO is the equivalent at the European Union (EU) level of the AOC used in France and DOC in Italy (see definition below). This would present a solution as approval as these "g.U." would bypass German wine law (EU law prevails on national law) and several applications for vineyards are under way in Germany concerning Bürgstadter Berg and the Uhlen B, R and L. The DPO system is quite clean but has the drawback of being quite complex and also costly as one needs to demonstrate that the site possesses features that are substantially different from those of the surrounding designations of origin or geographical indications. Also a large local consensus for having the area protected needs to happen, which requires political as well as local will. It is therefore not surprising that none has been approved so far for vineyards in Germany.

"g.U." The abbreviation of "geschützte Ursprungsbezeichnung", the German word for a Denomination of Protected Origin (DPO), the equivalent at EU level of the AOC used in France and DOC in Italy. A DPO designates the name of a product which must be produced within a determined geographical area using recognized and recorded know-how. The application for a DPO needs to demonstrate terroir uniqueness, namely that "the relevant geographical area or product possesses features that are substantially different from those of the surrounding designations of origin or geographical indications." There are several applications concerning vineyards currently under way, including concerning the Bürgstadter Berg (in Franken) and the Uhlen Blaufüsser Lay, Uhlen Laubach and Uhlen Roth Lay (in Winningen / Mosel).



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In the meantime, winemakers found great "naming" subterfuges to bypass the current law ...

Winemakers therefore recourse to add some form of "Lieu-Dit" to circumvent the above issues: Florian Lauer introduced the original cadaster names (such as Schonfels, Unterstenberg, Kern, etc.) to reflect the different nuances (and sometimes more than nuances!) between his bottlings. Van Volxem did the same in Wiltingen (Volz to refer to a former prime single vineyard in Braufels, or Pergentsknopp in Scharzhofberg), Daniel Vollenweider (Reiler, Portz and Padauer as sub-parcels in the Goldgrube) in Traben-Trarbach, Heymann-Löwenstein (Uhlen R, B or L), etc. Although none of these were 100% legal (Vollenweider had to give up his parcel denominations for that reason), one "rule of thumb" that emerged was that such parcel denominations were more or less ok as long as there was no reference to "Berg" (the German term for mountain) and, to a lesser extent, to "Fels" (rock) in the name ... leading to the creation of fantasy names such as Unterstenbersch (dialect) instead of Unterstenberg by the likes of the Peter Lauer Estate.

... but, structurally, this is not a viable solution and the VDP started to advocate the change of the wine labelling law.

As there was no rule, the decision of the authorities to accept or not these new terms on the label was perceived as being quite random. Some mentioned that, in the Mosel, one of the three centers for homologation of wines was "more easy-going" than the others. In other parts of Germany, public authorities were less flexible, sometimes continuing to forbid the use of "parcel" names on the label (and technically quite rightly so, as "it is the law"). For instance, Franken is facing such issues at the moment. This led to pressures to change the law, something which has happened in Rhineland-Palatinate as of August 1, 2014 (but not – yet? – in the other winemaking regional states such as Baden-Württemberg or Bavaria).



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6. 2014: A new wine labelling law in Rhineland-Palatinate comes to the rescue, offering the possibility to add a Lieu-Dit on the label

The new winemaking law in Rhineland-Palatinate allows Estates to use "Lieu-Dit" on the label, in addition or instead of the associated vineyard. The State of Rhineland-Palatinate includes six of the thirteen German wine regions, namely the Ahr, Mittelrhein, Mosel, Nahe, Pfalz and Rheinhessen. It passed a law on July 3, 2013 (effective as of August 1, 2014) which allows to put what in Germany is called "Gewann Name" on the label. A "Gewann Name" is in essence (to make things simple) the equivalent of the Lieu-Dit in France, i.e. old denominations legally found on cadastre maps. It is to note that the law allows these old cadastre names to be used together with the single vineyard name OR just with the village name! Let us explain this on a concrete example from the first approved list of such names: the "in der Kranklei" in Ürzig. As of 2014, any winemaker who own a parcel in this "Gewann" will be able to sell their produce as either "Ürziger Würzgarten in der Kranklei" or simply as "Ürziger in der Kranklei". The registration of such a "Gewann Name" can be done by any winemaker owning vines in that sector with no possibilities on the side of the authorities to filter / oppose the registration on quality grounds: any Gewann can be registered, be it from a grand or a humble terroir. Once registered, all makers with vines in the site can use the name.

"Gewann Name" Means "name of a parcel of land" in German and refers to a set of cadaster names which uniquely identifies each part of the vineyard, much in the way of the Lieu-Dit in Burgundy. These Gewann Name are often century old and can be quite simple ("Schonfels" in Ayl) or quite complex ("Hinterm Fahrhaus im Fusswingert" in Trittenheim). These are the names which have been allowed on the label according to the new wine labelling law in Rhineland-Palatinate since 2014.

It is not clear that it will lead to many new "Lieu-Dit" names as the most pertinent ones are de facto in use (and tolerated) already today. Will this law change much? It is not obvious at all. Already today, the most obvious anomalies of the 1971 law have been dealt with. Let us mention "Uhlen R, B or L" (Heymann-Löwenstein), "Schimbock" (Vollenweider), "Schmitt" (Selbach-Oster), "Herzlay" (Dr. Hermann, Joh. Jos. Christoffel Erben), "Kranklay" (Karl Erbes, Joh. Jos. Christoffel Erben) or Volz (Van Volxem), etc. Only names which include the word "Berg" or sometimes "Fels" are not allowed today, but this was an issue for a few winemakers "only", notably Florian Lauer from Peter Lauer and Mani Loch from Weinhof Herrenberg. Also, many of the old names that winemakers would like to use (because they could have some appeal from a terroir or commercial standpoint) do either not qualify as Lieu-Dit Johannisberg is a coveted part in the Mülheimer Sonnenlay and a pre-1971 vineyard but not a Lieu-Dit) or the Lieu-Dit part of is only microscopic (Hasenläufer is a well-known part of the Brauneberger Juffer whose terroir is different, but the Gewann "im Hasenläufer" is only a fraction of the pre-1983 vineyard). So, it is not clear that there is much drive to bring on many new names from the purpose of highlighting particular terroir within overly non-homogeneous vineyards. However, some winemakers using formal or informal cadastre names today may decide to take the plunge and have their name registered, which could lead to a small change in the denomination (as has been the case with the Kranklay, which is now "in der Kranklei").

The first list of Gewann names underlines the interest shown by the VDP to the concept but, for the Mosel, does not lead to "new names". The VDP was quick to cheer the new winemaking law, stating on the record: "The smaller the vineyard site, the higher the quality", which of course is all but correct (brutally said, a small part of a potato field remains a potato field). However, it is understandable that the VDP is happy about this new legislation as the possibility to put "Lieu-Dit" on the label is a cornerstone to the implementation of its classification concept. Also, the first list of approved sites published in September 2014 (a month after the introduction of the law) underlines that fact that the VDP is behind it as many new sites have been introduced by the likes of Emrich-Schönleber or Dönnhoff from the Nahe.

GEMEINDE	GEMARKUNG	GEWANNE_NAME	GEMEINDE	GEMARKUNG	GEWANNE_NAME
Ayl	Ayl	Schonfels	Monzingen	Monzingen	Auf der Ley
Bad Kreuznach	Bad Kreuznach	Im Kahlenberg	Norheim	Norheim	In der Kirschheck
Bad Kreuznach	Bad Kreuznach	Auf dem Krötenpfuhl	Oberhausen an der Nahe	Oberhausen an der Nahe	Am Leistenberg
Forst a.d.Wstr.	Forst	Ziegler	Roxheim	Roxheim	Im Mühlenberg
Großkarlbach	Großkarlbach	Im großen Garten	St. Martin	St. Martin	Im untern Reit
Leutesdorf	Leutesdorf	Im Forstberg	St. Martin	St. Martin	In den Rothäckern
Maikammer	Maikammer	Im Linsenfeld	St. Martin	St. Martin	Im Schraussental
Mettenheim	Mettenheim	Fuchsloch	St. Martin	St. Martin	Im Raubfeld
Monzernheim	Monzernheim	Niersteiner Gewännchen	St. Martin	St. Martin	Im Stäudig
Monzernheim	Monzernheim	In der Pfeffererde	Ürzig	Ürzig	In der Kranklei

Source: LWK-RLP (status – September 11, 2014)



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7. Deciphering wine labels still requires some connoisseurship and may require to learn many new terms

GG and Erste Lage / Grosse Lage wines are identified as such on the bottle ...

The labelling of GG bottles by VDP members is based on a combination of a specific bottle (with the embossing of "1V" before 2012 and GG after 2012), the wording GG on the label (or "back label") and the reference to Grosse Lage at the bottom of the capsule (after 2012). In addition, Erste Lage wines from VDP Estates should also be identifiable by a strip with the inscription Erste Lage at the bottom of the capsule as of 2012. GG bottlings by the Bernkasteler Ring are identified by a special GG sticker around the neck of the bottle and this has not changed over the years. See here the impact on label, bottle and capsule:

Grosses Gewächs labelling						
	VDP			Bernkasteler Ring		
Until 2011	On the bottle		On the label		On the capsule	
As of 2012	On the bottle		On the label		On the capsule	

... but the non-harmonized approach between Estates and the fact that any classification labelling is still against the law hamper label clarity.

Unfortunately, the labelling of GG and Erste Lage / Grosse Lage is not yet completely harmonized between all the VDP Estates at this stage and not all Estates use the three factors (in fact few do) to designate their GGs nor designate their Erste Lage and Grosse Lage with the required strip at the bottom of the capsule. Also, the reader may wonder why it has to be so complex and indirect. Well, legally speaking the wording Grosses Gewächs, Erste Lage and Grosse Lage are not (yet) allowed on the official label and hence Estates need to still use some subterfuge, much to the annoyance of consumers. This is why a Grosses Gewächs is simply indicated by "GG" on the label (or by the embossing on the bottle) and the wording "Erste Lage" and "Grosse Lage" relegated to a strip on the label or the capsule, or simply written on the (back) label

Unfortunately, some further label confusion may still exist over the coming years in regions without a changed vineyard law.

Many regional States, in particular Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg, have yet to formally adapt their laws and allow "Gewann Names" on the label. In the meantime, this could create some strange situations in which the same vineyard could be referred to as both Grosse Lage and Erste Lage on the label, as we have seen on bottles out of the Würzburger Stein from the Juliusspital Estate: As you have understood by now, this only means that the Gewann within the Würzburger Stein from which the Grosse Lage wine is made is not yet allowed formally on the label, but does not make the consumer's life easier.



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Also, there could be a new set of vineyard names to be learned as estates in the Rhineland-Palatinate implement the "Gewann Name" logic ... There will possibly be a whole new set of vineyard names to be learned as Estates in the Rhineland-Palatinate introduce Gewann names onto the label as a consequence of the new law. Fortunately for consumers, in the case of VDP Estates, the quality level will be known as this will be indicated by the name "Erste Lage" or "Grosse Lage" on the capsule (or by the GG on the bottle or on the label). However, even then, one will need to learn about the style of each of these "Gewann Name" wines, which is therefore no different than learning about a new vineyard.

... especially if "Gewann Name" becomes the new "fanciful" thing to do to sell wines.

There is a risk looming in the new winemaking law in Rhineland-Palatinate and this is that winemakers will "abuse" this possibility to have sub-plots registered by creating phony monopole vineyard sites (by having a name registered in which only they have vines), irrespective if the said parcel is of particular quality or not, for instance to satisfy the exclusivity requirements of a particular retailer. As there is no regulative body foreseen in the law to check on quality and relevance of the proposed new sites, this could be a disaster for the region as no one could see the forest for the trees if hundreds of these names would flourish.



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8. Despite the risks and complexity, these remain steps into the right direction even if the ultimate solution lies in a national law

Despite the reigning critic and cynicism voiced in the press and online, we continue to believe that these are important steps in the right direction. We may have been sipping too much French wine over the years, particularly from Burgundy, but we are strong believers in the virtue and qualities of terroir. Wines should reflect their origin and this should form an integral part of the wine system. And not every terroir is equal: some is simply greater than other, i.e. people are ready to pay more for the resulting wines. This fact has been recognized throughout the world for centuries. Helping consumers recognize the best terroir requires classifying it. Classifying vineyards may prove arduous, in particular in the Mosel, with its multitude of micro-climates, but, in our eyes, it is not because it is difficult that it should not be done. The above steps taken by the VDP and the Bernkasteler Ring are all steps into the right direction, even if one has to live with a specific concept for the dry wine (GG) next to that of the terroir (Grosse Lage, Erste Lage). At least now, the consumer has the possibility to read on the label words which help him recognize better wines / terroir without needing to learn all about 5,000 site names.

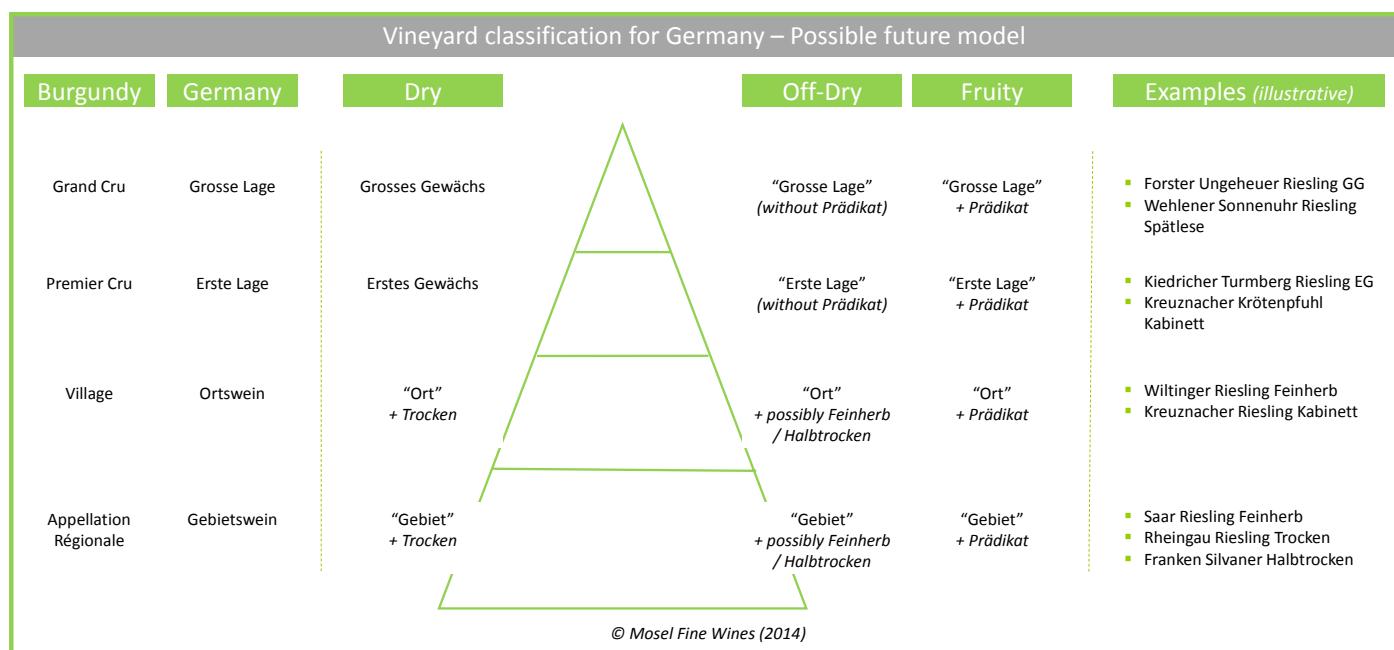
However, the fact that the classification is driven by both public and private initiatives will continue to create confusion for the consumer.

As we have seen, the different grower associations do their best to recognize terroir but have to take into account the needs of its members and work within the constraints of a not very helpful wine law (to say the least). While these initiatives are to be applauded, they will not completely solve the issues as the consumer will be left with (at least) the following unnecessary complications and sources of confusion:

- Within the VDP, some regions adopt the Erste Lage principle, others not. A consumer faced with a Grosse Lage from the Mosel does not know if this is really as "Gross" (Great) as the label pretends.
- The Bernkasteler Ring classifies only its sites for "suitability for GG" and therefore does not address the remaining styles.
- In the Rheingau, two concepts live next to each other: the legally defined Erstes Gewächs one and the one by the VDP. As of 2012, and the implementation of the internal Erste Lage and Grosse Lage VDP classification, the VDP Rheingau does no longer produce any Erstes Gewächs wines. They sell their dry wine from a Grosse Lage as "VDP.Grosse Gewächs" and any dry wine from Erste Lage simply under Trocken (even though, in some cases, they could have technically used the Erstes Gewächs label!).
- Several iconic Estates, such as von Schubert or Georg Breuer (or Koehler-Ruprecht as of year-end!) are not within any association and have follow their own system.

Long-term however, a classification which would encompass all regions (including Rheingau and its Erstes Gewächs) is unavoidable.

The Erstes Gewächs qualification is engraved in the wine law of the Rheingau region. This, for the moment, blocks the development of a holistic system, and there is no sign that this will be amended soon as the regional Rheingau grower association decided to not follow the VDP association and to adopt a denomination "Grosses Gewächs". This is unfortunate as this would have would not only ease the whole VDP new classification (as the term Erstes Gewächs could be used for all dry wines made from an Erste Lage site) along the following lines:



Note: This schema was first published in a slightly different form in the MFW Issue No 18 (Apr 2012).

This would then also allow to simplify labelling as all the required information (EG, GG, EL, GL) would be allowed on the official label and would no longer require consumers to hunt for clues on labels!



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Such a classification should be given a legal basis if only to allow for proper labelling and put quality boundaries to the new labelling law. Any classification would need to be embedded into law, much as it was done in the Rheingau, if only to allow the proper wording on the label such as Erste Lage, Grosse Lage, etc. This is particularly relevant as the new labelling law in Rhineland-Palatinate opened the door to declaring a flurry of new names. Without a basic tool to communicate at large to customers "this vineyard is a grand cru" and "this one not", accepted by all, there is a huge risk that this law will bring back flurries of old names which are not needed and which will only confuse the consumer who then needs to learn new names, either in combination with a vineyard, or even "worse", in combination with only a village (i.e. in our example in section 7 above, using "Ürziger in der Krunklei"). From a consumer's perspective, the latter is nothing else than introducing a new single vineyard. In a way, on paper, there is a risk of being thrown back to before 1971 as thousands of "Gewann Name" have been freed for use as single vineyard without the authorities being able to stop this. An approach of the definition of terroir based on the principles of the g.U. is probably the right basis and would allow to limit any excesses in declaring "Gewann Name" sites.

Eventually, any classification will also need to be done by style: dry, off-dry or sweet, as not all sites are suited for all styles.

Finally, there is another topic which will need to be addressed some day: at the moment, there is an implicit assumption that any classified site is suitable for any style of wine. At the moment, any site classified as Grosse Lage can be used for fruity-styled wines as well as GG! This is of course absurd as some sites excel at dry wines while others excel at fruity wines and finally others at Eiswein. This aspect has also been taken care of in the Burgundy classification, where producing white wine in Gevrey-Chambertin is technically possible, but only qualifies for Bourgogne Blanc. We do believe that this particular issue is not a big one at the moment, because it concerns essentially the Mosel and possibly the Nahe and because winemakers will certainly control themselves (we do not see a Spätburgunder Auslese any time soon!), but it could become an issue at one point in the future and is also not conceptually logical.



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9. Glossary

We provide here a short explanation of each term of the main terms used in this document.

Bernkasteler Ring	A grower association in the Mosel founded in 1899. It has 35 members by October 2014. It also uses the GG concept for its top dry wines. Each year, some of its members sell their best wines at the Auction in Trier in September.
Erstes Gewächs	A "first growth" in German. This term has a clear legal meaning: it refers to a dry-tasting Rheingau wine with max. 13 g/l of residual sugar from a vineyard classified by the regional authorities. Until 2011 included, also the member Estate from the VDP Rheingau commercialized their top wines as Erstes Gewächs. As of 2012, and the implementation of the internal Erste Lage and Grosse Lage VDP classification, the VDP Rheingau does no longer produce any Erstes Gewächs wines: They sell their dry wine from a Grosse Lage as "VDP.Grosses Gewächs" and any dry wine from Erste Lage simply under Trocken (even though, in some cases, they could have technically used the Erstes Gewächs label!).
Erste Lage	A "first site" in German. It is a term used by producers to refer to the vineyards classified in this category. There is no legal ground behind the term (in principle any winemaker can decide to call any of his vineyards "Erste Lage"). The VDP, who uses the denomination VDP.ERSTE LAGE which it had trademarked, installed a formal internal classification mechanisms designed to ensure that only remarkable sites from their members are classified. This denomination appears then at the bottom end of the capsule. Not all VDP regional associations use Erste Lage: Mosel does not. The VDP uses the denomination VDP.ERSTE LAGE which it had trademarked.
g.U.	The abbreviation of "Geschützte Ursprungsbezeichnung", the German word for a Denomination of Protected Origin (DPO), the equivalent at EU level of the AOC used in France and DOC in Italy. A DPO designates the name of a product which must be produced within a determined geographical area using recognized and recorded know-how. The application for a DPO needs to demonstrate terroir uniqueness, namely that "the relevant geographical area or product possesses features that are substantially different from those of the surrounding designations of origin or geographical indications." There are several applications concerning vineyards currently under way, including concerning the Bürgstädter Berg (in Franken) and the Uhlen Blaufüsser Lay, Uhlen Laubach and Uhlen Roth Lay (in Winningen / Mosel).
Gewann Name	Means "name of a parcel of land" in German and refers to a set of cadaster names which uniquely identifies each part of the vineyard, much in the way of the Lieu-Dit in Burgundy. These Gewann Name are often century old and can be quite simple ("Schonfels" in Ayl) or quite complex ("Hinterm Fahrhaus im Fusswingert" in Trittenheim). These are the names which have been allowed on the label according to the new wine labelling law in Rhineland-Palatinate since 2014.
Grosses Gewächs	Means "great growth" in German. It is the term used for a producer's dry wine from a classified Grosse Lage (equivalent to "grand cru") vineyard. Many refer to these growths simply as "GGs." Members of the VDP and the Bernkasteler Ring are the main users of this principle. However, given its success, also producers outside of these organizations often refer to this, formally or informally. To differentiate itself from the others, the VDP uses the denomination VDP.GROSSES GEWÄCHS which it had trademarked and which refers to the dry wine made from a classified VDP.GROSSE LAGE.
Grosse Lage	Means "great site" in German. It is a term used by producers to refer to their greatest vineyards. There is no legal ground behind the term (in principle any winemaker can decide to call any of his vineyards "Grosse Lage") but the VDP and the Bernkasteler Ring installed formal internal classification mechanisms designed to ensure that only remarkable sites from their members are classified. The VDP uses the denomination VDP.GROSSE LAGE which it had trademarked.
Grosser Ring	The name of the VDP association in the Mosel. It was founded in 1908 and has 31 members by October 2014. Some of its members sell their best casks every year at the Auction in Trier in September.
VDP	Stands for "Verband Deutscher Prädikatsweingüter", and is a large national private grower association (with 202 members by October 2014) and includes many of the very best Estates in Germany.