



## Mosel Fine Wines

*"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"*

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

# Issue No 49 Winter Stories

Mosel Vintage

*2018 Highlights*

*2019 Preview*

Mosel Perspectives

*Natural Wine*

*19th Century Winemaking*

Mature Riesling

*Breuer Vertical*

*Keller Vertical*



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## Issue No 49 – January 2019

### 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 full Estate Reviews, recommended wines and dry German Riesling).
- Annual Auction Guide (released ahead of the Trier Auctions), Highlights from Bad Kreuznach and Look-Back.
- Updates on maturing Riesling (10-Years-After Retrospective and recent releases).
- 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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# Mosel Fine Wines

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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.



# Mosel Fine Wines

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## Background Information

Each country has its own specificities regarding naming, labelling, style, etc. This is no different in Germany. 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:

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

Theme	Topic	Issue	Website
Region	Mosel Visiting Guide	Mosel Visiting Guide 2019	-
Estates	Defunct Mosel Estates	Issue No 45 (Apr 2019)	-
Estates	Fritz Haag   Deep-Dive Interview	Issue No 44 (Jan 2019)	-
Vineyards	Uhlen gUs / PDOs   A New Era for German Wine?	Issue No 44 (Jan 2019)	<a href="#">Click Here</a>
Vineyards	Ruwer on the Up   Large Solely-Owned Vineyard in New Hands	Issue No 42 (Aug 2018)	<a href="#">Click Here</a>
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)	-



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## List of Estates and Quick Links

An alphabetic overview (based on last names) of the Estates covered in this Issue with an indication in which section(s) they appear:

Estate	Section of Issue No 49					
	2018 Overview	2018 Highlights	Natural Wine	19th Century Winemaking	Georg Breuer Vertical	Keller Vertical
A.J. Adam	<a href="#">Link</a>	<a href="#">Dry Riesling</a> <a href="#">Off-Dry Riesling</a> <a href="#">Kabinett</a> <a href="#">Spätlese</a> <a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>	<a href="#">Link</a>			
Arns und Sohn			<a href="#">Link</a>			
Jan-Philipp Bleeke			<a href="#">Link</a>			
Blees-Ferber		<a href="#">Spätlese</a> <a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>				
Blesius			<a href="#">Link</a>			
Georg Breuer					<a href="#">Link</a>	
Peter Burens	<a href="#">Link</a>					
Clemens Busch	<a href="#">Link</a>	<a href="#">Dry Riesling</a> <a href="#">Kabinett</a> <a href="#">Spätlese</a> <a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>				
Markus Busch			<a href="#">Link</a>			
Cantzheim	<a href="#">Link</a>	<a href="#">Off-Dry Riesling</a> <a href="#">Kabinett</a>				
Jonas Dostert			<a href="#">Link</a>			
Falkenstein	<a href="#">Link</a>	<a href="#">Dry Riesling</a> <a href="#">Off-Dry Riesling</a> <a href="#">Kabinett</a> <a href="#">Spätlese</a>	<a href="#">Link</a>			
Fio		<a href="#">Dry Riesling</a>	<a href="#">Link</a>			
Dr. Frey			<a href="#">Link</a>			
Geltz-Zilliken	<a href="#">Link</a>	<a href="#">Dry Riesling</a> <a href="#">Off-Dry Riesling</a> <a href="#">Spätlese</a> <a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>				
Fritz Haag	<a href="#">Link</a>	<a href="#">Dry Riesling</a> <a href="#">Kabinett</a> <a href="#">Spätlese</a> <a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>				
Julian Haart	<a href="#">Link</a>	<a href="#">Dry Riesling</a> <a href="#">Kabinett</a> <a href="#">Spätlese</a>				
Dr. Hermann		<a href="#">Spätlese</a> <a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>				
Heymann-Löwenstein		<a href="#">Dry Riesling</a>				
von Hövel		<a href="#">Off-Dry Riesling</a> <a href="#">Kabinett</a>				
Immich-Batterieberg		<a href="#">Off-Dry Riesling</a>				
Karthäuserhof		<a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>				

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## List of Estates and Quick Links ( Cont'd )

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	2018 Overview	2018 Highlights	Natural Wine	19th Century Winemaking	Georg Breuer Vertical	Keller Vertical
Katla			<a href="#">Link</a>			
Keller	<a href="#">Link</a>	<a href="#">Dry Riesling Kabinett</a>				<a href="#">Link</a>
von Kesselstatt		<a href="#">Off-Dry Riesling</a>				
Kilburg	<a href="#">Link</a>					
Jan Matthias Klein	<a href="#">Link</a>	<a href="#">Dry Riesling</a>	<a href="#">Link</a>			
Knebel		<a href="#">Dry Riesling Noble-Sweet</a>				
Gebrüder Knebel			<a href="#">Link</a>			
Goswin Kranz			<a href="#">Link</a>			
Sybille Kuntz			<a href="#">Link</a>			
Philip Lardot			<a href="#">Link</a>			
Peter Lauer	<a href="#">Link</a>	<a href="#">Dry Riesling Off-Dry Riesling Kabinett Spätlese Noble-Sweet</a>				
Le Gallais		<a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>				
Schloss Lieser	<a href="#">Link</a>	<a href="#">Dry Riesling Kabinett Spätlese Noble-Sweet</a>				
Loersch		<a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>				
Carl Loewen		<a href="#">Dry Riesling Off-Dry Riesling Noble-Sweet</a>				
Dr. Loosen		<a href="#">Dry Riesling Noble-Sweet</a>	<a href="#">Link</a>			
Lubentiushof		<a href="#">Off-Dry Riesling</a>				
Madame Flöck	<a href="#">Link</a>		<a href="#">Link</a>			
Materne & Schmitt			<a href="#">Link</a>			
Maximin Grünhaus		<a href="#">Dry Riesling Kabinett Noble-Sweet</a>				
Meierer			<a href="#">Link</a>			
Melsheimer	<a href="#">Link</a>		<a href="#">Link</a>			
Markus Molitor	<a href="#">Link</a>	<a href="#">Dry Riesling Off-Dry Riesling Kabinett Noble-Sweet</a>				
Martin Müllen	<a href="#">Link</a>	<a href="#">Dry Riesling Off-Dry Riesling Spätlese Noble-Sweet</a>	<a href="#">Link</a>			

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	2018 Overview	2018 Highlights	Natural Wine	19th Century Winemaking	Georg Breuer Vertical	Keller Vertical
Egon Müller		<a href="#">Kabinett</a> <a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>				
Stefan Müller	<a href="#">Link</a>	<a href="#">Off-Dry Riesling</a> <a href="#">Kabinett</a> <a href="#">Spätlese</a> <a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>				
von Othegraven		<a href="#">Dry Riesling</a> <a href="#">Kabinett</a> <a href="#">Spätlese</a>				
Pandamonium			<a href="#">Link</a>			
Axel Pauly		<a href="#">Off-Dry Riesling</a>				
Joh. Jos. Prüm		<a href="#">Spätlese</a> <a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>				
S.A. Prüm		<a href="#">Kabinett</a> <a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>				
F.J. Regnery		<a href="#">Off-Dry Riesling</a>				
Julien Renard	<a href="#">Link</a>		<a href="#">Link</a>			
Max Ferd. Richter	<a href="#">Link</a>	<a href="#">Off-Dry Riesling</a> <a href="#">Kabinett</a> <a href="#">Spätlese</a> <a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>				
Schloss Saarstein		<a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>				
Willi Schaefer	<a href="#">Link</a>	<a href="#">Dry Riesling</a> <a href="#">Kabinett</a> <a href="#">Spätlese</a> <a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>				
Richard Scheid			<a href="#">Link</a>			
Selbach-Oster		<a href="#">Spätlese</a> <a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>				
Shadowfolk			<a href="#">Link</a>			
Sorentberg		<a href="#">Off-Dry Riesling</a>				
Später-Veit		<a href="#">Kabinett</a>				
Staffelter-Hof			<a href="#">Link</a>			
Stein		<a href="#">Off-Dry Riesling</a>				
Günther Steinmetz		<a href="#">Off-Dry Riesling</a> <a href="#">Spätlese</a> <a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>				
Steinmetz und Hermann		<a href="#">Off-Dry Riesling</a>				
Jakob Tennstedt	<a href="#">Link</a>		<a href="#">Link</a>			
Thanisch		<a href="#">Kabinett</a> <a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>				
Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Müller-Burggraef			<a href="#">Link</a>			
Tiny Winery			<a href="#">Link</a>			

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# Mosel Fine Wines

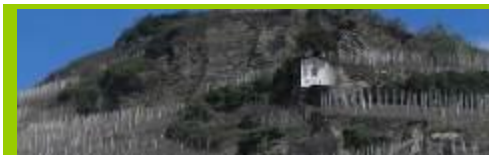
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Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Thanisch		<a href="#">Spätlese Noble-Sweet</a>				
Trös-Heimes			<a href="#">Link</a>			
Rita und Rudolf Trossen	<a href="#">Link</a>	<a href="#">Dry Riesling</a>	<a href="#">Link</a>			
Van Volxem		<a href="#">Dry Riesling</a>				
Stefan Vetter			<a href="#">Link</a>			
Vollenweider		<a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>				
Dr. Wagner			<a href="#">Link</a>			
Wegeler		<a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>				
Werner		<a href="#">Noble-Sweet</a>				
Weiser-Künstler		<a href="#">Dry Riesling Kabinett</a>				
Zur Römerkeller	<a href="#">Link</a>		<a href="#">Link</a>			





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## 2018 Mosel Vintage – Conclusions

After having tasted over 1,500 wines, many several times, we have a look-back at the remarkable 2018 vintage and put forward the highlights of the vintage.



## 2018 Mosel Vintage – Kissed by the Sun

1,500 wines later and we see our initial conclusion more than confirmed. 2018 is not the universally great vintage that parts of the press, relayed by some professional bodies, talked about during and immediately after the harvest. One needs to be really cautious, as too many wines are simply flat, round, and ripe. As we explain on the next page (see our opinion piece: "The Need to Rethink Winemaking in the Mosel"), too many growers applied their old (and tried) methods and were caught out. When dry or off-dry, their wines taste more like Viognier than zesty Riesling. When fruity-styled, their wines taste anything but their Prädikat as they are the result of heavy declassification.

So the bad news is: One needs to be very cautious in 2018. But there is also good news: A few growers managed to completely defy this logic and produced some of the most exciting wines we have ever tasted. Done right, 2018 offered the chance to produce stunning wines with ripe acidity and incredible aromatic purity and worthy of any cellar!

Mosel did remarkably well in the dry Riesling register, certainly when compared to other German regions, and yielded quite a few stunners. But one needs to keep a close look at the level of alcohol as many wines can feel hot, even at 12.5%. Finally, the off-dry Riesling category proved comparatively homogenous, certainly when considering the challenges of the 2018 vintage.

Most Kabinett and Spätlese wines are on the round, rich and often powerful side, and kick at one level (if not two levels ...) above their declared Prädikat. However, there are a few truly stunningly pure examples, which are among the finest "light fruity-styled Riesling" we have ever tasted. Overall, the noble-sweet wines, be them Auslese, Eiswein, BA or TBA, often have huge potential (there is wine perfection among them), but they will require quite some patience as their currently cloying sweetness will require several decades in order to melt away.

In 2018, more than in any recent vintage, the grower made the difference. This concerns in particular A.J. Adam, Clemens Busch, Falkenstein, Fritz Haag, Julian Haart, Peter Lauer Schloss Lieser, Markus Molitor, Martin Müllen, Stefan Müller, Max Ferd. Richter, and Willi Schaefer, who all produced vintage highlights in many different stylistic directions. The incredible performance of A.J. Adam cannot be praised enough: This fine Estate managed to produce vintage highlights in EVERY stylistic directions!

The 2018 vintage made us also discover some superb new Estates, in particular "natural" ones. The debut vintages by Julien Renard, Jakob Tennstedt, and Madame Flöck are hugely promising, and readers should have a close eye on the superb "natural" efforts produced by more seasoned growers such as Jan Matthias Klein, Melsheimer, Rudolf & Rita Trossen, and zur Römerkelter. Moreover, savvy readers and importers should try out the exciting wines coming out of the cellars of the still lesser-known but hugely promising Peter Burens, Cantzheim, and Kilburg.

Finally, 2018 marked the debut vintage of Keller in the Mosel (we had reported on this at the end of 2017). The result has been a roaring success, with, unfortunately for wine lovers, market prices to match.



# Mosel Fine Wines

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## The Need to Rethink Winemaking in the Mosel

2018 is a warm year – yet another warm year – and a modern-day “difficult” vintage in the Mosel.

In the old days, difficult vintages were easy to define: The average sugar levels did barely allow to make wine with 9% of alcohol. It was easy to define. Everybody agreed. In the modern days of climate change, difficult vintages are different. They occur when the summer is too hot. They occur when there is rot during harvest. Sugar levels are rarely part of the equation nowadays. Acidity, texture, and aromatic purity are the key indicators of a vintage's quality.

In 2018, grapes already showed sky-high sugar levels and moderate acidity levels by early September, i.e. weeks away of a usual harvest starting time. Given this situation, growers had essentially two choices:

- “Do I wait for my grapes reach full aromatic maturity but have wines which are soft, rich and potentially powerful or alcoholic, and taste of melon and other ripe flavors?”, or
- “Do I harvest early in order to preserve freshness but will have to face some consumer faces when the wines are a touch green in their youth?”

Neither solution is really optimal. But that is normal: In a difficult vintage, the best result will not be as good as in great vintages. By definition of a difficult vintage.

As we found out throughout the year, far too many growers are still in “sugar adoration” modus. 2018 was a proof in case. The bulk of the wines are ripe, round, and quite frankly un-Riesling. Very often, the dry wines have high levels of alcohol (some with as much as 14%). When we mentioned this to one grower, noting the heat in the after-taste, he just opened his arms and said: “I know, but what should I do? That is what nature gave me.”

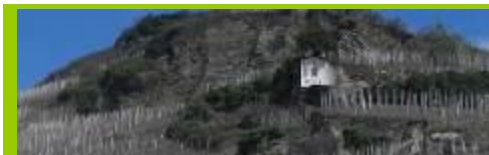
And we challenge this widely-held view. Some growers threw out their set plans and got into the vineyards harvesting very early. They also worked the vineyards differently (lower defoliation, etc.), relinquish extensive pre-fermentation cold-soak (to avoid making big wines even bigger), work with fractioning during pressing (to retain acidity), and rely on spontaneous fermentation (which allows other bacteria to eat some of the sugar and thereby reduce the alcohol creation). These growers were able to produce some superbly light and elegant wines, which is the reason why wine lovers around the world drink Riesling from the Mosel in the first place.

The best Estates managed of course to produce some outstanding wines in 2018. But, too often, the dry wines are riper and powerful than ideally should be the case, and the fruity-styled wines not very typical of their Prädikat. Kabinett are typically big Spätlese. Spätlese and Auslese were often are almost noble-sweet wines. The typical argument used by growers (and relayed by parts of the wine press) is that this is a great deal for consumers: “A Kabinett with Auslese credentials.”

Here is the fallacy. Imagine you are a lover of Portuguese dry red wine. You go to your favorite grower, ready to stock up on your favorites ... and you get served a fortified red with the argument: “isn't it great? You get such a great deal for your red wine. These fortified wines usually cost much more!” What would be the reaction of the consumer? Correct. He would tell the grower in more or less colorful and crisp language that it is not a great deal because it is not what he wants at that moment in time.

You think this pushes the boat regarding Mosel Riesling? Well, think again. Most people expect their Kabinett to be delicate, animating, crisp and tasting off-dry rather than really sweet. This is what you will get from grapes harvested at 80-85° Oechsle with 9-10 g/l of acidity, and fermented down to 8% alcohol and approx. 35-50 g/l of residual sugar. If however sells as Kabinett a wine which is really an Auslese (i.e. harvested at over 90-95° Oechsle, with 75-80 g/l of residual sugar and less than 8 g/l of acidity), you will get a sweet wine. Possibly a great sweet wine, but not AT ALL the style of wine probably expected at that moment in time by the consumer.

Mosel needs to wake up to the reality of modern times if it is to retain its position at the high table of world wines. Fortunately, many growers told us privately that 2018 had been a turning point and an eye-opener. So we are hopeful for the future!



# Mosel Fine Wines

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## 2018 Mosel Vintage – Dry Riesling Highlights

### 2018 DRY RIESLING | ELEGANT PURITY

On paper, the 2018 vintage was and was not an obvious candidate for dry greatness in the Mosel. On the one side, the growing conditions were positive for dry Riesling because they yielded wines with mild levels of acidity. On the other side, they were not as they also yielded grapes with high sugar content, i.e. high alcohol, and with low levels of dry extracts to buffer this off.

In the end, it was up to the growers to make the most of it ... and the finest really went for it! We have never tasted so many great dry Mosel Riesling in any previous vintage. It is heartening to see how top Mosel growers now master the art of producing dry wines. Not only did it do well: Overall, the Mosel is probably the most successful region in Germany as well. The wines have presence, but also excellent elegance and purity.



The performance of Schloss Lieser cannot be praised high enough. Not only did it land six (!) wines on our list of highlights, it also produced the dry Riesling of the vintage: the 2018er Bernkasteler Doctor GG. This wine is simply a remarkable wine of depth and elegance

A.J. Adam, Julian Haart, Peter Lauer, Carl Loewen, Dr. Loosen, Markus Molitor, and Van Volxem underlined their talent by each landing three wines on our list of dry Riesling highlights of the vintage. Also Keller, Knebel, Martin Müllen, Willi Schaefer, and Weiser-Künstler produced some stunning wines. 2018 proved also a major vintage for natural wine growers, as both Jan Matthias Klein and Rita & Rudolf Trossen landed some of their wines onto our list of highlights.

So 2018 is definitively one to keep an eye on and indulge on some great dry Mosel Riesling. As much as we praise the finest growers, we cannot stress enough that 2018 is also a vintage in which one needs to be extremely cautious. Many wines are simply aromatically too ripe, others are alcoholic, and, in many wines, the low acidity makes a touch of sweetness come through, despite them being legally dry.

As we mentioned in our buyer's guide in June: Without firm advice, discard any dry Riesling with more than 12.5% of alcohol and taste or rely on a tasting note before buying. Buying blind is definitively not a fashionable thing to do in 2018!

Finally, as we have been spreading the word for many years now, some of the very best dry Riesling from previous vintages have proved to be late released wines, so some of the best wines of the vintage are currently still in cask, and will only be released as of next year (and far later for some examples).

Happy hunting!

### 2018 DRY RIESLING | LIST OF VINTAGE HIGHLIGHTS

We provide here our list (ranked alphabetically by Estate) of dry Riesling highlights from the 2018 vintage:

2018er	A.J. Adam	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Trocken	08 19	94
2018er	A.J. Adam	Dhroner Häs'chen Riesling Trocken	06 19	93



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## 2018 DRY RIESLING | LIST OF VINTAGE HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

2018er	A.J. Adam	Dhroner Hofberg Riesling Trocken	07 19	93
2018er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Rothenpfad Riesling Trocken GG	33 19	93+
2018er	Falkenstein	Niedermenniger Sonnenberg Riesling Spätlese Trocken	09 19	93
2018er	Fio	Piesporter Falkenberg Riesling Trocken	04 19	92+
2018er	Geltz-Zilliken	Saarburger Rausch Riesling Trocken GG	19 19	92+
2018er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Trocken GG	08 19	93
2018er	Julian Haart	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling	16 19	94
2018er	Julian Haart	Wintricher Ohligsberg Riesling	15 19	93+
2018er	Julian Haart	Piesporter Riesling	17 19	93
2018er	Heymann-Löwenstein	Winninger Uhlen L Riesling Trocken GG	10 19	93
2018er	Keller	Piesporter Schubertslay Riesling Trocken GG Alte Reben	37 19	95+
N.V.	Jan Matthias Klein	Madcap Magnus Le Loup Fou (Lot 0119)	(No AP)	92+
2018er	Knebel	Winninger Uhlen Riesling GG	10 19	95+
2018er	Knebel	Winninger Röttgen Riesling GG	09 19	93
2018er	Peter Lauer	Ayler Schonfels Riesling Trocken Fass 11 GG	11 19	93+
2018er	Peter Lauer	Ayler Kupp Riesling Trocken Fass 18 GG	18 19	93
2018er	Peter Lauer	Biebelhausener Feils Trocken Fass 13 GG	13 19	93
<b>2018er</b>	<b>Schloss Lieser</b>	<b>Bernkasteler Doctor Riesling Trocken GG</b>	<b>34 19</b>	<b>96</b>
2018er	Schloss Lieser	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Trocken GG	32 19	95
2018er	Schloss Lieser	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Trocken GG	33 19	94+
2018er	Schloss Lieser	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Trocken GG	31 19	94
2018er	Schloss Lieser	Brauneberger Juffer Riesling Trocken GG	28 19	93
2018er	Schloss Lieser	Lieserer Niederberg Helden Riesling Trocken GG	30 19	93
2018er	Carl Loewen	Longuicher Maximiner Herrenberg Riesling Trocken "1896" Alte Reben	14 19	93
2018er	Carl Loewen	Thörnicher Ritsch Riesling Trocken GG	15 19	93
2018er	Carl Loewen	Longuicher Maximiner Herrenberg Riesling Trocken GG	16 19	92+
2018er	Dr. Loosen	Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Trocken Alte Reben GG	50 19	(92-95)
2018er	Dr. Loosen	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Trocken Alte Reben GG	47 19	(91-94)
2018er	Dr. Loosen	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Trocken Alte Reben GG	49 19	(91-94)
2018er	Maximin Grünhaus	Maximin Grünhäuser Abtsberg Riesling Trocken GG	08 19	92+
2018er	Markus Molitor	Erdener Prälat Riesling Auslese *** (White Capsule)	06 19	94+
2018er	Markus Molitor	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese *** (White Capsule)	32 19	93
2018er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese ** (White Capsule)	43 19	93
2018er	Martin Müllen	Trarbacher Hühnerberg Riesling Spätlese Trocken	32 19	94
2018er	Martin Müllen	Kröver Paradies Riesling Spätlese Trocken **	06 19	93
2018er	von Othegraven	Ockfener Bockstein Riesling Trocken GG	18 19	93+
2018er	von Othegraven	Kanzemer Altenberg Riesling Trocken GG	19 19	92+
2018er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Trocken GG	12 19	94
2018er	Rita & Rudolf Trossen	Riesling Trocken Lay Purus	(No AP)	93
2018er	Van Volxem	Ockfener Bockstein Riesling GG	35 19	93
2018er	Van Volxem	Wiltinger Gottesfuss Riesling Alte Reben GG	20 19	93
2018er	Van Volxem	Kanzemer Altenberg Riesling Alte Reben GG	19 19	92+
2018er	Weiser-Künstler	Trabener Gaispfad Riesling Kabinett Trocken	09 19	93
2018er	Weiser-Künstler	Trarbacher Gaispfad Riesling Trocken	07 19	93



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## 2018 Mosel Vintage – Off-Dry Riesling Highlights

### 2018 OFF-DRY RIESLING | GREATNESS ... IN THE FULLNESS OF TIME

2018 produced ripe wines with mild acidity. This may not sound like the winning combination for generating high quality off-dry Riesling, but in fact it was. Those growers who produced wines which stopped their fermentation naturally at around 15-20 g/l of residual sugar made stunning wines of purity with presence and without alcoholic heat. These wines still have a touch of sweetness to integrate, so they will require some patience. But the wait will be worth it.

The usual suspects did manage the vintage perfectly well. A.J. Adam, Falkenstein, Immich-Batterieberg, Peter Lauer, Carl Loewen, Lubentiushof, and Markus Molitor all produced superbly elegant and precise expressions of off-dry Riesling.



The performance of Falkenstein cannot be praised enough. It landed no less than seven (!) wines on our list of vintage highlights, including the finest off-dry Riesling of the vintage: The 2018er Niedermenniger Herrenberg Spätlese AP4, a modern-day classic in the making.

While not fully matching the performance of Falkenstein, Peter Lauer produced one of its finest vintage of off-dry Riesling ever, and landed four vintage highlights, including a stunning Stirn.

Besides some well-established players, a whole set of new growers made their appearance on our list of highlights. While Stefan Müller is already well-known by now (at least to the Mosel Fine Wines' readers), Cantzheim, Axel Pauly, F.J. Regnery, and Sorentberg all underline nicely their quality. These under-rated Estates definitely deserve more recognition!

Finally, we would like to underline the stunning Scharzhofberger by von Hövel, possibly the finest expression of off-dry Riesling we have ever tasted from this mythical vineyard.

The off-dry Riesling category remains a less loved one, as it seems stuck in between dryness and fruitiness. May be more than in any other category, we have to stress again the fact that these wines need to age, in order for their sweetness to integrate. This is quite comparable to tannins in red wine, and we urge you to have a closer look at our drinking windows. You will often notice that our recommendation is to wait quite a couple of years before true enjoyment (sometimes up to 8-10 years). It is only then that these wines will really start to shine. The finest 2018 wines are truly remarkable and deserve more attention! But patience will be required.



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## 2018 OFF-DRY RIESLING | LIST OF VINTAGE HIGHLIGHTS

We provide here our list (ranked alphabetically by Estate) of off-dry Riesling highlights from the 2018 vintage:

2018er	A.J. Adam	Dhroner Hofberg Riesling von den Terrassen	09 19	93
2018er	A.J. Adam	Riesling Feinherb in der Sängerei	10 19	92
2018er	Cantzheim	Saar Riesling Der Altenberg	11 19	93
2018er	Falkenstein	Krettnacher Altenberg Riesling Spätlese Feinherb	07 19	92+
2018er	Falkenstein	Niedermenniger Herrenberg Riesling Kabinett Feinherb	15 19	92
2018er	Falkenstein	Niedermenniger Herrenberg Riesling Spätlese Feinherb	03 19	94
<b>2018er</b>	<b>Falkenstein</b>	<b>Niedermenniger Herrenberg Riesling Spätlese Feinherb</b>	<b>04 19</b>	<b>95</b>
2018er	Falkenstein	Niedermenniger Herrenberg Riesling Spätlese Feinherb	11 19	94
2018er	Falkenstein	Niedermenniger Herrenberg Riesling Spätlese Feinherb	21 19	94
2018er	Falkenstein	Niedermenniger Herrenberg Riesling Spätlese Feinherb	23 19	94
2018er	Geltz-Zilliken	Saarburger Rausch Riesling Diabas	15 19	92
2018er	von Hövel	Kanzemer Hörecker Riesling	15 19	91+
2018er	von Hövel	Scharzhofberger Riesling	17 19	94
2018er	Immich-Batterieberg	Enkircher Ellergrub Riesling	05 19	92
2018er	von Kesselstatt	Kaseler Kehnagel Riesling Kabinett Feinherb	08 19	92
2018er	Peter Lauer	Ayler Kupp Neuenberg Riesling Fass 17	17 19	(91-94)
2018er	Peter Lauer	Riesling Kern Fass 9	09 19	94
2018er	Peter Lauer	Riesling Kern Fass 9	09 19	93
2018er	Peter Lauer	Riesling Stirn Fass 15	15 19	95
2018er	Carl Loewen	Riesling "1896"	17 19	93+
2018er	Lubentiushof	Koberner Uhlen Riesling Alte Reben	04 19	92+
2018er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese *** (Green Capsule)	59 19	94
2018er	Markus Molitor	Bernkasteler Badstube Riesling Spätlese (Green Capsule)	58 19	93
2018er	Markus Molitor	Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Auslese *** (Green Capsule)	01 19	93
2018er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Schlossberg Riesling Auslese *** (Green Capsule)	84 19	92+
2018er	Markus Molitor	Kinheimer Rosenberg Riesling Auslese *** (Green Capsule)	45 19	92
2018er	Markus Molitor	Saarburger Rausch Riesling Auslese *** (Green Capsule)	96 19	92
2018er	Markus Molitor	Wehlener Klosterberg Riesling Auslese *** (Green Capsule)	70 19	92
2018er	Martin Müllen	Trarbacher Hühnerberg Riesling Spätlese Feinherb * 3te Terrassen	29 19	92
2018er	Stefan Müller	Krettnacher Altenberg Riesling Feinherb	29 19	92
2018er	Stefan Müller	Niedermenniger Sonnenberg Riesling Spätlese Feinherb	12 19	92
2018er	Axel Pauly	Bernkasteler-Kueser Kardinalsberg Riesling Feinherb Steinerd	12 19	92
2018er	F.J. Regnery	Klüsserather Bruderschaft Riesling Spätlese Feinherb	27 19	<i>Auction</i> 92
2018er	Max Ferd. Richter	Mülheimer Sonnenlay Riesling Feinherb Alte Reben	36 19	92
2018er	Sorentberg	Reiler Sorentberg Riesling Rotschiefer	01 19	92
2018er	Stein	Alfer Hölle Riesling Spätlese 1900	15 19	92+
2018er	Günther Steinmetz	Neumagener Rosengärtchen Riesling von den Terrassen	36 19	92
2018er	Steinmetz und Hermann	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Alte Reben	45 19	91+



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## 2018 Mosel Vintage – Kabinett Riesling Highlights

### 2018 KABINETT | STUNNING AT THE TOP – OFF-TOPIC AT THE BOTTOM

2018 is a warm and hot vintage which yielded grapes with low acidity, ripe flavors, and high in sugar density. On paper, this did not bode well for whoever loves his Kabinett to be playful, racy, and elegant. And this was amply confirmed by the large number of soft, ripe, round, and often sweet wines sold as Kabinett in 2018.

But the vintage has another, hugely positive side. Some growers took the bold step to bring forward their Kabinett harvest to early-mid September (instead of the anticipated end of September), in order to retain some racy freshness. This concerns particularly A.J. Adam, Clemens Busch, Falkenstein, Julian Haart, Keller, Stefan Müller, von Othegraven, and Weiser-Künstler. And, surprise-surprise, these growers produced some truly remarkably playful and elegant wines.



Keller landed a master-piece in the first vintage it tended Mosel vineyards: Its 2018er Piesporter Schubertslay Kabinett (Auction) is the finest Kabinett of the vintage and one of the most exciting young Kabinett wines we have ever tasted.

However, also other growers underlined their talent at true Kabinett wines and landed multiple racy wines on our list of vintage highlights. A.J. Adam, Julian Haart, Schloss Lieser, and von Othegraven all have no less than three different great Kabinett bottlings. Falkenstein, Peter Lauer, and Stefan Müller each landed two Kabinett on this coveted list.

Besides these growers, other growers produced more Spätlese-styled Kabinett wines which retain nevertheless some cut and, above all, shine through their purity. In particular, Fritz Haag, Maximin Grünhaus, and Max Ferd. Richter proved hugely successful in this style.

We are particularly pleased to see Später-Veit (who produced an amazing Kabinett Ames in 2017) confirm its huge talent with another great wine (more on the Spätlese side of things). Also, the completely under-rated Thanisch Estate produced one of the Kabinett highlights of the vintage (this Estate is based in Lieser and only very distantly related to the Wwe Thanisch Estates of Bernkastel fame).

The finest growers produced some stunningly pure and elegant Kabinett wines in 2018. Others managed to produce gorgeous Spätlese-styled wines marked by purity and a touch of creaminess. These are highly recommended (the full list can be found on the following page).

However, this should not hide away the fact that too many growers essentially declassified Auslese wines fermented down to higher levels of alcohol, and then bottled as Kabinett. While some of these wines are superb in their own right, they are often powerful (due to the higher level of alcohol), ripe, and soft, and therefore a far cry from the playful and racy elegance that wine lovers expect from Kabinett. It is therefore paramount to read some tasting notes (or taste oneself) any unknown Kabinett from 2018.



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## 2018 KABINETT | LIST OF VINTAGE HIGHLIGHTS

We provide here our list (ranked alphabetically by Estates) of Kabinett highlights from the 2018 vintage:

2018er	A.J. Adam	Dhroner Häs'chen Riesling Kabinett	11 19		92+
2018er	A.J. Adam	Dhroner Hofberg Riesling Kabinett	12 19		94
2018er	A.J. Adam	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Kabinett	13 19		94
2018er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Riesling Kabinett	13 19	<i>Auction</i>	95
2018er	Cantzheim	Saar Riesling Kabinett Der Kabinett	03 19		93
2018er	Falkenstein	Krettnacher Euchariusberg Riesling Kabinett	12 19		93
2018er	Falkenstein	Krettnacher Euchariusberg Riesling Kabinett Alte Reben	08 19		95
2018er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer Riesling Kabinett	03 19		93
2018er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Kabinett	13 19	<i>Auction</i>	95
2018er	Julian Haart	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Kabinett	07 19		95
2018er	Julian Haart	Wintricher Ohligsberg Riesling Kabinett	10 19		94
2018er	Julian Haart	Wintricher Ohligsberg Riesling Kabinett Alte Reben	11 19		96
2018er	von Hövel	Saar Riesling Kabinett Lilly	10 19		93
2018er	Keller	Piesporter Schubertslay Riesling Kabinett Alte Reben	40 19	<i>Auction</i>	96+
2018er	Peter Lauer	Ayler Kupp Riesling Kabinett Fass 5	05 19	<i>Auction</i>	93
2018er	Peter Lauer	Ayler Kupp Riesling Kabinett Fass 8	08 19		93
2018er	Schloss Lieser	Bernkasteler Doctor Riesling Kabinett	13 19		94
2018er	Schloss Lieser	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Kabinett	36 19	<i>Auction</i>	93
2018er	Schloss Lieser	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Kabinett	12 19		93
2018er	Maximin Grünhaus	Maximin Grünhäuser Abtsberg Riesling Kabinett Nr. 25	23 19	<i>Auction</i>	93
2018er	Markus Molitor	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Kabinett (Golden Capsule)	62 19		93
2018er	Egon Müller	Scharzhofberger Riesling Kabinett Alte Reben	03 19	<i>Auction</i>	94
2018er	Stefan Müller	Krettnacher Altenberg Riesling Kabinett Fass Goldrichs	21 19		93
2018er	Stefan Müller	Niedermenniger Sonnenberg Riesling Kabinett Alte Reben	10 19		93
2018er	von Othegraven	Kanzemer Altenberg Riesling Kabinett	04 19		93
2018er	von Othegraven	Kanzemer Altenberg Riesling Kabinett	05 19	<i>Auction</i>	94
2018er	von Othegraven	Wawerner Herrenberger Riesling Auslese	10 19		93
2018er	S.A. Prüm	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Kabinett	09 19		92+
2018er	Max Ferd. Richter	Brauneberger Juffer Riesling Kabinett -Fuder 4-	17 19		93+
2018er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Kabinett	03 19		93
2018er	Später-Veit	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Kabinett Armes	05 19		93
2018er	Thanisch	Bernkastel-Kueser Weisenstein Riesling Kabinett	12 19		93
2018er	Weiser-Künstler	Enkircher Ellergrub Riesling Kabinett	04 19		95

*NB: We only took on this list those wines, which remain comparatively "Kabinett" styled.*





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## 2018 Mosel Vintage – Spätlese Riesling Highlights

### 2018 SPÄTLESE | PRESENCE AND PURITY

The hot and warm 2018 vintage generated grapes with high sugar density and low acidity. Consequently, the Spätlese are on the round and rich side, and often have the creamy side of an Auslese. No wonder, as many of these wines were made from fruit harvested at Auslese levels if not, in some cases, technically at BA level. This has an impact on the style of the wines, which are richer than Spätlese usually are.

At the top, A.J. Adam, Fritz Haag, Julian Haart, Schloss Lieser, Stefan Müller, Joh. Jos. Prüm, Willi Schaefer, and Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Thanisch produced some remarkable wines. They retain some Spätlese zest to pep up their delicately Auslese-styled presence. What makes these Spätlese so special is their remarkable elegance and purity.

The finest Spätlese of the vintage is the 2018er Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Spätlese by young and talented Julian Haart. His approach focused on finesse and freshness paid off handsomely!



Also other usual suspects produced some comparatively elegant expressions of Spätlese. This includes Falkenstein, Peter Lauer, von Othegraven, and Max Ferd. Richter.

All the names above are well known and established sources for the finest of Spätlese since years ... with the exception of Stefan Müller. We cannot underline more the extraordinary development this talented grower has had over the last few years: He hit the international scene only a few years ago (we reported on its wines in 2015) and has since joined the small and very coveted club of master Spätlese crafters. In addition, he is one of the few growers who landed two Spätlese onto our list of highlights.

If you enjoy your Spätlese more on the luscious side, Dr. Hermann and Günther Steinmetz as well as the up-and-coming Loersch all produced magnificent sweet wines which have already the clear luscious creaminess of an Auslese.

As we mentioned at the beginning, many Spätlese are really very big Auslese in disguise, and we urge our readers to review the tasting notes before buying some of these wines. The stylistic variations are simply too wide for gambling.

You will find our complete list of 2018 Spätlese highlights on the following page.



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## 2018 SPÄTLESE | LIST OF VINTAGE HIGHLIGHTS

We provide here our list (ranked alphabetically) of Spätlese highlights from the 2018 vintage:

2018er	A.J. Adam	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Spätlese	15 19	95
2018er	Blees-Ferber	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Spätlese ***	21 19	94
2018er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Riesling Spätlese GK	15 19	94
2018er	Falkenstein	Krettnacher Euchariusberg Riesling Spätlese	14 19	94
2018er	Falkenstein	Krettnacher Euchariusberg Riesling Spätlese	24 19	94
2018er	Geltz-Zilliken	Saarburger Rausch Riesling Spätlese	07 19	<i>Auction</i> 94
2018er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese	07 19	95
2018er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese #14	14 19	<i>Auction</i> 94
<b>2018er</b>	<b>Julian Haart</b>	<b>Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Spätlese</b>	<b>08 19</b>	<b>96</b>
2018er	Julian Haart	Wintricher Ohligsberg Riesling Spätlese	09 19	95
2018er	Dr. Hermann	Erdener Herzlei Riesling Spätlese Alte Reben	09 19	94
2018er	Dr. Hermann	Erdener Prälat Riesling Spätlese Alte Reben	10 19	95
2018er	Peter Lauer	Aylar Lambertskirch Riesling Spätlese	14 19	94
2018er	Schloss Lieser	Bernkasteler Doctor Riesling Spätlese	37 19	<i>Auction</i> 95
2018er	Schloss Lieser	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Spätlese	17 19	94
2018er	Martin Müllen	Kröver Paradies Riesling Spätlese ** Alte Reben	09 19	95
2018er	Stefan Müller	Krettnacher Euchariusberg Riesling Spätlese Alte Reben	15 19	95
2018er	Stefan Müller	Niedermenniger Sonnenberg Riesling Spätlese Alte Reben	28 19	94
2018er	von Othegraven	Kanzemer Altenberg Riesling Spätlese	07 19	94
2018er	von Othegraven	Kanzemer Altenberg Riesling Spätlese Alte Reben	09 19	94
2018er	Joh. Jos. Prüm	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese	17 19	<i>Auction</i> 96
2018er	Max Ferd. Richter	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese	19 19	94
2018er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Spätlese	05 19	94
2018er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Spätlese	10 19	94
2018er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Spätlese	13 19	<i>Auction</i> 96
2018er	Selbach-Oster	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese *	20 19	94
2018er	Günther Steinmetz	Neumagener Grosser Hengelberg Riesling Spätlese GK	13 19	94
2018er	Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Thanisch	Bernkasteler Doctor Riesling Spätlese	06 19	<i>Auction</i> 95



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## 2018 Vintage – Noble-Sweet Highlights

### 2018 NOBLE-SWEET | PATIENCE WILL BE REWARDED BY TRUE GREATNESS

2018 was a hot and ripe vintage, with the most heterogeneous outbreak of botrytis in living memory. Some villages, such as Zeltingen, saw plenty of botrytis, while others had hardly any. But the good weather conditions meant that growers who were set out for bringing in botrytized grapes had the time to do so during the harvest and could find the adequate grapes. The challenge in 2018 was to pack some freshness and zest as the acidity levels tumbled as the harvest progressed.

At the top, some absolutely amazing noble-sweet wines emerged from the 2018 vintage. In particular, historic masters of botrytized Auslese such as Fritz Haag, Schloss Lieser, Maximin Grünhaus, Egon Müller, and Joh. Jos. Prüm (which produced the Auslese of the vintage), made some wines of epic dimensions.

Beyond this, one needs to underline the incredible performance of Clemens Busch and Günther Steinmetz, who landed no less than four respectively three Auslese on our list of highlights.



Several lesser-known growers made it onto our list of Eiswein, BA or TBA highlights. This includes Blees-Ferber (who has done so now for three years in a row), Loersch, Philipps-Eckstein, Thanisch (in Lieser), and Werner, which thereby get some recognition for their outstanding work.

TBA perfection was possible in 2018, as Max Ferd. Richter (our TBA of the vintage) and Dr. Hermann underlined. The performances of Dr. Hermann and Selbach-Oster prove truly remarkable. Both land no less than six respectively five BAs and TBAs onto our list of highlights.

Finally, it is with immense pleasure that we saw the great return after a few lesser vintages of Karthäuserhof. It produced several BA and TBA highlights in 2018.

As much as the 2018 vintage proves a clear major vintage for noble-sweet wines, one needs to underline the fact that their mild acidity makes all these wines remarkably sweet if not outright cloying at this stage. They will require decades to integrate their sweetness and reveal their underlying finesse.

However, patience will be rewarded: Happy hunting!



# Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

## 2018 NOBLE-SWEET | LIST OF EISWEIN, BA, AND TBA HIGHLIGHTS

We provide here a list (ranked alphabetically by Estate) of Eiswein, BA, and TBA highlights from the 2018 vintage:

2018er	Blees-Ferber	Leiwener Kloostergarten Riesling Eiswein	11 19	96
2018er	Blees-Ferber	Neumagener Sonnenuhr Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese Non Plus Ultra	22 19	97+
2018er	Blees-Ferber	Piesporter Gärtchen Riesling Beerenauslese	10 19	97
2018er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Riesling Beerenauslese	24 19	97
2018er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese	27 19	98+
2018er	Geltz-Zilliken	Saarburger Rausch Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese	02 19	97
2018er	Dr. Hermann	Erdener Prälät Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese Alte Reben lange GK	24 19	98+
2018er	Dr. Hermann	Erdener Treppchen Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese GK	21 19	96
2018er	Dr. Hermann	Erdener Treppchen Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese Alte Reben lange GK	23 19	100
2018er	Dr. Hermann	Kinheimer Hubertuslay Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese lange GK	20 19	96
2018er	Dr. Hermann	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Beerenauslese GK	19 19	97
2018er	Dr. Hermann	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese Alte Reben lange GK	22 19	98
2018er	Karthäuserhof	Eitelsbacher Karthäuserhofberg Riesling Beerenauslese Nr. 63	19 19	<i>Auction</i> 96+
2018er	Karthäuserhof	Eitelsbacher Karthäuserhofberg Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese Nr. 55	20 19	97
2018er	Schloss Lieser	Lieserer Niederberg Helden Riesling Beerenauslese	26 19	98
2018er	Loersch	Neumagener Rosengärtchen Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese	09 19	95+
2018er	Loersch	Trittenheimer Apotheke Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese	10 19	96
2018er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Beerenauslese *	153 19	(95-98)
2018er	Stefan Müller	Krettnacher Altenberg Riesling Beerenauslese	17 19	96
2018er	Philipp-Eckstein	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Beerenauslese	28 19	<i>Auction</i> 96
2018er	Philipp-Eckstein	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese	29 19	<i>Auction</i> 97
2018er	Max Ferd. Richter	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese	40 19	97+
2018er	<b>Max Ferd. Richter</b>	<b>Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese</b>	<b>38 19</b>	<b>100</b>
2018er	Schloss Saarstein	Serriger Schloss Saarsteiner Riesling Beerenauslese	13 19	<i>Auction?</i> 96+
2018er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Beerenauslese	16 19	96
2018er	Selbach-Oster	Zeltinger Schlossberg Riesling Beerenauslese	43 19	98
2018er	Selbach-Oster	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese *	48 19	97
2018er	Selbach-Oster	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese	45 19	96
2018er	Selbach-Oster	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese Holz	44 19	96
2018er	Selbach-Oster	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese Stahl	46 19	96
2018er	Thanisch	Lieserer Niederberg Helden Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese	40 19	95+
2018er	Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch-Erben Thanisch	Berncasteler Doctor Riesling Beerenauslese	08 19	<i>Auction?</i> 98+
2018er	Vollenweider	Wolfer Goldgrube Riesling Beerenauslese	05 19	97+
2018er	Wegeler	Berncasteler Doctor Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese	15 19	98
2018er	Werner	Schweicher Annaberg Riesling Beerenauslese	18 19	96

## 2018 NOBLE-SWEET | LIST OF AUSLESE HIGHLIGHTS

We provide here a list (ranked alphabetically by Estate) of Auslese highlights from the 2018 vintage:

2018er	A.J. Adam	Dhroner Hofberg Riesling Auslese	16 19	96
2018er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Riesling Auslese	17 19	95
2018er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Riesling Auslese GK	21 19	95
2018er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Riesling Auslese lange GK	22 19	<i>Auction</i> 97
2018er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Rothenpfad Riesling Auslese	18 19	96



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## 2018 NOBLE-SWEET | LIST OF AUSLESE HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

2018er	Geltz-Zilliken	Saarburger Rausch Riesling Auslese lange GK	04 19	<i>Auction</i>	95
2018er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer Riesling Auslese GK	22 19		95
2018er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese	06 19		95
2018er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese GK	09 19		96
2018er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese GK #12	12 19		97
2018er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese lange GK #15	15 19	<i>Auction</i>	98
2018er	Dr. Hermann	Erdener Prälat Riesling Auslese GK	12 19		95+
2018er	Knebel	Winninger Röttgen Riesling Auslese GK	05 19	<i>Auction</i>	95
2018er	Peter Lauer	Ayler Kupp Riesling Auslese lange GK	34 19	<i>Auction</i>	95
2018er	Le Gallais	Wiltinger braune Kupp Riesling Auslese	07 19		94+
2018er	Schloss Lieser	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese GK	23 19		95+
2018er	Schloss Lieser	Lieserer Niederberg Helden Riesling Auslese lange GK	24 19		96
2018er	Schloss Lieser	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese lange GK	38 19	<i>Auction</i>	97
2018er	Carl Loewen	Longuicher Maximiner Herrenberg Riesling Auslese GK	21 19	<i>Auction</i>	95
2018er	Dr. Loosen	Erdener Prälat Riesling Auslese GK	63 19		(93-96)
2018er	Dr. Loosen	Erdener Prälat Riesling Auslese lange GK	30 18	<i>Auction</i>	96
2018er	Maximin Grünhaus	Maximin Grünhäuser Abtsberg Riesling Auslese Nr. 68 lange GK	31 19	<i>Auction</i>	96
2018er	Maximin Grünhaus	Maximin Grünhäuser Abtsberg Riesling Auslese Nr. 87	29 19		94+
2018er	Maximin Grünhaus	Maximin Grünhäuser Abtsberg Riesling Auslese Nr. 89	26 19		94+
2018er	Maximin Grünhaus	Maximin Grünhäuser Herrenberg Riesling Auslese Nr. 91 GK	27 19	<i>Auction</i>	97
2018er	Markus Molitor	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Auslese *** (Golden Capsule)	95 19		(94-96)
2018er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Himmelreich Riesling Auslese *** (Golden Capsule)	87 19		(94-96)
2018er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese *** (Golden Capsule)	28 19		(94-97)
2018er	Martin Müllen	Kröver Letterlay Riesling Auslese	10 19		95
2018er	Martin Müllen	Trarbacher Hühnerberg Riesling Auslese	19 19		95
2018er	Egon Müller	Scharzhofberger Riesling Auslese	08 19		94+
2018er	Egon Müller	Scharzhofberger Riesling Auslese GK	09 19		96
2018er	Egon Müller	Scharzhofberger Riesling Auslese GK	11 19	<i>Auction</i>	98
2018er	Stefan Müller	Krettnacher Euchariusberg Riesling Auslese	16 19		95
2018er	Joh. Jos. Prüm	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese	18 19	<i>Auction</i>	95
2018er	Joh. Jos. Prüm	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese GK			95
2018er	Joh. Jos. Prüm	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese GK	19 19	<i>Auction</i>	96
<b>2018er</b>	<b>Joh. Jos. Prüm</b>	<b>Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese lange GK</b>	<b>20 19</b>	<b><i>Auction</i></b>	<b>98</b>
2018er	S.A. Prüm	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese Fass 48	02 19	<i>Auction?</i>	94+
2018er	Max Ferd. Richter	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese	21 19		95
2018er	Max Ferd. Richter	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese *** Fass 138	38 19		95
2018er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese	14 19		96
2018er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese	15 19	<i>Auction</i>	95
2018er	Willi Schaefer	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese	18 19		95
2018er	Selbach-Oster	Zeltinger Schlossberg Riesling Auslese	26 19		(93-96)
2018er	Günther Steinmetz	Dhroner Hofberg Riesling Auslese GK	15 19		95
2018er	Günther Steinmetz	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese GK	16 19		97
2018er	Günther Steinmetz	Neumagener Grosser Hengelberg Riesling Auslese GK	14 19		95
2018er	Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch-Erben Thanisch	Berncasteler Doctor Riesling Auslese	07 19		94+
2018er	Vollenweider	Wolfer Goldgrube Riesling Auslese GK	04 19		95
2018er	Wegeler	Berncasteler Doctor Riesling Auslese	12 19		95



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## 2019 Mosel Vintage – Epic at the Top?

What does 2019 have in store? The growing conditions were pure drama: Late frosts, record heat wave, and rain during the harvest. And yet something truly remarkable seems to have emerged from this roller-coaster of a vintage. Here a sneak preview.



*The growing conditions were a roller-coaster ride of extremes.*

Spring proved a rather average affair, was it not for a spell of frost in early May. It almost passed unnoticed, even to growers, but had devastating effects, especially in the central part of the Saar. Flowering was comparatively late (around mid-June) and this was followed by quite some extreme weather in the summer. Heat waves (setting new temperature records through Germany) for days were often followed by spells of rain, putting quite some pressure on the growers.

*The harvest proved anything but easy ... but the growers did not seem to mind.*

Despite a comparatively late flowering, the summer and rain at the beginning of September led to sugar density levels to reach already 80-85° Oechsle by mid-September. Some growers started their harvest very early in 2019, sometimes as early as mid-September. Those included the growers who had also started early in 2018, but also other growers who "learned the lesson" (as one grower put it to us). The bulk of growers started picking around the end of the month, which is still remarkably early, given that flowering was comparatively late. The harvest was marked by quite some rain, which should have added to the high level of stress as rot (noble or not) was spreading. Growers we talk to during the harvest are often unhappy, because they are perfectionists and see all the details that are not ideal (rain at the wrong moment, a harvest worker getting sick, etc.). But that was not the case in 2019, as they were brushing the setbacks from the weather aside. So far, there are no signs of any Eiswein being possible ... not that many growers took the risk back in October and gamble some of their meagre yields on an elusive Eiswein.

*And the reason why they did not mind is clear: At the top, 2019 will be epic, possibly an even finer version of 2001.*

We soon got wind of the reason why growers did not seem to mind the bad weather during harvest: "This could be quite a vintage" was a regular comment prudently made during harvest. So we were eager to put our nose into some casks at some of the finest growers and we can confirm the hunch of the growers: The wines have incredible precision, play, zest, and structure. At their best, they remind us of 2001, but subtler and deeper. Some of the cask samples of fruity styled Riesling were among the finest young Riesling we have ever tasted. However, 2019 is also a ripe vintage, and not all wines will have the cut. But the potential is simply huge. The vintage has only one serious drawback: Its low yields. There will not be much wine to play with, courtesy of the frost, the scorching hot summer, and the need to discard lesser rain-affected grapes during harvest. The battle for the finest wines is likely to be as fierce as ever.

Stay tuned!

[www.moselfinewines.com](http://www.moselfinewines.com)

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# Mosel Fine Wines

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## Natural Wine | Developments in the Mosel

Natural wine, as it is called, has taken part of the wine world by storm in this century. Hated by some, the only real deal for others: Few topics have split the world of wine lovers as much as this topic. Although not well known to most, also because the region joined this movement rather late, the Mosel now offers a wide range of natural wines: We tasted over 80 low / no sulfur Mosel wines in 2019 alone! We take the opportunity to publish this background piece, where we look at the development of the "natural" movement in the Mosel, its historic foundations, its recent development, and feature our favorite growers.



## NATURAL WINE | A CONCEPT CENTERED AROUND MINIMAL INTERVENTION AND INTRUSION

### *Above all, an Attitude*

"Natural wine", or "vin nature" or "vin naturel" (whichever way one wants to call them), has caught up with a wider public recently. However, its roots go already back decades. From the 1960s onward, growers, mostly in France and in particular in the Beaujolais, started a counter-movement to the ever-increasing industrialization of winemaking and vineyard management. This trend was particularly epitomized by the huge quantities of nameless, highly-sulfured and often doctored Beaujolais Nouveau which was flooding the market every year, on the third Thursday of November.

Besides turning their back to synthetic herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers (they would become among the first organic growers), these pioneering growers questioned the necessity of additives and interventions in the cellar, such as using cultured yeasts, enzymes, sterile filtering, or relying on sulfur. More holistically, these pioneering growers were ardent opponents of the globalization and its nameless industrial conglomerates. They were advocating a return to the more human approach to winemaking, "the way our grandfathers worked the hills before the industrialization," in sync with nature. That is how the word "nature," "natural" in English, entered the equation.

This holistic approach is a crucial aspect in order to understand what "natural wine" is all about. It still underpins the actions of a large part of the natural wine growers today and explains why the natural wine movement continues to thrive what seems a parallel world to that of mainstream wines, with its dedicated importers, retailers, fairs, bars, etc.



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## ***A Contentious Term***

Right since the start, the term "natural" has been the source of many debates and tensions. And it is easy to understand why: Taken literally, a "natural wine" is of course nonsense. Nature does not make wine on its own, except for the few grapes which fall on the ground and are given the time to ferment instead of being instantly picked up by animals or birds. Recently, a grower nailed the concern by stating that the use of the word "natural" in this context is an insult to the role of humanity in making a wine.

Other parts of the food and drink world picked less controversial terms. One talks of "craft beer" in the beer world and of "slow food" in the restaurant world for instance. However, the notion of "natural" in the context of wine rang a chord with the public as it evokes something "non-intrusive," "like it should be," or "based on ancient proven methods." Probably, a better name would have been "minimal intervention" wine. But let's be honest: That does not sound half as aspirational! In addition, in French, the word "nature" is often used in the food and drinks industry to designate something untampered, "naked." An unsweetened yoghurt is called "nature" and its meaning is clear to everybody.

When we interviewed Mosel's natural wine growers for this background article, there was a broad consensus around the objective behind "natural wines": These are wines made with minimal human intervention and as much in symbiosis with nature as possible, as Rudolf Trossen (Weingut Rita & Rudolf Trossen / Kindel-Kinheim), a pioneer in biodynamic farming and natural winemaking in the Mosel, explained: "Natural wine is about a way of operating and being in symbiosis with your environment. Just satisfying some pre-defined criteria is not enough. I see many newcomers into natural wines who see this as a fancy new market to make a buck or two, and are eager for a firm definition, in order to be able to use the label. But, for me and many of my colleagues, it is above all about an attitude."

## ***A Consensus on Objectives but No Set Definition***

The objectives behind "natural wine" may be clear and the term has been used in the world of wine in one form or another for over 20 years now. However, there is still no general or worldwide-accepted definition (as one would expect to be set by the OIV, the world wine organization) as to what forms a natural wine.

### **What is a "Natural Wine"?**

A wine which was not chaptalized	<i>German Wine Law (until 1970)</i>
An organic wine made without any additives ... except for some sulfur and bentonite	<i>Austrian Wine Law (2019)</i>
An organic wine made without any additives "nothing in, nothing out"	<i>Natural Wine Movement Pioneers</i>
...	

On the contrary, there are still many diverging views on the subject, depending on whom you ask:

- In Germany, the term Naturwein (meaning natural wine in German) is heavily linked to the use of sugar as the term was historically reserved for wines which had not been chaptalized (this term was to be banned in the wine law of 1971).
- At the end of 2019, the Austrian legislator introduced a change in the law which allows growers to write "natural wine" on the label of a wine provided it comes from organic-certified fruit and was fermented and aged without additive except for bentonite and sulfite (whereby total sulfur may not exceed 70 mg/l).
- When talking to pioneers of the movement such as Rudolf Trossen or Thorsten Melsheimer, they clearly see a natural wine as one made from certified-organic grapes and which was fermented, aged and bottled without anything added or extracted ("*nichts rein, nichts raus*": nothing in, nothing out). In their eyes, this also means without any added sulfites (and certainly no bentonite, a fining agent allowed in the Austrian wine law). But it also means no extraction, including in particular no filtering of the wines.

By enlarge, most growers, be them adepts of the natural wine movement or not, shared the views of Rudolf Trossen and Thorsten Melsheimer when we interviewed them in the course of this article. However, this does not mean that there is a consensus on the matter, far from it. Some growers find the definition too restrictive, in particular regarding sulfites, others find it too loose when taking the holistic view.





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## ***Still Many Debating Points***

The following three topics came up most as being disputed by some and pushed by others during our discussions and research for this article:

**"Low Sulfur" or "No Sulfur"?** For Rudolf Trossen and many of the pioneers of the natural wine movement in the Mosel, when they say "nothing in, nothing out", they mean nothing, including no sulfites. However, there are others who advocate that sulfur is a natural product and that it has been used in winemaking since centuries [Note from the authors: We confirm this aspect in our article "Winemaking in the Mosel in the 19th century" later in this Issue] and that a minimalized use is therefore completely compatible with the concept of natural wine given that it is a return to winemaking before the industrial revolution. How little is a little sulfur? "10-30 mg/l added at bottling" seems to be the typical answer, which results into something like "less than 50 mg/l of total sulfur" when translated into measurable elements.

**"Natural wine" or "natural grower"?** Some purists, mostly driven by the "Vins Sains" association, argue that an Estate can only be considered as a producer of natural wines when it follows "natural wine" principles for ALL its wines. Their argument is very similar to the one used for organic wine growing. It is not a wine which gets an organic certification, but a whole Estate, as the objective is to be holistically in sync with one's environment. Others advocate that a natural wine should stand by itself, without reference to other practices used for the rest of the portfolio of a particular grower.

**Certified organic or not?** A sizeable amount of growers who produce minimal-intervention Mosel wines, with low or no sulfur added, from grapes which are not certified organic. The reasons behind their choice of not getting certified range from practical considerations to questions of principles. Some of these growers follow organic principles, but do not want to deal with the hassle of certification. Others work as closely as possible to organic certification criteria, but cannot avoid some minimal use of synthetic pesticides (especially if they farm tiny parcels on hills still treated conventionally by helicopter, see the insert here below). Finally, some choose to follow organic principles except for fungicides, as they are uncertain about the environmental benefit of spraying copper (which accumulates in the soil) vs. using some synthetic products (some of which had been approved for organic farming up to recently).

## **The Special Situation of Helicopter Spraying in the Mosel**

The steepness of the hills in the Mosel never fail to impress. While beautiful, steepness increases the levels of difficulties to tend the vineyards and do the necessary applications against diseases affecting the grapes (peronospora, etc.). In the 1970s, growers decided to bundle their forces and rely, for part at least, on helicopter-based spraying. This method may sound rather wasteful at first, but it is an efficient and heavily controlled way to make the applications (public authorities always control how much active components are used in the spraying). It certainly helped the region to remain on the map over the year. While some villages have abandoned it, it remains a pillar of disease management in many villages in the Mosel.

Turning to organic farming presents therefore a particular challenge for a grower in the Mosel. He needs sufficiently large parcels to "get out cleanly" from the helicopter spraying plan. Officially one can ask to avoid any spraying, but this would be at the expense of the neighbor and one's life in the local community becomes that much harder. So organic farming is not always feasible, especially in terraced parts of the region, where parcels are still tiny and geographically convolute. Once outside, this grower will need to do everything by hand, which is extra difficult (hence costly) given the steepness of the slopes.

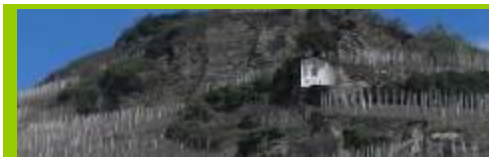
This is why, in many villages, including Pünderich, Reil, Traben-Trarbach, organic growers have joined forces to organize an organic helicopter spraying program which allows them to handle their vineyards more efficiently.

The three discussion points above are the most salient debating points. But there are others, more subtle ones. Here are some of the points we picked up: May one use tractors in the vineyards? Does harvest need to be manual? Is one allowed to heat or cool the must? Is the use of concrete (for tanks or the cellar) compatible with the natural ethos?

## ***Our Approach***

The purpose of this article is to provide an overview over the "natural wine" movement and help our readers to understand its rationale and tempt them into trying some wines. We therefore took an all-encompassing view and included all growers, certified organic or not, who make some Mosel wines with minimal intervention ("nothing in" and "nothing out") except for possibly a little sulfur added or some filtering before bottling.

We understand that, some of these growers, in particular those which are not certified organic or produce wines which see some filtering, may not qualify for the term "natural" as seen by the purists. In order to be useful to all readers, we provide as much background as possible on the specific "minimal-intervention" approach of each grower and each wine in order for our readers to be able to decide which approach makes sense to him / her and which not. In particular, we will clearly indicate when an Estate is certified organic: No mention means no certification.



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## NATURAL WINE | MOSEL, PIONEER IN ORGANIC FARMING ... BUT A LATE STARTER IN ALL THINGS NATURAL

Germany was one of the leading countries when it comes to organic and environmental friendly developments. It was even the first to vote a green party into its national parliament. It was also the first country where a whole region (the state of Baden-Württemberg) is led by a member of the German green party. Also in agriculture, Germany and the Germans have been among the pioneers in adopting organic principles.

The Mosel saw a few early adopters of organic principles already back in the 1980s and early 1990s. This includes in particular Clemens Busch (Weingut Clemens Busch / Pünderich) and Rudolf Trossen (Weingut Rita & Rudolf Trossen / Kindel-Kinheim), followed later by Claudia and Manfred Loch (Weinhof Herrenberg / Schoden), and Thorsten Melsheimer (Weingut Melsheimer / Reil). Their determination came out of a combination of the 1968 revolution and the "green" movement at the time, as Clemens Busch recalled: "The 1968 movement gave me a sense of revolution, to question things and do things differently. I felt uneasy with the synthetic products used at the time and stopped using herbicides already in 1977, followed by no synthetic fertilizers and then generally organic disease management." Rudolf Trossen followed a similar path: "Going organic was a natural move for me as I was seeing how the industrialization of winemaking was simply making bland wines." No wonder that both Clemens Busch and Rudolf Trossen were among the founding members of the organic movement in German (which was to become ECOVIN later on).

Despite Germany and the Mosel being among the pioneers in all things organic, the natural wine movement only came late to these shores. While France and Italy can look back at well over 20 years of natural winemaking, the first attempts of producing Mosel wine along natural wines only happened in the current decade. One factor which no doubt contributed to this is clearly the fact that the revival of dry Riesling in the Mosel only started at the end of the 2000s decade in earnest (un-sulfured wines require the wines to be fully dry to avoid any re-fermentation in bottle).

It all started informally in the 2000s but formally with Rudolf Trossen in 2010: "Several factors were converging at that time for me. In the mid-2000s, a young Danish importer was looking for some organic and biodynamic growers from Germany and added me to his portfolio. Suddenly, there were Scandinavian sommeliers standing in front of my door, and this opened my eyes to the world of natural wines. In parallel, I came into contact with some wine freaks from Belgium who were heavily into natural wines. They would regularly pass by my Estate while on holidays and made me taste these natural wines. I quite liked these wines but I was not sure if many others would like them as well. When the Danish importer asked me if I would produce some, I actually asked him who would buy it. He said he would buy some. And so I started to bottle my first wines, actually just a handful, without intervention in 2010, and then already a few hundred bottles in 2011. Things really took off when the famous Noma restaurant [Note: a modern two-star restaurant in Copenhagen, which was several times voted best restaurant in the world] started to list our wines. Still today, we are the most bought white wine during their seafood season menu." Rudolf Trossen now commercializes a full range of natural wines, under his Purus label.



*Recent bottlings of the Purus line launched in 2010 by the pioneering Weingut Rita und Rudolf Trossen*

Clemens Busch followed a similar path, experimenting with different aspects of minimizing the interventions in the cellar: "Few people remember this, but a winery in the Pfalz produced some wines which were made without sulfur added for a year or two in the mid-1980s. While these wines were not really convincing, they triggered thoughts in me about what we could be doing with less filtration, less sulfur, etc. It was real ground-breaking experimentation as we lacked the knowledge we have today about reduction potential and the role of clean grapes, etc. I used the 2005 vintage to produce a wine without filtration. Finally, in 2010, I produced a wine (called LS for low sulfur) without any additives and extractions except for a minimal amount of sulfur at bottling, which completely went to Japan. In the meantime, I added an Orange wine and the (Alter) Native."



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These two producers were followed in 2010 by Thorsten Melsheimer (Weingut Melsheimer / Reil) and Ulli Stein (Wein-Erbhof Stein / Bullay), two further pioneers and veterans from the green and organic movement. As Ulli Stein explained, "despite never having been formally certified, I was very much committed to producing wines as organically as possible, and was involved in the development of the principles of organic farming in Germany. I was also one of the biggest critique of certain early provisions on allowed additives for instance, and this was why I did not join the club back then. In the 1970s, I had the chance to visit the Jura and meet a then completely unknown grower called Pierre Overnoy [Note: this producer is now one of the living legends in France]. I fell in love with his stunning wines already back then made with hardly any sulfur. This got me going to also try out to reduce the use of sulfur at home, most of our dry wines are low in sulfur anyway. It is only in the 2000s that I produced a red wine without any sulfur added and my first Riesling then came in 2011. These wines have become an integral part of my portfolio today."

The path to natural wines was slightly different for Thorsten Melsheimer, even though he also firmly has his roots in the green movement which swept through German politics in the 1980s: "Already as a teenager, it was clear for me that I would go organic when I took over the family Estate." He kept the promise he made to himself, and converted the family vineyards to certified-organic farming in 1995 ... but did rely on synthetic advancements in the cellar: "It took me a few years to realize that there was something not right between being organic in the vineyards and modern in the cellars. As of 2002, I gradually abandoned all the modern additives such as cultured yeasts, fining agents, enzymes, etc. and completed this voyage in 2010. My voyage into no sulfur got into over-drive in September 2011, after I tasted a wine by Gravner. I thought to myself that I should also produce such a wine ... which I did immediately, a few weeks later. My Vade Retro was born. However, my commercial success really started when the Danish importer of Trossen and Stein bought some wines in 2014."

In parallel, Matthias Meierer (Weingut Meierer / Kesten) produced an orange wine with minimal sulfur added in 2011, after having discovered this way of making wine during a short stint at Weingut Huber in Baden: "In fact, I liked the approach and it is only after I produced the wine that someone told me that this is an orange wine!" Also, quietly (the wine would only be released much later), Philipp Ketter and Daniel Niepoort (Fio / Piesport) bottled some Pet Nat from the 2011 vintage. Also Maximilian Ferger (Weingut Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Müller-Burggraef) got interested and produced his first unsulfured orange wine in 2011.

Jan Matthias Klein (Weingut Staffelter-Hof / Kröv) and Timo Dienhart (Weingut zur Römerkeller / Maring-Noviant), two certified growers dedicated to the organic cause by the mid-2010s, as Jan Matthias Klein recalled: "I experimented privately with natural wines already around 2010 but the first results were anything but great [laughing]. It was the first results of my friend Thorsten Melsheimer who motivated me to persevere. My first formal production then followed in 2014." He now has one of the largest portfolio of all.

Besides these pioneers who were actively seeking to produce wines using a different and low-intervention approach, low sulfur wines did already exist in the Mosel. This may not be well known, but the Webers (Hofgut Falkenstein / Konz) have been producing wines based on very traditional methods, including gentle long pressing and aging in cask. As Johannes Weber explained, "our dry wines are made with very clean fruit and are generally very stable. So these wines rarely require much sulfur added. In general total sulfur is well below 50 mg/l."

## NATURAL WINE | AN ACCELERATION OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS WITH MANY NEW GROWERS

These pioneers and traditionalists have been joined by quite some other growers over the last few years, driven mainly by new blood flooding into the Mosel, a change of guard at established Estates, trials by other organic growers, and experiments by some established players.

### ***New Blood From Outside of the Mosel***

Over the last two years, a whole set of younger growers without a family background in wine set up shop in the Mosel with the aim to produce wines as "natural," i.e. with minimal intervention, as possible. The first to do so was to be Martin Cooper, an Australian winemaker who ended up in the Mosel, and who started to produce some Orange wines as of 2014.

Others followed suit, in particular Jakob Tennstedt, a young man from Berlin who got exposed to natural wine in Italy, and Philip Lardot, a young Dutch-Swedish national who works at Wein-Erbhof Stein. Both set up their own Estates in 2017 and have immediately started to make a name for themselves.

They were joined in 2018 by Julien Renard, who left a career in theatrical arts to produce wine, as well as Derek Labelle and Robert Kane, an American-Canadian duo who launched the Madame Flöck line.

2019 will see the first vintages of Sven Zerwas (Tiny Winery), who switched from the restaurant trade to winemaking, and Jasmin Swan (Katla), a young northern German woman who came to natural wine by working in the Scandinavian restaurant trade.

### ***Change of Guard at Established Estates***

At several Estates, the natural movement caught the attention of the next generation, usually after they get exposed to these wines and the philosophy behind it during their winemaking studies. These young growers are happy to embrace the natural movement and to produce wines along those lines, at least some.



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The most significantly development has clearly been at the initiative of Philipp Ketterern and Daniel Niepoort, both from established Estates respectively in the Mosel and in Portugal. They launched Fio in 2014 with a focus on low-intervention and traditional winemaking. On a smaller scale, this younger generation also includes Julian Scheid, who rejoined the organically-farmed family Estate, Weingut Richard Scheid, in 2015. The same happened at organically farmed Weingut Arns & Sohn, where young Alexander Arns produces some natural wines.

At Weingut Fred Knebel, young Alex and Chris Knebel have launched the Gebrüder Knebel label to produce wines made like in the old days, including some wines without sulfur. Young Frederik Heimes, still studying in Geisenheim, has been producing some low-sulfur wines together with his brothers from his parents' organically farmed Weingut Trös-Heimes in 2018. Also in 2018, young Florian Blesius experimented with a Pet Nat at his family Estate, Weingut Blesius in Graach.

Jonas Dostert, heir to an old Estate in Nittel in the Obermosel, will release his first minimal intervention and low-sulfur 2018er wines from his organically farmed holdings in the coming weeks.



*Young Generation in Winningen: (left to right) Alex Knebel, Julien Renard, Fred Knebel, Philipp Labelle, and Robert Kane.*

## ***Trials by Other Organic Growers***

A few of the traditional organic growers also made some attempts at "natural" wines, in particular Pet Nat wines. This includes Weingut Dr. Frey (Kanzem / Saar) and Weingut Markus Busch (Pünderich / Terrassenmosel). Also Sybille Kuntz (Weingut Kuntz / Lieser), who is one of the few growers to have gone through the formal steps of a biodynamic certification in the Mosel, offers a low-intervention Riesling.

Stefan Vetter, a young organic minimal-intervention grower from Franken, recently commercialized a low-intervention wine ... from the Mosel. This inter-regional development may however remain an exceptional case as the opportunity emerged from the fact that Andreas Adam (Weingut A.J. Adam / Dhron) is the brother-in-law of Stefan Vetter.

## ***Discovery and Experimentation by High-Profile Established Estates***

Several high-profile "mainstream" growers have experimented or are experimenting with minimal-intervention wines. This includes Maximilian Ferger (Weingut Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Müller Burggraef / Bernkastel-Kues), Erni Loosen (Weingut Dr. Loosen / Bernkastel-Kues), Martin Müllen (Weingut Martin Müllen / Traben-Trarbach), Stefan Steinmetz (Weingut Günther Steinmetz / Brauneberg), and Christiane Wagner (Weingut Dr. Wagner / Saaburg).



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The nature of the experimentation may vary. While Maximilian Ferger wanted to experiment with Orange wines, Erni Loosen’s underlying motivation is to return to winemaking approaches as they were done in the old days: “In the old days, the wines were left in cask and racked until ready. While they were hardly sulfured except via the sulfur used to clean the casks. This naturally yields wines with low sulfur.”

Martin Müllen wanted to try out what giving up on sulfur would do for his wines. Christiane Wagner bottled a small production of Pet Nat out of the same interest (it will be released later this year).

## NATURAL WINE | 30 MOSEL GROWERS PRODUCING LOW-NO SULFUR WINES TODAY

There are currently about 30 growers producing low or no sulfur, “minimal-intervention” Mosel wines, of which approx. 15 are certified organic. The most sizeable growers are Jan Matthias Klein, Thorsten Melsheimer, and Rudolf Trossen, with Ulli Stein not far behind. They will be joined by Jakob Tennstedt, who has taken on 1.7 ha, as of the 2019 vintage.

Interestingly enough, these growers fall mostly into two groups, as the table here below underlines. Certified-organic growers usually produce minimal intervention wines with, as a set principle, no sulfur added. This matches the definition of “natural wine” as seen by the likes of Rudolf Trossen and Thorsten Melsheimer and many other pioneers. Those producers of minimal intervention wines who are not certified organic typically also do not see the need for “no sulfur” as a dogma. More often than not, these growers are driven by a wish to produce wines made in very traditional ways “like in the old days.” They allow for low levels of sulfur added (up to 30 mg/l) at bottling.

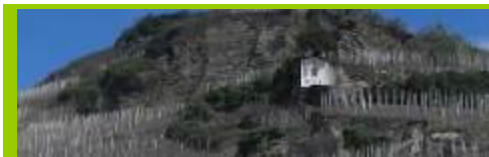
Producers of Low / No Sulfur Mosel Wines (2019)

VINEYARD		Not Certified Organic	Certified Organic
CELLAR	NO Sulfur Added	Katla (Brauneberg) Pandamonium (Kröv) Shadowfolk (Poltersdorf) Stein (Bullay) Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Müller-Burggraef (Bernkastel) Dr. Wagner (Saarburg)	Arns und Sohn (Reil) Markus Busch (Pünderich) Dr. Frey (Kanzem) Jan Matthias Klein (Kröv) Goswin Kranz (Brauneberg) Kuntz (Lieser) Melsheimer (Reil) Jakob Tennstedt * (Traben-Trarbach) Trös-Heimes (Reil) Rita & Rudolf Trossen (Kinheim) Zur Römerkeller (Maring-Noviand)
	LOW Sulfur Added	Jan-Philipp Bleeke (Piesport) Blesius (Graach) Falkenstein (Konz) Fio (Piesport) Gebrüder Knebel (Winningen) Philip Lardot (Bullay) Dr. Loosen (Bernkastel) Madame Flöck (Winningen) Materne & Schmitt (Winningen) Matthias Meierer (Kesten) Julien Renard (Winningen) Günther Steinmetz (Brauneberg) Tiny Winery (Piesport) Stefan Vetter (Gambach / Franken)	Clemens Busch (Pünderich) Jonas Dostert (Nittel) Richard Scheid (Zell-Merl)

\* In organic reconversion

Regarding the type of wines made, most minimal-intervention growers in the Mosel, be them certified or not, produce some Pet Nat, this fizzy wine made by bottling unfinished wine (which then undergoes a secondary fermentation in bottle), and commercialize them mostly without disgorgement. There are some good reasons for the success of Pet Nat wines in the Mosel: This type of wine is particularly well suited for the zesty and slender body of Mosel wines.

Besides Riesling, several growers also produce Spätburgunder along minimal intervention lines. A few producers produce wines from other grapes including Weissburgunder, Müller-Thurgau ... and even Portuguese native grapes. As in other regions of the world, the natural wine movement also pushes the boundaries in the Mose!



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## NATURAL WINE | GROWERS' PROFILE

We provide here a small profile of each of the Estates which produce or have produced some low-sulfur, low intervention wines. As you will see, the route to "natural wine" can take many different paths!

**Arns und Sohn** (Reil / Middle Mosel) is a small family Estate where Young Alexander Arns has been instrumental in turning it to organic means since joined in 2011 (the Estate has been certified since 2014). He also was the driving force behind the Estate's decision to produce a few "natural wines" (without any sulfur added nor filtering) as of the 2016 vintage.

**Jan-Philipp Bleeke** (Piesport / Middle Mosel) was not born into a winemaking family but comes from Westphalia, in northern Germany. After marketing studies, he fell in love with wine while jobbing as a student, and eventually ended up in the Mosel, where he did an apprenticeship at Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Müller-Burggraef and started working for the Staffelter-Hof in Kröv in 2019. In parallel, he took up some vineyards to produce his own wines following traditional principles, i.e. farmed organically (but without certification so far), crushed in the vineyard, very slow pressing, fermented spontaneously, and aged extensively before being bottled. The 2019 collection (to be released later this year) will also include some natural wines, including a Pet Nat, a Pinot Noir Rosé and a Riesling Orange, which will be made with no (or possibly a little) sulfur at bottling.

**Blesius** (Graach / Terrassenmosel) is a small family Estate where young Florian Blesius has been upping the quality since a couple of years: He launched, among others, a range of spontaneously fermented wines. In 2018, he also experimented with unsulfured, minimal intervention wines and produced a Pet Nat which was commercialized disgorged.

**Clemens Busch** (Pünderich / Terrassenmosel) is one of the true pioneers in all things organic in the Mosel. He was heavily influenced by the revolutionary spirit of 1968 and the upcoming green movement in Germany, and already questioned the old ways of working as early as 1977 (when he stopped using herbicides). He was to be a founding member of the German organic grower association (today ECOVIN) and has remained certified to this day (he is now certified biodynamic along RESPEKT guidelines as well). His path to natural wines was driven by experiments from the 1980s onwards, trying to reduce the level of intervention in winemaking. He commercialized his first unfiltered wine in the 2005 vintage and produced his first "natural wine", unfiltered with minimal sulfur added, in 2010 (called LS for Low Sulfur). He added an orange wine and another low-sulfur wine called "(Alter) Native" since. He is an advocate of adding tiny amounts of sulfur (a few mg/l at most) before bottling.

**Markus Busch** (Pünderich / Terrassenmosel) has been running his small family Estate with 4 ha spread over the different hills in Pünderich since 2005. The Estate has been certified organic along ECOVIN guidelines since 2015. In 2018, it produced a small quantity of Pet Nat, and plans to produce more low-sulfur and unfiltered wines in the future as well.

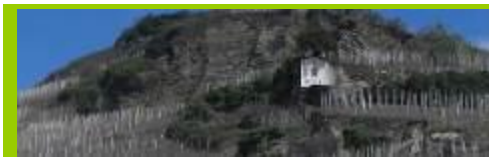
**Jonas Dostert** (Nittel / Obermosel) was born in an old traditional winemaking family in Nittel, in the Obermosel part of the region. He got exposed to organic and minimal-intervention wines during his winemaking studies in Geisenheim. After finishing them, he worked for an organic Estate in Luxembourg and took some parcels from his family Estate in direct management, which he converted to organic vineyard management. He produces some low-intervention, unfiltered wines (with minimal sulfuring at bottling) from Elbling, Spätburgunder, and Chardonnay grown on limestone soil. 2018 is his debut vintage. Some of the 2018 wines, to be released in the coming weeks, were lightly chaptalized but Jonas plans to make do without this in future vintages.

**Falkenstein** (Niedermennig / Saar) was set up by the Webers in the early 1980s. Right from the start, the Webers have been ardent traditionalists, relying on close to organic principles in the vineyard, slow long pressing, and fermentation in traditional oak casks. Their dry wines (Riesling, Weissburgunder, and Spätburgunder) have been all bottled with little sulfur added (less than 30 mg/l) since several years. The Estate has also been experimenting on a very small scale with Pet Nat over the last few years, and has produced some commercial (but still small) quantities in 2019 (which will be released commercially later this year).

**Fio** (Piesport / Middle Mosel) is the brainchild of a younger generation of growers, namely Philipp Kettern, heir to an historic Estate in Piesport, and Daniel Niepoort, son of the famous Dirk Niepoort from the Douro valley in Portugal. Their idea is to craft wines "as they were done in the past," i.e. with long fermentations and aging in casks, little to no sulfur, no filtering if possible, etc. Although it started with grapes from the 2011 vintage, the Fio operation was only formalized in 2016. While having already been farming close to organically since years, the Estate started to work fully along organic means in 2019 (without planning at this stage to be certified). It was among the first to produce some unsulfured Pet Nat under the Piu Piu label (first started with 2011 fruit) and a no-sulfur and unfiltered Orange wine called JoJo.

**Dr. Frey** (Kanzem / Saar) can look back to a long history (it was a founding member of the VDP), but was eventually stopped and its vineyards leased out in the 1980s. In 1994, its heirs revived the Estate (and are in the process of completing the replanting) and decided to turn to organic means. Besides producing organic wines, the Estate produced a beautiful Pet Nat in 2018.

**Katla** (Brauneberg / Middle Mosel) was set up by young Jasmin Swan, a pure produce of the German low lands near Cologne who found its way to wine in general and natural wine in particular via work in the Scottish and then Scandinavian restaurant trade. After stints at natural wine growers in France and Austria, she landed in the Mosel, where she set up Katla (named after an Icelandic volcano) and bought her first fruit in 2019 with the objective to only produce wines fully made along natural lines, i.e. without any added sulfur and bottled unfiltered. While not certified organic, so far, she only sourced her grapes from a certified-organic grower and one grower which is very close to organic. Her first wines will hit the market later this year.



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**Jan Matthias Klein** (Kröv / Middle Mosel) caught the nature bug immediately during his first apprenticeship at Weingut Sander in Mettenheim (Rheinhessen), one of the earliest organic grower in Germany. After he joined the family Estate, he gradually converted it to organic methods (he got it certified in 2014). In parallel, he experimented privately with natural wines already around 2010 but it took him a few years to learn how to make these wines, helped by his friend Thorsten Melsheimer. His first formal production then followed in 2014. He has been adding several wines in his portfolio since, which go well beyond Riesling and Pinot Noir, and include now blends with other grapes as well as natural wines made from non-local grapes such as Arinto and Fernão Pires (two Portuguese grape varieties). He also produces some Pet Nat from Frühburgunder and Regent. His range of natural wines is made without any sulfur added and bottled unfiltered. Up to 2018, these wines were marketed under the Staffelter-Hof label. As of 2018, he decided to bottle them under the separate Jan Matthias Klein label in order to better separate them from his conventional portfolio of wines.

**Gebrüder Knebel** (Winningen / Terrassenmosel) is the brainchild of young Alex and Chris Knebel, the sons of Fred Knebel, owner of the Weingut Fred Knebel (they are cousins of Matthias Knebel). Both studied winemaking and got encouraged by the different aspect of "natural" winemaking, and decided to produce some of these wines at their parents' Estate as well. After several wines over the years, they launched the Gebrüder Knebel brand, named after their grandparents' Estate. They rely on 0.7 ha farmed as close to organic principles as possible to produce terroir-driven wines. 2018 is their first vintage under this label. It includes a delicious disgorged Pet Nat, which was made without any intervention and any sulfur added.

**Goswin Kranz** (Brauneberg / Middle Mosel) is a certified-organic Estate which gained more profile after Sven Zerwas joined in in 2015. It produced a Weissburgunder fully made along natural wine (without any sulfur added and bottled unfiltered) in 2017.

**Sybille Kuntz** (Lieser / Middle Mosel) took over her family Estate back in the early 1980s and, step by step, focused it on high quality vineyards and organic methods. It started to work organically already in the 1990s. It eventually took the steps to get formally certified-organic in 2013 and certified biodynamic along DEMETER lines in 2016. The Estate portfolio includes an Orange wine made fully along natural lines (without anything added or extracted, and without sulfur at bottling).

**Philip Lardot** (Bullay / Terrassenmosel) is a "Quereinsteiger", i.e. he was not born into a winemaking family but came "from outside." His route to winemaking was paved with natural wines. His first experiments were made with grapes purchased from a befriended grower in Piesport. He then took on some small vineyards in St. Aldegund and Valwig, which are planted with old vines, in 2017 and 2018. The grapes from own vineyards are essentially grown organically (without being certified) and the wines are fermented without any additive or extraction (including no filtering), except for a little bit of sulfur added (20 mg/l) at bottling, at the cellar facilities of Wein-Erbhof Stein (Ulli Stein) in Bullay. This operation is tiny, with production not exceeding the equivalent of 1 ha.

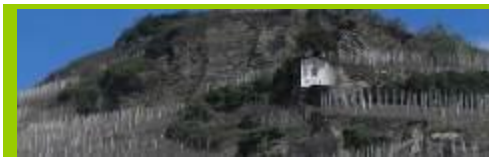
**Dr. Loosen** (Bernkastel-Kues / Middle Mosel) is probably one of the most well-known Estates from the Mosel, producing from price-point mass-market products (Dr. L) right up to GGs and rare TBAs. Erni Loosen has also been driven by reproducing the wines as made by his grandfather, who left the wines much longer in cask than usually done today. He launched his range of GG Réserve bottlings (which see two years in wooden casks) and a "Hommage" bottling (not yet released) which is aged 3 years in cask. More recently, he also engaged into an "orange" project together with Rioja producer Telmo Rodriguez, whereby Riesling grapes are skin-macerated for several months before being transferred into Rioja casks from Telmo Rodriguez. While producing wines which would be called minimalistic in terms of intervention, Erni Loosen sees himself more as on a path to "return to proven winemaking approaches from the past" rather than "natural wine" per se.

**Madame Flöck** (Winningen / Terrassenmosel) is the brainchild of Robert Kane (from the USA) and Derek-Paul Labelle (from Canada), both with a passion for wine, who met in the Barossa Valley in 2016. Robert Kane went on to marry Janina Schmitt (from Weingut Materne & Schmitt) and took the plunge with his old friend when they got the chance to buy a derelict vineyard in the Terrassenmosel from a certain Mrs. Flöck (hence the name of their venture). More vineyards have been added since. Their vineyards are dry-farmed without herbicides and hand tended. They produce two wines which are made without intervention during fermentation and aging, and which are bottled unfiltered and with only a little SO<sub>2</sub> added (the wines have less than 50-60 mg/l of total SO<sub>2</sub>). 2018 was the debut vintage.

**Materne & Schmitt** (Winningen / Terrassenmosel) set up by Janina Schmitt and Rebecca Materne has made a name for itself as one of the fine sources in the Mosel for mineral and elegant dry Riesling from vineyards farmed to as close to organic means as possible. In 2019, it bottled the 2017er Potion No. 1366. This dry Riesling was made without any intervention (including no filtering) except for a minimal touch of sulfur at bottling (total SO<sub>2</sub> does not exceed 30 mg/l).

**Meierer** (Kesten / Middle Mosel) is this small family Estate in Kesten with roots going back to the 18th century. Young Matthias Meierer joined it in 2006, and officially took it completely over in 2016. Open and curious by nature, he got exposed to skin-macerated wines during a short internship at Weingut Bernhard Huber in Baden. He produced his first wine (called WTF!?) along these lines (and with minimal sulfur added) in 2011 ... not knowing that this type of wine is called orange wine. A few years later, he was served a series of French Pet Nat at a wine event in Geisenheim, which triggered him to produce his own expression of this wine (called OMG!). He has been producing these two wines ever since.

**Melsheimer** (Reil / Middle Mosel) is one of the oldest Estates in the Mosel with roots back to the 14th century. Thorsten Melsheimer is one of the pioneers of natural wines in the Mosel. He is a child of the 1980s and was heavily influenced by the rise of the green movement in Germany. He moved to organic vineyard management as soon as he took over the family Estate (he got certified as early as 1995) and became the first certified biodynamic grower in the region. He gradually threw the industrial synthetic helps for the cellar (such as cultured yeasts, enzymes fining agents, etc.) over board in the 2000s and produced his first Vade Retro, a Riesling made along natural lines, without any sulfur added and bottled unfiltered, in 2011. He has added an orange wine as well as some Pet Nat to his portfolio since.



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**Martin Müllen** (Traben-Trarbach / Middle Mosel) is one of the region's most highly acclaimed Estates. In 2016, mainly out of curiosity and pushing the boundaries, Martin produced a Riesling made without intervention during fermentation, aging, and bottling (and which even was given an AP number, something minimal intervention wines rarely achieve).

**Pandamonium** (Kröv / Middle Mosel) is the new trading label under which Jan Matthias Klein, the owner of the Weingut Staffelter-Hof, sells project wines made without any intervention (including no sulfur added nor filtering) together with other winemakers from purchased fruit or from own vineyards in the process of organic conversion.

**Julien Renard** (Winningen / Terrassenmosel) is the offspring of a French-German couple and grew up in beer country, in northern Germany. After 10 years in theatrical arts, this passionate wine lover decided to give his career a change, and made his winemaking apprenticeship at Weingut Heymann-Löwenstein. He worked for a short period with Matthias Knebel (Weingut Knebel), before taking up a position at Matthias' uncle Estate, Weingut Fred Knebel, also in Winningen. Besides his day job, he took on 0.7 ha of vineyards and rented garages and cellars to make his own wines, following as close as possibly organic principles and "natural" lines in the cellar (i.e. without any intervention including no filtering, except for a little sulfur added at bottling). 2018 is his debut vintage.

**Staffelter-Hof** (Kröv / Middle Mosel) has a history which can be traced back to the 9th century which has been in the Klein family since the secularization in the 1800s. Jan Matthias Klein caught the nature bug immediately during his first apprenticeship at Weingut Sander in Mettenheim (Rheinhessen), one of the earliest organic growers in Germany. After he joined the family Estate, he gradually converted it to organic methods (he got it certified in 2014). In parallel, he experimented privately with natural wines already around 2010 but it took him a few years to learn how to make these wines, helped by his friend Thorsten Melsheimer. His first formal production then followed in 2014. He has been adding several wines to his portfolio since, which go well beyond Riesling and Pinot Noir, and include now blends with other grapes as well as natural wines made from non-local grapes such as Arinto and Fernão Pires (two Portuguese grape varieties). He also produces some Pet Nat from Frühburgunder and Regent. His range of natural wines is made without any sulfur added and bottled unfiltered. As of 2018, he decided to bottle his natural range under the Jan Matthias Klein label in order to better separate them from his conventional portfolio of wines (made under the Staffelter-Hof label).

**Scheid** (Merl / Terrassenmosel) can look back at generations of wine growers and includes 7 ha of vineyards spread over the different hills of Merl. After young Julian Scheid indicated that he would follow a winemaking career, his father Matthias, who had always been interested in nature, decided to convert to organic principles. In the meantime, Julian joined the family Estate after winemaking studies in Geisenheim and stints in Germany and abroad, and took over the cellar work. He experiments with natural wines and produced an unfiltered one with only a little sulfur added at bottling in 2018.

**Shadowfolk** (Poltersdorf / Terrassenmosel) was set up by Martin Cooper an Australian winemaker and wine consultant who had worked for large wineries and Estates in Australia and the USA, and Petra Kujanpää, a young finish Riesling lover turned viticulturist and winemaker. In 2014, Martin Cooper set up an Estate in the area of Cochem (Mosel), which he converted the vineyards to organic means and started to produce some orange wines without any sulfur added. After dissensions with the lessors of his cellar near Cochem, Martin, joined by then by Petra, vinified his 2018 vintage at the facilities of the Staffelter Hof in Kröv. The pair will commercialize these wines under the Shadowfolk label. The 2018 portfolio includes some more conventional wines but Martin and Petra plan to produce only wines made along "natural" lines (without any sulfur added or filtering) from their holdings in the Terrassenmosel in the future. They will also (re)release some of their older minimal-intervention wines from 2016 and 2015 under this new label in the coming weeks.

**Stein** (Bullay / Terrassenmosel) is a well-established whose brainchild, Ulli Stein has deep roots in the green movement which developed in Germany in the 1970s. He spent decades contributing to the development of the principles of organic farming in Germany, where he was also a very vocal critique of some of the early provisions (on allowed additives for instance), which made him relinquish to get certified. His encounter with natural wines came as early as the 1970s, during a visit to Pierre Overnoy, a then completely unknown grower in the Jura. This has led him to reduce the level of intervention, and in particular the use of sulfur, over the years. It is only in the 2000s that he produced a red wine without any sulfur added, and his first Riesling without any sulfur followed suit in 2011. He has since added a few wines to his portfolio of wines without any sulfur added and bottled unfiltered. These are sold under his Grenzgänger (meaning border crosser or walking on the edge) label.

**Günther Steinmetz** (Brauneberg / Middle Mosel) is a well-established Estate which came to the forefront of Mosel winemaking under the impulse of Stefan Steinmetz. As many other young growers, he got in contact with "natural" and "orange" wines from other countries and decided to experiment with it in 2018 by making a skin-fermented Chardonnay with "nothing added nothing extracted" (including no filtration) except for a little sulfur. He plans to produce more wines along this line in the future, including a Müller-Thurgau in 2019. We plan to review the first of these wines in the upcoming June Issue.

**Jakob Tennstedt** (Traben-Trarbach / Middle Mosel) is a new grower with no formal roots in winemaking (he comes from Berlin). He got exposed to natural wines and Mosel Riesling in Italy and decided to move to the Mosel during the 2016 harvest to "have a go at it." Besides his day job, he immediately started to produce his own wines from vineyards in Burgen and Reil in 2017, and set up his own Estate based in Traben-Trarbach in 2018. He only produces natural wines (without any sulfite added and bottled unfiltered) from his now 1.6 ha holdings all situated in Traben-Trarbach (he gave up the vineyards in Burgen and Reil in the meantime). The Estate has engaged in the process of becoming certified organic in 2019.





# Mosel Fine Wines

*"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"*

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

**Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Müller-Burggraef** (Bernkastel-Kues / Middle Mosel) emerged at the end of the 1980s out of the split-up of one of the mythical Estates in the Mosel and a pride owner of sizeable owners in the prized Bernkasteler Doktor. Maximilian Ferger joined the Estate in 2008 and set it on a path of quality improvement, both in the vineyard and in the cellar, where he reduced additives over the years. He also decided to push the boundaries in terms of sulfur by diminishing the doses, and introduced an "orange" wine made without any cellar intervention (including no sulfur added and no filtering) already with the 2011 vintage. This wine has been produced every other vintage since.

**Tiny Winery** (Piesport / Middle Mosel) is a new venture set up by Sven Zerwas, who had started his career in the restaurant trade where he discovered his love for wine. After a few years as Estate manager at Weingut Goswin Kranz, he returned to the food sector but set up a small Estate with 1 ha of leased vineyards, which he will be running as a side activity with the objective to produce traditional (including minimal-intervention and low sulfur added) wines. His first vintage will be 2020. He will release some wines from the 2019 vintage from fruit sourced at a befriended grower in Velden.

**Trös-Heimes** (Reil / Middle Mosel) is a tiny (0.4 ha) Estate run by the similarly-named couple a part-time basis (their main income lies outside of winemaking). The Estate has been certified organic (along general EU guidelines) since 2001, and traditionally sold its grapes to Thorsten Melsheimer. The three sons of the House all pursue or plan to pursue a career in winemaking. Consequently, the family decided to keep the grapes and to produce its own wines. The 2018 portfolio includes two natural wines: One Pet Nat and one dry Riesling (bottled unfiltered). The Estate plans to launch more natural wines in the future.

**Rita and Rudolf Trossen** (Kindel-Kinheim – Middle Mosel) are true pioneers in all things organic in Germany: They have been farming their vineyard organically since the early 1970s and were among the founding members of the biodynamic Demeter organization in Germany. They were also among the pioneers of the natural wine movement in Germany after they got exposed to natural wine through their importer in Denmark who brought many sommeliers from famous restaurants (including Noma and Geranium) as well as through some Belgian wine lovers in the late 2000s. In 2010, their Danish importer convinced them to take the plunge and they produced a small quantity of organically-farmed, "nothing added nothing retrieved" wines. Their success followed when they were listed at Noma (something they are still today). Over the years, they have developed an extensive range of Riesling wines and some Pinot Noir commercialized under the Purus label, which are fully made along natural lines (including no sulfur added and no filtering at bottling either).

**Stefan Vetter** (Gambach – Franken) only set up shop in 2010 but quickly made a name for himself through its organically farmed, minimal-intervention Franconian wines, which only see a little sulfur at bottling. Wait: A Franconian Estate in a list on Mosel wines? Yes, this is correct. Stefan Vetter is related through marriage to Andreas and Barbara Adam from Weingut A.J. Adam (Neumagen-Dhron / Mosel). In 2018, he bought some Mosel fruit from his in-laws and produced a low-sulfur, unfiltered wine made along natural lines from (not certified organic) grapes in the Dhroner Hofberg.

**Dr. Wagner** (Saarburg – Saar) is a traditional Estate with roots ranging back to the 19th century. Christiane Wagner, who has been at its helm since 2009, decided to produce a small quantity of Pet Nat in 2019, which will be released undisgorged and without any sulfur added later this year.

**Zur Römerkelter** (Maring-Noviand – Middle Mosel) is run by Timo Dienhart, a die-hard believer in all things organic: He had his Estate with holdings in the fine but lesser-known hills around Maring certified organic already back in 1995, and has been following full biodynamic principles (the latter without however being formally certified) since 2003. In 2014, he started to produce some natural Riesling made in stoneware without any sulfur added and has been producing this natural wine ever since. Also his Spätburgunder is made without intervention (including no filtering) except for a little sulfur at bottling.



# Mosel Fine Wines

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## NATURAL WINE | STILL A TINY NICHE ... BUT PART OF A TREND WAY BEYOND IT

As everywhere else in the world, minimal-intervention wines still very much remain a small niche. While these wines saw a huge growth in the Mosel over the last few years, the production figures are still tiny when compared to the overall wine production of the Mosel. We estimate that less than one percent of Mosel wines would fall into one or the other categories of "minimal intervention" wines.

However, the natural wine movement has a far bigger indirect impact on winemaking in the Mosel. Growers are rethinking the way they do wine in the light of the development of natural wines, and this not only for sulfur. As Christopher Loewen, the junior boss at Weingut Carl Loewen, reports: "I do like some natural wines but, above all, I do like the philosophy to return to ancient methods which got somehow forgotten. We rely for instance on basket press for our range of wines from our vineyard planted in 1896. But also overall, our wines are made with much less intervention than 20 years ago."

Growers have also reduced the level of sulfur and additives in general in their winemaking. Gernot Kollmann, from Weingut Immich-Batterieberg, has worked at several Estates over the last 20 years and clearly sees the trend: "When I started, general wisdom was to clarify the wines very early and to add sulfur early. This has completely changed, in particular for dry wines, in the Mosel. Even so-called conventional growers see the advantages in terms of body and presence by keeping the lees during the fermentation and aging, and by adding sulfur only very late in the process, thereby significantly reducing the overall amounts."

A remarkable fact in the Mosel is that, up to recently, few of the leading growers were certified organic. In fairness, the Mosel, with its rain and wet climate, presents more challenges to go organic than say a completely dry part of Chile. But despite the difficulties, there has been a change in attitude lately and more and more Estates are embracing organic principles. Weingut Weiser-Künstler has since been certified organic. Weingut Immich-Batterieberg has been farming 100% along organic guidelines on his own vineyards (the Estate has chosen not to get certified because it purchases grapes which are not all organically certified for its basic wines). After having restructured a large part of the Wolfer Goldgrube, Daniel Vollenweider is now completely following organic guidelines in that part of the vineyard as well as in the neighboring Schimbock (both of which represent a sizeable part of his holdings). Lastly, Markus Molitor is in the process of organic certification on the former Serrig State Estate, which he took over in 2018. Also Erni Loosen has been farming his large parcel in the Bernkasteler Lay situated around his Estate organically since 2013. Fio is also converting to organic means. Critics will rightly say that, as long as a growers is not formally certified, it is essentially a question of word and growers are not fully "walking the talk." However, we see a clear trend into the direction of more environmentally friendly vineyard management.

While not every Estate wants to produce "natural" or "minimal intervention" wines with no or little sulfur, many of the leading growers have been revisiting their way of working. While we will certainly not state that there is a direct link, this trend towards more environmentally friendly wine growing has certainly been furthered by the development of natural wines and the growing awareness it has generated in the public.



# Mosel Fine Wines

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## NATURAL WINE | RECOMMENDED WINES

We summarize here minimal intervention wines made without anything added or extracted except for a little sulfur added at bottling which we tasted in 2019 and can recommend on quality grounds.

*NB: We specifically mention for each Estate if it farms its vineyards along certified-organic or certified-biodynamic guidelines.*

### Weingut Arns und Sohn

(Reil – Middle Mosel)

*NB: The Estate is certified organic (along general EU guidelines).*

<b>2016er</b>	<b>Arns und Sohn</b>	<b>Pinot Blanc Trocken Orange</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>89+</b>
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The 2016er Pinot Blanc Trocken Orange (L1603, it does not hold an AP number) was skin-fermented for two months and aged for 18 months in 2-3 year-old barrique following strict natural wine principles (“nothing added, nothing extracted”). This orange-colored wine develops a big nose of almond, cooked apple, tangerine, apricot, melon and herbal elements. It proves still quite firm and structured on the remarkably zesty palate but already shows some of its complexity in the long but also still quite tart finish. There is quite some upside as the wine integrates its tart side. 2021-2026 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

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### Weingut Blesius

(Graach – Middle Mosel)

<b>N.V.</b>	<b>Blesius</b>	<b>Riesling Extreme Pet Nat FEX</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>90</b>
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The Riesling Extreme Pet Nat FEX (FEX stands for Florian, Eva – his girlfriend who also studied winemaking – and X-Treme) with lot Number 01 19 comes from 2018 fruit grown conventionally in the Bernkasteler Matheisbildchen. It was re-fermented in bottle without sulfur added in October 2018 before being disgorged in May 2019. It offers a rather beautiful nose of pear, nut, laurel, herbs and smoke. The wine proves gorgeously lively and delicately tart on the palate and leaves a playful feel of pear, herbs and minerals in the fizzy finish. This joyful sparkling wine should even benefit from a little bit of bottle aging to slightly smooth the edges. But what a nice and comparatively complex sparkling wine! 2020-2024 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 47 – August 2019)

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### Weingut Clemens Busch

(Pünderich – Terrassenmosel)

*NB: The Estate is certified organic (along ECOVIN guidelines) and certified biodynamic (along RESPEKT guidelines).*

<b>2017er</b>	<b>Clemens Busch</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken (Alter) Native</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>92</b>
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The 2017er (Alter) Native Riesling with lot number 1732 is a bone-dry Riesling from grey-slate sectors of the Marienburg made along “natural” lines (i.e. without intervention during fermentation and aging) and was bottled unfiltered, with only minimal added SO2 (23 mg/l). It offers an elegant and beautifully subdued nose made of baked apple, bitter-lemon, sage, a hint of buttery almond, fine spices, and a touch of cream. The wine is gorgeously intense and racy on the focused and light-footed palate, and leaves a beautiful feel of dried herbs, mirabelle, and apple pie, all pepped up by typically airy and refreshing Mosel flavors such as bitter-lemon, aniseed herbs, chalky minerals, and smoke. This delineated expression “natural” wine is truly irresistible. Now-2026 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)



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<b>2017er</b>	<b>Clemens Busch</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken O</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>89+</b>
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The 2017er Riesling O (O stands for Orange), as it is referred to on the main part of the label, with lot number 1733 is an unfiltered bone-dry Riesling from the grey-slate sectors of the Marienburg, which saw four months of skin-maceration and extended aging in cask for 14 months before being bottled unfiltered and with little SO<sub>2</sub> added. It offers a rather backward nose made of mirabelle, bitter-grapefruit, pear, sage, laurel, some camphor, and smoky elements. The wine is still firmly sharp and tart on the palate and only gradually reveals some flavors of pear, iodine, and aniseed herbs in the long and completely dry finish. The after-taste already hints at more charm to come. This rather backward and raw wine really needs a few years of bottle aging in order to absorb its tart and tannic side. It could then turn out outstanding. 2023-2033 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

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## Weingut Markus Busch

(Pünderich – Middle Mosel)

NB: The Estate is certified organic (along ECOVIN guidelines).

<b>2018er</b>	<b>Markus Busch</b>	<b>Riesling Pet Nat</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>87</b>
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The 2018er Riesling "Pet Nat" with Lot Number L1/19 was made with fruit harvested in the flatter parts of the Pündericher Marienburg vineyard, and was bottled when the wine reached 19 g/l of residual sugar and came on the market with its yeasts. This delicately orange and subtly hazy wine offers an ample but satisfying nose made hay, tangerine, bitter almond, cardamom, pear tart, and some earthy spices. The wine comes over as round and only lightly fizzy on the palate, and leaves a big feel of earthy spices and pear puree in the direct and not fully dry-tasting finish. Now-2023 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

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## Winzer Jonas Dostert

(Nittel - Obermosel)

NB: The Estate farms its vineyards organically (along general EU guidelines).

<b>2018er</b>	<b>Jonas Dostert</b>	<b>Pure Limestone</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>92</b>
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The 2018er Pure Limestone with lot number 04-19 is a blend of organically-farmed Chardonnay (70%) and Elbling (30%) grown on limestone-infused soils in the Nitteler Rochusfels. It was fermented and aged without intervention in a 7-year-old Burgundy piece (228 liter) for 12 months before being bottled unfiltered and with a little sulfur added (total sulfites do not exceed 30 mg/l). This bright green-yellow colored wine offers a superb nose of pear, citrusy elements, red and black berried fruits, elderflower, floral notes, and a hint of volatile acidity. The wine is gorgeously animating and fresh on the slender and delicately zesty palate, and leaves a delicately smooth and slightly creamy feel in the racy and playful finish. The after-taste is animating and, despite the lightness of the body, quite persistent and remarkably multi-dimensional. This combination of raciness and delicate smoothness is a huge success! Now-2023

<b>2018er</b>	<b>Jonas Dostert</b>	<b>Rosé Karambolage</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>90</b>
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The 2018er Rosé Karambolage with lot number 05-19 is a blend of Elbling (85%) with Chardonnay and Spätburgunder Rosé (15%) grown on a limestone-infused soil in the Obermosel. It was fermented and aged without intervention in a used Burgundy piece (228 liter) for 12 months before being bottled unfiltered and with a little sulfur added (total sulfites do not exceed 20 mg/l). This pale-pink-golden colored wine offers a fascinating nose, which reminds us of some Rosé Champagne without dosage as detailed scents of rose petal, baked apple, lime, chalky minerals, and a hint of herbs emerge from the glass. A touch of volatile acidity adds, strangely enough, more precision to the experience. The wine proves beautifully precise and balanced on the palate, where more rose petal and some jasmine flowers provide a superbly perfumed side. A touch of acidity gives focus to the long finish. This remarkably enjoyable even if rather individualistic wine is a real winner if you are partial to some very pale partridge-yeared Rosé! Now-2021

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## Hofgut Falkenstein

(Konz-Niedermennig – Saar)

<b>2018er</b>	<b>Falkenstein</b>	<b>Niedermenniger Sonnenberg Riesling Spätlese Trocken</b>	<b>09 19</b>	<b>93</b>
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The 2018er Niedermenniger Sonnenberg Kabinett Trocken (known internally as "Muny, Kleiner Klaus") was harvested early on 60-70 year-old vines in the Unter den Röderchen and Beim Hasenbirnbaum sectors of the vineyard. It delivers great fresh notes of almond, smoke, dried flowers and minty herbs on the nose. The wine starts off on the zesty and pure side before it develops more presence and intensity on the palate. The long and intense finish is superbly zesty, clean and precise. This beautiful dry Riesling is all about finesse and steely Saar. 2023-2033 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

<b>2017er</b>	<b>Falkenstein</b>	<b>Niedermenniger Sonnenberg Rotwein Trocken</b>	<b>16 19</b>	<b>90</b>
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The 2017er Niedermenniger Sonnenberg Rotwein Trocken is made from what was planted by the Webers as Spätburgunder 25 years ago but which the authorities now say is a mutation and not legally Spätburgunder, hence the fact that the wine is bottled simply as Rotwein, meaning red wine. It was fermented and aged for 18 months in traditional Fuder casks (hence the late AP number) without chaptalization and malolactic fermentation. It offers a beautiful nose made of cherry, mint, clove, herbs and a hint of soy sauce. The wine is beautifully light-footed and engaging on the silky and focused palate. The finish is still slightly hard, but nothing what a little bottle aging cannot wipe away. 2021-2027+ (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

<b>2018er</b>	<b>Falkenstein</b>	<b>Niedermenniger Herrenberg Riesling Kabinett Trocken</b>	<b>01 19</b>	<b>91</b>
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The 2018er Niedermenniger Herrenberg Kabinett Trocken AP 01 (known internally as "Mutter Anna, Meyer Sidney") comes from 60-70 year-old vines. It develops a beautifully expressive and fruit driven nose of violet, apricot, yellow peach, spices, mirabelle and greengage. The wine proves also fruity and nicely ripe on the palate but these smooth flavors are perfectly balanced out by superb acidity and spices. A lovely kick of grapefruit and citrus-driven acidity adds to the bone-dry feel in the finish. 2020-2028 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

<b>2018er</b>	<b>Falkenstein</b>	<b>Niedermenniger Herrenberg Riesling Kabinett Trocken</b>	<b>19 19</b>	<b>91</b>
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The 2018er Niedermenniger Herrenberg Riesling Kabinett Trocken AP 19 (known internally as "Egon") comes from grapes harvested at 85° Oechsle in a south-facing part of the house situated just below the cellar. It offers a superbly under-cooled nose made of pear, mint, passion fruit, star fruit and fine spices. The wine is beautiful long and refined and offers great grip and finesse in the razor sharp and stunning finish. Now-2028 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

<b>2017er</b>	<b>Falkenstein</b>	<b>Niedermenniger Herrenberg Rotwein Trocken</b>	<b>10 19</b>	<b>90</b>
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The 2017er Niedermenniger Herrenberg Rotwein Trocken is made from what was planted by the Webers as Spätburgunder 25 years ago but which the authorities now say is a mutation and not legally Spätburgunder, hence the fact that the wine is bottled simply as Rotwein, meaning red wine. It was fermented and aged for 18 months in traditional Fuder casks (hence the late AP number) without chaptalization and malolactic fermentation. The wine delivers a beautifully aromatic nose made of fresh cherry, plum, graphite, tobacco and herbs. It coats the palate with juicy red fruits (including Morello cherry) and licorice. There is good presence and even a touch of power right into the very long and acid-driven finish. A slightly bitter side emerges in the after-taste which still needs to integrate. This should happen within a year or two. This wine will then prove an outstanding piece of red Saar wine to enjoy for many years. 2020-2027 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

<b>2018er</b>	<b>Falkenstein</b>	<b>Niedermenniger Herrenberg Weissburgunder Spätlese Trocken</b>	<b>02 19</b>	<b>88</b>
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The 2018er Niedermenniger Herrenberg Weissburgunder Spätlese Trocken was fermented down to 6 g/l of residual sugar. It offers a rather engaging nose made of macerated fruits, pear, herbs, fine spices, ginger and smoky elements. The wine is mellow (and not bone dry) on the rather forceful and creamy palate, and leaves a surprisingly full-bodied and round feel in the otherwise delicately juicy finish. The after-taste is about lemon grass, infused pear and smoke. This Weissburgunder proves more forceful than usually by the standards of this Estate. Now-2023 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

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## Fio Weinmanufaktur

(Piesport – Middle Mosel)

<b>2015er</b>	<b>Fio</b>	<b>Piesporter Riesling Trocken Fio</b>	<b>05 17</b>	<b>94</b>
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The 2015er Piesporter Fio, as it is referred on the central part of the label, was made fruit harvested in the Piesporter Goldtröpfchen, which was fermented and aged without any additive or other intervention in large casks for 24 months before being bottled unfiltered and with minimal sulfur added (30 mg/l). It will be released commercially at the end of 2020. This bright yellow-white colored wine offers a superb nose made of ripe herbs, fine spices, candied grapefruit, and chalky minerals, all wrapped into some slate-infused reduction. The wine proves packed with engagingly fresh and complex flavors on the beautifully light, tart and remarkably multi-layered palate (the wine only has 11.5% alcohol). The finish proves gorgeously long and beautifully refined. A touch of hard tartness still needs to integrate in the after-taste and does already recede after a day of airing. The potential here is immense, even if it will only fully blossom in a few years. But; lovers of light-footed and elegant dry Riesling should plunge upon this! 2023-2030+

<b>2018er</b>	<b>Fio</b>	<b>Piesporter Falkenberg Riesling Trocken</b>	<b>04 19</b>	<b>92+</b>
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The 2018er Riesling Falkenberg, as it is referred to on the main part of the label, was fermented and aged without any additive or their intervention in large cask for 12 months before being bottled filtered and with minimal sulfur added (30 mg/l). It will be commercially released at the end of 2020. This pale hey-yellow colored wine offers a beautifully aromatic nose made of pear, candied lemon zest, camphor, licorice, and pungent slate elements. The wine is aromatic but focused on the beautifully creamy and zesty palate. It becomes more focused and fresher as it develops in the glass. It then leaves a beautifully tart feel of ripe pear, melon, and star fruit in the long and rather engaging finish. A great sense of ripe fruits packed into fresher elements makes for an elegant after-taste. This is best left alone for another couple of years before true enjoyment. We would not be surprised if this will gain depth and ultimately warrant a higher rating at maturity. It is truly impressive. 2023-2033

<b>N.V.</b>	<b>Fio</b>	<b>Pet Nat Piu Piu</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>91</b>
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The Piu Piu, as it is referred to on the main label (and showing a green bird), with lot number F 19-2 is made from Riesling fruit harvested in 2016 which was fermented naturally, without any SO2 added, before being bottled to complete its fermentation in bottle, and being commercialized undisgorged. It offers a beautifully engaging nose made of pear, zest from citrusy fruits, and chalky minerals, all wrapped up in some residual scents from a spontaneous fermentation. The wine proves hugely engaging on the racy palate. Some flavors of baked apple and a hint of cardamom join the party and add depth to the experience. The mousse proves rather exuberant but, far from disturbing, this adds to the immense pleasure of drinking this Pet Nat already at this early stage. It will however develop more nuances over the coming years. 2021-2024

<b>2018er</b>	<b>Fio</b>	<b>JoJo "Orange Juice"</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>90</b>
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The JoJo, as it is referred to on the main label (the vintage is provided on the back label), with lot number F 19-1 is an Orange wine made from Riesling harvested in the Freudenburg sector of the Piesporter Treppchen. The grapes are whole-bunch fermented for 10 days before being partly pressed and partly de-stemmed, and continue the fermentation in respectively traditional Fuder casks and stainless steel. It was bottled unfiltered and with minimal SO2 added (10 mg/l). This deep yellow-golden colored wine offers a hugely aromatic nose made of melon, baked apple, bergamot, almond, licorice, cardamom, whipped cream, and some smoky slate. The wine is on the round and creamy side before some nice tartness brings structure on the mid-palate. The finish is smooth and complex, but also slightly soft and creamy. The apply side comes through in the after-taste and adds structure to the experience. Now-2028

<b>N.V.</b>	<b>Fio</b>	<b>Pet Nat Rosé Piu Piu</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>89</b>
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The Piu Piu, as it is referred to on the main label (and showing a red bird), with lot number F 19-3 is made from Spätburgunder harvested in 2015 and 2018, which were fermented naturally, without any SO2 added, before being bottled to complete their fermentation in bottle, and being commercialized undisgorged. This pale pink-colored wine offers a quite attractive nose made of strawberry milkshake, fading rose, chalky minerals and spices. Some cranberry-driven elements add cut to the overall slightly soft palate and add structure to the slightly soft after-taste. Now-2023

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## Weingut Dr. Frey

*(Kanzem – Saar)*

NB: The Estate is certified organic (along ECOVIN guidelines).

2018er	Dr. Frey	Riesling Pétillant Naturel	(No AP)	90
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The 2018er Riesling Pétillant Naturel with Lot Number 1812 was made from fruit harvested in the Estate solely-owned Wawerner Jesuitenberg, and was re-fermented in bottle without any additives and came onto the market with its yeasts. This hazy wine offers a gorgeous and hugely primary nose made of pear, almond, baked apple, a hint of citrusy fruits, and some superbly yeasty elements. The wine is packed with fruits, some creamy elements, and earthy spices on the off-dry and fizzy palate, and leaves a gorgeously fruity feel in the engaging and lively finish. The touch of sweetness adds a nicely smooth side and gives this beautiful "Pet Nat" much early appeal. Now-2022 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

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## Jan Matthias Klein

*(Kröv – Middle Mosel)*

NB: The Estate is certified organic (along ECOVIN guidelines).

N.V.	Jan Matthias Klein	Madcap Magnus Le Loup Fou	(No AP)	92+
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The Madcap Magnus Le Loup Fou with Lot Number 0119 is a 2018er bone-dry Riesling made along "natural" lines from fruit harvested in the Kröver Steffensberg (the vintage is not provided on the label). It was macerated for 72 hours and fermented in stainless steel before being aged in traditional Fuder cask for 10 months without any intervention and bottled unfiltered without any added SO<sub>2</sub>. This offers a superbly complex yet almost raw nose made of pear tatin tart, mirabelle, chalky minerals and citrusy elements, all wrapped into some smoke and spices. The wine is full-bodied without being overpowering on the racy yet delicately creamy palate and leaves an intense feel of minerals and cooked pear in the long and still assertively tart finish. This remarkably wine has even some upside if it manages to harness its natural powerful side (it does have 13% of alcohol). 2023-2028+ (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

N.V.	Jan Matthias Klein	Kiss Kiss Maddies Lips	(No AP)	92
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The Kiss Kiss Maddies Lips with Lot Number 0119 is a 2018er bone-dry "Pet Nat" made from Frühburgunder harvested in the Kröver Paradies (the vintage is not provided on the label). It saw a skin-maceration of a few hours and a re-fermentation in bottle of 6 months before being disgorged without any dosage or SO<sub>2</sub> added. This gorgeously pink-colored fizzy wine offers an amazingly complex nose made of cooked strawberry, clove, herbs and spices. An active mousse enhances the gorgeously subtle and complex flavors of underbrush and cooked raspberry on the remarkably balanced palate and leaves an elegant feel of berried fruits and herbs in the subtle and very persistent finish. This amazing success proves very hard to resist and, at the same time, one can spend hours on its subtle details. What a wine! Now-2023 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

N.V.	Jan Matthias Klein	Little Bastard	(No AP)	92
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The Little Bastard with Lot Number 0119 is a 2018er bone-dry blend made along "natural" lines of Riesling from the Kröver Letterlay and Kirchlay (60%), Sauvignon Blanc from the Kinheimer Hubertuslay (25%), Müller-Thurgau (10%) and Muscat (5%) from the Kröver Paradies (the vintage is not provided on the label). These have seen various levels of skin-fermentation before being aged together in an old Fuder cask for a few months and bottled unfiltered, with a little CO<sub>2</sub> but no SO<sub>2</sub> added. This hazy and lightly foamy wine offers a superbly engaging nose made of baked apple, earthy spices, fine spices and some almond elements, all wrapped into beautifully citrusy elements. The wine is delicately fizzy on the fruity and almond-infused palate and leaves a gorgeously playful feel of citrusy fruits, herbal elements and earthy spices in the long and juicy finish. The bubbly side still dominates the after-taste at this stage, so this is best left alone for a year or two in order to fully benefit from the underlying complexity. 2021-2028 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)



# Mosel Fine Wines

*"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"*

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

N.V.	Jan Matthias Klein	Little Red Riding Wolf Pinot Nu Wilf Edition	(No AP)	91
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The Little Red Riding Wolf Wilf Edition, as it is referred to on the main part of the label (whereby Wilf cheekily stands for "Wow, it's a lovely Frühburgunder"), with Lot Number 0119 is a 2016er Frühburgunder from the Kröver Paradies made along "natural" lines (the vintage is not provided on the label). It was aged in used barrique without any additive for 24 months before being bottled unfiltered without any added SO<sub>2</sub>. It starts off on the reduced side of things but gradually reveals a superb nose made of fresh blueberry, wild strawberry, cherry, herbs, and spices. The wine is gorgeously playful on the beautifully smooth and silky palate, where a touch of horse stable enhances the experience. A hint of spices from oak support the fruit flavors in the finish and adds complexity to the after-taste. Quite frankly, this wine is both delicious and deep. What a great positive surprise and easily the finest Frühburgunder we ever tasted from the Mosel! Now-2026+ (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

N.V.	Jan Matthias Klein	Kiss Kiss Maddies Lips Purple Rain	(No AP)	90
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The Kiss Kiss Maddies Lips Purple Rain with Lot Number 0119 is a 2018er bone-dry "Pet Nat" made from Regent harvested in the Piesporter Treppchen (the vintage is not provided on the label). It saw a skin-maceration of seven days and a re-fermentation in bottle of 6 months before being disgorged without any dosage or SO<sub>2</sub> added. This pitch dark-red fizzy wine offers a big and bold nose made of cassis, blueberry and ink, all wrapped into a hint of green herbs. The wine proves gorgeously fruity and delicately herbal on the bone-dry and nicely fizzy palate. It leaves a great and big feel of blue-berried fruits in the long and joyful finish. The after-taste is complex and tart. This Mosel answer to the great but still so underrated Lambrusco is truly delicious and enjoyable. We would however opt to enjoy this in its youth and its primary fruit. Now-2021 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

N.V.	Jan Matthias Klein	Little Red Riding Wolf Pinot Nu	(No AP)	89
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The Little Red Riding Wolf, as it is referred to on the main part of the label, with Lot Number 0119 is a 2018er Spätburgunder from the Kröver Paradies made along "natural" lines (the vintage is not provided on the label) which was aged and fermented in a traditional Fuder cask without any additives for 10 months before being bottled unfiltered without any added SO<sub>2</sub>. It offers a rather engaging nose of cranberry, beetroot, cherry, red currant, and minty herbs. The wine is nicely fruity and playful on the sweet and juicy palate, and leaves a nice and appealing mineral side in the finish. The after-taste is beautifully airy and persistent. Now-2026 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

N.V.	Jan Matthias Klein	Portu Geezer	(No AP)	89
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The Portu Geezer with Lot Number 0119 is a 2018er bone-dry blend made along "natural" lines of Arinto and Fernão Pires (two Portuguese grape varieties) planted in the Kröver Paradies four years ago (the vintage is not provided on the label) and fermented and bottled unfiltered, with some residual CO<sub>2</sub> but without any added SO<sub>2</sub>. This slightly hazy white wine offers a rather engaging nose made of passion fruit, almond, cooked jam, candied grapefruit and herbal elements. The wine is rather vivid and almost sharp on the delicately fizzy palate and leaves a nice and subtle feel of racy minerals, pear, lime and herbs in the nicely long finish. The fizzy side still drives the after-taste so we would rather opt to leave this rest a year or more before cracking open a bottle of this wine. 2020-2025 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

N.V.	Jan Matthias Klein	Orange Utan	(No AP)	88
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The Orange Utan with Lot Number 0119 is a 2018er bone-dry blend made along "natural" lines of Riesling (65%) from the Kröver Steffensberg and Muskateller (35%) from the Kröver Paradies (the vintage is not provided on the label). It saw extensive skin-fermentation and was aged for 6 months in large casks before being bottled unfiltered without any added SO<sub>2</sub>. This hazy-orange-colored wine offers a beautiful and highly aromatic nose of made of pear, nut, laurel, orange peel and strong elements of camphor. The camphor side dominates the full-bodied feel on the palate and gives quite some power and a simple feel to the otherwise persistent even if quite bold finish. 2021-2026 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

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## Gebrüder Knebel

(Winningen – Terrassenmosel)

2018er	Gebrüder Knebel	Pet Nat Rosé Don't Be Afraid	(No AP)	88
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The 2018er Pet Nat Rosé Don't Be Afraid with lot number P1n0t was made from 100% Spätburgunder in the Winninger Röttgen which completed its fermentation in bottle before being disgorged at 9 g/l of residual sugar, without any dosage or sulfur at any stage. The wine offers an attractive and quite delicate nose made of fading rose, cooked strawberry, and chalky minerals. It is barely off-dry on the rather playful palate, and leaves a nicely long feel of minerals, underbrush, and berried fruits in the long and delicately fizzy finish. Now-2022 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

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## Weingut Goswin Kranz

(Brauneberg – Middle Mosel)

NB: The Estate is certified organic (along BIOLAND guidelines).

2018er	Goswin Kranz	Weissburgunder Trocken	(No AP)	88
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The 2017er Weissburgunder Trocken (with Lot Number 03/2019) is a bone-dry wine (less than 1 g/l of residual sugar) from Estate holdings in the Brauneberger Mandelgraben, which was fermented along "vin nature" principles, i.e. without any additive or extraction during the fermentation and bottling (including no added sulfites). The wine offers a slightly reduced but fascinating nose made of pear, chalky minerals, a hint of whipped cream and some nutty and floral elements. It proves full of grip and delicately zesty on the creamy and nicely fruity palate and leaves a pure and engaging feel of chalky minerals, pear, nut and herbs in the long but slightly linear finish. Now-2021+ (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

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## Philip Lardot

(Bullay – Terrassenmosel)

2017er	Philip Lardot	Riesling Trocken Der Graf	(No AP)	91
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The 2017er Riesling Trocken Der Graf comes from fruit harvested in Piesport. It was made for 30% by adding grapes into the must and was fermented without any additive down to bone-dry levels of residual sugar (3 g/l) in used wooden casks for 18 months before being bottled with 20 mg/l of SO<sub>2</sub>. The wine offers a nicely big nose of fresh pear, caraway, lemon zest, whipped cream, a hint of caramel and smoky elements. It is gorgeously fruity and playful on the palate and leaves a superb and easy feel of fresh fruits in the long finish. This is truly gorgeous, quite complex, and superbly racy. Now-2021+ (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

2018er	Philip Lardot	Pinot Gris	(No AP)	91
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The 2018er Pinot Gris is made from an extensive (9 days) skin-contact of Grauburgunder harvested in Piesport, fermented down to bone-dry levels of residual sugar and bottled with 20 mg/l of SO<sub>2</sub>. This pink-colored wine offers a gorgeous nose of cranberry, rose water, earth and a hint of saddle. The wine is nicely aromatic and lively on the otherwise rather smooth finish. This reminds one more of a fruit-Lambic than of a classic aromatic Mosel wine but it is fascinating ... and while being easy to drink, it has superb depth! Now-2020+ (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)



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<b>2017er</b>	<b>Philip Lardot</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken Soif Pet Nat</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>90</b>
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The 2017er Riesling Trocken Soif Pet Nat is made from Riesling grapes from a befriended grower in Piesport. It was fermented without any added sulfur in used barrique and bottled with some residual sugar to undergo its second fermentation for 6 months before being disgorged in June 2018 and bottled without any added sulfur. The wine offers a gorgeous nose of yellow peach, cassis, caraway and hints of caramel and sherry. The wine is nicely bubbly on the palate and leaves a superb feel of minerals, strawberry and spices in the finish. This should prove beautiful and nice for the coming year or two (if not more). Now-2020+ (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

<b>2018er</b>	<b>Philip Lardot</b>	<b>Pinot Noir</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>89</b>
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The 2018er Pinot Noir with lot number 1803 is a bone-dry wine made from fruit picked in Piesport which was de-stemmed by hand before being fermented and aged without intervention or sulfur in 5-10 year-old barrique for 10 months. It was bottled unfiltered and with minimal sulfur added (20 mg/l). It offers an engaging nose made of cherry, blueberry milkshake and fine spices. The wine proves playful and a touch direct on the palate but leaves an engaging yet subtle feel of fresh fruits and herbs in the long and quite subtle finish. This very good "natural" expression of Pinot Noir will offer much pleasure over the coming years. 2020-2024 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

<b>2017er</b>	<b>Philip Lardot</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken Der Hirt</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>87</b>
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The 2017er Riesling Trocken Der Hirt was made from grapes harvested at 98° Oechsle in the prime but underrated Valwiger Herrenberg. It saw some overnight pre-fermentation soak before being fermented and aged for 18 months in wooden cask. The resulting bone-dry wine (3 g/l f residual sugar) was bottled with only 20 mg/l of SO<sub>2</sub>. It offers a big nose akin of a Viognier with camphor, mirabelle, herbs and spices. It is big and structured with quite some power on the palate. A surprising kick of acidity comes through on the palate. Despite the power and the alcohol (13.5%), the intensity of the flavors gives the wine some playfulness. It remains however a wine for lovers of baroque expressions of Riesling. Now-2022 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

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## Weingut Dr. Loosen

*(Bernkastel-Kues – Middle Mosel)*

<b>2016er</b>	<b>Dr. Loosen</b>	<b>Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Trocken Ernst Loosen &amp; Telmo Rodriguez</b>	<b>64 18</b>	<b>92</b>
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This 2016er Graacher Himmelreich Riesling, as it is referred to on the consumer label, is a common "orange" project between Ernst Loosen (Mosel / Germany) and Telmo Rodriguez (Rioja / Spain). It is based on fruit from Dr. Loosen holdings in the Abtsberg part of the vineyard, which was skin-macerated for several months before being pressed (using a basket press) and transferred into in 2,000 liter wooden casks which had previously seen some of the finest Rioja by Telmo Rodriguez. The wine, which will be released in 2020, was made without intervention (including no filtering) except for a little sulfur (30 mg/l). It offers a superb nose made of mirabelle tart, pear, licorice, yellow plum, and smoky elements. The wine proves beautifully balanced on the still slightly tart and sharp feel of bitter-lemon, mirabelle, herbs, and spices on the nicely focused palate. It leaves a great juicy but also intense sense of minerals, herbs and spices in the long finish. A touch of bitterness still needs to integrate in the after-taste of this beautiful and delicately oxidative wine. 2021-2031 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

<b>2015er</b>	<b>Dr. Loosen</b>	<b>Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Trocken Ernst Loosen &amp; Telmo Rodriguez</b>	<b>42 17</b>	<b>91</b>
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This 2015er Graacher Himmelreich Riesling, as it is referred to on the consumer label, is a common "orange" project between Ernst Loosen (Mosel / Germany) and Telmo Rodriguez (Rioja / Spain). It is based on fruit from Dr. Loosen holdings in the Abtsberg part of the vineyard, which was skin-macerated for several months before being pressed (using a basket press) and transferred into in 2,000 liter wooden casks which had previously seen some of the finest Rioja by Telmo Rodriguez. The wine, which was released in 2019, was made without intervention (including no filtering) except for a little sulfur (30 mg/l). It offers a ripe and quite aromatic nose made of toffee, marzipan, pear puree, roasted pineapple, Indian spices, and smoke. Candied lime, grapefruit and tangerine makes for a vivid and focused feel on the zesty and beautifully refreshing palate. These give way to broader flavors of cream and fruits in the long and suave finish. Now-2030 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

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## Madame Flöck Wines

*(Winningen – Terrassenmosel)*

2018er	Madame Flöck	Lehmener Ausoniusstein Riesling Dewy's Drop	10 19	92
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The 2018er Dewy's Drop, as it is referred to on the label (named after Stephen Dew, the winemaker at Kaesler Estate and a mentor who inspired this project), is a bone-dry Riesling made along natural lines from old vines in the steep south-east facing Lehmener Ausoniusstein. The wine was fermented and aged without any sulfur or additive on its gross lees with regular batonage in stainless steel for 10 months before being bottled unfiltered, unfiltered, and with little SO<sub>2</sub> added (30 mg/l). It offers a rather upfront fruity nose as scents of lemongrass, grapefruit zest, earthy spices, and chalky minerals emerge from the glass. The wine is beautifully playful on the fruit-driven palate and leaves an exquisitely feel of orchard fruits, fine spices in the long and gorgeously engaging and airy finish. This is a great dry Riesling. 2020-2033 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

2018er	Madame Flöck	Riesling Mad Dog Warwick	20 19	86+
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The 2018er Mad Dog Warwick, as it is referred to on the label (named after Warwick Bruce Murray, a viticulturist in the Barossa Valley and a mentor who inspired this project), is a bone-dry Riesling made along natural lines from 30-year-old vines in a terraced part of the Winninger Domgarten. The wine was fermented and aged without any sulfur or additive on its gross lees with regular batonage in a mix of an old barrique (30%) and stainless steel (70%) for 10 months before being bottled unfiltered, unfiltered, and with little SO<sub>2</sub> added (35 mg/l). It offers a rather ample and creamy nose of pear puree, white currant, minerals, and a hint of smoke, all wrapped into quite some volatile acidity. The wine comes over as satisfyingly smooth and silky on the round and fruit-driven palate. At this stage, it is only in the finish that some zesty elements, underlined by more hint of volatile acidity, give this slightly broad wine some cut and pep. The wine develops more structure and presence as it develops with air (and this over days) and also sheds some of the volatile elements, so we would rather opt to wait for next year before cracking open any bottle. It could then prove much finer and elegant. 2020-2026 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

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## Weingut Materne & Schmitt

*(Winningen – Terrassenmosel)*

2017er	Materne & Schmitt	Lehmener Riesling Réserve Potion No. 1366	07 19	94
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The 2017er Potion No. 1366, as it is referred to on the central part of the label, is a bone-dry Riesling (with 2 g/l of residual sugar) picked in the Estate's finest parcels (Lay and the Ausoniusstein), which was partially whole-bunch fermented and pressed before being transferred for completing its fermentation and aging in a 600l acacia cask for 20 months (hence the late AP number) before being bottled unfiltered and with minimal added SO<sub>2</sub> (total SO<sub>2</sub> does hardly exceed 30 mg/l). This already hay-colored wine offers a rather complex and delicately oxidative nose made of almond, baked pear, subtle elements of ginger, and creamy smoke. It is superbly balanced on the fully dry palate, and leaves a most fascinating feel of almond, aniseed herbs, baked apple, and smoky elements in the long and beautifully engaging finish. It will particularly appeal to lovers of elegant and refreshing expressions of "natural-styled" wines. This Mosel answer to the great Rheingau wines from Peter-Jakob Kühn proves a massive success! 2022-2032 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

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## Weingut Meierer

*(Kesten – Middle Mosel)*

2017er	Meierer	Riesling Pet Nat OMG!	(No AP)	91
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The 2017er Riesling OMG!, as it is referred to on the front label, with Lot Number 01/2018 was made with fruit harvested in Kestener Paulinsberg, and completed its fermentation in the bottle and came on the market with its yeasts. One needs to be a bit cautious when opening the bottle as the juice bursts out under the carbonation. These cautionary measures are however rewarded by a beautiful nose of pear cider, aniseed herbs, a hint of spices, a touch of whipped cream, and smoky elements. It proves rather delicately fizzy on the palate (certainly after being so vivid upon opening). More creamy fruits add a delicately smooth and not fully dry feel right into the nicely playful and delicately tart finish. More minerals, herbs, and pear cider round off the pleasure of enjoying this superb, delicately off-dry tasting "Pet Nat" wine. Now-2022 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)



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By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

<b>2017er</b>	<b>Meierer</b>	<b>Riesling WTF!?</b>	<b>10 18</b>	<b>91</b>
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The 2017er Riesling WTF!? Is a bone-dry "orange" wine from the Kestener Paulinsberg which was whole-bunch fermented for 8 weeks and aged without intervention before being bottled with only a minimal amount of SO<sub>2</sub> added (11 mg/l). This bronze-colored wine offers a rather elegant nose made of pear, orange blossom, a hint of whipped cream, some citrusy elements, almond, minty herbs and earthy spices. The wine is driven by baked pear, tangerine zest, aniseed herbs and fine spices on the palate and leaves a beautifully tart feel in the long and direct finish. Herbs, tart minerals, and fine spices emerge in the after-taste and add to the airy side of the wine. Now-2027 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

<b>2018er</b>	<b>Meierer</b>	<b>Riesling WTF!?</b>	<b>10 19</b>	<b>90+</b>
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The 2018er Riesling WTF!? Is a bone-dry "orange" wine from the Kestener Paulinsberg which was whole-bunch fermented for 8 weeks and aged without intervention before being bottled with only a minimal amount of SO<sub>2</sub> added (17 mg/l). It offers a rather ample nose made of pear puree, bergamot, ginger, citrusy elements, cardamom and smoke. The wine proves surprisingly smooth and almost off-dry on the palate, but leaves a big and rather satisfying feel of pear tatin tart, herbs, and minerals in the long and nicely tart but also somewhat powerful finish. This wine will need a year or two to fully develop and become more complex and nuanced. It could then easily exceed our high expectations. 2021-2028 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

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## Weingut Melsheimer

(Reil – Middle Mosel)

NB: The Estate is certified organic (along DEMETER guidelines) and certified biodynamic (along DEMETER guidelines).

<b>2017er</b>	<b>Melsheimer</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken Orange</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>92</b>
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The 2017er Riesling Trocken Orange comes from grapes harvested in the Reiler Mullay-Hofberg and was whole-bunch fermented with whole bunches in stainless steel for one month before being pressed. It completed its fermentation and aging without lees' steering and any sulfur added in used Barrique for 12 months. The wine was bottled unfiltered. This offers a stunning nose made of apricot, rhubarb and tangerine tart with a touch of funk (which may not be to everybody's taste but suits the wine perfectly). The feel on the palate is gorgeously playful, suave, zesty and multi-layered, without any harsh tannic structure. The finish is light and zesty. Obviously taste plays a major role here and lovers of fresh Mosel wine should stay well clear of this wine. But Orange wine lovers will have much fun with this Mosel answer (with less alcohol and more zest) to the great wines made by the Friuli masters! Now-2022+ (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

<b>2017er</b>	<b>Melsheimer</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken Vade Retro</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>91</b>
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The 2017er Riesling Trocken Vade Retro (a cheeky wordplay on everything lovers of fruity wines should hate from "vin nature") was made from grapes harvested in the Reiler Mullay-Hofberg, and was fermented with ambient yeasts in used Barrique for 12 months following *vin nature* principles, i.e. without added sulfur and bottled unfiltered. It offers a gorgeous nose of baked apple, mirabelle, tart Tatin and whipped cream as well as some classy herbal elements. The wine is gorgeously playful on the slightly fizzy palate and leaves a stunning feel of stewed pear, chalky minerals and fine spices in the long and zesty finish. This is a superb "vin nature"! Now-2020+ (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

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## Weingut Martin Müllen

(Traben-Trarbach – Middle Mosel)

2016er	Martin Müllen	Riesling Spätlese Trocken	31 17	91
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The 2016er Riesling Spätlese Trocken AP 31 comes mainly from the Kröver Steffensberg and was fermented spontaneously in 500-liter wooden cask with some batonage (to stir up the fermentation) for 11 months before being bottled filtered but without any sulfur added at any time of the process (and, as Martin Müllen underlined, it was awarded an AP number!). The wine offers a superb nose of baked apple, grapefruit, whipped cream, herbs and minerals. It proves beautifully balanced and refined on the palate, where whipped cream mingles superbly well with just a hint of almond and caramel. The finish is long and elegant. This is a great low-sulfur wine where the touch of oxidation adds to the complexity of the wine. Now-2023 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

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## Pandamonium

(Kröv – Middle Mosel)

N.V.	Pandamonium	Papa Panda's Rising	(No AP)	88+
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The Papa Panda's Rising (made together with the Kröv-based grower Andrzej Greszta) with Lot Number 0119 is a 2018er bone-dry "Orange" wine made along "natural" lines from purchased Riesling fruit as well as own vineyards in organic conversion harvested in the Kröver Steffensberg and Letterlay (the vintage is not provided on the label). It saw extensive skin-fermentation and was bottled unfiltered without any added SO2. This delicately bronze-colored wine offers telltale scents of almond, baked apple and orange peel, all wrapped into some smoky and earthy elements. It proves delicately full-bodied on the still slightly bitter and harsh palate but shows already its beauty in the long and gorgeously suave yet racy finish. The balance in the after-taste is impeccable, as the mouthcoating flavors of nut and baked apple are beautifully wrapped into some tart and zesty minerals. This wine could easily turn out even better than expected as it fleshes out and gains finesse over the coming years. 2021-2028 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

2018er	Pandamonium	Riesling Sam Jan Guy	(No AP)	88
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The 2018er Mosel Riesling Sam Jan Guy (made together with Australian grower Sam Guy Renzaglia) with Lot Number 0119 is a bone-dry Riesling made along "natural" lines from fruit out of the Kröver Steffensberg. It was macerated for 72 hours whereby the sediments from the juice are fermented separately in a 50 liter glass bottle and later, after racking them off the rough lees, are added to the wine and bottled unfiltered without any added SO2. It offers a quite aromatic nose of pear puree, herbs, almond and fine spices. The wine is still quite wild on the palate as ripe and delicately creamy flavors of pear, earthy spices and Provence herbs are battling it a bit out with more classic Riesling elements including citrusy fruits and smoke. The wine shows its true potential in the remarkably lively and engaging finish and in the citrusy, mineral and delicately camphor-infused after-taste. This is a nicely animating wine made along natural principles in the making. 2022-2028 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

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## Weinbau Julien Renard

(Winningen – Terrassenmosel)

2018er	Julien Renard	Riesling Trocken	(No AP)	92
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The 2018er Riesling Trocken with Lot Number 18mth comes from two steep part of the Winninger Domgarten, and was crafted along "natural wine" lines, i.e. fermented and aged without any intervention, in a mix of stainless steel and wooden casks for 10 months before being bottled unfiltered with minimal sulfur added (total SO<sub>2</sub> is less than 15 mg/l). It offers a gorgeous nose made of herbs, anise, a hint of volatile acidity which blows off rather rapidly, baked apple, floral elements, and fine spices. The wine is nicely lively and driven by beautiful flavors of aniseed herbs, ginger, grapefruit, pear, almond, and delicately earthy spices. It leaves a refreshing and nicely tart feel in the otherwise nicely complex finish. The after-taste is hugely long and multi-layered. This great dry Riesling combines immediate drinking fun with depth and layered complexity. What a debut effort by this new grower! Now-2023+ (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

2018er	Julien Renard	Müller-Thurgau Trocken	(No AP)	91
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The 2018er Müller-Thurgau with Lot Number 18mth was picked on un-grafted vines in a steep part of the Winninger Domgarten, and was crafted along "natural wine" lines, i.e. fermented and aged, without any intervention, on its gross lees in a wooden cask for 11 months before being bottled unfiltered with minimal sulfur added (total SO<sub>2</sub> is less than 30 mg/l). It offers a gorgeous nose made of pear, coriander seed, whipped cream, floral elements, candied lime, and smoke. The wine is beautifully balanced on the palate, where a delicate touch of melon is wrapped into more aniseed elements. Everything is lifted up by some beautifully zesty and slightly minty elements. The finish is lively but also remarkably subtle and incredibly intense (especially given the low 10.4% of alcohol). This is easily the most convincing example of Müller-Thurgau we have ever tasted from the Mosel. In addition, this gorgeous dry wine will appeal to both lovers of "natural" wines and those with more conventional fruity freshness. Now-2025 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

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## Weingut Scheid Inh. Matthias und Julian Scheid

(Zell-Merl – Terrassenmosel)

NB: The Estate is certified organic (along ECOVIN guidelines).

2018er	Richard Scheid	Riesling Trocken Pur Unfiltriert	(No AP)	89
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The 2018er Riesling Trocken Pur, as it is referred to on the main part of the label, with the Lot Number 1840 is a bone-dry Riesling made along "natural" lines from Estate holdings in the east-facing part of the Merler Klosterberg. It saw no pre-fermentation cold soak, and was racked only once (in April 2019), before being bottled unfiltered and with a low 30 mg/l of SO<sub>2</sub> in August. It offers a beautifully elegant nose made of mirabelle, pear, ginger, herbs and fine spices. A touch of CO<sub>2</sub> makes for a delicately tickly side on the creamy yet light-bodied and playful palate. More power comes through in the still rather elegant and long finish. Pear, earthy herbs, a hint of citrusy fruits and smoky cream all round off the pleasure of enjoying this wine in the after-taste. Now-2028 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

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## Shadowfolk Vineyards

(Poltersdorf – Terrassenmosel)

2016er	Shadowfolk	Pommerner Goldberg Riesling	(No AP)	88
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The 2016er Pommerner Goldberg Riesling (the reference to the wine is provided on the back label) with lot number 02/17 was made from grapes fermented and was aged in stainless steel without intervention for 12 months, which were added approx. 10% of wine which had undergone a 180-day skin-fermentation before being bottled unfiltered and without any sulfur in September 2017. This yellow-hey colored wine offers an attractive even if ripe nose made of pear, barbeque herbs, coal, dried earth, pear puree, and smoky slate. The wine is nicely direct and smooth on the palate, and leaves a direct but satisfying feel of pear puree in the medium-long finish. The after-taste is still remarkably tart and structured. 2021-2026



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<b>2015er</b>	<b>Shadowfolk</b>	<b>Riesling 300</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>87</b>
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The 2015er Riesling 300 (the reference to the wine is provided on the back label) with lot number 01/16 was made along natural lines, without intervention, from grapes in the Valwiger Herrenberg and the Pommerner Goldberg which underwent a 300-day skin-fermentation in a ceramic egg, and was bottled unfiltered without any sulfur in September 2017. This fully orange-bronze colored wine offers a rather ripe and luscious nose made of dried apricot, licorice, orange zest, cardamom, and earthy elements. The wine develops rather intense flavors of poached pear, herbs, and fine spices, and leaves a tart and big feel of chalky minerals in the ample and powerful finish. This full-on wine will please lovers of bigger expressions of Riesling. Now-2025

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## Weingut Staffelter-Hof

*(Kröv – Middle Mosel)*

*NB: The Estate is certified organic (along ECOVIN guidelines).*

<b>N.V.</b>	<b>Staffelter-Hof</b>	<b>Madcap Magnus Le Loup Fou</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>93</b>
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The Madcap Magnus Le Loup Fou with Lot Number 0116 is a 2014er bone-dry Riesling made along "natural" lines from fruit harvested in the Kröver Steffensberg (the vintage is not provided on the label). It was macerated for 72 hours and fermented in stainless steel before being aged in traditional Fuder cask for 10 months without any intervention and bottled unfiltered without any added SO<sub>2</sub>. It offers a beautiful nose made of dried herbs, pear, citrusy elements, a hint of camphor and lots of minerals. The wine is beautifully engaging on the mango, pear and apple infused palate. It leaves one with a gorgeous and complex sensation of fresh herbs, spices, tea and pear. The overall balance of this dry Riesling is simply beautiful. What a great success! Now-2024 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

<b>N.V.</b>	<b>Staffelter-Hof</b>	<b>Little Bastard</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>91</b>
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The Little Bastard with Lot Number 0117 is a 2016er bone-dry blend made along "natural" lines of Riesling from the Kröver Letterlay and Kirchlay (60%), Sauvignon Blanc from the Kinheimer Hubertuslay (25%), Müller-Thurgau (10%) and Muscat (5%) from the Kröver Paradies (the vintage is not provided on the label). These have seen various levels of skin-fermentation before being aged together in an old Fuder cask for a few months and bottled unfiltered, with a little CO<sub>2</sub> but no SO<sub>2</sub> added. It offers a beautifully engaging nose made of baked apple, lemon curd, herbs, almond and fine spices. The wine is nicely zesty and playful on the palate and leaves a gorgeously tart and complex feel in the long and citrusy finish. The feeling of fizz has completely melted into the background. This is so easy to drink and yet it is packed with great complex flavors. Now-2026 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

<b>N.V.</b>	<b>Staffelter-Hof</b>	<b>Little Red Riding Wolf Pinot Nu</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>89</b>
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The Little Red Riding Wolf, as it is referred to on the main part of the label, with Lot Number 0118 is made from Pinot Noir grapes harvested in 2017 in the Kröver Paradies. It was produced without any added SO<sub>2</sub> and was bottled unfiltered. This light-red colored wine offers a superb scents of hibiscus, rose petal and Morello cherry, which are joined by tar, dark spices and smoked herbs with some airing. The wine offers some tannins as well as dark fruits and spices on the light-footed palate, and leaves a satisfyingly tart feel in the medium-long finish. This very seductive expression of Pinot Noir proves utterly easy to drink. Now-2022 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

<b>N.V.</b>	<b>Staffelter-Hof</b>	<b>Madcap Magnus Le Loup Fou</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>88+</b>
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The Madcap Magnus Le Loup Fou with Lot Number 0118 is a 2016er bone-dry Riesling made along "natural" lines from fruit harvested in the Kröver Steffensberg (the vintage is not provided on the label). It was macerated for 72 hours and fermented in stainless steel before being aged in traditional Fuder cask for 10 months without any intervention and bottled unfiltered without any added SO<sub>2</sub>. The wine offers a rather oxidized nose made of funky elements reminiscent of Madeira, some pear, herbs and spices. It is however still remarkably vivid and loaded with fruits on the superbly balanced palate. More flavors of freshly macerated fruits, minerals and burnt wood emerge in the finish. It could well be that this is simply closed as the wine freshens up significantly after extensive airing. The upside could therefore be remarkable, and we would opt to rather wait for another year (or even two) before opening another bottle. 2020-2026 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

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## Wein-Erbhof Stein

*(Bullay – Terrassenmosel)*

<b>2017er</b>	<b>Stein</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken *** U1</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>92</b>
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The 2017er Riesling Trocken \*\*\*, as it is referred to on the consumer label (the reference to U1 is left for the back label), with lot number 03 19 is a wine made along "natural" lines from fruit harvested in the Alfer Hölle. It was fermented and aged in traditional Fuder cask for 18 months without intervention before being bottled unfiltered and without any sulfur added. It offers a stunningly complex nose made of baked apple, ginger, lemongrass, herbs, and fine spices. The wine proves both fruity and mineral on the alluring and mouth-watering palate and leaves a gorgeous feel of almond, herbs, and smoke in the long finish. This wine made along "natural" principles is a huge success. Now-2023 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

<b>2016er</b>	<b>Stein</b>	<b>Alfer Hölle Riesling Trocken *** Grenzgänger U1</b>	<b>17 18</b>	<b>91</b>
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The 2016er Grenzgänger U1 (as it is referred to on the back label) was fermented with yeasts from the finest wines of the Estate in Fuder for 24 month before being bottled without any sulfur added at any time of the process. The wine still proves incredibly reduced and only gradually reveals its beautiful nose made of caramel, lemon zest, herbs and fine spices. It offers a beautiful mouthfeel on the elegant palate and leaves a refreshing feel in the long finish. Now-2027 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

<b>2017er</b>	<b>Stein</b>	<b>Spätburgunder Trocken</b>	<b>23 18</b>	<b>90</b>
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The 2017er Spätburgunder Trocken, as it is referred to on the consumer label designed by Waechter, comes from over 30 year-old vines in the St. Aldegunder Himmelreich, and was fermented and aged in traditional Fuder cask for 11 months before being bottled unfiltered and with a low 30 mg/l of sulfur. It offers a beautiful nose made of strawberry, herbs, clove, minerals, and smoke. The wine is nicely playful and elegant on the palate, and leaves a gorgeously herbal and mineral feel in the long and fruit-driven finish. 2020-2028

<b>2018er</b>	<b>Stein</b>	<b>Spätburgunder Kabinett Trocken Red Light</b>	<b>22 19</b>	<b>90</b>
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The 2018er Spätburgunder Red Light, as it is referred to on the consumer label, comes from approx. 10 year-old vines in the St. Aldegunder Himmelreich, and was fermented and aged in traditional Fuder cask for 10 months before being bottled unfiltered and with a low 30 mg/l of added sulfur. It offers a beautiful nose of confectionery cherry, herbs, and spices. The wine is nicely playful and elegant playful on the palate, and leaves a gorgeous feel of cherry, spices, and mint in the engaging finish. This is an outstanding red wine in the making. 2021-2028 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

<b>2017er</b>	<b>Stein</b>	<b>Redvolution</b>	<b>22 18</b>	<b>89</b>
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The 2017er Redvolution is a Spätburgunder harvested in the Alfer Himmelreich. The wine was fermented and aged used barrique for 9 months before being bottled without any added sulfur. It offers a beautiful nose of cranberry, sour cherry, a hint of rose and smoke. The wine proves absolutely gorgeously elegant and playful on the palate, where minty elements add a nicely fresh and linear side to the wine. The finish is racy and animating. This is a gorgeously light and engaging expression of Pinot Noir! Now-2022 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

<b>2017er</b>	<b>Stein</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken **** U3</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>88</b>
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The 2017er Riesling Trocken \*\*\*\*, as it is referred to on the consumer label (the reference to U3 is left for the back label), with the lot number 04 19 is a wine made along "natural" lines from fruit harvested in the Alfer Hölle. It was fermented and aged in traditional Fuder cask for 18 months without intervention before being bottled unfiltered and without any sulfur added. It offers a rather big nose made of mirabelle, pear, vanilla pod, violet, camphor, earthy spices, and herbs. The wine is on the powerful and smooth side on the quite ample and assertive palate, and leaves a long feel of floral and spicy elements in the slightly hot finish. We would opt to enjoy this over the next two years. Now-2021 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

<b>2015er</b>	<b>Stein</b>	<b>St. Aldegunder Palmberg-Terrassen Riesling Trocken *** Grenzgänger U2</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>88</b>
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The 2015er Grenzgänger U2 (as it is referred to on the back label) was made from fruit harvested at a whopping 99° Oechsle. The wine was fermented without any added sulfur by adding some grapes from the finest wines from the Estate and was then aged for 30 month in Fuder before bottled without any added sulfur. It offers a big and ripe nose of camphor, caramel, pear, quince and mirabelle. It proves quite ripe and structured on the rather full-bodied palate and leaves a slightly hot feel in the long finish. This wine is made for lovers of big and bold expressions of dry Riesling Now-2027 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

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## Weingut Jakob Tennstedt

*(Traben-Trarbach – Middle Mosel)*

<b>2017er</b>	<b>Jakob Tennstedt</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken Sterntaucher</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>90</b>
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The 2017er Riesling Trocken Sterntaucher is a bone-dry wine (with less than 2 g/l of residual sugar) made from fruit grown along organic principles in the Reiler Goldlay and Burger Wendelstück. It was fermented and aged on its lees following "vin nature" principles in traditional Fuder cask for 18 months before being bottled unfiltered and without adding any sulfites. The golden-yellow colored wine offers nose of baked apple, mirabelle tart, whipped cream, earthy spices and fresher citrusy elements. The wine rewards one with beautiful flavors of pear, baked apple, greengage, herbs and fine spices on the remarkably zesty and delicately oxidative palate. The finish is loaded with complex flavors blending ripe and delicately oxidative fruits with minerals and fine herbs. Far from being overpowering, this wine firmly made along "vin nature" lines remains at all times subtle and playful. What a remarkable debut vintage by this promising grower! Now-2022+ (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

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

*(Bernkastel-Kues – Middle Mosel)*

<b>2015er</b>	<b>Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Müller-Burggraef</b>	<b>Riesling Orange White Thanisch</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>90</b>
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The 2015er White Thanisch, as it is referred to on the consumer label, with Lot Number 2017 comes from fruit harvested very late (in early November) in the Brauneberger Juffer and which was destemmed by hand, macerated for four weeks, and fermented and aged in a used barrique for 18 months before being bottled unfiltered and without any added SO<sub>2</sub>. This fully orange-colored wine offers a very engaging nose made of pear, citrusy zest, bitter apricot, orange peel, saddle leather, earthy spices, and fine smoky elements. The wine delivers plenty of ripe flavors of apricot-infused fruits, tannin and spices on the full-bodied but delineated palate, and leaves a nice feel of licorice, dried herbs, lemon zest, and fine spices in the long and intense finish. This has evolved beautifully well and will offer much pleasure for many years to come. Now-2025 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

<b>2017er</b>	<b>Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Müller-Burggraef</b>	<b>Riesling Orange White Thanisch</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>88</b>
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The 2017er White Thanisch, as it is referred to on the consumer label, with Lot Number 3119 comes from fruit harvested very late (in early November) in the Brauneberger Juffer and which was destemmed by hand, macerated for four weeks, and fermented and aged in a used barrique for 24 months before being bottled unfiltered and without any added SO<sub>2</sub>. It offers a rather pungent nose made of licorice, camphor, baked apple, Madeira, pear, and dried herbs. The wine is smooth and big on the creamy and quite strongly herbal palate, and leaves a ripe and broad feel of barbeque ashes, macerated pear and Provence herbs in the long and lingering finish. The after-taste rather backward and oxidative expression of Orange wine is packed with flavors and quite elegant. 2022-2027 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

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## Weingut Trös-Heimes

*(Reil – Middle Mosel)*

*NB: The Estate is certified organic (along general EU guidelines).*

<b>2018er</b>	<b>Trös-Heimes</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken Pur +</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>90</b>
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The 2018er Riesling Trocken Pur + (Lot 0118) is a "Pet'Nat" made from grapes grown organically in the Reiler Mully-Hofberg and the resulting wine was bottled for a secondary fermentation without any added sulfite and with 13 g/l of residual sugar in March 2019. This beautifully yellow-colored wine offers a nicely complex nose of passion fruit, mirabelle whipped cream, herbs and earthy spices. A nicely integrated kick of fine provides the right frame to whip up the creamy and nicely complex flavors on the palate and leaves a dry and long feel of dried herbs and fine spices in the finish. This truly classy effort even gains in presence with some air. It will offer much pleasure over the coming years. What a nice surprise! 2020-2024 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)



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<b>2018er</b>	<b>Trös-Heimes</b>	<b>Riesling Pur</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>88</b>
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The 2018er Riesling Pur (Lot 0118) is a bone-dry wine made along Vin Nature principles from grapes grown organically in the Reiler Mullay-Hofberg. The wine was fermented spontaneously and bottled unfiltered without any sulfur added during the whole process. It offers a complex nose made of grapefruit zest, lemon, pear, almond, a hint of whipped cream and some earthy spices. The wine is delicately tart but also surprisingly soft and round on the full-bodied palate but leaves a nice feel of dried herbs and spices in the long and juicy finish. Zest brings some cut to the slightly bitter-hot after-taste (the wine does have 13% of alcohol). Despite good delineation, this fascinating wine is not for the faint-hearted. Now-2023 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

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## Ökoweingut Rita & Rudolf Trossen

(Kinheim – Middle Mosel)

NB: The Estate is certified organic (by ECOVIN guidelines).

<b>2018er</b>	<b>Rita &amp; Rudolf Trossen</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken Lay Purus</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>93</b>
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The 2018er Riesling Trocken Lay Purus is a legally dry wine (with 4 g/l of residual sugar) made from 35 year-old vines in the Kinheimer Hubertuslay. It was fermented and aged along natural lines, and was bottled without any sulfur added. The wine offers a stunning nose made of almond, pear, lemon peel, orange, herbs, and spices. It proves superbly playful and silky on the smooth and beautifully balanced palate, and leaves a stunning feel of fresh herbs and spices in the long and elegant finish. This is a stunning natural wine to enjoy over the coming decade. Now-2028

<b>2017er</b>	<b>Rita &amp; Rudolf Trossen</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken Schiefergold Purus</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>92+</b>
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The 2017er Riesling Trocken Schiefergold Purus is a legally dry wine (with only a few g/l of residual sugar) made from a prime parcel still planted with very old un-grafted vines situated in the front and fully south-facing part of the Kinheimer Hubertuslay. The wine was fermented and bottled without any sulfur added. It offers a gorgeous nose of fresh almond, pear, baked apple, and spices, all wrapped into a hint of volatile acidity at this early stage. The wine is full of grip and spicy flavors of quince, almond wrapped into a delicate set of citrusy fruits on the palate and leaves a gorgeous feel of fresh herbs and spices in the long and hugely persistent finish. This remarkable wine could even exceed our high expectations as the volatile elements blend into the wine in a few years. 2021-2024+ (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

<b>2017er</b>	<b>Rita &amp; Rudolf Trossen</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken Lay Purus</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>92</b>
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The 2017er Riesling Trocken Lay Purus comes from 35 year-old vines in the Kinheimer Hubertuslay. It was fermented and bottled without any sulfur added. It offers a gorgeous nose of gooseberry, mirabelle, greengage, spices and herbs. The wine is superbly playful and elegant on the palate and leaves a beautiful feel of fresh herbs and spices in the long finish. A kick of acidity brings focus and length to this remarkably engaging wine. This truly remarkable "Vin Nature" will remain highly enjoyable for many more years. Now-2022+ (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

<b>2017er</b>	<b>Rita &amp; Rudolf Trossen</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken Madonna Purus</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>92</b>
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The 2017er Riesling Trocken Madonna Purus is a legally dry wine (with only a few g/l of residual sugar) made from a prime parcel in the front and fully south-facing part of the Kinheimer Hubertuslay. The wine was fermented and bottled without any sulfur added. It offers a gorgeous nose of mirabelle, greengage, tea, spices and herbs. These give way to a superb feel of fresh herbs, almond cream and herbs on the palate and in the remarkably persistent and nicely dry finish. What a beautiful "Vin Nature" wine! Now-2022+ (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

<b>2018er</b>	<b>Rita &amp; Rudolf Trossen</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken Schiefergold Purus</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>92</b>
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The 2018er Riesling Trocken Schiefergold Purus is a legally dry wine (with 5 g/l of residual sugar) made from a prime parcel still planted with very old un-grafted vines situated in the front and fully south-facing part of the Kinheimer Hubertuslay. It was fermented and aged along natural lines, and was bottled without any sulfur added. This yellow-colored wine offers a gorgeous nose made of pear, quince, mirabelle, lemony elements, chalky minerals, herbs, and spices. The wine proves stunningly deep and complex on the palate, and leaves a gorgeous feel in the long and suave finish. This is a remarkably complex natural wine in the making. Now-2028



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<b>2016er</b>	<b>Rita &amp; Rudolf Trossen</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken Lay Purus</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>91</b>
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The 2016er Riesling Trocken Lay Purus comes from 35 year-old vines in the Kinheimer Hubertuslay. It was fermented and bottled without any sulfur added. The wine offers a gorgeous nose of gooseberry, mint, whipped cream and a hint of volatile acidity. It is beautifully elegant and refined on the palate and leaves a playful feel of fruits and herbs in the long finish. This offers a great natural feel with depth and elegance. Now-2021+ (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

<b>2018er</b>	<b>Rita &amp; Rudolf Trossen</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken Ylvi Purus</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>91</b>
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The 2018er Riesling Trocken Ylvi Purus (named after their grandchild born in 2018) is a legally dry wine (with 3 g/l of residual sugar) made from virgin vines situated in a gentle slope parcel at the border to Kinheim but technically already in the Kröver Paradies. It was fermented and aged along natural lines, and was bottled without any sulfur added. The wine offers a superb nose made of floral elements, quince, peach, almond, spices, and herbs. The wine develops a slight touch of spritz on the palate and leaves a gorgeously structured feel in the long and refined finish. Given the spritz, we would opt to enjoy this rather sooner than later. Now-2023

<b>2017er</b>	<b>Rita &amp; Rudolf Trossen</b>	<b>Riesling Perlwein Trocken Purellus Pet Nat</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>91</b>
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The 2017er Riesling Perlwein Trocken Purellus Pet Nat (Lot Number 1808) was harvested at 85° Oechsle on slate vineyards and made without any sulfur added and re-fermented in bottle without any sugar added. The wine is proves nicely complex as it offers attractive scents of almond, mirabelle, and herbs on the nose. The wine is beautifully balanced and elegant on the palate, where a superbly refined mousse adds to the playful side of the wine. This is a gorgeous Pet Nat with great depth. Now-2020 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

<b>2018er</b>	<b>Rita &amp; Rudolf Trossen</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken Schieferstern Purus</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>90</b>
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The 2018er Riesling Trocken Schieferstern Purus is a legally dry wine (with 4 g/l of residual sugar) made from a parcel planted with 35 year-old vines in the lower part of the Kinheimer Rosenberg. It was fermented and aged along natural lines, and was bottled without any sulfur added. The wine shows a hint of volatile acidity for a moment, but this blows away as the wine develops in the glass. These scents then give way to gorgeous notes of pear, almond, thyme, and spicy elements. The wine proves beautifully silky and alluring on the palate, and only needs a year or two of patience for the touch of harsh tartness to mellow away in the finish. 2021-2028

<b>2017er</b>	<b>Rita &amp; Rudolf Trossen</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken Schieferstern Purus</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>90</b>
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The 2017er Riesling Trocken Schieferstern Purus comes from a parcel planted with 35 year-old vines in the lower part of the Kinheimer Rosenberg. It was fermented and bottled without any sulfur added. It offers a rather opulent nose of pear, whipped cream and smoke. The wine is nicely juicy and fruity on the palate and leaves on with a persistent feel of herbs and fruits in the finish. Spices emerge in the after-taste and round off the pleasure to drink this wine. Now-2022+ (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

<b>2017er</b>	<b>Rita &amp; Rudolf Trossen</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken Kestenbusch Purus</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>88</b>
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The 2017er Riesling Trocken Kestenbusch Purus comes from the Kinheimer Rosenberg. It was fermented and bottled without any sulfur added. It starts off on the nicely fruity side, as peach, pear, herbs and smoke emerge from the glass. These flavors are wrapped into some noticeable volatile acidity. The wine proves however nicely juicy and playful on the palate, where it unfolds great tension and even some finesse. The finish is beautifully racy and refined. This is a very engaging wine if you do not mind some volatile acidity fleeting around. Now-2022+ (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 46 – June 2019)

<b>2018er</b>	<b>Rita &amp; Rudolf Trossen</b>	<b>Spätburgunder Trocken Pinot Noir Purus</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>85</b>
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The 2018er Spätburgunder Trocken Pinot Noir Purus comes grapes on a gentler slope in the Kinheimer Rosenberg, which were fermented whole-bunch along natural lines, and was bottled without any sulfur added. It offers a nicely direct and appealing nose made of cassis, sour cherry, blueberry, mint, and barbeque herbs. The wine is slightly green but nicely lively and engaging on the palate, and leaves a nice feel of fruit-driven grip in the medium-long and rather crisp finish. Now-2023

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# Mosel Fine Wines

*"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"*

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

## Weingut Stefan Vetter

*(Gambach – Franken)*

*NB: The Estate farms its Franconian vineyards organically (along general EU guidelines)*

<b>2018er</b>	<b>Stefan Vetter</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken Donner Vetter</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>91</b>
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The 2018er Donner Vetter, as it is referred to on the commercial label, comes from 45 year-old vines tended by the related A.J. Adam Estate in the Dhroner Hofberg. It underwent a light pre-fermentation cold-soak (due to the travel) before being pressed, fermented spontaneously, aged in wooden casks without any sulfur added for 10 months, and bottled unfiltered with a small 12 mg/l of sulfur added. It offers a delicately flowery and under-toned nose made of pear, a hint of licorice, chalky minerals, and some smoke, all lifted up by grapefruit, citrusy fruits, and a hint of volatile elements. The wine is precise and elegantly sharp on the remarkably light-footed palate. A hint of almond adds depth and great charm to the experience. The finish is delicate, smooth, and hugely satisfying. This is a terrific and quite precise expression of "natural" Mosel! Now-2023+

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## Weingut Zur Römerkeller – Timo Dienhart

*(Maring-Noviant – Middle Mosel)*

*NB: The Estate is certified organic (along ECOVIN guidelines).*

<b>2014er</b>	<b>Zur Römerkeller</b>	<b>Maringer Honigberg Riesling Trocken Selection Natural Steinzeug</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>94</b>
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The 2014er Maringer Honigberg Riesling Trocken Selection Natural Steinzeug with Lot Number S0 14 was made along "natural" lines as it was (25% whole bunch) fermented in stoneware and was aged in stainless steel without intervention for 15 months before being bottled unfiltered without any SO<sub>2</sub> added. The wine offers a stunning nose made of mirabelle tart, a hint of Christmas spices, fine almond, and smoky elements. It is remarkably complex and fresh on the palate, where delicately creamy flavors of pear, grapefruit zest, cardamom, and fine herbal elements are wrapped into a beautiful kick of acidity. The finish is smooth, racy, detailed, and precise: Everything is here from what one expects from a great dry Riesling, which will also appeal to lovers of more classically defined Mosel Riesling. What a stunning success! Now-2024 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

<b>2016er</b>	<b>Zur Römerkeller</b>	<b>Maringer Honigberg Riesling Trocken Selection Natural Steinzeug</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>92</b>
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The 2016er Maringer Honigberg Riesling Trocken Selection Natural Steinzeug with Lot Number S0 16 was made along "natural" lines as it was (25% whole bunch) fermented in stoneware and was aged in stainless steel without intervention for 15 months before being bottled unfiltered without any SO<sub>2</sub> added. It proves still quite reduced and backward as only faint notes of earth, quince, mango, apple tart and herbs emerge from the glass. It is only on the palate that the wine shows its underlying juicy and fresh side. Grapefruit zest, green herbs, and ripe pear lead to a still rather tart feel in the finish. This is a beautiful dry Riesling in the making! 2021-2026 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

<b>2017er</b>	<b>Zur Römerkeller</b>	<b>Spätburgunder Trocken Timo Dienhart</b>	<b>22 19</b>	<b>89</b>
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The 2017er Spätburgunder Trocken was made from 80% de-stemmed fruit harvested in the Maringer Honigberg and Sonnenuhr. It was fermented in more than 10 year-old used barrique for 12 months before being bottled with little sulfur added (total sulfur is below 55 mg/l). It offers at first a big nose of blueberry, candied black cherry, a hint of strawberry milkshake, violet, and minty herbs. These scents become more subtle and refined with extensive airing. The wine is smooth, round and driven by blueberry, joined by strawberry and fine spices, on the palate. It leaves a slightly minty feel in the long and rather smooth finish. Succulently ripe notes of black cherries round off the pleasure to enjoy this very nice expression of Mosel Pinot Noir. Now-2027 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

<b>2015er</b>	<b>Zur Römerkeller</b>	<b>Maringer Honigberg Riesling Trocken Selection Natural Steinzeug</b>	<b>(No AP)</b>	<b>88+</b>
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The 2015er Maringer Honigberg Riesling Trocken Selection Natural Steinzeug with Lot Number S0 15 was made along "natural" lines as it was (25% whole bunch) fermented in stoneware and was aged in stainless steel without intervention for 15 months before being bottled unfiltered without any SO<sub>2</sub> added. It offers a rather assertive and already slightly oxidative nose as scents of grapefruit zest, baked apple, cardamom, fine spices, and smoke dominate the aromatics. The wine proves ripe and round on the cardamom and licorice-infused palate, and leaves one with a slightly ripe feel of herbs, fruits, and zest in the finish. This could well prove closed, as some of these natural wines can be, and develop more freshness as it evolves over the coming years. 2021-2025 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 48 – October 2019)

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# Mosel Fine Wines

*"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"*

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

## 19th Century Winemaking | Mosel Wine Before the Modern Age

When researching for our article on natural wines in the Mosel, Rudolf Trossen, one of the pioneers of the natural wine movement in Germany, asked us: "Natural wine growers want to make wine like in the old days, before the age of industrialization, synthetic products and other oenological helps. You know everything about the history of Mosel wine, so my question is how was Mosel wine made in the old days? I would die to know how a 1909er Graacher was made and how it tasted."

Over the last decade, we have spent a substantial amount of time researching the history of Mosel, its growers, its winemaking, its wines, and the socio-economic environment in which the players in the region had to evolve. The question from Rudolf Trossen was the perfect "excuse" for summarizing some of our findings about Mosel wine in the 19th century. As you see here below, some myths need revisiting.

### MOSEL WINE IN THE 19TH CENTURY



STYLE	WINEMAKING
Almost exclusively white	Block-harvested
Not predominantly Riesling ... with exceptions	No pre-fermentation maceration desired
Essentially dry	Aged in casks for 2-3 years
Bright-colored and fresh	Sulfured ... but indirectly so

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We take on to substantiate these facts here below but also spend quite some time to explain the facts around it. Enjoy the read!



# Mosel Fine Wines

*"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"*

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

## 19TH CENTURY WINEMAKING | CHARACTERISTICS OF MOSEL WINES

### ***Almost Exclusively White***

When evoking the subject of Mosel red wine, all books from the 19th century (and we have read more than 100 of them) underline the fact that it played only a completely minor role in the region. When statistics were available, they show that red wine represented a few percentage points at best of the area planted with vines. In 1818, official statistics showed that the *Regierungsbezirk* (government district) Trier, which was composed of the Saar, Ruwer and Mosel up to Traben-Trarbach, produced 6954 Fuder of white wine ... and only 64 Fuder of red wine. This means that red wine represented less than 1% of the production in the whole region. This was confirmed in 1865 (and later as well), in all background books of the region.

*"The Regierungsbezirk Trier yielded 6,954 Fuder of white wine and 64 Fuder of red wine" (1818)*

This does not mean that there was no red wine at all or that it was any good. Piesport and Koblenz (Terrassenmosel), later joined by Maring-Novian, were regularly mentioned as having some good red wines. However, authors overwhelmingly describe the finest red Mosel wine to be coming from Könen, a today completely forgotten village (with hardly any vineyards left) near the mouth of the Saar, just north of Wawern and Kanzem.

But the myth that the Mosel was predominantly red, a myth still widely relayed by growers and writers alike (we see plenty of references and such assertions in various publications), is simply not supported by the facts from the period.

### ***Not Predominantly Riesling ... With Exceptions***

All books describing the Mosel in the 19th century mention that the majority of vineyards were planted with an Elbling-based field blend, in which Riesling only played a partial role. Elbling, known back then as Kleinberger, is still widely planted in the Obermosel today. In a book of 1881, Koch still mentions that *"Riesling reigns in the Saar but Elbling still makes 58% of the vineyard surface in the Mosel."* In 1885, the founding statutes of the regional grower association still put as one of its priorities that *"only Riesling is being farmed, at least in the finest vineyards."*

*"Riesling is now the dominating grape ... This has accelerated over the last 20 years, when Riesling and Elbling were as important" (1898)*

Riesling was eventually to become the main grape planted in the Mosel, but this was not to happen at the very end of the 19th century, when the Mosel became the rage around the world, as Koch explains in a book of 1898: *"Riesling is now the dominating grape in the part of the Mosel which is on slate. This has accelerated over the last 20 years, when Riesling and Kleinberger were both as important."* However, even then, Riesling was not reigning supreme everywhere yet: A newspaper report from 1897 mentions that the prevailing grape variety was still Elbling in Kues and Üzig. By 1914, Riesling represented 80% of the surface planted.

Even if, overall, the Mosel was Elbling territory throughout the 19th century, Riesling became the dominant grape earlier in some instances. This includes a few villages in the Mosel, notably Piesport, where the local priest was a driving force. Also the area from Trarbach to Enkirch and that from Bernkastel to Zeltingen are mentioned as "islands of Riesling," whatever that means (Zeltingen is described as being planted with Elbling and Riesling to equal measures in a book on Mosel wine of 1821).

In addition, the few rich and ambitious Bourgeois growers who had snatched up the vineyards from the Church after the secularization around 1800 (and whose heirs would start selling their wines via annual Auctions as of the 1860s) were all mentioned as being heavy promoters of Riesling. They were also heavily involved in clearing land for planting vineyards.

Much of this new breed of gentlemen-growers lived in Trier. It is not surprising that the neighboring Saar was where most of these Riesling-only vineyards were planted. According to regional statistics, more than 50% of the new plantings in the Mosel from 1815 until 1832 happened in the Saar, despite the fact that the Saar represented less than 10% of the region. Most of these mono-varietal vineyards were planted with Riesling ... but not all, as there is also mention of Weissburgunder, Gewürztraminer and Grauburgunder vineyards.

Overall, Elbling was the dominant grape in the Mosel for much of the 19th century, even if the large Estates had already switched to Riesling long before the 1880s. But even these leading Estates did not only harvest Riesling: In another newspaper update on the 1897 vintage, it is mentioned that the vintage at Josephshof, already owned back then by the Reichsgraf von Kesselstatt and one of the finest Estates of the day, would be *"good for Riesling, but less so for Österreicher [Sylvaner] and Kleinberger [Elbling]."*



# Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

## ***Essentially Dry***

It is only recently (partially through our research on Dry Mosel for an article on the topic published in Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 14 – January 2011) that we unearthed analytical information from the period that Mosel wine was more or less dry in the 19th century.



Chemical analysis in 1862 on many wines from the famed 1857 vintage (one of the all-time great in the Mosel) show residual sugar levels around a few grams per liter (and not only in the Mosel). The reason that Mosel wines back then were essentially dry is pretty simple: There was no reliable tool available until the early 20th century to stop the fermentation and retain residual sugar. As most Mosel grapes came in with a sugar density of 70° possibly 80° Oechsle and the yeasts of the day allowed to transform all this sugar into alcohol ... which resulted in a dry wine.

Authors of the period underline that only a few large Estates with large contiguous holdings could make selections for Auslese and gamble on a late harvest in their Riesling-only vineyards, thereby producing wines with sweetness. So these wines existed, but were ultra-rare and hence very expensive. As Hamm noted in a book of 1865, the most prized casks of Mosel wine shone through "*the sweetness of their taste and smell.*"

## ***Bright-Colored and Fresh***

Universally, from articles in general publications and international newspapers to the specialized press and books of the day, the Mosel wine was praised for its lightness and zest, as Hamm wrote in 1865: "*A good Mosel wine is always very bright, with green-yellow reflections, fresh and cooling, rather dry and without much fire.*"

*"A good Mosel wine is always very bright, with green-yellow reflections, fresh and cooling, very dry and without much fire" (1865)*

Not only this author notes an earthy note as a characteristic of the Mosel wine: "*Anyone who knows something about wine will find an unmistakable earthy taste in the Mosel wines, and this from any grower.*"

Generally speaking, the Mosel wine is becoming well and animating. These characteristics would be at the basis of its huge success by the end of the 19th century.



# Mosel Fine Wines

*"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"*

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

## 19TH CENTURY WINEMAKING | DISTINCTIVE ELEMENTS IN THE MOSEL

### ***Mostly Block-Harvested***

The Rheingau had known the value of a Spätlese (late harvest in German) since the 18th century (the story goes that the order to harvest by the Bishop of Fulda once came too late at his Schloss Johannisberg Estate and resulted in a very special wine and the first formal Spätlese). This was not the case in the Mosel, as Mühl noted in his book of 1845: *"The Mosel has no culture of late harvests and Mosel growers are afraid of noble-rot grapes, despite the fact that these can contribute to the quality of a wine."*

*"The Mosel has no culture of late harvests and Mosel growers are afraid of noble-rot grapes" (1845)*

The reason for this lack of Spätlese culture finds its roots in the (Elbling centric) field blend prevailing in the Mosel right until the end of the 19th century. The reason why this approach survived for so long is explained in the books on winemaking of the period: Kleinberger, as Elbling was called at the time, was an early ripening grape variety, which gave good yields but was a bit bland. It benefited from being blended with other, late-ripening grape varieties, mostly Riesling: "Elbling brings the volume, Riesling the quality." While a bit simplistic, there was a lot of common sense in this approach: Field-blend simply allowed to diversify the risks. This is very appealing, especially when you are a small grower and have to feed a family year-in year-out in an age long before social and economic safety nets.

Spätlese (late harvested grapes) was simply not feasible when you have a field-blend vineyard, as part of the blend would invariably be way over-ripe and the grapes rotten. Of course, large Estates, especially those with big contiguous parcels planted with Riesling only, were able to produce some Spätlese. But even these Estates relied mostly on block-harvesting, as the auction catalogues of the period underlined. The casks on offers were nearly all from a single Gewann (Lieu-Dit), even if they would be subsequently marketed simply under the name of the village.

Auslese were also hardly the norm. Access to the vineyards before and during harvest was a strictly controlled by authorities (in order to avoid theft but also to ensure a minimal quality). Once a vineyard was freed for harvest (the equivalent of the *ban des vendanges* in France), growers hardly had time to make some pre-selections for Auslese and had to make sure to bring in their grapes in the steep and hard to reach hills of the Mosel. Only the largest Estates, with sizeable parcels, could risk to "lose time" with Auslese as it could afford to delay the main harvest. Auslese were usually only produced in rare vintages, in those where some botrytis came into play very early, often by surprise.

### ***No Pre-Fermentation Maceration Desired***

An article in an English newspaper of 1833 underlines the flint stone elements of the Mosel wines and puts this in contrast to the more powerful and imposing structure of the wines from the Rhine (which included, at the time, anything from the Pfalz down to the Mittelrhein).

This difference was essentially due to the treatment of the grapes before pressing, as many writers tirelessly reported to their readers throughout the 19th century, as Koch underlines in his book of 1881: *"A prolonged skin-maceration of the grapes until fermentation starts before pressing them, as it is done in the Rheingau, is not the usual approach in the Mosel."* The author (and many before him) continues to explain that leaving the grapes to start their fermentations on the skin *"give the wines a dark color which is unwanted in a Mosel and a Saar wine."*

*"Leaving the grapes to macerate before pressing is not usual in the Mosel and the Saar" (1881)*

Of course, invariably, the time between harvest and pressing was not always short. Grapes had to be transported, sometimes taking a barge to cross a river, and then wait for the communal presses to be available. But the principle was to keep this period as short as possible and to make sure that no fermentation occurred, as Mühl explains in his book of 1845: *"In the Mosel, the grapes are immediately pressed or, if not possible, actions must be taken to ensure that the grapes remain clean and not crushed, and do not start to ferment."*

Authors recognized that leaving Mosel grapes, in particular Riesling grapes, to macerate produced some interesting wines but that the essence of Mosel was lost, as Koch underlined as late as in his book of 1914: *"Experiments with longer pre-fermentation maceration generate powerful wines, which are not without interest, but they lack the typical flowery bouquet of Mosel wine."*





# Mosel Fine Wines

*"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"*

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

## ***Aged In Casks for 2-3 Years***

All books from the 19th century on Mosel winemaking mentioned that the wines were left in casks for years before bottling. During this period, the wine would be racked several times, i.e. would be pumped from one cask to another to clear it from its sediments (notably but not only its yeasts). During the first year, this racking would be done three times, in January or February, in May, and then again in September ... *"and then once every following year until the wine was ready to be drunk."*

*"A Mosel wine would be racked three times during the first year ... and then once every year thereafter until it was ready to be bottled" (1833)*

Why this? The reason is very simple. No effective and consistent methods existed at the time to eliminate the yeasts in the wine except wait for the yeasts to eat up all sugar, "die," and fall to the bottom of the cask. This could take years, especially in the cold cellars of the Mosel.

The role of aging the wines fell upon the merchant, who would buy the casks (typically young) and cellar them until their content was ready to be bottled. As Beck explains in his book of 1868 on the Trier region, *"once the wine had been adequately racked and aged for two to three years, the merchant would take a few samples, bottle them, and leave them for four to six weeks to ascertain that the wine does not leave a deposit."*

It is interesting to note that the objective of this procedure was described primarily as to secure a perfectly clear wine, which was something expected by customers at the time. But at the time, it was also the safest way to ensure that no yeasts were left in the wine. Modern growers working without fining and filtering check the level of residual sugar and yeasts in the wine, and allow for some other deposits, if necessary.

## ***Sulfured ... But Indirectly So***

The point about the "freshness" and "green color" of 19th century Mosel wine made us have a closer look as how wines were preserved from the impact of oxygen back then and, in particular, to what degree sulfur was part of the equation. And our research showed that it was, but indirectly so. Let us explain.

That sulfur was used in winemaking is well documented since at least the middle ages. A court verdict of 1465 in Cologne warned that sulfur could lead to wine poisoning and makes over-sulfuring a criminal offence. An edict of August 6, 1487 by Emperor Frederic III specifically limits the use of sulfur in winemaking to *"one portion Fuder cask."* As reference, one portion amounts to approx. 20 grams of sulfur per Fuder.

However, all books from the 19th century on cellar work in the Mosel only mention sulfur in the context of making a cask safe prior to using it for winemaking purposes. We did not come across a single source which indicates a link between sulfur and a wine's preservation after bottling.

Despite this, wines saw sulfur. Here is how: When a wine is ready to be racked, it is pumped into another cask. This cask is being prepared (cleaned and disinfected) by burning some sulfur sticks inside the cask. This saturates it with SO<sub>2</sub>. When the wine is pumped into the cask, much of this sulfured air is simply pushed out ... but not all. Some ends up in the wine. Given that the pumps back then were anything but efficient, this transfer from one cask to another took time, giving the gas more opportunity to blend into the wine.

*"A Fuder cleaned with 10 g of sulfur will leave 3-17 mg/l of total SO<sub>2</sub> in a wine after racking" (1878)*

*"By the time a dry Riesling is ready for bottling, it will have 70-100 mg/l of total SO<sub>2</sub> through the sulfuring of casks before racking" (1914)*

So how much sulfur was added in a Mosel wine in the course of its making? As we already mentioned Mosel wine was racked three times during the first year and, after that, once a year. Since most wines were ready after two to three years, this means that they were racked five or six times. Growers were advised to use three sticks of 10 grams to sulfur a Mosel Fuder (1,000l). We found scientific analysis data from the 1870s which showed that for every 10 grams of sulfur burnt in a Fuder cask, 3-17 (average approx. 10) mg/l of SO<sub>2</sub> would dissolve into the wine. A scientific source from 1914 showed that a wine would include approx. 70-100 mg/l of total SO<sub>2</sub> after a full *élevage* (i.e. six racking with casks cleaned with 15-20 grams of sulfur each).

So sulfur was an inherent part of the winemaking process in the 19th century, even if it was only usually an indirect one as the intention at the time was not to add sulfur to the wine, but to clean the cask before filling it.



# Mosel Fine Wines

*"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"*

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

## 19TH CENTURY WINEMAKING | TRIED METHODS STILL IN USE TODAY

There has been a revival among many growers for a return to traditional winemaking. What our research has shown is that this involves elements which are still used or being revived by various growers today. Unsurprisingly, the so-called traditionalists feature heavily here:

- **Block-harvesting:** Many Estates bring in full vineyards for their standard wines at once, but do make selections for their high-end bottlings, be them dry, off-dry, or fruity-styled. Few still rely on block-harvesting as an approach for their overall portfolio (except maybe for noble-sweet wines). Such Estates include Falkenstein and Merkelbach, who still bottle different plots separately (without mentioning this on the label ... as was the norm in the 19th century). This practice was also revived at Selbach-Oster for its top single parcel vineyards 15 years ago. Several "natural wine" growers also work along these principles.
- **No pre-fermentation maceration:** Quite a number of well-established Estates rely on this approach for their dry wines, including A.J. Adam, Hofgut Falkenstein, Schloss Lieser, Knebel, Dr. Loosen, Melsheimer, etc. But also several Estates follow this approach for their "natural wines," including Clemens Busch, Melsheimer, Fio, Jan Matthias Klein, Philip Lardot, Julien Renard, and Stein.
- **Sulfur added essentially through cask cleaning:** Today, most growers still keep their casks under sulfur when not in use, but do wash them thoroughly just before use, in order to get rid of the sulfur (and they would then add sulfur directly into the wine). Of course, most of the "natural" growers drastically limit the use (in not completely make do) of sulfur, but also when cleaning their casks, as other methods are now available. Sulfuring only via the casks is however being revived at Dr. Loosen for its Telmo & Rodriguez, Tradition, and GG Reserve bottlings, although the Estate completes this with a little or some sulfuring at bottling.
- **Extended aging in cask over multiple years:** This is done by a growing number of Estates, including Dr. Loosen (which has been actively pursuing this avenue since 2011), Clemens Busch, Fio, Melsheimer, Stein (for its natural wines), etc. Even though they may not keep their wines in cask for 2-3 years, most "natural" growers, starting with the pioneers Jan Matthias Klein, Melsheimer, and Rita & Rudolf Trossen bottle their "natural wines" unfiltered, i.e. waiting for the wines to be naturally stable. However, also some more conventional growers, starting with Peter Burens, experiment with this for their white wines.

Of course, Mosel wine does not need to taste like it did a century ago. Other expressions of Mosel wines, for instance those relying on extensive pre-fermentation macerations for dry wines or those Auslese which result from heavy vineyard selections, can be superb as well (as we regularly underline in our reports).

Also, technologically advances opened up major improvements and, in the Mosel, a completely new world of wine. The sterile filtration methods and other approaches to block fermentations developed at the beginning of the 20th century opened up the beautiful world of the fruity-styled wines, be them bottled as Kabinett, Spätlese, or Auslese. These would otherwise not have existed.

But it is interesting to note that major elements of the way Mosel wine was made a century still lives on or is being revived in the region today.



# Mosel Fine Wines

*"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"*

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

## Georg Breuer | Schlossberg Vertical ( 2014 – 1984 )

We had the chance to participate to a unique vertical spanning over four decades of the Rudesheimer Berg Schlossberg by Weingut Georg Breuer, which was organized at the initiative of Weinart, a rare and fine wine merchant based in Geisenheim, with the attendance of Theresa Breuer. This event proved the perfect occasion to dive into this mythical wine.



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The Independent Mosel Review

## GEORG BREUER | THE RÜDESHEIMER BERG SCHLOSSBERG WINE

The Rudesheimer Berg Schlossberg is a rather unique vineyard named after the castle ruin in its midst (Schloss means castle). Geographically, it stretches over nearly 1.5 km (1 mile) and forms the extreme western side of this bend of the Rhine. The vines are almost all facing full south, even though those in the western part (where the castle is located) are more south-west orientated. The Berg Schlossberg is one of the few vineyards in the Rheingau which directly overlooks the river (most of the vineyards in the region are a bit further away from the water).



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# Mosel Fine Wines

*"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"*

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As Theresa explained, "the Berg Schlossberg has a complex soil composed of slate and quartzite elements, which makes it quite unique for the region. It is orientated due south and, with 70% inclination, it is the steepest vineyard in the whole region. It is also one of the few vineyards in the Rheingau which stretches for part from the river right up to the hill top. Lastly, its soil does not retain easily water. It is a very hot vineyard, much hotter than our Nonnenberg for instance." She considers that, given the warmth of the site, candy floss is one of the characteristic flavors found in great Berg Schlossberg wines.

Weingut Georg Breuer has always held parcels in the vineyard, right since Bernhard Scholl and Albert Hillebrand set up this Estate in 1880 and Peter Breuer, Theresa's great-grandfather, took it over at the beginning of the 20th century. The family gradually expanded its holdings to a total of 3.5 ha today. As Theresa explained, "we have parcels all over the vineyard, from the level of the river right up to the crest, from the eastern part to the more south-west facing part at its western end. This spread plays an essential role in the wine's quality. We only retain the finest casks for our single-vineyard bottlings. The ability to select grapes from different altitudes and orientations allows us to adapt to each vintage."

The Estate has always focused on elegance: "My father used to love the elegance in our wines, and so do I. Therefore, we go to extreme lengths to harvest grapes with not too high sugar density. Even in the warm 2018, we harvested grapes with 92° Oechsle. In other vintages, we work with grapes with 88° Oechsle. We are no friend of a strong pre-fermentation cold soak. The wines are pressed and transferred into casks for aging. We then bottle them in the summer after the vintage."

Right since the 1980s, the Estate has been reserving the AP 01 for the Schlossberg wine. In the meantime, every single vineyard wine at this Estate has its set AP number.

## GEORG BREUER | VERTICAL CONCLUSIONS

Most wines were acquired over the years on the secondary market, from perfect cellars. Theresa Breuer kindly added some vintages to fill in the holes. The wines were tasted in flights of four and not blind.

The overarching conclusion of the vertical is very simple: The Rudesheimer Berg Schlossberg by Georg Breuer is possibly the finest dry Riesling of the last 30 years. No less than four vintages are wine perfection or close to it. A few younger ones are on the best way to get there. A total of 15 vintages tasted here are modern day classics. Only two vintages are "merely" very good (and not outright outstanding).

This confirms our findings from our extensive "10 Years After" retrospectives of dry Riesling. In both 2008 and 2009, the Berg Schlossberg came out on top, and this also in blind tastings among top German, French and Austrian Riesling.

The biggest surprise proved the stunning 1989, which is a little jewel of precision, finesse, and elegance. However, when thinking about it, the 1989 vintage also proved a remarkably elegant and beautiful vintage in the Mosel and shone through in our extensive (150+ wines) look-back at mature dry Mosel Riesling published in 2011. As Theresa mentioned, it is likely that this wine saw some botrytis (something almost unavoidable in 1989). As we found out in the Mosel, a touch of botrytis can be beneficial to the overall elegance and finesse of dry Riesling. The 1989er Berg Schlossberg by Georg Breuer underlines this brilliantly.

Overall, four major conclusions can be drawn from this vertical:

- The wine is one of the finest dry Riesling on planet earth. Every single vintage was at least outstanding. The Estate produced modern-day classics in almost every second vintage since the 1980s. Many wines are flirting with perfection. The level of quality is simply remarkable: The Georg Breuer Berg Schlossberg is a mythical wine, with few (if any) dry Riesling showing such class continuously over a period of 30 years.
- The wine is particularly successful in cooler vintages. The wine fared particularly well in the 1990s (which were overall cooler), as well as, in 2008, 2013 and 2014. It does not reach these dazzling heights in warmer vintages such as 2003, 2005, 2006 and 2011 (except in 2009!) ... but still proves a remarkable finest examples of Riesling and among the finest dry Riesling of these vintage.
- The wines from 2000 until 2007 proved slightly broader and less refined than those from the 1990s and the 2010s. As Theresa explained, even they had to adapt to the new givens in the 2000s, when a succession of warm vintages led growers to rethink their work methods.
- The wine has gained significantly in cut and precision since the 2008 vintage. The latest vintages have seen the wine become generally more aromatically focused. We believe that this is the result of the wines being fermented to drier levels than in the past. The remarkably thing is that the wine has not increased its alcohol levels.

Also, this tasting underlined the fact that high Oechsle degrees are absolutely not required to produce the finest of dry Riesling. It is actually even the opposite!

It was truly fascinating to taste such a wide range of Berg Schlossberg wines by Georg Breuer. We hope to be able to taste them many more times in our lives despite the fact that the market has picked up on its incredible quality and it has become increasingly challenging to source these wines. Every effort should be made to lay one's hands to some of these gems: They are truly worth it!



# Mosel Fine Wines

*"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"*

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

## GEORG BREUER | RÜDESHEIMER BERG SCHLOSSBERG – TASTING NOTES 2014-1984

2014er	Georg Breuer	Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling	01 15	98+
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The 2014er Berg Schlossberg, as it is referred to on the consumer label, is a bone dry Riesling (with 4 g/l of residual sugar) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. It offers a deeply complex and detailed nose made of grapefruit, white flower, pepper, and minty elements. The wine is superbly focused and precise on the palate, and leaves a stunning feel of herbs, fruits, and spices in the airy yet hugely intense finish. The after-taste seems endless and is made of stunning purity. This could well turn into wine perfection at maturity (which is not expected before another 10 years): It is that impressive! 2029-2054

2013er	Georg Breuer	Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling	01 14	96+
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The 2013er Berg Schlossberg, as it is referred to on the consumer label, is a legally dry Riesling (with 7 g/l of residual sugar) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. It still proves pretty much work in progress and is tight, austere, and hugely primary at first. It is only after a couple of minutes that it starts to offer a remarkably engaging nose made of green herbs, mint, gooseberry, mirabelle, and aniseed herbs. The wine proves structured and hugely zesty in the palate, and leaves a long and delicately tart feel in the still slightly sharp finish. The underlying finesse of this still very backward effort is simply remarkable, and the energy that it delivers is simply mind-blowing. There is quite some upside here, once the wine will emerge from its shell. 2028-2053

2012er	Georg Breuer	Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling	01 13	96+
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The 2012er Berg Schlossberg, as it is referred to on the consumer label, is a legally dry Riesling (with 8 g/l of residual sugar) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. It offers an elegantly smoky and still slightly closed nose driven by grapefruit, pear, vineyard peach, sage, greenage, and spices. The wine is packed with flavors on the delicately zesty palate, and leaves a superbly precise and subtly racy feel in the creamy and long finish. It is really well balanced and possesses great energy and purity in the after-taste. This wine has quite some upside potential as it fleshes out and develops more presence over the coming few years. 2024-2042

2011er	Georg Breuer	Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling	01 12	90
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The 2011er Berg Schlossberg, as it is referred to on the consumer label, is a barely off-dry Riesling (with 11 g/l of residual sugar) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. It offers an attractive and rather rich nose made of pear, candy floss, nut, honeyed peach, pineapple, and smoky elements, wrapped into a hint of camphor. The wine comes over as somewhat round, slightly sweet, and suave on the otherwise elegant palate, and leaves a nice even if smooth and slightly powerful feel in the finish. Now-2026

2010er	Georg Breuer	Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling	01 11	95
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The 2010er Berg Schlossberg, as it is referred to on the consumer label, is a legally dry Riesling (with 6 g/l of residual sugar) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. It offers a beautifully fresh and engaging nose made of spices, grapefruit, lime, coconut, pear, aniseed herbs, smoke, a hint of petrol, and chalky minerals. The wine proves initially slightly milky and supple, but quickly shows a racy and structured side on the herbal palate. It leaves a sharp feel of herbs and spices pepped up by lime in the gorgeously detailed and straight finish. This racy expression of dry Riesling proves truly irresistible, and has now entered its drinking window. Now-2035

2009er	Georg Breuer	Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling	01 10	97
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The 2009er Berg Schlossberg, as it is referred to on the consumer label, is a bone-dry Riesling (with less than 3 g/l of residual sugar) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. It offers a stunningly floral nose made of pear, white peach, pina colada, almond, spices, and aniseed herbs. The wine is superbly playful and filigreed on the palate, and leaves an intense and persistent feel of fruits and herbs in the long and multi-layered finish. This offers impressive power but without any undue weight. This dry Riesling is simply singing now. Now-2039

2008er	Georg Breuer	Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling	01 09	99
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The 2008er Berg Schlossberg, as it is referred to on the consumer label, is a legally dry Riesling (with 5 g/l of residual sugar) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. This offers an absolutely stunning and elegant nose made of white floral elements, pear, some cassis, minerals, anise, ginger, and fine spices. The wine proves gorgeously multi-layered and detailed on the overall rather racy palate, and leaves a remarkably precise feel of fruits and spices in the long and vibrating finish. The cut and precision in this deep and complex dry Riesling are truly remarkable. This is one of the finest dry Riesling ever made. Now-2038



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<b>2007er</b>	<b>Georg Breuer</b>	<b>Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling</b>	<b>01 08</b>	<b>94</b>
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The 2007er Berg Schlossberg, as it is referred to on the consumer label, is a dry-tasting Riesling (with 6 g/l of residual sugar) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. It offers an intense and aromatically ripe nose made of pear, a hint grapefruit, pineapple, almond cream, anise, herbs, and spices. The wine is delicately smooth but also on the assertive side on the dense palate, and leaves a remarkably powerful feel in the long and rather tart finish. While slightly bigger expression of dry Riesling certainly by Georg Breuer standards, this remains nevertheless remarkably enjoyable and complex. Now-2032

<b>2006er</b>	<b>Georg Breuer</b>	<b>Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling</b>	<b>01 07</b>	<b>90</b>
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The 2006er Berg Schlossberg, as it is referred to on the consumer label, is a dry-tasting Riesling (with 8 g/l of residual sugar) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. This slightly deeper yellow colored wine offers an ample, ripe, and honeyed nose made of bitter almond, spices, cardamom, and herbal elements, as well as mango, dried apricot, and marzipan. The wine proves rich, bold, and delicately powerful on the palate and leaves a slightly harsh and bitter feel in the overall rather direct finish. This very good dry Riesling proves however a bit on the rustic side, and definitively needs some food to buffer off its structure. Now-2026

<b>2005er</b>	<b>Georg Breuer</b>	<b>Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling</b>	<b>01 06</b>	<b>92</b>
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The 2005er Berg Schlossberg, as it is referred to on the consumer label, is a dry-tasting Riesling (with 5 g/l of residual sugar) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. It offers a ripe and big nose made of roasted pineapple, mirabelle, marzipan, coconut, pear, melon, minerals, cardamom, and herbs. The wine proves big and slightly ripe on the palate but leaves a remarkably balanced feel in the intense and more than satisfying palate. The after-taste leaves a touch of earthy spices and phenolic presence. This riper expression of dry Riesling is impressive, and is best served with some hearty or spicy food. Now-2030

<b>2003er</b>	<b>Georg Breuer</b>	<b>Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling</b>	<b>01 04</b>	<b>93</b>
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The 2003er Berg Schlossberg, as it is referred to on the consumer label, is a dry-tasting or legally dry Riesling (data is no longer available) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. The first nose still has some freshness and proves even youthful, and slowly offers a rather ripe and engaging nose made of melon, starfruit, almond, a hint camphor, and fine spices. The wine coats the palate, and proves rather powerful and assertive on the palate. It leaves a pleasing and aromatic finish, delivering flavors of almond, coconut, and pineapple juice, with a light touch of tartness coming through in the overall nicely complex finish. This proves a beautiful surprise in the hot 2003 vintage. Now-2028

<b>2002er</b>	<b>Georg Breuer</b>	<b>Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling</b>	<b>01 03</b>	<b>94</b>
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The 2002er Berg Schlossberg, as it is referred to on the consumer label, is a dry-tasting Riesling (with 8 g/l of residual sugar) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. This initially offers a quite aromatic and almost Burgundian nose of roasted nut, sea breeze, and almond cream, before some fruity notes of pear, melon, and grapefruit as well as earthy spices, candy floss, and smoky elements kick in. The wine proves superbly fruit driven on the intense and round palate. It then proves elegantly straight and intense in the long and refined finish. There is a touch of power lurking around in the after-taste. This is an impressive dry Riesling at full maturity. Now-2027

<b>2000er</b>	<b>Georg Breuer</b>	<b>Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling</b>	<b>01 01</b>	<b>93</b>
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The 2000er Rüdesheim Berg Schlossberg, as it is referred to on the consumer label, is a dry-tasting Riesling (with 7 g/l of residual sugar) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. This light golden colored wine offers a superbly engaging nose made of pear, apple, herbs, pink grapefruit, tangerine, and spices, all wrapped into a delicate touch of saffron. The wine proves beautifully elegant and intense on the palate, and leaves a sweet, smooth, and delicate feel in the finish. This is a truly remarkable effort for this rather average vintage. Now-2025

<b>1998er</b>	<b>Georg Breuer</b>	<b>Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling</b>	<b>01 99</b>	<b>98</b>
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The 1998er Rüdesheim Berg Schlossberg, as it is referred to on the consumer label, is a dry-tasting Riesling (with 10 g/l of residual sugar) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. It offers a simply breathtaking nose made of citrusy fruits, pear, melon, coconut, gooseberry, a hint of laurel, and some gorgeously aniseed herbs. The wine proves stunningly subtle and elegant on the palate, where flavors of fruits are lifted up by some remarkably subtle zesty and mineral elements. The finish is effortlessly long and multi-layered. This is a truly magnificent mature dry Riesling! Now-2028+

<b>1997er</b>	<b>Georg Breuer</b>	<b>Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling</b>	<b>01 98</b>	<b>97</b>
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The 1997er Rüdesheim Berg Schlossberg, as it is referred to on the consumer label, is a dry-tasting Riesling (with 9.4 g/l of residual sugar) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. It offers a superbly refined, gorgeously attractive and fruity nose made of cassia, yellow peach, pear, aniseed herbs, bergamot, roasted pineapple, and spices. The wine develops a superbly suave feel of camphor, whipped cream, a touch of petrol, and minerals on the palate. It proves long and intense in the finish. The 1997er Berg Schlossberg may not have the cut of the finest vintages at this Estate, it is still a modern-day classic living from refined flavors, presence, and mild acidity, and is beautifully delicious to drink. Now-2027



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1996er	Georg Breuer	Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling	01 97	98
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The 1996er Rüdesheim Berg Schlossberg, as it is referred to on the consumer label, is a dry-tasting Riesling (with 7.5 g/l of residual sugar) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. It offers a dream of a nose driven by lime sorbet, grapefruit, cassis, minerals, floral elements, sea breeze, and a delicate touch of slate. The wine is pure refinement and elegance on the precise and multi-layered palate. More scents of grapefruit and finely herbal elements underline the greatness of this wine in the finish. The after-taste is racy, deep, and stunningly detailed. This flirts with dry Riesling perfection. Now-2031

1993er	Georg Breuer	Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling	01 94	96
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The 1993er Rüdesheim Berg Schlossberg, as it is referred to on the consumer label, is a dry-tasting or legally dry Riesling (data is no longer available) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. This golden colored wine offers a stunning nose made of dried apricot, pear, grapefruit, mirabelle, aniseed herbs, a hint of slate, and a touch of whipped cream. The wine is full and intense on the palate, yet it proves stunningly balanced and leaves an incredibly nuanced and detailed feel of ripe fruits, citrusy elements, and fresh herbs in the long and complex finish. The after-taste is long, focused, and gorgeously persistent. This is a superb mature dry Riesling. Now-2028

1991er	Georg Breuer	Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling Charta	01 92	92
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The 1991er Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Charta is a dry-tasting or legally dry Riesling (data is no longer available) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. This golden colored wine offers a superb nose of citric fruits, almond, herbs, smoke, licorice, baked apple, and quite some spices. The wine proves beautifully elegant and precise on the intense but medium-bodied palate, and leaves a lingering feel of complexity and presence in the finish. This wine oozes elegance and finesse. Now-2024

1990er	Georg Breuer	Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling Charta	01 91	98
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The 1990er Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling Charta is a dry-tasting or legally dry Riesling (data is no longer available) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. It offers a stunningly fresh and deep nose made of candied grapefruit, white flowers, pear, cassis, sea breeze, bergamot, smoke, and fine aniseed herbs. The wine proves quite concentrated and powerful on the palate, yet there is a hugely zesty and focused side coming through on the vibrant palate. It leaves a stunning feel of citric tension in the long, firmly dry, and tart finish. This is now at full peak, and proves a magnificent dry Riesling. Now-2025

1989er	Georg Breuer	Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling Kabinett Charta	01 90	100
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The 1989er Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling Kabinett Charta is a dry-tasting or legally dry Riesling (data is no longer available) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. This still light-colored wine offers a mind-blowing and magnificently refined nose made of pina colada, whipped cream, pear, chalky minerals, white flowers, spices, sea breeze, and herbs. The wine is gorgeously fresh, refined, and lively on the comparatively light-bodied palate, and leaves a delicately creamy and suave feel in the refined finish. This ethereal and pure dry Riesling is without doubt one of the finest dry Riesling we have ever tasted. Now-2034

1987er	Georg Breuer	Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling	01 88	90
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The 1987er Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling is a dry-tasting or legally dry Riesling (data is no longer available) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. This offers a delicately warm and superbly delicate nose made of some pear, smoke, anise, sage, a hint of fern, and fine spices. The wine is subtle, light, and refined on the medium-bodied palate, and leaves a gorgeous playful feel in the stunning finish. This dry Riesling is pure finesse, and will please lovers of mature herbal Riesling. Now-2022

1984er	Georg Breuer	Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling	01 85	88
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The 1984er Rüdesheimer Berg Schlossberg Riesling is a dry-tasting or legally dry Riesling (data is no longer available) made from the Estate's finest casks from this vineyard. It offers a rather evolved nose made of fern, pear, candied grapefruit, date, green herbs, baked apple, and minty elements. The wine is on the thin and delicate side on the quite remarkably zesty palate, and leaves a vibrant even if medium-long feel in the finish. This dry Riesling, while not truly grand, is a massive success in this terrible vintage for German wine in general. Drink up



# Mosel Fine Wines

*"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"*

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

## Keller | von der Fels Vertical ( 2018 – 2004 )

We had the chance to participate to a vertical of Keller's von der Fels Riesling ranging back to 2004. Here a summary of this fascinating tasting with some background on the wine, lessons learned, and detailed tasting notes to each of the wines.



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The Independent Mosel Review

### KELLER VON DER FELS | THE WINE

In the modern German wine label approach used by many Estates, a wine called Riesling von der Fels would be an Estate wine. It could be a very good wine but one made from secondary vineyards, pre-harvest fruit, and / or fruit-purchases.

This is not the case of Keller's von der Fels, as Klaus-Peter Keller explained: "It started in 2000, when we vinified separately some fruit out of a younger parcel in the Hubacker. As of 2001, as we got vineyards from Westhofen, we also included declassified fruit from other of our Grand Cru."

This approach, akin to that of a Second Vin from Grand Cru vineyards, may not be widely practiced in Germany. But it is used for instance at Weingut Georg Breuer, which bottles a wine called Terra Montosa from declassified fruit and younger vines from its Grand Cru holdings.

Given that it comes from declassified fruit from Grand Cru vineyards, the precise terroir mix underlining the von der Fels bottling varies according to the vintage. Only in 2 vintages (2006 and 2014) all Grand Cru sites have been used for the blend, otherwise it includes a selection of 2 to 3 Grand Cru vineyards.

At the beginning, the bottling concerned essentially younger vines. Today, as Klaus-Peter underlined, "with the increasing age of our vines, the bottling is made from approx. 30 year-old vines. Also, demand has picked up strongly lately, so we also add some the fruit from parcels with older vines, such as the parcel in the Kirchspiel which we refer to internally as Liebesnest [note from the authors: love nest in German] and which is planted with 50 year-old vines."

Klaus-Peter Keller applies some of the principles used for the Grand Cru wines, with however a more relaxed approach and a slightly shorter maturation, as he is quick to underline: "Yields are comparatively low, typically 40-60 hl/ha. The wine sees a short pre-fermentation maceration before being aged in a mix of wooden casks and stainless steel. The wine is then typically bottled in May after the vintage."





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## KELLER VON DER FELS | VERTICAL CONCLUSIONS

The tasting took place at the Landhaus Wolfgang Dubs restaurant in Osthofen (Rheinhessen) on June 7, 2019. The bottles had essentially been generously provided by Mr. Onstein, a wine lover and longtime private customer of the Kellers. They had been bought by him, on release, directly from the Estate. The wines were tasted open (i.e. not blind) in flights of three.

In our eyes, the vertical highlighted above all one thing: The sheer beauty of this affordable and classy dry "simple" Riesling. We say "simple" here because there is no reference to any village or Grand Cru on the label, and, if you are not familiar with the label, this could easily be mistaken for a run-of-the-mill Riesling. The vertical also underlined the superb and rather homogeneous quality of this wine over the last two decades. Except for the very challenging 2006 vintage for dry Riesling, the von der Fels has proven at least outstanding if not truly great over the period. It gives many high-end (GG or equivalent) dry Riesling from leading Estates a good run for their money.

In addition, the von der Fels is a dry Riesling with quite some aging potential. The good vintages in the 2000s are still drinking beautifully well. Every vintage since 2013 still needs to be waited for another couple of years to enter their drinking window, something which may also feel strange for a "simple" Riesling. The recent vintages, especially 2018 and 2017, still proved very tight, but have great potential.

As long as there is a great underlying terroir (or several) and a gifted grower, even "declassified" fruit may yield stunning results.

Many wine lovers focus on the great and highly sought-after bottlings of dry Riesling from Keller's Grand Cru sites, and, if money plays no role, there is every reason to do so. However, this over-attention for the high-end at Keller makes one easily overlook the exceptional quality of the still remarkably fairly priced and normally relatively easy-to-find von der Fels bottling. No stone should be left unturned to find some von der Fels bottles, and keep in mind that these wines need cellaring, as Grand Cru (which there are in essence) need.

## KELLER VON DER FELS – TASTING NOTES



2018er	Keller	Riesling Trocken von der Fels	13 19	92+
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The 2018er Riesling Trocken von der Fels comes only from Grand Cru sites, essentially from the Westhofener Kirchspiel, and was fermented down to bone-dry levels of residual sugar (less than 3 g/l). It is still very on the primary side on the nose, where residual scents from the spontaneous fermentation only gradually give way to almond cream, yellow peach, cassis, pear and spices. It proves nicely juicy and fruity on the palate, yet leaves a racy and vibrating feel in the bone-dry finish. A touch of tartness emerges in the after-taste which still needs to mellow away, something which will happen in a decade or so. It could then easily exceed our high expectations. 2028-2038+

2017er	Keller	Riesling Trocken von der Fels	10 18	92+
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The 2017er Riesling Trocken von der Fels comes only from Grand Cru sites, essentially from the Westhofener Kirchspiel (including from the oldest part planted in 1964), and was fermented down to bone-dry levels of residual sugar (less than 3 g/l). It offers a beautifully restrained and cool nose made of herbs, minty spices, white peach, green fruits and a dash of almond cream. The wine is full of energy on the straight, compact and razor-sharp on the palate and leaves an intense feel in the very long and bone-dry finish. A touch of tartness emerges in the after-taste which still needs to mellow away, something which will happen in a decade or so. It could then easily exceed our high expectations. 2027-2037+



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<b>2016er</b>	<b>Keller</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken von der Fels</b>	<b>13 17</b>	<b>93</b>
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The 2016er Riesling Trocken von der Fels comes only from Grand Cru sites, essentially from the Abtserde part of the Westhofener Brunnenhäuschen and the Westhofener Kirchspiel (including from a parcel still planted with very old vines). It proves still hugely youthful and primary, but develops a most gorgeous and refined set of aromatics including mint, herbal notes, smoke, tar, white flowers, and zesty fruits after. The wine is packed with zesty fruits and proves beautifully intense, straight, and pure. The finish is fully bone dry, very focused, and leaves one with a hint of bitterness which still needs to integrate. This superb dry Riesling has great energy and focus. 2024-2041

<b>2015er</b>	<b>Keller</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken von der Fels</b>	<b>20 16</b>	<b>93</b>
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The 2015er Riesling Trocken von der Fels comes only from Grand Cru sites, essentially from the Abtserde part of the Westhofener Brunnenhäuschen, the Westhofener Kirchspiel and the Westhofener Morstein. It offers a beautifully ripe and quite expressive nose made of candied grapefruit, dried apricot, pear, yellow peach, and orange peel. The wine is full of zest on the palate and leaves a feel of presence and depth in the finish. There is huge sensation of energy in the after-taste. Even though the aromatics are already coming through, this dry Riesling is still very much work in progress and will require quite some patience. 2025-2045

<b>2014er</b>	<b>Keller</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken von der Fels</b>	<b>13 15</b>	<b>91+</b>
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The 2014er Riesling Trocken von der Fels comes only from Grand Cru sites, essentially from the Dalsheimer Hubacker, the Abtserde part of the Westhofener Brunnenhäuschen, the Westhofener Kirchspiel, and the Westhofener Morstein. It offers a quite minty nose with in addition scents of dried white flowers, lime, and candied grapefruit. It proves still youthful but not very expressive on the light-footed and elegant palate. However, the wine develops more presence in the still rather tight, bone dry, and slightly bitter finish. This wine still needs a couple of years to fully blossom, and could exceed our high expectations as it becomes more nuanced and balanced over time. 2024-2034+

<b>2013er</b>	<b>Keller</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken von der Fels</b>	<b>08 14</b>	<b>93</b>
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The 2013er Riesling Trocken von der Fels comes only from Grand Cru sites, essentially from the Abtserde part of the Westhofener Brunnenhäuschen and the Westhofener Kirchspiel. It comes over as superbly fresh and cool at first, but this quickly gives way to riper but beautifully aromatic scents of yellow fruits, grapefruit, anise, herbs, and mirabelle. The wine is deliciously refined, pure, and zesty on the palate. It is still quite compact and intense, but proves already beautifully focused and airy in the delicately long finish. This only needs a few more years of patience to fully develop its flavors, but everything is already in place for a great wine at maturity. 2023-2043

<b>2012er</b>	<b>Keller</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken von der Fels</b>	<b>15 13</b>	<b>94</b>
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The 2012er Riesling Trocken von der Fels comes only from Grand Cru sites, essentially from the Westhofener Kirchspiel and the Westhofener Morstein. It offers a magnificent and complex nose of herbs, fresh floral elements, tangerine, cassis, candied grapefruit, and thyme. The wine develops a great sense of structure and presence on the intense yet seemingly weightless palate. The finish seems almost a touch opulent, but remains superbly refined and persistent. This truly delicious and complex dry Riesling is now slowly entering its optimal drinking window, and will remain great for many more years. Now-2037

<b>2011er</b>	<b>Keller</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken von der Fels</b>	<b>20 12</b>	<b>91</b>
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The 2011er Riesling Trocken von der Fels comes only from Grand Cru sites, essentially from the Dalsheimer Hubacker and the Westhofener Kirchspiel. It offers an attractive nose combining riper scents including pineapple, vanilla cream, almond, and yellow peach with fresher elements such as herbs and white bean. The wine is structured but also slightly smooth and sweet on the mid-palate, no doubt a side effect of the ripeness of the vintage, but leaves a beautifully herbal and fresh feel of grapefruit and candied citrus in the finish. The wine even proves comparatively racy by 2011 standards in the after-taste. Now-2026+

<b>2010er</b>	<b>Keller</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken von der Fels</b>	<b>33 11</b>	<b>92</b>
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The 2010er Riesling Trocken von der Fels comes only from Grand Cru sites, essentially from the Dalsheimer Hubacker, the Abtserde part of the Westhofener Brunnenhäuschen, and the Westhofener Kirchspiel. This already yellow-golden colored wine offers a rich and aromatic nose of yellow fruits, pineapple, coconut, apricot, a hint of exotic fruits, butter cream, and toffee. The wine proves on the powerful and broad side on the firmly zesty palate, and leaves a nice sense of freshness in the very long finish. This may prove a bigger expression of dry Riesling, but one which remains no less fascinating. Now-2025



# Mosel Fine Wines

*"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"*

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

<b>2009er</b>	<b>Keller</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken von der Fels</b>	<b>14 10</b>	<b>93</b>
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The 2009er Riesling Trocken von der Fels comes only from Grand Cru sites, essentially from the Westhofener Kirchspiel (including from the oldest part planted in 1964) with, in addition, some fruit from the Abtserde part of the Westhofener Brunnenhäuschen and the Dalsheimer Hubacker. It offers a superbly complex nose of herbs, candied citrus, pineapple, anise, and a hint of nut paste. The wine proves superbly structured and intense, without any undue weight, on the remarkably balanced palate. A touch of opulence and presence, more typical for high-end dry Riesling than "mere" Estate wines, comes through in the very long and lingering finish of this superb wine. Now-2034

<b>2008er</b>	<b>Keller</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken von der Fels</b>	<b>21 09</b>	<b>90</b>
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The 2008er Riesling Trocken von der Fels comes only from Grand Cru sites, essentially from the Dalsheimer Hubacker and the Abtserde part of the Westhofener Brunnenhäuschen. It offers a surprisingly funky nose under-pinned by cool and herbal scents of gooseberry, minty herbs, anise, white bean, peach, and spices. The wine is focused and driven by zesty yet ripe acidity on the palate, and leaves a great sense of grip and energy in the long finish. It may prove aromatically quite unusual for a von der Fels bottling, but the wine's refreshing side and sense of focus will please lovers of racier expressions of dry Riesling. Now-2028

<b>2007er</b>	<b>Keller</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken von der Fels</b>	<b>22 08</b>	<b>92</b>
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The 2007er Riesling Trocken von der Fels comes only from Grand Cru sites, essentially from the Abtserde part of the Westhofener Brunnenhäuschen and the Westhofener Morstein. It offers a beautifully aromatic and delicately ripe nose made of yellow peach, pear, apricot, ginger driven spices, and a hint of nut paste. The wine proves nicely balanced and refined on the smooth and delicate palate, and leaves a nicely fruity component in the very long finish. A touch of roundness and power underpinned by honeyed elements comes through in the after-taste. This now fully mature dry Riesling offers much pleasure. Now-2027

<b>2006er</b>	<b>Keller</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken von der Fels</b>	<b>20 07</b>	<b>88</b>
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The 2006er Riesling Trocken von der Fels comes only from Grand Cru sites, essentially from the Dalsheimer Hubacker, the Abtserde part of the Westhofener Brunnenhäuschen, the Westhofener Kirchspiel and the Westhofener Morstein. This golden-orange colored wine offers a ripe, warmth, and rich nose of toffee, nut cream, candied pineapple, apricot, and butter. It proves rather broad and creamy on the palate, and leaves an opulent and quite herbal feel in the long finish. A touch of phenolic presence and tartness emerge in the after-taste, which gives a tighter side to this overall rather rich expression of dry Riesling. Drink up

<b>2005er</b>	<b>Keller</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken von der Fels</b>	<b>18 06</b>	<b>90</b>
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The 2005er Riesling Trocken von der Fels comes only from Grand Cru sites, essentially from the Westhofener Morstein and the Westhofener Kirchspiel. It offers a ripe yet refined set of aromatics including almond cream, yellow peach, a hint of pineapple, yellow flowers, and a touch of rhubarb. The wine proves on the creamy and honeyed side on the slightly sweet-tasting palate, yet leaves one with a good sense of focus in the intense finish. A touch of power in the after-taste underlines the bigger side of this fully mature and dry-tasting wine. Now

<b>2004er</b>	<b>Keller</b>	<b>Riesling Trocken von der Fels</b>	<b>21 05</b>	<b>91</b>
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The 2004er Riesling Trocken von der Fels comes only from Grand Cru sites, essentially from the Dalsheimer Hubacker and the Westhofener Kirchspiel. It offers a beautifully expressive and fully mature nose of ripe sweet fruits, almond, pineapple, smoke, and chamomile. The wine proves pure, focused, and driven by zesty fruits on the palate. A superb sense of grip gives the wine presence and complexity as it unfolds. The finish is very long and tastes fully dry. Now-2024



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

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

**April  
2020**

### **Mature Riesling**

- 10-Years-After Retrospective: The 2010 Vintage
- Notes from the Cellar

**June to October  
2020**

### **2019 Vintage Reports**

- Vintage Review
- Detailed Estate Reviews & Recommended Wines
- Auctions Coverage
- Dry German Riesling

**In Parallel**

### **Regular Postings** on our Website and Social Media with:

- News
- Wines of the Month
- Vintage Highlights
- 2020 Growing Conditions
- Updates of our TN database (via CellarTracker)
- Interesting Articles from other Sources

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