



# Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

## Issue No 39 – January 2018

### 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 Riesling produced in Europe.

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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### Contact Information

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## Understand Our Tasting Notes

The core of Mosel Fine Wines is to publish independent tasting notes. The particularity of Mosel and German wines made us adopt a specific structure in order to capture all the information needed for wine lovers to make informed choices based on our tasting notes which we explain below.

2015er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Spätlese	13 16	Auction	97
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This wine immediately stands out as the airy precision of its elegant nose of white peach, a hint of cassis, herbs and spices is simply mind-boggling. The wine then delivers a gorgeous array of orchard and delicately exotic fruits on the zesty palate and leaves one with an explosion of minerals and herbs in a hauntingly deep and elegant finish. This is an epic effort on par with the best at this Estate. 2025-2055

**1. NOMENCLATURE:** For simplicity, consistency and clarity, we rely on the following to define a wine:

- We stick to the traditional "Village + Vineyard" denomination even for wines from VDP classified vineyards (where only the vineyard name appears on the consumer side of the label).
- We provide the grape variety, except for the few cases of a blend, in which case the blend details will be given in the tasting note.
- No Prädikat in the name means that the wine was bottled as QbA.
- GG stands for "Grosses Gewächs" and EG for "Erstes Gewächs."

You can find more information on how to decipher German wine labels in the article "Deciphering the modern German wine label" [here](#).

**2. AP NUMBER:** The AP Number is the unique number associated with any lot of German quality wine. We systematically provide this information (actually the last 4 or 5 "meaningful" digits of the AP) as wine growers sometimes differentiate between wines only through this AP Number. You can learn more about AP numbers [here](#). "N.A." means that the AP number was not yet available at the moment of publication.

**3. AUCTION:** We add the mention "Auction" for wines sold via the annual Auctions held in September as they are different from the ones sold via traditional channels. You can learn more about the annual Trier wine Auctions and these particularly fine expressions of Riesling [here](#).

**4. DRINKING WINDOW:** Riesling has a long development cycle and can be enjoyable for 20 years and more. Like other great wines from this world, Mosel and German Riesling usually go through a muted phase before reaching maturity. At the end of each tasting note, we therefore provide a drinking window, which refers to our estimation of the maturity period for the wine. This maturity period is based on the following principles:

- It consists of the "fruit" and "terroir" phases as defined in our review of Maturing Mosel.
- It does not explicitly mention the additional drinking window for fruity-styled wines which typically lasts for 1-3 years after the vintage.

You can find more about the different maturing phases of Mosel Riesling [here](#).

**5. SCORE:** The use of scores to evaluate wines has advantages (clearly communicating a perspective) and disadvantages (over-simplifying such a complex matter as wine). We believe the advantages prevail as long as a rating is put into the perspective of a tasting note. Here our principles:

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

95-100	<b>Classic:</b> 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	<b>Outstanding:</b> Stands out as distinctive example of its style and terroir. It will offer immense pleasure and should be actively looked out for.
85-89	<b>Good to very good:</b> 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	<b>Solid to good:</b> 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	<b>Not worth it:</b> 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.

- Assessment:** We evaluate complexity, balance and elegance ("more is not better") as well as respect of terroir and style (a great Kabinett will get a higher score than an average Spätlese). If the actual style does not match that on the label (say a Spätlese bottled as Kabinett), we will review the wine according to its intrinsic style (in the example as "the Spätlese it is") and add a remark about its true style in the tasting note.
- Timing:** Our ratings for young wines refer to the expected quality of the wine at maturity (i.e. during its drinking window) and not at moment of tasting.
- Firm Scores vs. Score Ranges:** Bottled wines get firm scores. Score ranges indicate tasting notes based on cask samples.

The principles above cover the basics. We remain at your disposal under [info@moselfinewines.com](mailto:info@moselfinewines.com) should there be a question.



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## Background Information

Each country has its own specificities regarding naming, labelling, style, etc. This is no different in Germany. In this country also, there are specific subjects such as vineyard classification or AP numbers, which any lover of German Riesling needs to understand to get the most of their wines and our reviews. We regularly publish articles on topics which may help readers get a first grasp at or deepen their knowledge in a particular aspect of German wine or winemaking. As these articles have appeared in different Issues and / or on our website since 2008, we insert here a **comprehensive list of background articles published to date** with the topic and where it can be found:

Theme	Topic	Issue	Website
Region	Mosel Visiting Guide	Mosel Visiting Guide 2018	-
Vineyards	Vineyard Classification   The Classification Before the Classification	Issue No 39 (Jan 2018)	-
Estates	Keller takes over Prime Mosel Vineyard	Issue No 39 (Jan 2018)	<a href="#">Click Here</a>
Wines	Deciphering the Modern German Wine Label	Issue No 34 (Apr 2017)	<a href="#">Click Here</a>
Estates	Bert Selbach   40 Years at the Service of Riesling	Issue No 33 (Jan 2017)	-
Winemaking	Karl Erbes   Precursor of the Flying Winemaker	Issue No 33 (Jan 2017)	-
Estates	The Merkelbach Brothers   Living Legends celebrating their 65th vintage	Issue No 33 (Jan 2017)	-
Estates	State Estates in Trier, Ockfen and Serrig   Historic Estates Given a New Life	Issue No 33 (Jan 2017)	<a href="#">Avelsbach Estate</a> <a href="#">Serrig Estate</a>
Region	German Wine   A Look at a Century Ago	Issue No 33 (Jan 2017)	-
Region	Grosser Ring   The Mosel Branch of the VDP	-	<a href="#">Click Here</a>
Wines	Let's Talk About Sekt – The Sparkling Joy of Riesling	Issue No 30 (Mar 2016)	<a href="#">Click Here</a>
Vineyards	Vineyard Revivals - Lambertskirch by Peter Lauer - Neumagener Sonnenuhr is back - Trabener Zollturm, revival of a forgotten glory	Issue No 29 (Oct 2015)	<a href="#">Click Here</a> <a href="#">Click Here</a> <a href="#">Click Here</a> <a href="#">Click Here</a>
Wines	Winemaking in the Age of Climate Change	Issue No 28 (Jun 2015)	<a href="#">Click Here</a>
Vineyards	Geisberg - The Revival of a Forgotten Saar Glory	Issue No 28 (Jun 2015)	<a href="#">Click Here</a>
Wines	Maturing Mosel and drinking windows	Issue No 27 (Mar 2015)	<a href="#">Click Here</a>
Wines	AP Number	Issue No 27 (Mar 2015)	<a href="#">Click Here</a>
Wines	Eiswein	-	<a href="#">Click Here</a>
Wines	Understanding German classification and associated labelling (Grosses Gewächs, Erstes Gewächs, Grosse Lage, Erste Lage, etc.)	Issue No 26 (Oct 2014)	-
Wines	Dry Mosel Riesling	Issue No 14 (Jan 2011)	-
Vineyards	Erdener Prälat	Issue No 10 (Jan 2010)	<a href="#">Click Here</a>
Estates	Jos. Christoffel jr.	Issue No 7 (May 2009)	-

Past issues are available to subscribers on simple request at [info@moselfinewines.com](mailto:info@moselfinewines.com).



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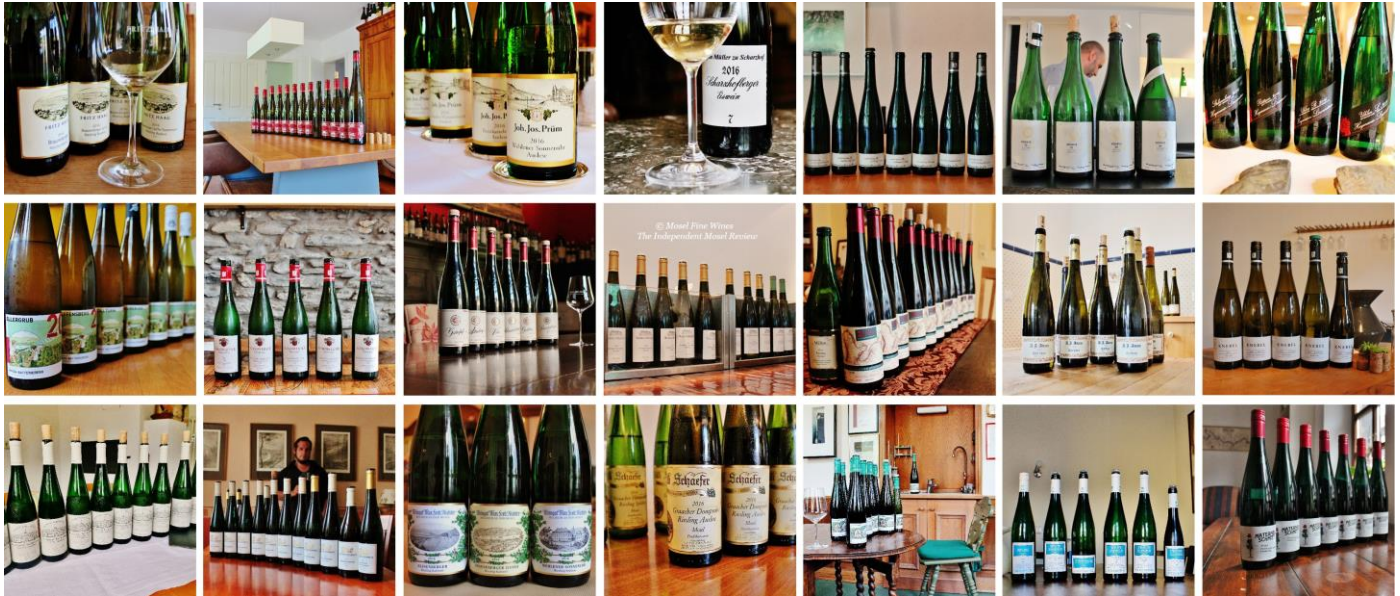
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2016 Mosel – Conclusions

## 2016 Mosel Vintage – Conclusions

After having tasted over 1,000 wines, many several times, we have a look-back at the gorgeous 2016 vintage and put forward the highlights of the vintage.



A Look-Back

## *2016 Mosel Vintage – Victory from the Jaws of Defeat*

What started under such difficult omen with a spring from hell has yielded a beautifully elegant and delicately ripe vintage, with some stunning classics among its midst which are cut along the lines of the great 1997 vintage.

The moderate but still quite firm acidity (much of the acidity is of tartaric nature, i.e. with a low pH levels) and low sugar levels in the most made for some stunning Kabinett, which is certainly the sweet spot of the vintage. Never has the Mosel yielded so many brilliant Kabinett which have elegance, depth and finesse.

The cleanness of the fruit (there was hardly any botrytis in 2016) made for very little BA (which are in general terrific) and hardly no TBA. But it allowed growers to produce some superbly airy and pure Spätlese and Auslese. However, the Auslese category proved the trickiest exercise in 2016, as the underlying ripeness all too often generated wines lacking precision and finesse.

As in 2015, many growers had however quite high sugar levels and declassified Auslese as Spätlese and Spätlese as Kabinett. It is therefore quite important to read tasting notes in order to know the style of the wine.

As we expected already in June, the vintage also proved a god sent gift for lovers of elegant and refined dry Riesling, not only in the Mosel but across Germany (see our Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 38 for a detailed review). 2015 may be bigger, but 2016 is finer. This resulted in a stunning amount of highly rated wines from all regions, particularly from the Mosel. While charmers, the finest of these dry Riesling are true keepers and will be modern day legends in a decade or two.

Off-dry Riesling is an almost Mosel-only specialty (although for instance Schäfer-Fröhlich does give the Mosel a run for its money). The balanced acidity and ripeness makes these wines start slightly on the cuddly side, especially in the Middle Mosel, but there are some stunners in the making.

Overall, the Saar and the Ruwer may ultimately have an edge over the Mosel, and the Terrassenmosel faced the most challenging conditions. But there are plenty of exceptions to contradict this rule. The vintage proved actually more homogeneous than 2015, even though many wines are on the riper side. Again, generalities may help gain a helicopter view but will not replace a look at detailed tasting notes in order to make sure a wine fits one's specific taste.

Lastly, two Estates stood out in the Mosel in 2016: Hofgut Falkenstein and Markus Molitor. The depth, greatness and elegance of their 2016 Riesling collections deserve a special mention.





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Dry Riesling Highlights

## ***2016 Mosel Vintage – Dry Riesling Highlights***

### **2016 DRY RIESLING | CHARM AND ELEGANCE ... FOR THE LONG HAUL**

2016 offered growers clean fruit with moderate acidity and a stress-free harvest, i.e. the ideal conditions for crafting dry Riesling. The knowledge accumulated by Mosel growers over the last years on how to produce great dry Riesling has handsomely paid off: The Mosel hit the bull's eye in 2016 and produced a huge number of stunning dry Riesling in all stylistic directions, be it in the more fuller-bodied style (e.g. Heymann-Löwenstein, Clemens Busch, etc.) or in the lighter style (e.g. von Schubert, Falkenstein, etc.).

One Estate stands out: Markus Molitor. What it achieved in 2016 is simply awe-inspiring. Not only did it produce the dry Riesling of the vintage, no less than eight of its dry Riesling made it onto our list of vintage highlights, many of these stunning dry Riesling remain very fairly priced.

But also A.J. Adam, Clemens Busch, Julian Haart, Reinhold Haart, Heymann-Löwenstein, Knebel, Schloss Lieser, Carl Loewen, Martin Müllen, von Othegraven, von Schubert and Van Volxem landed several of their dry Riesling on our list of highlights.

Quality-wise, Reinhold Haart (Wintricher Ohligsberg), Carl Loewen (Maximiner Herrenberg Trocken Alte Reben 1896) and von Schubert (Maximin Grünhäuser Herrenberg) may have produced their finest dry Riesling ever.

The most remarkable thing is however the sheer density of great dry Riesling in 2016, a fact reflected in the incredibly long list of vintage highlights. Besides the growers already mentioned, one may cite Immich-Batterieberg, Peter Lauer, Materne & Schmitt and Weiser-Künstler.

All in all, we can only repeat ourselves. If elegance is your thing, at the top, there is no better vintage than 2016 to get some fine dry Riesling for the cellar.

This summary would not be complete without a word on the stunning late releases of dry Riesling which have happened recently or are going to happen over the coming months. Let us be direct: Some of the finest dry Riesling from Germany are now the late-released Rieslings by leading Estates. Many Mosel Estates, including Clemens Busch and Dr. Loosen, have recently or are about to release late releases from recent vintages. We urge readers to have a look at these in the latest Issue.

### **2016 DRY RIESLING | LIST OF VINTAGE HIGHLIGHTS**

We provide here a list (ranked alphabetically) of dry Mosel Riesling highlights from the 2016 vintage:

2016er	A.J. Adam	Dhroner Häs'chen Riesling Trocken	05 17	93
2016er	A.J. Adam	Dhroner Hofberg Riesling Trocken	06 17	92+
2016er	Adam & Haart	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Trocken	01 17	92+
2016er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Fahrlay Riesling Trocken GG	20 17	92+
2016er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Falkenlay Riesling Trocken GG	17 17	93
2016er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Riesling Trocken GG	18 17	93
2016er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Rothenpfad Riesling Trocken GG	19 17	94
2016er	Falkenstein	Krettnacher Altenberg Riesling Spätlese Trocken	07 17	93
2016er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Trocken GG	08 17	92+
2016er	Julian Haart	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling	07 17	93
2016er	Julian Haart	Wintricher Ohligsberg Riesling	08 17	93
2016er	Reinhold Haart	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Trocken GG	20 17	93
2016er	Reinhold Haart	Wintricher Ohligsberg Riesling Trocken GG	40 17	94
2016er	Heymann-Löwenstein	Winninger Röttgen Riesling Trocken GG	09 17	92+
2016er	Heymann-Löwenstein	Winninger Uhlen R Riesling Trocken GG	N.A.	(92-95)
2016er	Heymann-Löwenstein	Winninger Uhlen L Riesling Trocken GG	11 17	92+
2016er	Immich-Batterieberg	Enkircher Zepfingert Riesling	04 17	93
2016er	Knebel	Winninger Röttgen Riesling Trocken GG	08 17	(92-95)
2016er	Knebel	Winninger Uhlen Riesling Trocken GG	09 17	(91-94)
2016er	Peter Lauer	Ayler Kupp Riesling Fass 18 GG		94
2016er	Schloss Lieser	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Trocken GG	24 17	92+



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## 2016 DRY RIESLING | LIST OF VINTAGE HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

2016er	Schloss Lieser	Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Trocken GG	22 17	92+
2016er	Schloss Lieser	Lieserer Niederberg Helden Riesling Trocken GG	23 17	93
2016er	Schloss Lieser	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Trocken GG	26 17	94
2016er	Schloss Lieser	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Trocken GG	25 17	93
2016er	Carl Loewen	Longuicher Maximiner Herrenberg Riesling Trocken "1896" Alte Reben	11 17	94
2016er	Carl Loewen	Longuicher Maximiner Herrenberg Riesling Trocken GG	13 17	93
2016er	Dr. Loosen	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Trocken Alte Reben GG	41 17	(91-94)
2016er	Materne & Schmitt	Lehmener Lay Riesling	08 17	92+
2016er	Markus Molitor	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Spätlese (White Capsule)	36 17	94
2016er	Markus Molitor	Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Auslese *** (White Capsule)	32 17	96
2016er	Markus Molitor	Ockfener Bockstein Riesling Spätlese (White Capsule)	21 17	93
2016er	Markus Molitor	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Spätlese (White Capsule)	69 17	92+
2016er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese ** (White Capsule)	43 17	95
2016er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese *** (White Capsule)	40 17	94
2016er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Kabinett Fuder 6 (White Capsule)	41 17	93
2016er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese (White Capsule)	19 17	94+
2016er	Martin Müllen	Trarbacher Hühnerberg Riesling Spätlese Trocken *	28 17	93
2016er	Martin Müllen	Trarbacher Hühnerberg Riesling Spätlese Trocken **	27 17	93+
2016er	von Othegraven	Kanzemer Altenberg Riesling Trocken GG	23 17	93
2016er	von Othegraven	Ockfener Bockstein Riesling Trocken GG	22 17	92+
2016er	von Schubert	Maximin Grünhäuser Abtsberg Riesling Trocken GG	08 17	93
2016er	von Schubert	Maximin Grünhäuser Herrenberg Riesling Trocken GG	09 17	94
2016er	Van Volxem	Kanzemer Altenberg Riesling Alte Reben	19 17	93+
2016er	Van Volxem	Scharzhofberger Riesling P	17 17	93
2016er	Van Volxem	Wiltinger Gottesfuss Riesling Alte Reben	18 17	95
2016er	Van Volxem	Wiltinger Volz Riesling GG	12 17	92+
2016er	Wegeler	Bernkasteler Doctor Riesling Trocken GG	11 17	92+
2016er	Weiser-Künstler	Enkircher Ellergrub Riesling Trocken GE	04 17	93



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Off-Dry Riesling Highlights

## ***2016 Mosel Vintage – Off-Dry Riesling Highlights***

### **2016 OFF-DRY RIESLING | BALANCE AND FINESSE**

Off-dry Riesling is an almost Mosel-only specialty (although for instance Schäfer-Fröhlich does give the Mosel a good run for its money). The balanced acidity and ripeness of the vintage made the 2016 off-dry Riesling start their life on the slightly cuddly side, especially in the Middle Mosel. However, there are some true stunner in the making.

The performance of Hofgut Falkenstein cannot be praised enough. This Estate excels at the light delicately off-dry and racy rendition of Saar Riesling and delivered some stunning Feinherb wines in 2016, including the possibly three finest wines of the vintage.

Also Gernot Kollmann (Immich-Batterieberg), Markus Molitor and Martin Müllen produced some serious contenders for finest off-dry Riesling of the vintage.

The other specialist of off-dry Riesling, Stefan Steinmetz (Weingut Günther Steinmetz) did also remarkably well in 2016. Alone or in collaboration with Christian Hermann (Weingut Dr. Hermann) and Martin Gerlach (Weingut Gerlachs Mühle), he landed no less than four wines on our list of vintage highlights.

Finally, one does not talk often about the Weinhof Herrenberg in Schoden (Saar). The quality it achieved in 2016 is nicely underlined by its Ockfener Bockstein Riesling Feinherb Steinmetzrausch, which made it onto our list of vintage highlights.

2016 offers many great wines to satisfy one's cravings for stocking up on these off-dry wines which are so food-friendly and age beautifully well.

### **2016 OFF-DRY RIESLING | LIST OF VINTAGE HIGHLIGHTS**

We provide here a list (ranked alphabetically) of off-dry Riesling highlights from the 2016 vintage:

2016er	Falkenstein	Niedermenniger Herrenberg Riesling Kabinett Feinherb	04 17	94
2016er	Falkenstein	Niedermenniger Herrenberg Riesling Spätlese Feinherb	03 17	94
2016er	Falkenstein	Niedermenniger Herrenberg Riesling Spätlese Feinherb	11 17	94
2016er	Falkenstein	Niedermenniger Herrenberg Riesling Spätlese Feinherb	15 17	93
2016er	Geltz-Zilliken	Saarburger Rausch Riesling Diabas	06 17	93
2016er	Herrenberg	Ockfener Bockstein Riesling Feinherb Steinmetzrausch	08 17	92+
2016er	Heymann-Löwenstein	Winniger Röttgen Riesling Réserve Cuvée Viola	N.A.	(91-94)
2016er	Immich-Batterieberg	Enkircher Ellergrub Riesling	05 17	93+
2016er	von Kesselstatt	Ockfener Bockstein Riesling Kabinett Feinherb	07 17	93
2016er	von Kesselstatt	Wiltinger Gottesfuss Riesling Kabinett Feinherb	06 17	92+
2016er	Carl Loewen	Riesling "1896"	14 17	92+
2016er	Markus Molitor	Bernkasteler Badstube Riesling Spätlese (Green Capsule)	58 17	93
2016er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese *** (Green Capsule)	59 17	(92-95)
2016er	Martin Müllen	Kröver Paradies Riesling Spätlese Feinherb	20 17	93+
2016er	Selbach-Oster	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese Feinherb "Ur" Alte Reben	29 17	93
2016er	Günther Steinmetz	Neumagener Rosengärtchen Riesling "von den Terrassen"	07 17	93
2016er	Günther Steinmetz	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling GP	26 17	93
2016er	Steinmetz und Gerlach	Katteneser Steinchen Riesling Liquid Fossil	24 17	92+
2016er	Steinmetz und Hermann	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Alte Reben	17 17	93



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Kabinett Highlights

## 2016 Mosel Vintage – Kabinett Riesling Highlights

### 2016 KABINETT | A REMARKABLE SUCCESS

2016 is a major vintage for Kabinett. Lovers of this light and elegant expression of Riesling packed with flavors will find much to like in the 2016 renditions. The seemingly endless list of highly successful Kabinett may be surprising, but this is how great 2016 has turned out to be for this style.

The depth of this result is a combination of two things: ideal grapes (ripe, with low sugar levels and moderate but good acidity) and a renewed focus by growers on this stylistic direction which the Mosel can "do" like no other. 10 years ago, it was almost shameful to admit producing Kabinett with fruit harvested below 85° Oechsle. Today, many growers have embraced freshness and specifically look for ripe grapes with low sugar levels.

At the top, Hofgut Falkenstein (which produced the Kabinett of the vintage), Fritz Haag, Egon Müller and von Schubert produced stunner which are must-haves for any Kabinett aficionado. Three Estates stand out in 2016 by the sheer depth of quality in their Kabinett collections: Besides Hofgut Falkenstein and von Schubert, also Julian Haart and von Othegraven each produced not one but several Kabinett vintage highlights. Also the other usual suspects produced Kabinett to fall in love with. One up-and-coming Estate made it onto our list of highlights, Loersch in Leiwen, no doubt a name we will hear more from in the coming years.

All in all, we can only urge our readers to plunge onto these Kabinett. The remarkable thing is that the 2016 Kabinett are so good, that there are many more outstanding wines beyond this list. Just open your Issues of Mosel Fine Wines and see what is available in your neck of the world. You will not regret it!

### 2016 KABINETT | LIST OF VINTAGE HIGHLIGHTS

We provide here a list (ranked alphabetically) of Kabinett highlights from the 2016 vintage:

2016er	Falkenstein	Krettnacher Euchariusberg Riesling Kabinett	12 17		94
2016er	Falkenstein	Krettnacher Euchariusberg Riesling Kabinett	13 17		93
2016er	Falkenstein	Krettnacher Euchariusberg Riesling Kabinett Alte Reben	08 17		95
2016er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Kabinett	13 17	Auction	94
2016er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Riesling Kabinett	03 17		92+
2016er	Julian Haart	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Kabinett	06 17		92+
2016er	Julian Haart	Wintricher Ohlgsberg Riesling Kabinett	10 17		93
2016er	Julian Haart	Wintricher Ohlgsberg Riesling Kabinett Alte Reben	11 17		93+
2016er	Reinhold Haart	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Kabinett	22 17		93
2016er	Steinmetz und Hermann	Wintricher Geierslay Riesling Kabinett	08 17		93
2016er	von Kesselstatt	Kaseler Nies'chen Riesling Kabinett	17 17		93
2016er	Peter Lauer	Ayler Kupp Riesling Kabinett Fass 5		Auction	93
2016er	Peter Lauer	Ayler Lambertskirch Riesling Kabinett	14 17		93
2016er	Loersch	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Kabinett	07 17		92+
2016er	Markus Molitor	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Kabinett (Golden Capsule)	62 17		93
2016er	Markus Molitor	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Kabinett (Golden Capsule)	30 17		93
2016er	Egon Müller	Scharzhofberger Riesling Kabinett	02 17		93
2016er	Egon Müller	Scharzhofberger Riesling Kabinett Alte Reben	03 17	Auction	94
2016er	von Othegraven	Kanzemer Altenberg Riesling Kabinett	08 17		93
2016er	von Othegraven	Kanzemer Altenberg Riesling Kabinett	09 17	Auction	93+
2016er	von Othegraven	Ockfener Bockstein Riesling Kabinett	05 17		93
2016er	von Othegraven	Wiltinger Kupp Riesling Kabinett	04 17		93
2016er	Max Ferd. Richter	Veldenzer Elisenberg Riesling Kabinett	27 17		93+
2016er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Kabinett	03 17		92+
2016er	von Schubert	Maximin Grünhäuser Abtsberg Riesling Kabinett	13 17		93
2016er	von Schubert	Maximin Grünhäuser Abtsberg Riesling Kabinett Nr. 19		Auction	94+
2016er	von Schubert	Maximin Grünhäuser Herrenberg Riesling Kabinett	04 17		94





# Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Spätlese Highlights

## 2016 Mosel Vintage – Spätlese Riesling Highlights

### 2016 SPÄTLESE | PURITY AND PRECISION

2016 proves a pure even if slightly ripe vintage, making for some beautifully elegant and playful fruity-styled Spätlese. The finest Spätlese are cut along the lines of the great Auslese from the 1997 vintage. Why Auslese? Because what was bottled back then as Auslese is what is bottled as Spätlese today, and are a must have in any Riesling cellar.

At the top, Hofgut Falkenstein, Weingut Fritz Haag (which produced the Spätlese of the vintage), Weingut Schloss Lieser and Weingut Willi Schaefer produced some true classics which will prove irresistible in a decade or two. But also many of the other Spätlese specialists including Weingut A.J. Adam, Weingut Julian Haart, Weingut Markus Molitor, Weingut Max Ferd. Richter, Weingut von Schubert and Weingut Weiser-Künstler produced beautifully pure and elegant renditions of this stylistic direction.

However, many of these Spätlese, including the beautiful wines by Weingut von Kesselstatt and several Auction bottlings, are really rich Auslese in disguise. While stunning wines, their higher level of sweetness and stronger presence will require more time to integrate. It is therefore critical to have a good look at our tasting notes to make sure that one gets wines along the stylistic direction expected. This little effort and discipline is well-worth it: The best Spätlese are simply stunning!

### 2016 SPÄTLESE | LIST OF VINTAGE HIGHLIGHTS

We provide here a list (ranked alphabetically) of Spätlese highlights from the 2016 vintage:

2016er	A.J. Adam	Dhroner Hofberg Riesling Spätlese	10 17		94+
2016er	Falkenstein	Krettnacher Euchariusberg Riesling Spätlese	06 17		94
2016er	Falkenstein	Krettnacher Euchariusberg Riesling Spätlese	14 17		95
2016er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese #14		<i>Auction</i>	95+
2016er	Julian Haart	Wintricher Ohligsberg Riesling Spätlese	16 17		94
2016er	von Kesselstatt	Josephshöfer Riesling Spätlese	15 17		94
2016er	von Kesselstatt	Kaseler Nies'chen Riesling Spätlese	18 17		94
2016er	von Kesselstatt	Scharzhofberger Riesling Spätlese	12 17		95
2016er	Schloss Lieser	Bernkasteler Doctor Riesling Spätlese	28 17	<i>Auction</i>	95
2016er	Schloss Lieser	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Spätlese	13 17		94
2016er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese (Golden Capsule)	22 17		94
2016er	Egon Müller	Scharzhofberger Riesling Spätlese	05 17		94
2016er	Martin Müllen	Trarbacher Hühnerberg Riesling Spätlese *	05 17		94
2016er	von Othegraven	Kanzemer Altenberg Riesling Spätlese	11 17		94
2016er	von Othegraven	Kanzemer Altenberg Riesling Spätlese Alte Reben	13 17		93+
2016er	Joh. Jos. Prüm	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese	15 17	<i>Auction</i>	93+
2016er	Max Ferd. Richter	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese	09 17		93+
2016er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Spätlese	13 17	<i>Auction</i>	95
2016er	von Schubert	Maximin Grünhäuser Abtsberg Riesling Spätlese	16 17		94
2016er	Weiser-Künstler	Enkircher Ellergrub Riesling Spätlese	02 17		94



# Mosel Fine Wines

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Noble Sweet Highlights

## ***2016 Mosel Vintage – Noble Sweet Riesling Highlights***

### **2016 NOBLE SWEET | STUNNING EISWEIN, LITTLE BA/TBA ... AND AUSLESE PURITY**

2016 was not a vintage for botrytis and this reflects on the style and quality of its noble-sweet wines. Very little BA and hardly no TBA was produced. However those produced by the likes of Fritz Haag, Dr. Hermann and Max Ferd. Richter are terrific.

2016 turned out a classic vintage for Eiswein as Mother Nature offered several occasions to produce this frozen gold, including comparatively early, at the end of November. Markus Molitor produced Eiswein perfection and the finest noble sweet wine of the vintage.

But also the other specialists including Karl Erbes, Egon Müller, Max Ferd. Richter, von Schubert and Selbach-Oster crafted some of their finest Eiswein ever.

A special mention goes to the up-and-coming Blees-Ferber. After landing its TBA on our list of noble-sweet Riesling highlights in 2015, the Estate underlines its skills again in 2016 with one of the finest Eiswein of the vintage.

The fact that the fruit was clean, the acidity moderate (even if still quite good) and the aromatics ripe made the production of refined Auslese a quite tricky affair in 2016. 2015 proved here the overall better vintage.

Nonetheless, some stunning Auslese of extraordinary purity was made (often in tiny quantities) by a whole string of top growers, whereby Fritz Haag (which produced the Auslese of the vintage), Markus Molitor, Schloss Lieser and Max Ferd. Richter achieved to land two of their wines on our list of vintage highlights.

Many of the finest Auslese are Auction wines, and hence often (very) pricey. The stunning quality of the Bernkasteler Doktor Auslese by Schloss Lieser proves the vintage's finest Auslese outside of the Auctions. Unfortunately, also this wine was only produced in tiny quantities.

As we explained in our overall assessment of the 2016 vintage in Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 35 (June 2017), the 2016 vintage is stylistically not very homogeneous. Some wines are fresh, others riper. These huge stylistic differences apply particularly to the Auslese category. We recommend you to have a close look at our tasting notes in order to make sure the wine suits your style.

### **2016 NOBLE SWEET | LIST OF EISWEIN, BA AND TBA HIGHLIGHTS**

We provide here a list (ranked alphabetically) of Eiswein, BA and TBA highlights from the 2016 vintage:

2016er	Blees-Ferber	Leiwener Laurentiuslay Riesling Eiswein ***	22 17	97
2016er	Karl Erbes	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Eiswein *	18 17	97
2016er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Beerenauslese	16 17	(95-97)
2016er	Dr. Hermann	Erdener Prälat Riesling Beerenauslese	19 17	97
2016er	Markus Molitor	Brauneberger Mandelgraben Riesling Eiswein	90 17	98
2016er	Markus Molitor	Brauneberger Mandelgraben Riesling Eiswein *	91 17	100
2016er	Egon Müller	Scharzhofberger Riesling Eiswein	07 17	98
2016er	Max Ferd. Richter	Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Beerenauslese	30 17	97
2016er	Max Ferd. Richter	Mülheimer Helenenkloster Riesling Eiswein ** Fass 103		98
2016er	von Schubert	Maximin Grünhäuser Herrenberg Riesling Eiswein	18 17	96
2016er	Selbach-Oster	Zeltinger Himmelreich Riesling Eiswein	14 17	96



# Mosel Fine Wines

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## 2016 NOBLE SWEET | LIST OF AUSLESE HIGHLIGHTS

We provide here a list (ranked alphabetically) of Auslese highlights from the 2016 vintage:

2016er	A.J. Adam	Dhroner Hofberg Riesling Auslese	12 17		95
2016er	Falkenstein	Krettnacher Euchariusberg Riesling Auslese	05 17		95
2016er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese GK #12			95
2016er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese lange GK #15		<i>Auction</i>	96+
2016er	Julian Haart	Wintricher Ohligsberg Riesling Auslese	09 17		95
2016er	Reinhold Haart	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Auslese GK	31 17	<i>Auction</i>	95
2016er	Dr. Hermann	Erdener Prälat Riesling Auslese GK	12 17		95
2016er	Le Gallais	Wiltinger braune Kupp Riesling Auslese	06 17	<i>Auction</i>	96
2016er	Schloss Lieser	Bernkasteler Doctor Riesling Auslese	17 17		96
2016er	Schloss Lieser	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese lange GK	29 17	<i>Auction</i>	96
2016er	Dr. Loosen	Erdener Prälat Riesling Auslese lange GK	32 17	<i>Auction</i>	96
2016er	Markus Molitor	Saarburger Rausch Riesling Auslese *** (Golden Capsule)	86 17		94+
2016er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Schlossberg Riesling Auslese * (Golden Capsule)	29 17		95
2016er	Joh. Jos. Prüm	Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Auslese lange GK	20 17	<i>Auction</i>	95
2016er	Max Ferd. Richter	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese -38-			95
2016er	Max Ferd. Richter	Veldenzer Elisenberg Riesling Auslese -54-			94+
2016er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese	15 17	<i>Auction</i>	95
2016er	von Schubert	Maximin Grünhäuser Herrenberg Riesling Auslese Nr. 17		<i>Auction</i>	96



# Mosel Fine Wines

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2016 Beyond Mosel – Keller Collection

## 2016 Beyond Mosel – The 2016 Collection of Keller

We had the chance to taste much of the 2016 collection of the Keller Estate. We provide the tasting notes to this remarkable set of wines here below. We also included the tasting notes published in October for reference and completeness.

### Weingut Keller

(Flörsheim-Dalsheim – Rheinhessen)

2016er	Keller	Westhofener Morstein Riesling Trocken GG	35 17	97+
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This develops a stunning even if still brooding nose of fresh pear, aniseed herbs, candied lemon, a hint of backed apple and tons of minerals. The wine is gorgeously focused and precise on the palate, where a delicately silky side driven by aromatic fruits is nicely framed by backward mineral elements. The finish is simply endless. This work in progress shows immense potential! 2026-2041

2016er	Keller	Niersteiner Pettenthal Riesling Trocken GG	38 17	Auction 97
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This immediately catches one attention through its magnificent cool nose made of mint, white flowers, smoke, sea breeze and orange blossom. The wine is ethereally light and airy on the palate yet offers immense complexity and intensity. One is then left with stunning salty, smoky and spicy elements in the hugely persistent finish. The wine literally takes one's breath away as it leaves one with a great feeling of freshness and multi-layered complexity in the after-taste. This is a magnificent dry Riesling in the making! 2026-2041 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 38 – October 2017)

2016er	Keller	Riesling Trocken G-Max	36 17	96
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The 2016er G-Max proves gorgeously backward and restrained, and only gradually reveals a beautifully aromatic and fresh nose of sage, white pear, candied lemon, floral elements and fine herbs. The wine is pure silk and yet stunningly precise on the palate and leaves a refined feel of chalky minerals in the long and smooth finish. It is seemingly light but the presence and intensity in the after-taste are proving this wrong. This only needs time to shine. 2026-2041

<u>2014er</u>	Keller	Westhofener Morstein Spätburgunder Trocken GG	54 16	Auction 96
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Light red-purple in color, this Spätburgunder offers a most beautiful and complex nose of red berry fruits including raspberry and redcurrant as well as rose petal, spices, Morello cherry and blueberry. This is superbly elegant on the palate, where it does not try to through power but shines through multi-layered finesse and subtlety. The freshness packed into the wine is quite stunning, and leads to myriads of fruit nuances right into the magnificent and long finish. There is still a light touch of tannins in the background which only needs a couple of years to fully integrate. This should then turn into a breathtaking piece of Spätburgunder! 2020-2034 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 38 – October 2017)

2016er	Keller	Dalsheimer Hubacker Riesling Trocken GG	31 17	95
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This develops a superbly herbal and minty nose driven by intense notes of smoke, yellow peach, pineapple and spices. The wine is full of energy and, even if still quite compact at this early stage, already reveals great complexity and finesse. There is a touch of riper fruits on the mid-palate but these are beautifully balanced out by fresh and minty notes in the very long, spicy and herbal finish. Smoky notes remain in the after-taste for minutes. This fresh Hubacker is quite a treat, but also one which will need quite some time to reach its optimal drinking window. 2026-2041 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 38 – October 2017)

2016er	Keller	Westhofener Brunnenhäuschen Abts E@.de Riesling Trocken GG	34 17	95
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The "Abts E@.de" stands for Abtserde, a prime sector of the Westhofener Brunnenhäuschen vineyard. This backward wine only gradually reveals a beautiful nose of wet stone, herbs, spices, pear and candied lemon. It is gorgeously elegant and refined on the palate and leaves a stunning feel of sage, herbs and chalky minerals in the long and beautifully balanced finish. What a great dry Riesling in the making. 2024-2036



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<b>2016er</b>	<b>Keller</b>	<b>Niersteiner Hipping Riesling</b>	<b>37 17</b>	<b>94+</b>
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The 2016er Niersteiner Hipping has stopped its fermentation at 17 g/l of residual sugar, i.e. above the levels for being legally dry (and qualify for GG). This develops a gorgeously backward and primary nose of yeasts, white flowers, candied lemon, sage, herbs and spices. The feeling of sweetness drives the pace on the palate at this early stage but the underlying feel of balance, finesse and elegance coming through in delicately fruity finish more than hints at greatness to come. However, this is one for the cellar as the sweetness does still need to melt into the wine. 2026-2041

<b>2016er</b>	<b>Keller</b>	<b>Niersteiner Hipping Riesling Kabinett</b>	<b>21 17</b>	<b>Auction</b>	<b>93</b>
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The 2016er Niersteiner Hipping Kabinett delivers some fine nuances of reduction, spices, green herbs and white peach on the nose at first. With airing, it gains in presence and develops more intensity and a slight touch of richness with some yellow fruits and whipped almond cream. The wine offers good presence on the palate with some creamy fruits wrapped into superb freshness and lightness in the juicy long finish. 2024-2036 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 38 – October 2017)





# Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Vintage 2017 – Sneak Preview

## 2017 Mosel Vintage – Small but Beautiful?

What does 2017 have in store? Although still early days, 2017 looks set on becoming a small but potential quite beautiful vintage.



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The Independent Mosel Review

*Yield-destroying frosts were the central event in spring.*

2017 is one of these vintages, like 1991, where severe frosts put their mark on the vintage. The severity of the frosts finds its origin in the very early bud break. The first shots developed as early as April 5 in parts of the Terrassenmosel. The frosts that hit the region came at the end of April and saw temperatures drop to -5°C (23°F). Strangely enough, this affected less the side valleys than the main vineyards. This sounds counter-intuitive at first but the reason was that air temperatures dropped so the whole air and not only buckets of cold air was below freezing. As budding was the most developed in the main (best exposed) vineyards, this is where the most damage was done. In the end, the losses were somewhere between 30% and 50%. The situation is not limited to the Mosel. Overall Germany (and other European countries as well) had the smallest yields in decades.

*The summer started well but rain led to fragile grape skin.*

Overall, the summer proved patchy but quite good. June proved a hot month, which accelerated the development of the grapes. July saw good temperatures and especially quite some regular patches of rain, which made the grapes swell and their skin soften. August also proved wet yet the temperatures remained comparatively cool for the season. One thing did not bulge much during the summer though: acidity.

*Rain in September led to the spreading of botrytis and one of the earliest harvests ever.*

The weather turned dry by mid-September but many grapes had burst, allowing for the development of botrytis and the sugar levels were already remarkably high. Most Estates, even the usual "late harvest" suspects, started their harvest sometime around September 20 to September 27. This is the earliest in human memory. The widespread presence of botrytis allowed for much BA and TBA. The weather stayed stable until early October, when more rain hit the region.

*The result looks completely counter-intuitive: A classic vintage with HUGE potential seems in the making!*

So where will this lead in terms of finished wines? We had a chance to have a sniff at a few casks from some of the leading growers in the different parts of the region. The wines made from grapes without botrytis impact show stunning purity and hint at great classic Mosel elegance. So there is HUGE potential in this vintage. The rich material which will produce quite some quantities of Auslese, BA and TBA were not yet really ready for tasting, but a combination of clean botrytis, good acidity and plenty of TBA material should deliver some stunners.

Stay tuned!



# Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

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Mosel Perspectives  
Vineyard Classification

## Vineyard Classification – The Classification before the Classification

Most lovers of the German wines will have been confronted with the Prussian taxation maps published as of the 1860s. These highlight the quality of vineyards via color codes (as in the insert, here below on the right). But how were the vineyards classified before the mid-19th century? We were able to lay our hands on the vineyard taxation classification of 1820, i.e. before the famous ones with maps. It makes for some interesting reading!

Laufende Nummer	Benennung			Wein-Steuerklasse des	
	des Fluß-gebieten	des landräthl. Kreises	der Gemeinde, in welcher Weinbau betrieben wird.	rothen	weißen
399.	Mosel	Trierb.-Kr.	Mertesdorf, a) Grünhaus . . . . .	—	1
			b) alle übr. Theile der Gemarkung	—	4
400.	"	"	Gitelbach, a) Garthausen . . . . .	—	3
			b) alle übr. Theile der Gemarkung	4	4
401.	"	"	Gafel . . . . .	3	3
402.	"	"	Walbrach . . . . .	—	3
403—408	"	"	Morscheid, Riberis, Kenn, Longnich mit Kirsch, Riol, Fafterau . . . . .	—	5
409.	"	"	Fell . . . . .	—	4
410—412	"	"	Schweich mit Pfel, Longen, Lorsch	—	5
413—419	"	"	Mähring, Pöhllich, Schleich mit Gnsch, Thörnich, Degen, Köverich, Letwen	—	4



## VINEYARD CLASSIFICATION | A FUNDAMENT OF MODERN GERMAN QUALITY WINEMAKING

There has been an increasing interest into classification of vineyard sites for commercial purposes in Germany over the last 20 years, led by the VDP, the regional authorities of Hesse and the Bernkasteler Ring. While these vineyard classifications are not without their issues (we reviewed these at length in a detailed article published in the Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 26 – Oct 2014), they paved the way for a better recognition of sites and overall appreciation of German wines.

These classifications typically rely on some sensorial elements (to check that a vineyard is "special") and price levels (to confirm the appreciation by the public). They also heavily rely on track records, the vineyard's historic footprint. In the Mosel, this means looking at the vineyard taxation system which was introduced by the Prussian fiscal authorities in the 1850s.

Mosel wine lovers know this taxation system through the taxation maps (see the insert, here above on the right) which visualize the quality of a vineyard via different shades of red. These maps are regularly used in the communication and marketing efforts by Mosel growers, and this for good reasons. This classification still holds up remarkably well today. Of course, there have been shifts and new vineyards have been added. But ask growers which parcels are best in say the Ockfener Bockstein or the Wehlener Sonnenuhr, and you will find a high correlation with the taxation maps.

## VINEYARD CLASSIFICATION | THE PRUSSIAN TAXATION BEFORE THE FAMOUS MAPS

What is less known is that the vineyards had been classified for taxation purposes well before. In the 17th and 18th century, the vineyards of the Mosel were classified in three categories for taxation purposes. Around 1800, the French authorities, when they annexed the Mosel to France, set up a classification based on vineyard rent prices to secure that the secularized vineyards owned by the aristocracy and the church would not be sold under value.

After the treaty of Vienna of 1815, the Mosel became part of Prussia and the Prussian authorities introduced a new taxation system of land, including vineyards. Around 1820, so we understand, the public authorities published a complete classification of the vineyards of the Mosel based on a six level scale: Class 1 (highest) to Class 6 (lowest). We were able to find this in a state publication of 1831.

This taxation system was essentially village-based (there are a few notable exceptions for some - already at the time - highly recognized vineyards) and was different for white and red wines.

This taxation system made vine growing more advantageous than that for fruit growing or crop. This had led to a large increase in vine planting, also because the Mosel was the main winemaking region in Prussia. It had a huge captive market as all other wines were heavily taxed by customs and duties. This was to change after Prussia entered a customs union with other German states as of 1834. This led, among others, to a revision of the land taxation system by the 1850s. This revised taxation system is the one on which the famous maps were then based.

The 1820 taxation system and implicit classification make for a fascinating reading and show some interesting and quite unexpected points.



# Mosel Fine Wines

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## VINEYARD CLASSIFICATION | THE VINEYARD TAXATION CLASSIFICATION (E1820) FOR WHITE WINE

Here is the classification for vineyards planted to white wine grapes:

Class	Saar Upper Saar (*)	Trier-Ruwer Obermosel (**)	Middle Mosel		Terrassenmosel	
I	Wiltingen (Scharzhof)	Maximin Grünhaus				
II		Trier (Maximiner Pichter) Trier-Olewig (Tiergarten)	Brauneberg (Brauneberg) Wintrich (Ohligsberg)			
III	Kanzem Krettnach (Eucharisberg) Oberemmel Ockfen Wiltingen (Other)	Eitelsbach (Karthäuserhof) Kasel Trier (Schammet) Waldrach	Bernkastel Brauneberg (Other) Dhron Erden Graach Kesten (Paulinsberg) Lieser (Niederberg) Löslich	Mülheim Piesport Traben Ürzig (Kranklay) Velden (Bitschberg) Wehlen Wintrich (Other) Zeltingen	Kobern (Uhlen) Winningen (Uhlen)	
IV	Ayl <i>Beckingen</i> Kastel-Staad Konz Krettnach (Other) Filzen Niedermennig Saarburg Schoden Wawern	Eitelsbach (Other) Trier-Olewig (Other) Trier (Augenscheiner) Avelsbach Mertesdorf	Andel Burgen Detzem Enkirch Fell Kesten (Other) Kinheim Klüsserath Köwerich Kröv Kues Leiwen Lieser (Other) Maring-Novian	Mehring Minheim Neumagen Osann-Monzel Pölich Rachtig-Machern Schweich Starkenburg Thörnich Trarbach Trittenheim Ürzig (Other) Velden (Other) Wittlich Wolf	Koblenz (Güls, Lay, Metternich) Winningen (Other) Kobern (Other)	
V	<i>Auersmachen</i> Biebelhausen <i>Fremersdorf</i> Irsch bei Saarburg <i>Kleinblittersdorf</i> Könen <i>Menningen</i> <i>Merzig</i> Serrig	Ruwer Morscheid Trier (Other)	Kenn Longuich Riol	Schweich Platten	Burg Bremm Briedel Dieblich	Merl Pünderich St. Aldegund Zell-Kaimt
VI	<i>All other villages in the Upper Saar</i>	<i>All villages in the Obermosel</i>			Alf Alken Beilstein Burgen Bruttig-Fankel Bullay Cochem Ellenz- Poltersdorf Ernst Gondorf Karden-Treis	Klotten Löf-Kattenes Lehmen Mesenich Müden Neef Nehren Niederfell Pommern Senheim Valwig

(\*) The Upper Saar is situated way upriver from the current Saar and stretches from Merzig right up to Saarbrücken and Kleinblittersdorf.

(\*\*) The Obermosel (Upper Mosel) is the part of the Mosel situated upriver of Trier, much of which is facing the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

NB: Names in italics refer to villages in the Upper Saar respectively Upper Mosel.





# Mosel Fine Wines

*"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"*

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One needs to read classification maps in one direction. Highly regarded vineyards indicate an appreciation and recognition. Lowly regarded vineyards may only indicate that some vineyards had yet to be discovered. Still, there are a few remarkable facts emerging from this taxation classification, which we go through here below.

*The overriding presence of Scharzhof, Maximin Grünhaus and Brauneberg, which are still some of the finest vineyards today.*

Ask any wine lover which is the most mythical vineyard in the Mosel today and chances are high that Scharzhofberg will come up first. Already 200 years ago, this vineyard was at the top of the scale (a fact confirmed by the high prices achieved by its casks at Auctions throughout the 19th century). Around 1820, only the Maximin Grünhaus (today the Maximin Grünhäuser Abtsberg), another mythical vineyard, was considered the equal of the Scharzhof. Also the Brauneberg (consisting of what forms the Brauneberger Juffer, Juffer-Sonnenuhr and Kammer today) was also already highly considered 200 years ago (and more, as wines from this hill were praised by no less than Thomas Jefferson in the 1780s). This underlines the enduring appreciation for some of the finest vineyards in the Mosel.

*The high regard for the Ohlgsberg.*

Thanks to the efforts of first Theo Haart (Weingut Reinhold Haart) and later Julian Haart and Stefan Steinmetz (Weingut Günther Steinmetz), the Wintricher Ohlgsberg is a highly regarded Mosel vineyard. However, at the time, the vineyard was already at the height of its development. Before the 1850s, the Ohlgsberg was one of the major names, mentioned for the fieriness of its wines and the sweetness of its Auslese.

*The high praise for some today lesser-known Trier vineyards.*

One striking fact is the "superstar" status of no less than two Trier vineyards, the Maximiner Pichter (today part of the Maximiner Kreuzberg) and the Thiergarten (today split between the Trierer Benediktinerberg, Thiergarten Unterm Kreuz and Thiergarten Felsköpfchen). Both the Maximiner Pichter and the Thiergarten were tended by some of the finest growers of this period just after the secularization. This certainly explains, in part at least, the high appreciation. However, we also feel that these vineyards are under-rated today, certainly if you had the chance to taste the 1976er Vereinigte Hospitien Trierer Maximiner Kreuzberg Auslese or the 1971er G.F. von Nell Trierer Thiergarten Unterm Kreuz Auslese.

*The unique quality of the Euchariusberg.*

Besides the Scharzhof, only the Euchariusberg is mentioned specifically as vineyard in the Saar. Again, the particular status has to do with the owner at the time, who was the most probably largest owner of vineyards in the region. The quality of the vineyard (at least its original part) is not to be disputed. This is where the Webers from Hofgut Falkenstein produced their amazing Kabinett wines in 2016 (see the Kabinett Vintage Highlights earlier in this Issue).

*The special status of the Paulinsberg.*

Another vineyard which enjoyed exceptional recognition throughout the 19th century is the Paulinsberg. Our research has shown that the vineyard is not the Paulinsberg of today nor is it the whole of the Paulinshofberg. It referred to what is the central part of the Paulinshofberg, a vineyard which forms the western continuation of the Brauneberger Juffer. Prices for its casks were at the level if not above those of the leading villages of the Middle Mosel. Unfortunately today, much of this central sector is not even bottled under the vineyard name. We had the chance to taste some older bottles from the 1960s from this privileged vineyard and these have amply shown the unique quality of the terroir.

*The rather equal treatment of many of the currently leading villages across the Saar, Ruwer, Trier and the Middle Mosel.*

Most of the villages harboring what are today's highly sought-after vineyards such as Kanzern, Kasel, Wehlen, Piesport, Trittenheim, Brauneberg, Erden, Ürzig, etc. are all classified in the third and fourth category, i.e. rather close together. Was this the result of the fact that the individual qualities of some vineyards were not yet discovered? Or was it out of taxation practicality? Only further research will clarify this question.

*The remarkable presence and performance of the – today almost completely abandoned – region of the Upper Saar.*

An astute eye will have seen village names in the Saar such as Beckingen which do not ring a bell. There is a good reason for that: These villages are situated in the Upper Saar, i.e. the part of the Saar situated near Merzig and even Saarbrücken, some 20 to 50 km upriver from Saarburg, as well as some side rivers such as the Blies. Wine was still an essential drink around 1820 and only the finest travelled internationally as logistics was expensive. Each region therefore tried, if conditions allowed for it at all, to produce its own wines next to other crops. It is therefore not surprising that winemaking was also a not insignificant activity in the Upper Saar. Official figures show that over 160 ha of vines were planted in 1834, with still over 130 ha in activity around 1900. What is more remarkable is that some of its wines (in particular Beckingen, a village near Merzig) were as highly rated as those from the finest villages in the Saar or Middle Mosel. This was, by the way, to continue for the rest of the 19th century. But winemaking all but stopped by the 1920s in the Upper Saar, thanks to improved logistics and the devastation from the phylloxera. However, there are some signs of a localized revival, as 10 ha are planted today near Merzig and upriver from Saarbrücken.

*The lack of recognition of the Terrassenmosel.*

With the exception of the Uhlen vineyards (Kobern and Winnigen), most vineyards in the Terrassenmosel must have sold for little money as the vineyards were classified in the lowest of the taxation categories. Many reasons have been evoked over the years: lack of trading centers, etc. With the possible exception of the Zeller Schwarze Katz (at the time a wine made only from a prime sector in Zell), the Terrassenmosel was to play underdog for much of the 19th and 20th century. It is only recently that some parts were being "discovered" by leading quality-minded growers.



# Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

## VINEYARD CLASSIFICATION | THE VINEYARD TAXATION CLASSIFICATION (E1820) FOR RED WINE

Besides a classification for vineyards planted to white wine grapes, the taxation authorities introduced a different taxation for vineyards planted to red wine grapes. Red wine was not a major activity for the Mosel and only half of the villages produced some. But this was deemed sufficiently different to be taxed separately. Here the classification of red wine vineyards inferred from the 1820 taxation:

Class	Saar Upper Saar (*)	Trier-Ruwer Obermosel (**)	Middle Mosel		Terrassenmosel	
I	Wiltingen (Scharzhof)					
II	Könen					
III	Kanzem	Kasel	Lieser (Niederberg) Wehlen	Piesport Traben		
IV	<i>Beckingen</i> <i>Dreisbach</i> <i>Filzen</i> <i>Wawern</i>	Eitelsbach	Kesten Klüsserath Lieser (Other) Maring-Novian	Rachtig-Machern Trarbach Trittenheim Enkirch	Koblenz (Güls, Lay, Metternich) Winningen Kobern Lütz	
V	<i>Auersmachen</i> <i>Fremersdorf</i> <i>Kleinblittersdorf</i> <i>Menningen</i> <i>Merzig</i>	Ruwer Trier-Ehrang (Quint)	Kenn Longuich Riol	Schweich Platten	Dieblich Koblenz (Moselweiss) Zell-Kaimt	
VI	<i>Most villages in the Upper Saar</i>	<i>Many villages in the Upper Mosel</i>			Alf Alken Beilstein Bruttig-Fankel Bullay Burg	Cochem Ellenz- Poltersdorf Eller-Ediger Ernst Gondorf

(\*) *The Upper Saar is situated way upriver from the current Saar and stretches from Merzig right up to Saarbrücken and Kleinblittersdorf.*

(\*\*) *The Obermosel (Upper Mosel) is the part of the Mosel situated upriver of Trier, much of which is facing the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.*

NB: Names in italics refer to villages in the Upper Saar respectively the Upper Mosel.

This classification shows some interesting facts:

*Red wine was produced in quite a few villages ... but was not widespread.*

The first thing that strikes one when looking at the above list is the large number of villages in which red wine was being produced in the Mosel at the beginning of the 19th century. This concerns quite a few (but not all) villages in the Saar and the Middle Mosel. There were quite a lot of villages in the Upper Saar, the Upper Mosel and many villages in the Terrassenmosel which produced red wine. While the number of villages was high, the proportion of red wine was already quite low. By 1800, the Mosel had already become firmly white wine territory.

*Not only white: Also the finest red Mosel came from the Scharzhof.*

This came to a surprise for us as well. We knew that there was some red Scharzberger produced (in very small quantities. It is however not 100% clear to us if the name Scharzhof literally means the vineyards belonging to the Scharzhof Estate or if it includes what forms the Scharzhofberg today, i.e. the whole hill). The reason for this remark is that in 1844, the owners of the Scharzhof had to publish a series of inserts in journals throughout Germany to indicate where the real Scharzhofberg could be bought as many neighboring growers were apparently usurping the name.

*The special position of the red wines from Könen.*

Könen is a small town on the Saar situated near the confluence to the Mosel. These vineyards are facing east and were highly regarded around the turn of the century, its red wine winning gold medals at the world exhibitions of the time. This particular situation was already there by the early 19th century. Its fame would only fade by the 1920s, when also these vineyards were completely turned to white grapes.

*The high regards for the red wines from Kanzem, Kasel, Wehlen, Lieser (Niederberg), Wehlen, Piesport and Traben.*

All these villages are primarily known today for their white wines. 150 years ago, these were equally regarded for their red wines. Interestingly enough, the Bischöfliche Weingüter Trier replanted a parcel in the Kanzemer Altenberg with red wine grapes. However, no one would probably think of the Wehlener Sonnenuhr for planting some red grapes today (although there was one parcel planted with red grapes in the Wehlener Sonnenuhr for approx. 20 years).





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As a final remark, all records of the time indicate that the production of red wine was quite marginal overall in the Mosel and only represented a few percentages of total production. It is still remarkable that some of these red wines were taxed at the same level as their white wine counterparts by the Prussian authorities.

## VINEYARD CLASSIFICATION | CHILDREN OF THEIR TIME

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One needs to keep in mind that vineyard classifications, as robust as some of their elements may be, always need to be put into the perspective of their times to fully understand them.

After the secularization of the goods of the church and aristocracy, famous Estates came into the ownership of entrepreneurial wealthy bourgeois, who, out of a combination of passion and financial ambition, drastically improved winemaking and vineyard growing. These would be the first whose vineyard names would be recognized, as the list underlined.

The taxation system was set up, as we understand, in 1820. At the time, much of the crop was sold under village name at best. Only the finest of growers used these village names literally. Most wine merchants, especially when selling on export markets, used village names as a stylistic indication, and could bottle Trittenheimer under the name Piesporter. Some vineyards had already achieved some fame, as we mentioned above. But these were visibly still the exception. This was to radically change by the 1850s and the reform of the taxation system. By then, names such as Wawerner-Herrenberger, Ockfener Bockstein, Ockfener Herrenberg, Scharzberg, Zeltinger Schlossberg, Josephshöfer, Oberemmeler Raul, Bernkasteler Doktor, etc. had achieved fame and were consequently taxed differently.

Also, some of the finest vineyards today had not yet been planted and could not weigh onto the classification. In particular, the today famous Ockfener Geisberg was only to be (re)planted by the 1840s (more information on this in Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 28 – Jun 2015). Parts of the Ayler Kupp, the Wehlener Klosterberg, the famous Paradies of Martin Müllen, the Serriger Vogelsang (recently acquired by Markus Molitor) and the Serriger Schloss Saarfels had yet to be planted.

Overall, this taxation system of 1820 provides very interesting insights. Some vineyards which were held in high regards are today completely forgotten (and / or no longer planted). Others, and today famous, sites had not yet blossomed. May this have entertained you ... and enticed the one or the other grower to have a closer look and kiss back alive some of the forgotten vineyards.



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Keller takes over prime Mosel vineyard

## Legendary Keller Estate Takes Over Prime Mosel Vineyard

The mythical Keller Estate takes over a prime vineyard in the Mosel and will produce Mosel wine as of 2018. We interviewed Klaus-Peter Keller about this move and provide some background to this exciting project.



### WEINGUT KELLER | THE OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE OVER THE PIESPORTER SCHUBERTSLAY

The Piesporter Schubertslay is a small 0.8 ha single vineyard tucked in a very steep part of the Piesporter hill, just above the small village of Ferres, slightly upriver to Piesport. This monopoly of the Vereinigte Hospitien has come to fame lately thanks to the efforts of Julian Haart, who leased the largest part of the vineyard (0.7 ha) in 2011.

In the meantime, Julian Haart, still a young Estate, had taken over much of the historic Joh. Haart Estate and is contemplating other developments. This led him to ponder about prolonging the lease. He talked about this to Klaus-Peter Keller (Julian Haart worked at Keller for some time and the two are very close friends), who jumped onto this opportunity.





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The vineyard is certainly among the finest of the region. It forms the terraced part above the village of Ferres, a sector classified in the highest taxation categories on the old Prussian maps. The Schubertslay is not yet named on the taxation map of 1868 because the name was only coined by the Felzen Estate, a founding member of the Grosser Ring, in the early part of the 20th century.

The Schubertslay yielded many great wines over the years, including one of the finest Kabinett in 2014 at the hand of Julian Haart (see Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 28 – June 2015).

## **KLAUS-PETER KELLER | A GROWER BUT ABOVE ALL A WINE LOVER ... WITH A PASSION FOR MOSEL**

Weingut Keller is one of the household names in the world of wine. Its wines are among the most sought-after and heralded worldwide. But Klaus-Peter and Julia Keller also share a passion for wine in general. At their table, you will find wines from the Burgundy, Jura, old Bordeaux, Piedmont, etc. as well as a lot of Riesling, many from the Mosel.

What is less well known is that Mosel blood runs through Klaus-Peter's veins: His mother comes from a wine growing family in the Mosel. We had the chance to talk to him about his plans about this Mosel project.

### **Mosel Fine Wines**

*The logical step for you in Rheinhessen would have been to consolidate / expand in the prime sites of your region, which has seen a revival like no other over the last decades. Why take on the hassle of a Mosel vineyard (far away, etc.)?*

*You just took over 0.7 ha in the Schubertslay (from the Vereinigte Hospitien under lease). Can you say more about your plans?*

*How will you manage the vineyard going forward? Where do you envisage that the wines will be made?*

*With its iron-rich soil, the vineyard has proven to be quite versatile. What are your thoughts going forward in terms of style?*

*Going forward, is this only a first step? Will you be looking for further vineyards in the Mosel region?*

*When can we taste your first wines from the Schubertslay?*

### **Klaus-Peter Keller**

You know, when you are really passionate about something, decisions may not follow common wisdom or defy direct logic. We have never chosen for the easy route. Actually, we love a bit of craziness and unpredictability. We almost felt an urge to go to the Mosel (my parents Hedwig and Klaus already had a small vineyard in the Kaseler Kehrnel in the Ruwer in 1994 and 1995), just as we did when we took on the Abtserde, Morstein and Kirchspiel (in 2006, 2002 and 2001), the Hipping and Pettenthal in Nierstein (in 2011 and 2009) or planted a tiny vineyard with Riesling and Spätburgunder in Kristiansand in Norway (in 2009). We are a bit crazy about wine, and gut feel as well as the fascination of these great terroirs have, more often than not, driven our decisions. Thankfully, we have a lot of friends in the Mosel so that we know the area well. In fact, it feels a bit like home. The 1.5-hour drive from Dalsheim usually flies by!

At this stage, the plan is set on a 10-year horizon. Julia and I will be over 50 by then and, hopefully, Felix will have joined and set his mark on the Estate. We took on responsibilities early and we will certainly do the same with Felix.

We will see what Mother Nature has in store for us in 2018. The vines have had the chance to rest after the frost and the small 2017 harvest. The transfer of the grapes to Dalsheim will take 1.5 hours, max. 2 hours. This should pose no problem, especially given the lower temperatures in the autumn. On top, we are talking about something like 1,000-1,500 liters. If you think about my esteemed colleague Markus Molitor, who just took on over 20 ha in the Saar, he has a completely different challenge to integrate these vineyards into his portfolio (and I am sure he will be, as usual, achieve this to perfection!). Our tiny parcel and small harvest in the Schubertslay are only small fry in comparison and should pose no problem.

We had already offered some larger projects in the Mosel over the years. We have always declined because our main focus are the fascinating limestone and slate vineyards in Rheinhessen. However, with the Schubertslay, we could simply not say no. As Julia Harding MW (Jancis Robinson) described it: "The Schubertslay is the jewel of the Mosel crown." The very old, un-grafted vines still trained on single pole, the raw beauty of the site – we will try to capture all of it in our wines. But Mother Nature is the boss. Whether dry, Feinherb, fruity or noble-sweet, we are open to anything she will put on our plate.

This is not our plan at the moment ... but one never knows!

We do not have a set timetable. We first hope for a good 2018 vintage and the rest, as so often, will come by itself.





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The love of Mosel Riesling is not something unusual among top growers. Some of the greatest fans of Mosel wines are growers from other wine regions. We are aware of substantial exchanges of wines between for instance Burgundy growers and Mosel growers.

It is however quite unusual that this admiration is followed up by taking over a vineyard in the said region. This is exactly what Klaus-Peter and Julia Keller did: Seeing one of the iconic Riesling growers in the world taking on one of the finest Mosel vineyards is not only thrilling news for wine lovers and the Kellers themselves. It is also great news for the Mosel region as a whole. We cannot wait to taste the first Keller wines from the Mosel!





# Mosel Fine Wines




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Upcoming Issues

## Upcoming Mosel Fine Wines Issues: Topics to be Covered

Here is an *avant-goût* on what will be covered in the upcoming Issues:

<b>March-April</b> 2018	<b>Mature Riesling</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>2008 "10-Years-After Retrospective"</li><li>1998 "20-Years-After Retrospective"</li><li>Notes from the Cellar</li></ul>
<b>June-October</b> 2018	<b>2017 Vintage Report</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Vintage Review</li><li>Detailed Estate Reviews &amp; Recommended Wines</li><li>Auctions coverage</li><li>Dry German Riesling</li></ul>
<b>In Parallel</b>	Regular Postings on our Website and <b>Social Media</b> , including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>News</li><li>Wines of the Month</li><li>Vintage Highlights</li><li>2017 Growing Conditions</li><li>Updates of our TN database (via CellarTracker)</li><li>Interesting Articles from other Sources</li></ul> <p><i>Follow us on social Media (click on logo)</i></p> <div style="text-align: center;"></div>