

Justerini & Brooks

ESTABLISHED 1749

GERMANY 2024: POISE AND VITALITY





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GERMANY 2024: POISE AND VITALITY GERMANY 2024: POISE AND VITALITY

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I had braced myself for a trip that would make the dentist wince. An overall cold, wet year concentrated by frost sounded like an advert for trouble, so it was first relief, then happiness that 2024 proved to offer a lot more to the taster than mere bracing freshness. In fact, the wines aren't all that bracing at all. It is a cool year, and they are slender, they are pure, and they are animated, that's for sure. But high natural acidities are buffered by small, very pretty, mostly citrus and white fruits, with a delectable, salty feeling that adds structure, subtlety and interest. It is not a daunting year, in the way that 2010 or, at times, 2021 had the potential to be. 2024 offers more of the fluid, charming, fresh feeling that the best 2016s had, but with a little extra dynamism. Along with 2008, 2016 and 2021 were the vintages most readily recalled by growers, with a few nods to 2002 and 2004. In the end, history dictates that Riesling is built for adversity. Plain sailing vintages tend to produce aromatic wines, with opulence and concentration, but stimulating, saline, thought-provoking Rieslings - those that have poise and vitality – are generally the ones that endured a long, turbulent season.

2024 in most quarters will be remembered for the most brutal April frosts that producers have ever seen. Ice came in a wave on 22nd and 23rd April, capitalising on the unseasonably warm February and March that advanced shoot development and budding across all regions. In the Saar and Ruwer, damage reached 80-90%. In the Nahe, Dönnhoff and Schönleber are down 70% and 50% respectively. What's more, those frosts also hit the Grosse Lagen (Grand Crus), even though they are historically the sites with the warmest exposures. Helmut Dönnhoff, after more than fifty vintages, believed his were untouchable. The Middle Mosel escaped with around 30% losses on average, primarily in the lower lying plots destined for estate and other junior-level wines, though the village of Graach was hit by a hailstorm on 2nd May that picked up where the frost left off. The Schaefers lost about a third of their crop to that one shock event alone. The Rheinhessen was largely spared, thankfully, while the Southern Pfalz was also hit by about 30%. These are the sort of stats that, allied to high labour costs and the innumerable human-hours required to manage the steepest vineyards in the world, make one question a life of grape growing.

However, having tasted a lot of 2024s, it's more accurate to say that, far from a disaster, 2024 sets a new watermark for resilience and determination. I was struck by a comment made by the young, passionate Christopher Loewen, who has removed the word 'Riesling' from his labels this year, accompanying the likes of Schloss Lieser and JJ Prüm. "The Mosel should have confidence to present as site and people," he said. "This is not a region that makes every variety. We stand for something, just as they do in Burgundy, Barolo and Bordeaux. We do what we do in a world-class way."

The weather remained cool with regular rain until early July. Summer arrived in earnest only in August. A month of warm, stable temperatures with no extremes put ripening back on track. Harvest began between late September and early October depending on the region, about two weeks later than in 2023. The frost's yield reduction (in the affected areas) and the warm late summer helped to thicken grape skins and produce well-structured, small clusters. Klaus-Peter Keller was thrilled with the quality of the grapes come harvest time, but he, like others stressed that growers had to keep on top of the vegetation, cut away unripe or vulnerable bunches early and ensure airflow, throughout the variable September and October months. Most Rheinhessen and Pfalz producers were basically finished by mid-October. Some in the Mosel were still picking into early November. Those who took a disciplined approach to the stop-start harvest have produced Rieslings with all the fine-boned, nuanced fruit and minerality of a great, classic vintage.

Growers who produce the full spectrum of styles purport that the sweet spots (once again) are in the Grosses Gewächs (GG) and Kabinett categories, though we'd add that there are some mightily impressive

Spätlesen out there – they are surely destined for a resurgence in popularity, at some point. Regrettably, there are hardly any noble sweet wines in 2024 as they require a certain tolerance to risk – at the end of what, in 2024, was already a difficult year. The few in our offer today are remarkable not just for rarity's sake but as articulate expressions of their terroir; chiselled and racy, with little opulence even as one climbs the scale.

The 2024 dry wines are frequently definable by a shell-like salinity, often as part of a lightly reductive whole, consistent with the profile of a cooler year. Many producers bottled their 2024 GGs a little later than usual to exploit time on the fine lees, layering textures to support the fine, varyingly wiry and intricate lines of acidity. In tasting the 2024 dries, purely for my own appreciation, I have tried to actively reflect on the way that acidity stamps its authority. Acidity offers more than refreshment – it is fundamental. Consider the varying nature of acidity in Riesling in the same vein as the evident, yet articulate – thrilling – nature of tannin in Nebbiolo. Once you've learned to love it, all other reds feel slow.

Rebholz is a Pfalz winery producing exclusively dry wines from a multitude of soil types. We concluded that the acidity of slate feels fast. It arrives quickly and it goes quickly – it rushes over like a wave. Limestone acidity sparkles – it is fragmented but it is persistent, and it can feel quite profound. The acidity of Rotliegenden soil (iron-rich red slate, gravel and loam), such as that in the Kastanienbusch, is all pressure and amplitude. It can be tannic in sensation.

For Riesling lovers, 2024 offers all that diversity and transparency, in what appears now to be an unusually charming and graceful way. That makes it a vintage to take seriously.

Mark Dearing
GERMANY BUYER
JUSTERINI & BROOKS





BUYERS' PICKS - RIESLING

	Vintage	6x75cl
TROCKEN - DRY		
Laurentiuslay, Riesling, Alte Reben, Trocken, Carl Loewen [10-25]	2024	£110
Mölsheim, Riesling, Aus dem Erste Lagen, Battenfeld-Spanier [20-25]	2024	£110
Schlossböckelheimer, Riesling, Trocken, Dönnhoff [11-25]	2024	£135
Monzinger Riesling, Trocken, Halgans, Emrich-Schönleber [33-25]	2024	£125
GROSSES GEWÄCHS – DRY GRAND CRU		
Longuicher Maximin Herrenberg, Riesling, Grosses Gewächs, Carl Loewen [13-25]	2024	£170
Zellerweg am Schwarzen Herrgott, Grosses Gewächs, Battenfeld-Spanier [50-25]	2024	£335
Halenberg Riesling, Grosses Gewächs, Emrich-Schönleber [45-25]	2024	£335
Im Sonnenschein, Riesling, Grosses Gewächs, Rebholz [26-25]	2024	£345
Hermannshöhle, Riesling, Grosses Gewächs, Dönnhoff [25-25]	2024	£365
FEINHERB/KABINETT - OFF-DRY/MEDIUM		
Brauneberger Juffer, Riesling, Feinherb, Fritz Haag [19-25]	2024	£100
Maximin Grünhauser, Abtsberg, Riesling, Superior, Feinherb, von Schubert [15-25]	2024	£145
Piesporter Goldtröpfchen, Riesling, Kabinett, Schloss Lieser [12-25]	2024	£80
Saarburger Rausch, Riesling, Kabinett, Zilliken [01-25]	2024	£110
Wehlener Sonnenuhr, Riesling, Kabinett, JJ Prüm [05-25]	2024	£168
SPÄTLESE – MEDIUM-SWEET		
Wehlener Sonnenuhr, Riesling, Spätlese, Schloss Lieser [16-25]	2024	£95
Brauneberger Juffer Sonnenuhr, Riesling, Spätlese, Fritz Haag [07-25]	2024	£105
Wehlener Sonnenuhr, Riesling, Spätlese, JJ Prüm [08-25]	2024	£192
Niederhäuser Hermannshöhle, Riesling Spätlese, Dönnhoff [16-25]	2024	£230
AUSLESE AND ABOVE - SWEET-NOBLE SWEET		
Brauneberger Juffer Sonnenuhr, Riesling, Auslese, Fuder 6, Fritz Haag [06-25]	2024	£140
Lieser Niederberg Helden, Riesling, Auslese, Goldkapsel, Schloss Lieser [22-25]	2024	£210
Monzinger Halenberg, Riesling, Auslese, Emrich-Schönleber [57-25] *[12x37.5cl]	2024	£225*
Graacher Himmelreich, Auslese, Goldkapsel, JJ Prüm [14-25]	2024	£450
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ZILLIKEN SAARBURG, SAAR

2024 will forever go down as the frost vintage at Zilliken where, devastatingly, they lost 80% of their crop and ended with the smallest production in their history. Those who have seen the frighteningly steep Rausch vineyard will attest that "in our sites we cannot light candles [for frost protection] as you would in flatter areas in other parts of Germany and Europe – it would require 100 people per night." Usually, the frost hits the lower reaches of the Rausch but on 23rd April the lower plots were somehow spared, and the damage got worse as they scrambled up the site. In the traditional heart of the vineyard Dorothee says 99% of the buds were destroyed. "This meant we concentrated our efforts on the lower part of the slope for the rest of the season, where there are old, ungrafted vines." The harvest itself was accordingly short, just a week, beginning on 7th October, two weeks later than in 2023, noting that before 2018, all vintages started in October. The abridged range this year includes a teasing, flinty GG that exemplifies the Saar's reputation for producing weightless wines, a serious Kabinett that will comfortably age over twenty-five years, and a longer-aged, single plot GG from 2023 – only the second ever release of this caressing, balm-like dry wine that has an incredible history.

ABV	Vintage	6x75cl

Saarburger Rausch, Riesling, Grosses Gewächs, Zilliken [03-25]

2% 2024

£200

£110

Floral and powdery with wispy, airy fruits and citrus – on the elegant mineral side with almost no overt fruit in 2024. It drinks like a mountain stream. Tense and stony; the definition of a mineral-driven Riesling! Fruit for the GG comes from the oldest part of the Rausch in its lower reaches abutting the village where the ungrafted vines reach a remarkable 140 years old. Just one fuder barrel was produced.

Saarburger Auf der Rausch, Riesling, Grosses Gewächs, Zilliken [05-25] 11% 2023 £285

Auf der Rausch is a "single plot" bottling that comes from the high right-hand corner of the Rausch hillside: an ungrafted sector that even a hundred years ago was recorded as being of exceptional quality. 2023 is only the second ever release of this wine, after 2018. The Zilliken thinking for this, their top dry wine, is that it must comprise exclusively fully ripe, healthy berries and have the concentration to support 18 months' ageing in traditional Mosel fuder barrels – in this case just two of them. Fuller and creamier, with fresh lemon, chamomile and salts; the mouth feel is super finessed and slatey with a powerful, ripe acidity. Long, caressing and impressive.

Saarburger Rausch, Riesling, Kabinett, Zilliken [01-25]

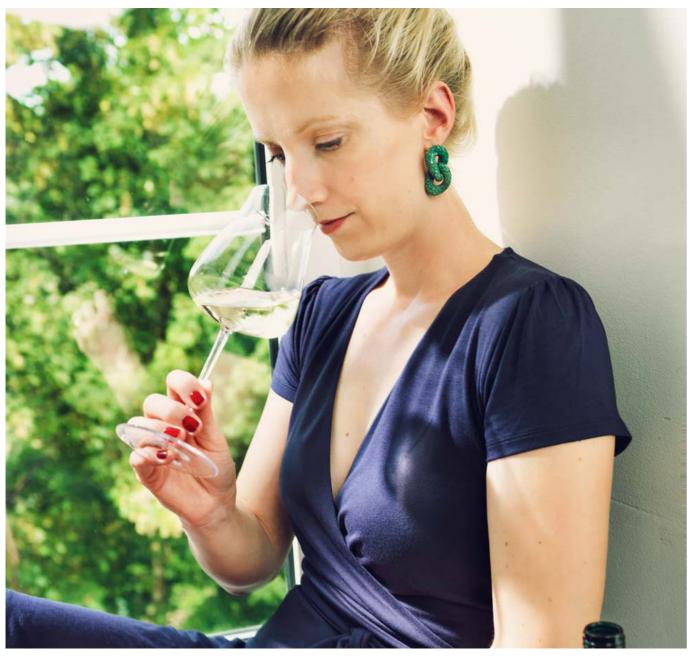
7.5% 2

2024

For those seeking a 20–25-year Kabinett to lay down, the 2024 Rausch Kabinett would make an excellent choice. For the first time since 2013, the Rausch Kabinett represents the peak of the estate's traditional Prädikat output, recognisable by its AP (registration) number 01–25, the last two digits referring to the year of bottling. Tense, bright and juicy, already showing a lot of charming and ripe fruit, counterbalanced by cool vintage grip and tension. A good blade of acidity cuts through the concentration and structure. Bottled at 56g/l residual sugar.

MAXIMIN GRÜNHAUS MERTESDORF, RUWER

In early June 2024 we saw the frost damage for ourselves as we walked through the Abtsberg and Herrenberg vines with Maximin von Schubert, owner of this most venerable Ruwer wine estate. That rather gloomy vineyard tour was followed by a tasting of the then upcoming 2023s, which was a thrilling vintage here. It was naturally disappointing to see that range clipped back in such extreme fashion in 2024. In the end, they produced a total of 20 fuder barrels off 30 hectares of vineyards. That equates to 20% of a normal crop. The Riesling harvest began on 20th October, four weeks later than in 2023 and ended in early November. At a total level, not only is 2024 the smallest vintage ever, it was also the wettest. Despite its challenges, what Grünhaus has on its side is pedigree. If the frost damage was admittedly shocking, they are no stranger to rain, and the intense grape selections and increased attention to detail in the vineyards (including drones for targeted sprays and analysis on a micro plot-by-plot basis) have resulted in a small collection of pulsating, cooling, symmetrical Rieslings that recall vintages of old. There is no Abtsberg GG this year and the concentration level tops out at Kabinett. A cleansing, cool-vintage profile across the wines favours citrus salts, wild herbs and slatey flavours over golden/tropical fruits and honey. Tiny volumes means the wines need to be snapped up quickly.



ABV Vintage 6x75cl

Maximin Grünhauser, Herrenberg, Grosses Gewächs [11-25]

11.5%

2024

The one and only fuder selected as a GG this year, the Herrenberg has a lovely alluring fully ripe nose, complimented by expressive, honeyed white flowers, fresh peaches and a tangy red berried finish.

Maximin Grünhauser, Herrenberg, Riesling, Feinherb, Superior [14-25] 11.5%

%

2024 £135

£175

Lovely detail and lift, less earthbound, spicy with a nice balance of salts and citrus fruits – crispy on the finish. The "Superior" Feinherbs benefit from the same selection and handling as the GGs but are allowed to ferment to a natural stop. Being just off-dry (18g residual sugar in 2024), they make for wonderful food partners. A total of 1330 bottles were produced.

Maximin Grünhauser, Abtsberg, Riesling, Feinherb, Superior [15-25]

2024

24 £145

In 2024, the Abtsberg initially appears to have more commonality in flavour with the Herrenberg than usual, as it touches on stone fruits and flowers, though it offers a cooler acidity, all beautifully symmetrical and ending on fine salts. The "Superior" Feinherbs benefit from the same selection and handling as the GGs but are allowed to ferment to a natural stop. Being just off-dry (18g residual sugar in 2024), they make for wonderful food partners. Two barrels totalling 2600 bottles were produced.

Maximin Grünhauser, Bruderberg, Riesling, Kabinett [23-25]

%

2024

£105

The coolest, smallest vineyard on the estate, Bruderberg offers up a noticeably herbal profile recalling Grünhaus vintages of old. Crunchy and wild on the palate, sappy with a fresh, relatively dry-tasting finish. Just one fuder barrel of 1300 bottles was produced.

Maximin Grünhauser, Herrenberg, Riesling, Kabinett [24-25]

′%

2024

£110

Cleansing, juicy Kabinett with a note of violet and melon overlaying ripe apples, and a pliant, gentle acidity, which closes in moreish, quite dry-tasting fashion. This would be a beautiful accompaniment to a host of aromatic foods.

Maximin Grünhauser, Abtsberg, Riesling, Kabinett [26-25]

′%

2024

£120

Elegant aromas, not forced, but brittle and subtle with crisp yellow berries greengage and pale, bright citrus. Youthful, there is more to come here, as the Abtsberg still shows a light, attractive reduction. A relatively lean, slatey and very composed Kabinett.

Maximin Grünhauser, Kollektion Grosse Lagen, Riesling

2024

£275

The collection case comprises Grunhaus' best wines of 2024, including single fuder Kabinetts only available in the collection. It provides a rare and exciting opportunity to compare one 75cl bottle of each: Bruderberg Kabinett, Herrenberg Kabinett Nr. 25 (a single barrel, exclusive to the case), Abtsberg Kabinett Nr. 21 (a single barrel, exclusive to the case), Bruderberg Superior (off-dry), Abtsberg Superior (off-dry) and Herrenberg GG (dry Grand Cru – the only GG this year).

PART 1 - RIESLING 2024 PART 1 - RIESLING 2024

CARL LOEWEN LEIWEN, MOSEL

By working with truly ancient, often ungrafted vines dating back to 1896 in some of the steepest sites in the Mosel - and consequently the world - Christopher Loewen binds nuance and verticality in his wines. This young vigneron is clearly one of the Mosel's burgeoning talents, producing predominantly dry Rieslings that are clearly amongst the best in Germany. They are never fruity nor aromatic but pure, vitalising and focused. Helpfully, they are also accessibly priced. Loewen describes 2024 as a cold, dramatically low yielding vintage in general. They lost about 30% of the crop to frost, representing the middle ground damage-wise between the more exposed Saar and Ruwer valleys and the less affected, warmer Middle Mosel. Luckily, losses were centred around the more junior wines and not the single vineyards, and they feel that the frost effectively just concentrated the grapes slightly whilst retaining acidity – no bad thing. The wines were fermented coolly and slowly in fuder as usual, and the 2024s have an effortless, fresh balance to them, showcasing high toned notes of spearmint and herb – wines of absolute exactitude. Analytically, high acidity levels sit close to 2021 and 2010, yet they have less austerity, more fluidity and charm. Harvest began on 4th October and was carried out over two weeks. Rain was forecast on 7-8th October. Many producers opted to pick before the rain, fearing unwelcome rot. Loewen felt that though the analysis was acceptable, intuition led them to risk waiting for enhanced flavour development and finer texture. In preparation they cut away the bunches that were never destined to make the grade anyway and stripped away leaves for aeration. All of this meant that they could harvest in contiguous blocks after the rains quickly, with minimal sorting required. On the new labels, they have removed any mention of Riesling.



"The Mosel should have confidence to present as site and people", he said. "This is not a region that makes every variety. We stand for something, just as they do in Burgundy, Barolo and Bordeaux. We do what we do in a world-class way." As buyers, we hear a lot about how "wine is made in the vineyard." Here, that message lands.

> ABV Vintage 6x75cl

Leiwener Laurentiuslay, Riesling, Alte Reben, Trocken [10-25]

12.5% 2024 £110

Powdery and fine in feel, but with depth and intensity, sculpted aromas and elegant balance, all very salty and mineral - not a fruit forward wine but one of real clarity. Laurentiuslay is the top site in the village of Leiwen. The soils are grey slate and hard stone, and the Carl Loewen vines are an impressive 105 years old, fully ungrafted. Fermented and aged in traditional fuder barrels, bottled in April before the weather warms.

Longuicher Maximin Herrenberg, 1896, Riesling, Trocken [11-25]

2024

£150

Herrenberg is more concentrated, exuding grapefruit, peach and shells. It carries a certain feeling of sunlight despite its cool finish with a totally different minerality to that of Laurentiuslay. Here, the wines are herbal, aromatic and have more structure compared to the leaner saltiness of the blue slate sites. The village of Longuich is situated on red slate soils in the direction of Trier. The Trocken comes from ungrafted vines planted in 1896 in the central part of the vineyard.

Longuicher Maximin Herrenberg, Riesling, Grosses Gewächs [13-25]

2024

£170

The GG bottling offers all of the 1896 Trocken character plus an extra kick of saltiness and spice and basil leaf – a more compact, firm acidity in the middle framed by a little extra roundness from the barrel, all nicely judged. 2024 brings a cool vintage aroma profile within a typically expressive red slate context. The GG comes from the highest, steepest, stoniest part of the vineyard where the roots are closest to the bedrock – about 100m above the river line. Planted in 1902, this too is the product of ungrafted vines. Fermented and aged in traditional fuder barrels.

Thörnicher Ritsch, Riesling, Grosses Gewächs [12-25]

12.5%

2024

£160

Ritsch GG sings of red apples, blueberries, freshly cut pear and greengages. It is more primary than the Herrenberg, opening up gradually to revel in softer orchard walks. Cooler in style this year, closer perhaps to a Saar or Ruwer style Riesling, a fabulous wine. The soils are blue slate and quartzite. Ritsch is officially the second steepest vineyard in Europe after the Bremmer Calmont, also in the Mosel. Being open on both sides, it benefits from constant cool air circulation. Fermented and aged in traditional fuder barrels.

Riesling, 1896, Feinherb, Carl Loewen [14-25]

£275 2024

Sporting a new, dark blue label, the estate "1896" is fuller bodied with that light wispy smoke and red-fruited profile as always. Pithy yet precise, there is no shortage of power here but there is a highly stimulating feel to this Riesling, which is lifted by saltiness, thyme, sage and spearmint. A wine of great tension and at just 12g of sugar, it drinks like a dry wine not like a Feinherb (the official classification). In 2024, the cooler vintage supported the extra gram of sugar. It comes from the lowest parcel in the Herrenberg, abutting the river. The grapes are picked as one full block, are pressed by hand in traditional wooden basket press, and left to settle overnight. It ferments spontaneously on the full lees and is left to run to a natural stop. Production sits at one fuder barrel a year.

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FRITZ HAAG BRAUNEBERG, MOSEL

Weingut Fritz Haag speaks to the gliding refinement and friable blue-slate bed of the Mosel Valley like no other. Celebrated for their ability to produce haunting Rieslings from dry to lusciously sweet, predominantly from two Grand Cru sites: the Juffer and Juffer Sonnenuhr, Oliver Haag is a restless character who works tirelessly to bottle the best wines he can. Understated, thirst-quenching, perfumed and incredibly ageworthy Rieslings (at every level), lovers of traditional Mosel wine can't go wrong at this address. Like everywhere, 2024 was no walk in the park, and Oliver reports 35% crop loss to frost, concentrated at estate level and a few potential Juffer Kabinett plots. The overall cool, wet year meant a later harvest, and despite the low yields and decent concentration levels across the range, alcohols remain pleasingly light, the fruit as breezy as ever. Multiple pre-harvest selections were followed by late picks on the GGs and a very small amount of Auslese and GK. "I am happy with the purity of the wines. They are not creamy or powerful, but they have good extract for development. The challenge in our region is to seek out racy dry wines that are not just green and sharp but have enough support to guide them." Oliver likens 2024 to 2016 and 2008, noting that a good August and September gave enough time to cultivate grapes of quality and make at least four passes through each vineyard over the course of the harvest. The wines stayed in contact with the fine lees for longer than usual in traditional German fuder barrels, tonneaux and stainless-steel tanks, depending on the wine, to slowly enhance the tactile aspect, balancing the vintage's natural tension.



ABV Vintage 6x75cl 6x37.5cl 12x75cl 1x1.5L 12x37.5cl

Brauneberger Juffer,

Grosses Gewächs,

Fritz Haag [24-25] 12% 2024 £130

All on the slate and salts, with light and fragrant, elegant fruits. Tight and crisp on the palate with a dry citrussy feel. Fermented and aged two thirds in fuder barrels and one third in tank.

Brauneberger Juffer,

Sonnenuhr, Grosses Gewächs,

Fritz Haag [08-25]

12% 2024 £17!

The Juffer Sonnenuhr GG routinely offers a little more roundness next to the Juffer, thanks to its slightly warmer exposure in the heart of the vineyard, old vines and a longer fermentation. Clear cut and classic in feel, not showy but silky and poised, as ever. Ageing is carried out in wood.

Riesling, Screwcap,

Feinherb, Fritz Haag [01-25]

10.5% 2024

£105

Utterly drinkable, all cool clear and crisp with a lovely light fruitiness. One of our bestselling Rieslings, Haag's Estate Feinherb is ever dependable. Lip-smacking and lively, it never disappoints. Such a good Mosel estate Riesling; one that displays more than a little of the top wines' character: delicate, animated and very easy to drink.

Brauneberger Juffer

Feinherb [19-25]

12% 2024 £100

A seriously good, juicy wine at the level of GG (designated Grosse Lage), full of slate and salts, ballasted with enough concentration to support real upward development. Fermented half in steel and half in wood, it began its life as a potential GG but stopped at an effortlessly well-balanced 12g/l residual sugar.

Brauneberger Juffer,

Riesling, Kabinett,

Screwcap, Fritz Haag [03-25]

2024 £75

£40

Fresh citrus meets rain-on-slate and violet; a beautiful blend of fruit, earth and flowers, the 2024 is sappy and finely structured. "Drinky" is how Oliver describes it... Known until the 2019 vintage as Brauneberger Riesling, we now know that this wine has always in fact come from the fine blue slate Juffer.

Brauneberger Juffer Sonnenuhr,

Riesling, Spätlese, Fritz Haag [07-25]

7.5% 2024

£105

£50

£165

Wonderful, floating Mosel Riesling, offering super fruits and a succulent mix of white fleshed stone fruit, red and yellow berries and background notes of slate spice and stones. Juicy and a joy to taste. It will age handsomely.

Brauneberger Juffer Sonnenuhr,

Riesling, Auslese, Fuder 6,

Fritz Haag [06-25]

7.5% 2024 £140

£60

Some light reduction vies with the most gorgeous, complex fine Riesling notes. Sleek, gentle and finessed, super beautiful and long, this is a stunning Auslese that delivers sweetness and freshness in equal measure. Of the two regular Auslesen that the estate produces, Fuder 6 is a pure late harvest selection with no botrytis from the oldest parcel of 80–120-year-old vines close to the terraces, left of the sundial itself. Fuder 10, when produced, is a more powerful, spicy expression often with some botrytis influence.

Brauneberger Juffer Sonnenuhr,

Riesling, Auslese, Goldkapsel, Fuder 9, Fritz Haag [09-25]

7.5% 2024 £145

A rare Goldkapsel to cap this highly attractive range, Fuder 9 is again the only GK produced by the estate this year, amounting to just 1200 bottles in total. The botrytis required to achieve this level of concentration and complexity was hard to come by as the grapes needed rigorous sorting to separate good rot from bad. Clearly the bunches in this blend were the good ones, as this 2024 is immensely silky and lovely with a deep undertow of stones and salts. It positively shimmers on the palate. Wonderful.

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SCHLOSS LIESER, MOSEL

Thomas Haag has transformed the fortunes of Schloss Lieser, which was a rather run-down wine estate when he joined in the mid-1990s. Fast forward to now and Schloss Lieser is considered one of the most dynamic properties in the Mosel, with small holdings in practically all the Middle Mosel's most prestigious Grosse Lagen (Grand Crus). By pursuing an individual style that is always racy and crystalline, often lightly reductive, tight and spicy, the Lieser wines find their way on to every German wine guide with 5-star endorsements. Lara and Thomas describe 2024 as "a super classic vintage that has a great minerality. The growing season was mixed and required a lot of leaf work due to the rain but there was no suffering for the vine. In the end, the harvest was easier than in 2023 as it came with cool days and cool nights, and the skins of the grapes were robust and healthy because of our work through the summer." They started picking at the end of September, but harvest was quite extended, going into November, which yielded a small amount of highly prized Auslese GK. The 2024s at Lieser have a cool profile with a certain crunch to them, but they are not overpowered, and they are light on their feet. The reductive, herbal, smoky aromas often present in cool vintages is found in 2024 in many of the wines, and this adds certain edge. As always, everything is fermented naturally and slowly, in cool conditions, exclusively in stainless steel. Bottling for most of the wines was a little later than usual, in late April, with the GGs in summer. The salinity and athletic acidity of the vintage at Lieser indicates they may need a little extra time in bottle. The quality is evident, even striking.

ABV Vintage 6x75cl

Lieser Niederberg Helden, Riesling, Grosses Gewächs, Schloss Lieser [30-25]

2024

Slender and fine, the Helden GG presents an array of chiselled stone fruits, keeping on a tight track, with hints of black tea, fine earth and smoke as the wine opens up. This is a great dry wine with lovely focus and energy, a little creaminess in the middle, all in beautiful balance.

Piesporter Goldtröpfchen, Riesling, Grosses Gewächs, Schloss Lieser [33-25] 2024

24

£180

Unmistakably Lieser on the nose; spontaneous and herbal, all kefir lime leaf and tea, atop pure citric, vitalising fruits – not so tropical in 2024; nervy Sicilian lemon, zesty red apples, wiry acidity meets fractured slate. Long with great grip and stimulation on the finish.

Wehlener Sonnenuhr, Riesling, Grosses Gewächs, Schloss Lieser [32-25]

2024 £180

The Wehlener Sonnenuhr GG is pure class. Vibrant and succulent in profile with spice, salts and a wave of squeezed lemon juice and tangerine, the mineral structure and salinity feels crumblier and flakier here; intense, powdery and chalky, compared to the more elemental, darker Helden.

Terroir Kiste, Riesling, Grosses Gewächs, Schloss Lieser

2024 £275

The Schloss Lieser "Terroir Case" is the only way to purchase the Doctor GG, together with one bottle of each: Wehlener Sonnenuhr GG, Himmelreich GG, Niederberg Helden GG, Juffer Sonnenuhr GG and Goldtröpfchen GG. All six wines are personally signed by winemaker and owner Thomas Haag and packed in an original wooden case.

Himmelreich, Riesling, Kabinett, Schloss Lieser [09-25]

8.5%

2024 £80

Lifted and sparkling, white-fruited with herbs and lemons, this is a Kabinett with cut and sculpt, quite dry-tasting and focused. Bottled at 43g/l sugar, about 10g lower than the other Kabinetts in the range.

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SCHLOSS LIESER, MOSEL

12x37.5cl Vintage

£80

Wehlener Sonnenuhr, Riesling, Kabinett, Schloss Lieser [11-25] 8% 2024

Fuller, creamier earth-driven notes with a fleshy stone fruit and herbal drive. More complex and layered, with salinity, vibrancy and energy.

Piesporter Goldtröpfchen, Riesling, Kabinett,

Schloss Lieser[12-25]

The Goldtröpfchen offers up a combination of fine reduction and spice with tangy tangerine and pomelo notes, green apples and salts, delivered with a fresh, cool kick of energy. A tighter, more linear Goldtröpfchen that comes across as more agile and less tropical than it can do in warmer years.

Lieser Niederberg Helden, Riesling, Spätlese,

Schloss Lieser [14-25]

2024

The Helden has today a deft and lightly structured feel, projecting smoky aromas of lapsang and lemon with fresh, lively stone fruit and a darker earthier note in the background. Elemental and slatey. This is a sophisticated offering that will age well.

Wehlener Sonnenuhr, Riesling, Spätlese, Schloss Lieser [16-25] 7.5% £95

A sensational Spätlese that carries a deep slate impression on the nose, leading into a palate that displays an elegant, slightly brittle cool-vintage mix of stones and citrus fruits and salts, framed by high mouthwatering acidity: a more teasing and mineral-driven wine. Finishes on tangerine and fresh pineapple. Superb.

Wehlener Sonnenuhr, Riesling, Auslese, Schloss Lieser [20-25] 7% £145

Lovely high-toned, ripe stone fruit and complex tropical notes are intertwined with a grippy, focused acidity, before pure, silky, floral, paler notes waltz on the finish. A late harvest selection that marries succulent ripe fruits with freshness and minerality.

Lieser Niederberg Helden, Riesling,

Auslese, Goldkapsel, Schloss Lieser [22-25]

A detailed GK that oozes freshly-grated pineapple and green papaya with creamed honey and the purest, laser-like lemony finish over dark slate. The coolness of the 2024 vintage is felt in the liveliness of the wine here; it is so long on the finish but is not a wine of opulence; rather, it is a noble sweet of transparency and juice. Produced with 20-25% botrytis and bottled at 110g/l residual sugar.

Wehlener Sonnenuhr, Riesling, Auslese,

Goldkapsel, Schloss Lieser [24-25]

2024

£245

£245

The Wehlener Sonnenuhr GK is more concentrated than the Helden, coated in ripe exotic fruits through to impressive impact – a dancing, thoroughly delicious style of GK that is so clear and easy to read – though it promises an enormous amount for the future. The acidity is lacy and fine, the mineral impression more crumbled, less rocky. Clean and pure and long. Produced with 20-25% botrytis and bottled at 110g/l residual sugar.

PART 1 - RIESLING 2024 Even if hopes of a generous harvest and some higher Prädikat wines were not fulfilled, the young Rieslings from the 2024 vintage are pure joy. Those youngsters are polished like sparkling diamonds, showing multi-layered flavours, while being finely detailed, slim, and tight, as well as playful and deep at the same time – they're just fascinating!" CHRISTOPH SCHAEFER WILLI SCHAEFER, GRAACH, MOSEL

WILLI SCHAEFER, GRAACH, MOSEL

At just four and a half hectares (ha) in size, the Schaefers epitomise the life of the true vigneron, experiencing every inch of the vagaries of a marginal climate. Each year they face down that challenge with the optimism that must be essential in preserving any semblance of sanity. Or perhaps it's more that it simply flows in the blood. Remarkably, Christoph Schaefer can trace his family roots in the very same village of Graach over more than five hundred years. For all that, this charming family keeps its feet firmly in the soil by dividing the 4.5ha into 100 micro-parcels farmed over three sites: Graacher Himmelreich (2ha), Graacher Domprobst (2ha) and Wehlener Sonnenuhr (0.5ha). For Schaefer, the heart of the 2024 vintage is at Kabinett level, having "a charming fruitiness that supports quietly the freshness of the vintage." Frost was not an issue in Graach, however, localised hail in early May hit about a third of the vines. The Schaefers describe the vintage as one of constant change: unseasonably warm until the frosts in April, then wet and cool until late June, early July. The protracted flowering period they feel had an impact on irregular ripening within the bunches come harvest time, though the sunny and dry August really helped to push the development of the berries along. Harvest began in the last week of September and ran over four weeks with breaks for rain. Sensing that the weather was a story of variability, they opted to stop picking at Spätlese level of concentration, opting to safeguard a filigreed acid structure. "Ripeness is less the goal as that comes early nowadays. It only takes 2 or 3 days of warm temperatures during harvest to turn bunches from good to bad." The wines at Willi Schaefer in 2024 are racy and slender with no extremes. Pin-point, charming fruit flavours with a poise and dancing intensity - they rarely, if ever, put a foot wrong. All wines are fermented and aged in traditional Mosel fuder barrels. There is sadly no Himmelreich Spätlese or Domprobst Fuder 10 this year.



ABC 3x1.5L Vintage 6x75cl

Graacher Riesling Trocken (Screwcap) [06-25]

11.5%

10.5%

2024

£90

A brisk apple and citrus-driven village Trocken chock-full of freshness. Vital and cleansing. Aged in traditional Mosel fuder on the fine lees; a little texture to balance the high acidity.

Graacher Riesling Feinherb (Screwcap) [07-25]

2024

£90

The village Feinherb offers extra fragrancy versus the more vertical Trocken, layered with slate spice, light red fruits and tangerine, finishing crisp and lemony. Aged in wooden fuders on the fine lees to balance the acidity. A drytasting Feinherb of impeccable balance.

Graacher Himmelreich, Riesling, Kabinett,

Willi Schaefer [02-25]

2024

£135 £165

Lemon, verbena and black tea, with a more linear feel next to the Wehlener Sonnenuhr. Salty and limey with fresh red apple, white peach and blossom. Racy and slender with a river of sharp slate minerality. Bottled at 45g/l residual sugar.

Graacher Domprobst, Riesling, Kabinett, Fuder 3, Willi Schaefer [03-25]

£135 £165

The Graacher Domprobst Kabinett offers a darker rain-on-stone feel, sustaining sultry pulpy rangpur limes, golden apples and a ripe, finely integrated acidity. Fresh but tactile, pretty as ever, but with more concentration and potential here than meets the eye. Finishes on light spice and slate. Bottled at 45g/l residual sugar.

Graacher Domprobst, Riesling, Spätlese, Fuder 5, Willi Schaefer [05-25]

7.5%

2024

£235

Fuder 5 is the only Domprobst Spätlese this year. It feels much more primary and youthful than the Kabinetts preceding it, offering a ripe fusion of greengages and apples and quince, with a lick of honey going into a salty, stony finish. Fuder 5 in youth is all about texture and a certain density. This stunning Spätlese is the result of an intense pre-selection of perfect yellow berries, small and concentrated, on the cusp of Auslese. The Schaefers opted to pick before late harvest rains rather than risk waiting for an Auslese that could go either way... Just one fuder barrel was produced. What a wine.

PART 1 - RIESLING 2024

"They tempt with a combination of lightness and elegance on the one hand, and texture, complexity and precision



JOH. JOS. PRÜM WEHLEN, MOSEL

Katharina Prüm is, in our view, making the wine of her life. She told us that "we are feeling positive about 2024. But we also know what happened to our colleagues in the Ruwer and Saar, so we don't dare to show too much enthusiasm..." Well, allow us to do that bit! This is a splendid collection of 2024s that impresses from start to finish. Katharina's holdings in Graach were only minorly touched by frost and a little by hail, Bernkastel was hit by both, while Wehlen and Zeltingen were spared. She describes the 2024s as being "milder" than the 2021s – another cold year - "with no lack of anything, nor any extremes." The sweetness up to Spätlese level presents in tasting as secondary to saltiness and freshness, the wines impeccably animated and pure. The jumps between Prädikat level (sweetness/concentration) are distinct and individually expressed. Each wine and site has its own clear profile, as laid out in the notes. Indeed, it is hard to imagine anyone regretting having laid down any of them, and it is in that regard we are reminded that JJ Prüm is one of only a tiny number of German wine estates that loyally draws wine collectors from all walks of life. Occasionally, one ponders what it is about their style (it's certainly not their website) that chimes with such a broad spectrum of people, even those who do not necessarily identify with the Rieslingworld at large. It's true that their wines are nimble, joyous, fun – and delicious – and at the same time, paradoxically ageworthy, strident and intricate. But that is true of others too. Sometimes it's just a feeling. Prüm is fresh air and the absence of urgency. These are the wines that you dive off a boat with. They are timeless and they are class.

> 6x375cl Vintage

Graacher Himmelreich, Riesling, Kabinett, JJ Prüm [04-25]

8.5% 2024 £162

Fresh clear cut, imbued with very distinct apple notes, very pure and cool with a fine grip. A Kabinett with an impressive track record of ageing, and it is also normally the most open of the range in youth.

Wehlener Sonnenuhr, Riesling, Kabinett, JJ Prüm [05-25]

The Wehlener Sonnenuhr is spicier and more reductive than the Himmelreich, with sharper, fresh pineapple, stone fruits and lemons. Complex and juicy and a lot more persistent, all on the extract and slatey material. This year, at least at this early stage, there is distance between the two Kabinetts. The Graacher will please young, the Wehlener Sonnenuhr needs time.

Graacher Himmelreich, Riesling,

Spätlese, JJ Prüm [07-25]

Detailed and juicy, offering crushed limes, salts and salivating sapid fruits – not too sweet. It has a fresh, dry slatey finish.

Wehlener Sonnenuhr, Riesling,

Spätlese, JJ Prüm [08-25]

The most sophisticated and complex of the Spätlesen, carrying ripe yellow fruits with a hint of cream and spice, full fruited with a great integrated acidity and beautifully pliant texture. Long and finessed.

PRICES ARE IN BOND

JOH. JOS. PRÜM WEHLEN, MOSEL

3V Vintage 6x37.5cl 6x75cl 3x1.5L

Graacher Himmelreich, Riesling, Auslese, JJ Prüm [11-25]

7.5% 2024 £198

A steely Auslese with a light reduction on the nose with small tight berries, lime leaf and lemongrass. The higher ripeness level here bring with it tropical notes of passion fruit and fresh pineapple. On tasting, its pretty, elegant perfume continues to build. Overall, this a lighter styled Auslese with good acidity and succulence, making it very food friendly.

Wehlener Sonnenuhr, Riesling, Auslese, JJ Prüm [12-25]

7.5% 2024 £222 £264

An Auslese that owing to its concentration comes across more primary and less expressive than the Spätlese today. Not reductive, but closely packed, presenting stone fruits and melon dipped in creamed honey. Less spice and minerals at this stage, more on the white and yellow fruits, and a fine, gentle acid thread. An Auslese to lay down for ten years and come back to.

Graacher Himmelreich, Auslese, Goldkapsel, JJ Prüm [14-25]

8% 2024 £234 £450

A glorious noble sweet that leaps out of the glass with the telltale botrytised notes of jasmine tea, pear and soft dried mango and apricot. Fully ripe and sweet, the product of a very small selection in the vineyard. On the day, it came across in style closer to a LGK – a hugely impressive balance of elegance and intensity that overdelivers in 2024.

Zeltinger Sonnenuhr, Riesling, Auslese, Goldkapsel, JJ Prüm [16-25]

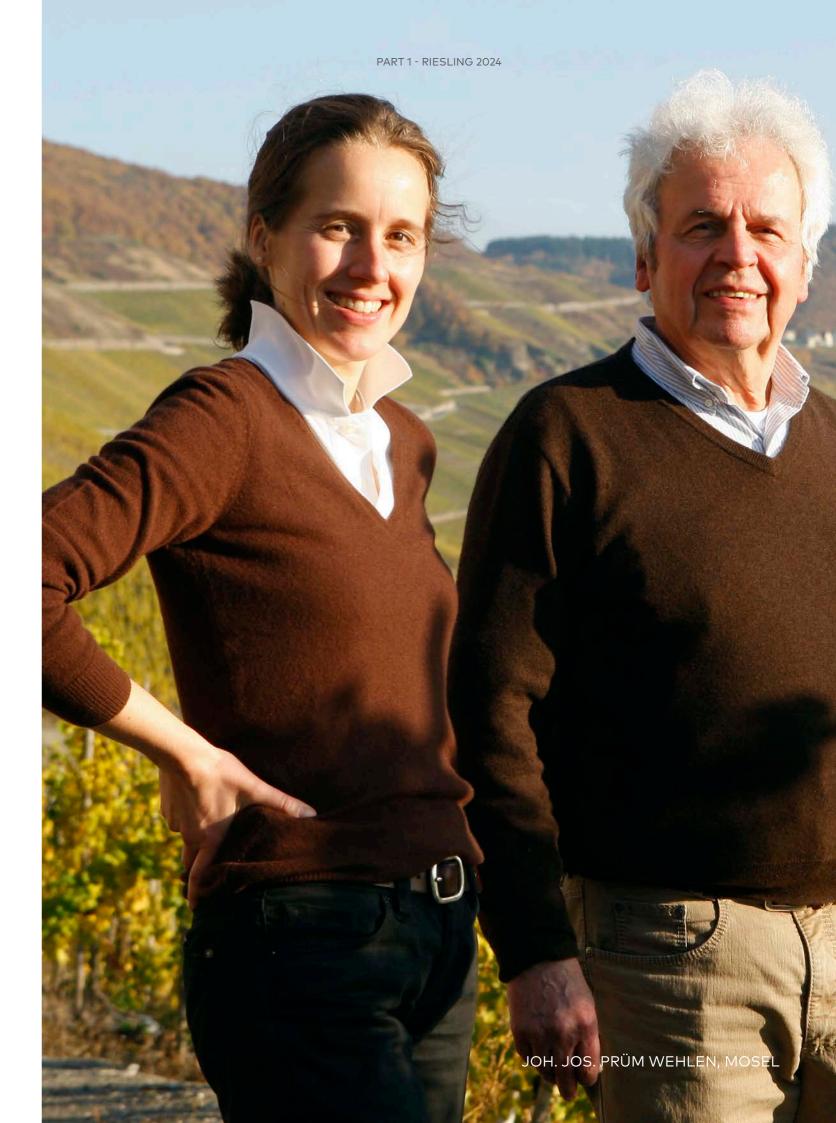
3% 2024 £378

Full and intense and yet so pure and "Prüm" in its detail. Grated zesty tropical fruits, a hint of smoke and fine earth, then long and concentrated on the finish. Plush in the middle, full flavoured and luminous. The most unctuous and flattering of the three GKs today – a rich, seamless wine that is hard not to love.

Wehlener Sonnenuhr, Riesling, Auslese, Goldkapsel, JJ Prüm [15-25]

7.5% 2024 £252 £462

Tighter on the nose and more reductive and backward, offering fine spice, slate and minerals. On the palate it presents an intense citrus burst, floral and bitter-sweet notes of almond blossom and pastry. This GK is super long and complex. Wonderful.



EMRICH-SCHÖNLEBER MONZINGEN, NAHE

Along with the Saar and Ruwer, it is the Nahe growers who have most to feel aggrieved about in 2024. The region's warmer days and very cold nights always exposes them to frost damage, but it is the rare year that the Grosse Lagen (Grand Crus) are equally badly hit. Frank Schönleber says that come harvest time they were hoping to hit 50% of a regular crop and that is where they have landed now that the wines are in bottle. Thanks to their typically fastidious work through the season, Frank does not consider the growing period itself to have been all that challenging, adding that they "had healthy fruit and good acidity. The wines are precise and filigreed, well balanced and not overly demanding," referring to 2016 and 2008 as useful comparisons. Schönleber is an estate famed for Grosses Gewächs (Grand Cru dry wines) and they are standouts as ever, with a tightness and intricacy in 2024 that will require patience to get them at their best. If they evolve along the lines of 2016, then there is lots to look forward to, as those GGs are superb today. The sweeter wines are friendly, with chamomile and ripe stone fruits lending a more open, padded sense of luxury, even if quantities are tiny. If the GGs speak to quality German engineering, the fruity wines are a walk through the grounds. A smart buy, as ever, is the Monzinger Halgans which not only comes from young and not-so-young vines in the Halenberg, but also from declassified vines in Auf der Ley – a single vineyard plot which is used for an auction-only GG and tends to land at more than double the price of the Halenberg.



ABV Vintage 12x37.5cl 6x75cl 3x1.5L 1x3L

Monzinger Riesling, Trocken,

Fruhtau, Emrich-Schönleber [32-25] 12% 2024 £120

Fresh citrus – all squeezed juice and sparkling colours – a pretty and vibrant Fruhtau, as ever. Produced from younger vines in the Frühlingsplätzchen vineyard of 10-25 years old and raised in the same way as the GGs, this is always a canny buy.

Monzinger Riesling, Trocken, Halgans,

Emrich-Schönleber [33-25] 12% 2024 £125

Highly mineral and transparent, the Halgans has a fine chalky feel, more purity and less fruit than the Fruhtau; it drinks like a cold river over stones. Produced mostly from younger vines in the Halenberg but it now includes a small part of Auf der Ley too, a plot so special that it is only bottled for the auction.

Frühlingsplätzchen, Riesling, Grosses

Gewächs, Emrich-Schönleber [44-25] 12% 2024 £305 £310 £230

A chiselled, fine boned Frühlingsplätzchen; quite shy initially, high in citric intensity and rapier-like acidity. Opens to whiter fruits and pale, taut flavours framed by stony extract, slate and salts. Fine bone China. The meticulous quality selection in 2024 equates to 50-60% of a normal crop. Produced from 35-year-old vines, fermented naturally and raised in traditional German casks. A red slate, loam and gravel dominated site facing southwest to southeast.

Halenberg Riesling, Grosses Gewächs,

Emrich-Schönleber [45-25] 12.5% 2024 £335 £345 £255

Introspective again, as these GGs can be at the beginning; a closer look reveals a riper citrus and almost sherbet-like palate. Neat and crisp and fast, it offers lemons, grapefruit, slates and stones with tons of latent energy. The Halenberg GG 2024 represents just a third of a normal crop. Technically Halenberg is warmer than Frühlingsplätzchen, but its poor soils and quartzite presence lend a cooler profile to the wines – providing you pick it at the right time. Here, ripeness moves quickly.

Monzinger Halenberg, Riesling, Spätlese,

Emrich-Schönleber [54-25] 8% 2024 £155

Silky sweet suggestions of mango and apricot and Amalfi lemons; very delicious, energetic, open fruits with real cut and cleanse on the finish. Whole bunch pressed, they take off the first few litres and focus on the heart of the press where the acidity level is highest. The Schönleber goal is to preserve vitality and pick when the first grapes are on the cusp of overripeness.

Monzinger Halenberg, Riesling,

Auslese, Emrich-Schönleber [57-25] 7% 2024 £225

Cool fruited with a mix of yellow flesh, chamomile, cherry and white strawberry notes; this is always a plush and silky and high-toned Auslese. Fresh and drinkable in style, not demanding. Gorgeous. At just 900L in total, the Halenberg Auslese is always a tiny cuvée. Frank Schönleber is a believer that botrytis in Auslese is essential to develop the raisined and exotic flavours that define the category over time.

PRICES ARE IN BOND

"The wines that we were able to bring into the cellar impress with their character, elegance and harmony - even if they will only be available in very limited quantities. There will only be a few bottles, especially from our Grosse Lage vineyards in the Middle Nahe, but they will be all the more precious."



DÖNNHOFF OBERHAUSEN, NAHE

Dönnhoff is one of the most globally renowned German wine estates. The family has been in the Nahe region since 1761 and as winegrowers and bottlers since around 1900. It was only last year though that we realised the extent to which Helmut Dönnhoff, father of present winemaker Cornelius, paved the way for the success we see today. He grew the estate from just 2.5ha in 1971 to 30ha today. In doing so, he helped to put the Nahe region and his own output on the international map of world class wineries. Remarkable then, that he says he has "never seen such a disaster as the frost in 2024. We really thought that the Grosse Lagen were frost-proof, but it was not so." The Dönnhoffs are down by the tune of 70%. It seems flippant to say that what they have got in the cellar is exceptional, but the truth is that the frost damage yielded moments of great positivity. Two friends of the estate, a certain Philipp Wittmann of the Rheinhessen, and Nicola Libelli of Bürklin-Wolf in the Pfalz, proposed an exciting project whereby they would split two Ortswein (village-level) vineyards each with Dönnhoff. The proprietors would manage the viticulture through the season, for logistical ease, but Dönnhoff would have the final decision on when to pick and employ their own team. Quite apart from the Dönnhoff picking team realising that not all German vineyards require winches, all parties have loved the exploration of winemaker-meets-new terroir in a new region - something that rarely, if ever, happens amongst family estates in Germany. These are one-off wines that tasted fabulous on our visit. As a trio, with the original Dönnhoff Schlossböckelheimer village Trocken (that in 2024 includes the full production of Felsenberg GG), they make for a fascinating set. At GG level, both Dellchen and Hermannshöhle rank amongst the best we tasted. They will need 8-10 years to show what they can do but experience has shown that after that, the top wines (at all sweetness levels) hold for a very long time.

ABV Vintage 6x75cl

Schlossböckelheimer Riesling, Trocken, Dönnhoff [11-25]

12% 2024

24

£135

£135

The first of three exceptional, even unique Ortswein (village wines) in the 2024 collection, the Schlossböckelheimer is becoming an important and symbolic wine for the estate. It offers great intensity of tight golden fruit, and a crystalline structure in the wine. In 2024 it has a nervy, sharp acidity underpinned by a clear volcanic, smoky profile, with lots of minerals. The village Schlossböckelheimer typically contains early pickings of the Grand Cru Felsenberg anyway, but this year it includes the full production of what would have been the GG bottling, which in the end was too small to release. For that reason, it tastes rather more like a GG than your average village wine.

Westhofener Riesling, Trocken, Dönnhoff [12-25]

2%

2024

A rare examination into how a celebrated German winemaker attacks an entirely new terroir, this Westhofener (Rheinhessen) Riesling is produced from two vineyards supplied by acclaimed producer Philipp Wittmann, to help offset Dönnhoff's catastrophic frost losses. These limestone vineyards were managed by Wittmann throughout the season but picked by the Dönnhoff team on their preferred date. It has a real vital and cleansing sherbet-like limestone acidity which penetrates deep into lime, oyster shell, apples and grated pineapple – wonderful energy, transparency and a lean, vibrancy.

Wackenheimer Riesling, Trocken, Dönnhoff [13-25]

1.5%

2024

£135

A rare examination into how a celebrated German winemaker attacks an entirely new terroir, this Wackenheimer (Pfalz) Riesling is produced from two vineyards supplied by Germany's largest organic producer Bürklin-Wolf, to help offset Dönnhoff's frost losses. The sandstone, clay and loamy soils in and around Wackenheimer, allied to warmer overall temperatures produces playful Rieslings with a certain breadth: pliant, pulpy fruits that charm from the beginning. A stroll through an orchard; it offers red apples, sage and wild strawberries, finishing on juicy rich stone fruits. Softer styled and delicious, a humming acidity floats fully ripe flavours.

DÖNNHOFF OBERHAUSEN, NAHE

ABV 6x75cl Vintage

Dellchen Riesling, Grosses Gewächs, Dönnhoff [24-25]

12.5% 2024 £340

A GG of supreme delicacy and high-toned juicy fruits, lovely purity and elegance. No hard edges here but there is a lovely, slender cool-vintage feel to this 2024. Beautiful. Dellchen is the rare vineyard that combines two entirely different soil types, with up to 2m of slate over volcanic bedrock, on a steep 70% gradient. Picked in micro-plots and raised in a combination of traditional German fuder and stainless steel.

Hermannshöhle, Riesling, Grosses Gewächs, Dönnhoff [25-25]

12.5% 2024

£365

A stunner of a GG, by every measure. The 2024 comes with a light reduction and fine minerality woven through a steely, Riesling bouquet that is both edgy and complex. Not powerful on the palate, but persistent - a more slender figure than in a warmer vintage. There is so much intricacy and elegance here, the acidity is ripe but reviving. Five-

Riesling, Feinherb, Dönnhoff [01-25]

star. A truly great vineyard that seldom lets you down.

2024 £85

Simple off-dry Riesling fruits with an easy-going juicy freshness. The estate Riesling comes mostly from the younger vineyards in the villages of Bad Kreuznach and Roxheim where the fuller volcanic and sandstone soils produce a more accessible style from the beginning. By contrast, the estate Trocken comes from the vineyards around Oberhausen, Niederhäusen and Schlossböckelheim – the idea being that the two estate wines are not the same wines stopped at different sugar levels.

Oberhäuser Leistenberg, Riesling, Kabinett, Dönnhoff [03-25]

Anne Dönnhoff describes 2024 as an excellent year for Kabinett and fruity wines. It's true that this Leistenberg has real freshness and focus and it's easy to like. Leistenberg has the Lemberg vineyard in front which gives it some protection, unlike Hermannshöhle, which sits fully exposed. This cool microclimate makes Leistenberg perfect for lighter Kabinett wines - indeed, historically, they bottled at least three variations of Kabinetts from this site: Kabinett, Kabinett Feinherb and Kabinett Trocken. A southeast facing site on 30-40% gradient, the soils are primarily weathered grey slate with a dark clay.

Oberhäuser Brücke, Riesling, Spätlese, Dönnhoff [15-25]

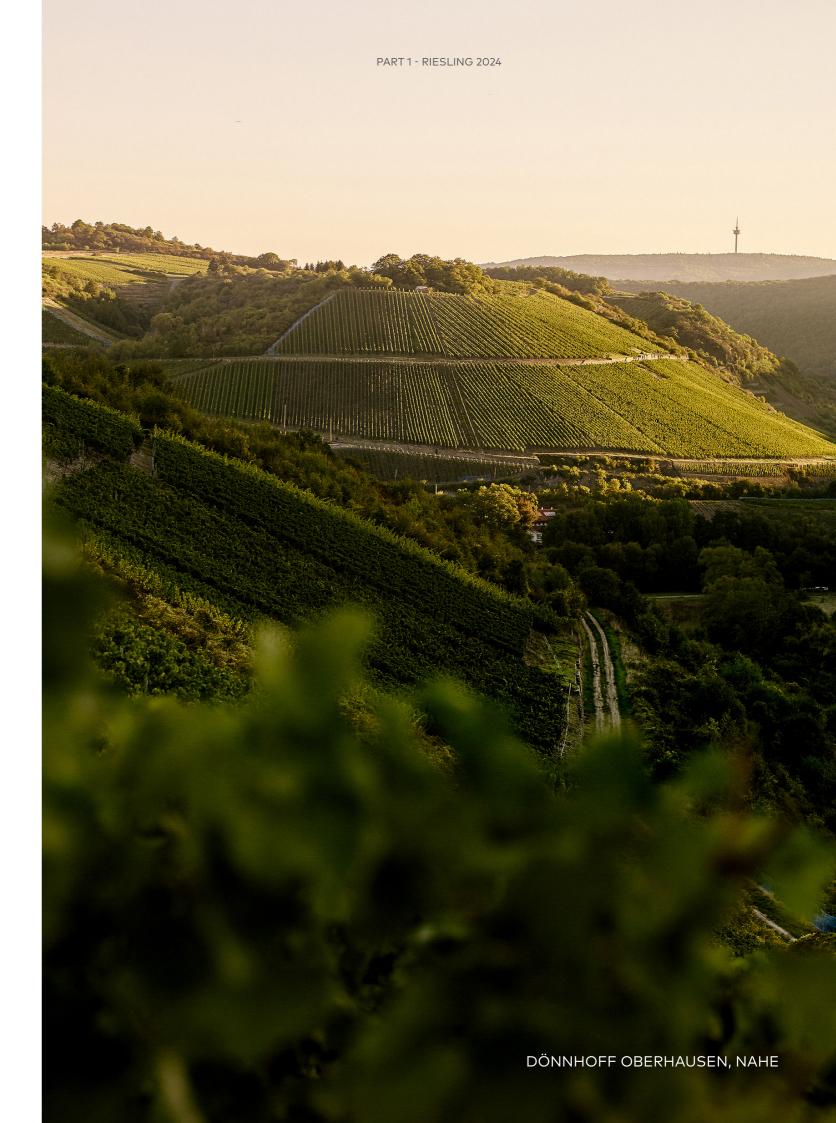
£195

£100

The Brücke Spätlese 2024 is medium bodied in style with a good freshness and cool, tapered fruits, offering a lot of up-front charm - it will require a few years to develop the complexity that only bottle ageing can bring. Produced from one of Dönnhoff's coolest sites, Brücke is a low vineyard close to the river which excels at Spätlese level and occasionally produces scintillating Eiswein.

Niederhäuser Hermannshöhle, Riesling Spätlese, Dönnhoff [16-25] £230

Intense, complex and subtly floral, fruit shimmers and sparkles along a juicy acid line. A gorgeous Spätlese with plenty of substance and tight-knit fruit.



KÜHLING-GILLOT & BATTENFELD SPANIER **HOHEN-SÜLZEN, RHEINHESSEN**

It's hard to keep track of proceedings at what must be one of the most ambitious projects in Germany. They continue to draw plaudits for their exclusively dry expressions of the limestone vineyards (Battenfeld-Spanier) and red slate vineyards (Kühling-Gillot). Moreover, huge investments in Pinot Noir and Chardonnay are starting to really pay off [more detail in Part 2 of the brochure] and a new bottling machine bought in the past year allows Oliver and Carolin absolute flexibility on dates and schedules, precisely adapting to the development of each individual wine. No frost in the Rheinhessen thankfully, but 2024 was naturally a cool and wet year. Carolin feels that one of the crucial factors for success was to de-leaf rigorously around flowering time and to keep on top of it. This is especially true at a fully organic estate who wishes to keep spraying to a minimum. The big advantage they have in the Rheinhessen, Carolin explained, is constant wind, from the Donnersberg mountains to the limestone vineyards, and a warmer exposure and regular breezes off the Rhine to the red slate sites. Quantities are smaller than usual, but the wines feel sophisticated and balanced. Less explosive and spicy than the 2023s, the 2024s offer more delicacy and charm. For grown-up dry wines that have a bit of extra texture and ripeness in places, with notes of fine reduction and smoky lees, delivered with a sculpted feel, we can't recommend this estate highly enough. They produce first-class barrel-aged wines that sit beautifully next to fine white Burgundies, Champagnes and Chenin Blancs.



ABV V

12.5%

Vintage

6x75cl

£110

Mölsheim, Riesling, Aus dem Erste Lagen, Battenfeld-Spanier [20-25] 12% 2024

Pixellated, precise and cooling with a fine lees and gently growing texture, one of the best examples of this cuvée we have tasted yet. Mölsheim is produced from vines between the Grosse Lagen Kreuzberg and Schwarzer Herrgott including young vines from the latter. As such, it is now bottled with the Premier Cru designate "Aus dem Erste Lagen" and marked on the label "1G".

Kirchenstuck, Riesling, Grosses Gewächs, Battenfeld-Spanier [48-25] 12.5% 2024 £225

Lovely open white and yellow fruits, Kirchenstuck always offers a succulent style with a roundness of texture and subtle mint and flintiness. Gentle and fine and long. Hailing from a plot above the winery in Hohen-Sülzen, Kirchenstuck is located in a relatively flat vineyard with a high proportion of limestone and loess. The Grosse Lage (Grand Cru) section is only a small portion of the wider site.

Hipping, Riesling, Grosses Gewächs, Kühling-Gillot [53-25]

2024 £285

The 2024 is a more herbal noted Hipping incarnate, offering expressive notes of fine lime and rangpur, crushed mint and lemongrass on the nose, going into verbena. On the palate, tighter berries, light citrus, slate smoked–pomelo and salted peaches. A nicely detailed Hipping, one that is less exuberant than the 2023 and 2022; more on the detail and slim, wiry fruits. Produced from a blend of four small plots, fermented and aged in 1200L cask. Hipping is a justly famous, steep, southeast/east facing vineyard on red slate – along with Pettenthal, one of the key sites in the Roter Hang.

Zellerweg am Schwarzen Herrgott, Grosses Gewächs, Battenfeld-Spanier [50-25]

2.5% 2024 £335

Bright and light and radiant with tons of juice and a composed, nuanced and detailed feel. A step up on 2023 even, our favourite vintage for this cuvée until now. The 2024 is more delicate in style with lacy fruit and fine acidity, gentle and cool and yet it offers refined drinkability already. This is one of the oldest known vineyard sites in Germany, first recognised in the 8th Century. The vineyard is technically split into two sections – the Zellerweg am Schwarzen Herrgott which sits administratively in the Rheinhessen, whilst the part below the road is dubbed just Am Schwarzen Herrgott under jurisdiction of the Pfalz. Both have dark limestone soils and are heavily influenced by the Donnersberg mountains to the west, from where cool winds flow.

Pettenthal, Riesling, Grosses Gewächs, Kühling-Gillot [54-25]

12.5% 2024 £335

Pettenthal comes with a crumblier mineral structure, as we move back to the slate vineyards, presenting deep lemon, apples and lots of wispy mineral salts and white pepper. Super smart and composed – the 2024 has great acidity and verticality. A superbly transparent GG. Typically, Pettenthal is the more sober and sophisticated sibling of the enthusiastic, gregarious Hipping. The main difference is that in Pettenthal the iron rich slate tends to be composed of larger plates, which contributes to the wine's signature sense of composure. At 73 degrees, Pettenthal is the steepest vineyard in the Rheinhessen. The Kühling-Gillot vines were planted in the 1970s.

Frauenberg, Riesling, Grosses Gewächs, Battenfeld-Spanier [49-25] 12.5% 2024 £335

Airborne and super fine, this Frauenberg is not so showy or dazzling as last year's version, the cool vintage offering layers of subtlety and nervy focus. As always, it shows notes of white stone lime and a briney salinity, tight and long with a light smoky stony finish. A very windy site that offers up light to the Hergott's darkness. The soil is extremely rocky and stony, not heavy at all. Buffeted by wind from the Zellertal valley, sitting at 280m above sea level, this is always the last vineyard to be harvested, and the wines have an aromatic clarity that is second to none.

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ÖKONOMIERAT REBHOLZ **SIEBELDINGEN, PFALZ**

Rebholz is a longstanding and highly regarded winery in the Southern Pfalz, not far from the French border. In the villages of Siebeldingen, Birkweiler and Burrweiler, where Rebholz operates, the vineyards have the most extreme, fractured and fragmented profile of anywhere in the Pfalz region. Brothers Hans and Valentin Rebholz harness this diversity, in step with high elevations (and thus cool nights) to dial up the intensity of the different soil profiles in their armoury, leveraging their old vine holdings to produce bracingly clear, ageworthy dry whites, and not just Riesling! 2024 is an excellent example of the quality of the Weisser Burgunder (Pinot Blanc) that the brothers turn out, the best in their view since 2018. In fact, the range tastes as if there are two different vintages to choose from. Spring was noticeably wet and cold, and they lost 30% to frost. "Then we had high heat in July and August which made the young Riesling vines suffer as they could not easily adapt from a wet year to a warm one." They started picking the youngest Rieslings in September, along with the Pinot Blancs, and stopped as rains came in and temperatures dropped, the harvest finishing up finally in mid-October. The Pinot Blancs taste of the warm summer, with good concentration levels, extract, texture and density, whilst the Rieslings have a light, cool vintage feel with alcohol levels the lowest they have seen since 2016. Acidity levels, with that, turned out to be surprisingly moderate post-fermentation, giving them a remarkably delicate, filigreed, pretty feel at this early stage – less of the chisel and structure that we've come to know and love. The GGs were selected exclusively from the old vines and are about 50% down on a normal year. Of note this year are the Weisser Burgunder and a stunning Im Sonnenschein Riesling GG. As always, the Ortswein (village-level wines), named according to soil profile, all come entirely from the Grosse Lagen (Grand Crus) and are effectively a first selection of the GGs. Viticulture is fully organic and the total absence of oak or additives in the cellar produces bell-clear whites of great accuracy.

> ABV Vintage 6x75cl

Siebeldinger, Weisser Burgunder, vom Muschelkalk, Ökonomierat Rebholz [36-25]

13% 2024 £155

The Ortswein (village) Weisser Burgunder follows the same concept as the Riesling GGs i.e. young vines from Grand Cru sites. In this case, the limestone Im Sonnenschein offers a sapid, nutty texture and fine, crispy fruits couched in a full but very fine silky embrace.

Im Sonnenschein, Weisser Burgunder, Grosses Gewächs, Ökonomierat Rebholz [17-25]

2024 £330

High toned, fine and flinty with a core of ripe lemon and verbena. Very stony and clear, salty, full of impact and drama but also finesse. The GG was picked in the first week of September, which in some years poses a challenge as that can mean sugar without flavour, but in 2024 the aromatics were present with the requisite structure. Certainly, one of the best they have made.

Birkweiler, Riesling vom Rotliegenden, Trocken, Ökonomierat Rebholz [05-25]

£145 11% 2024

Precise, quiet white fruits form a base for pink spices to play off salts and berries. Lots of juice and a fine grip on the finish suggests that even with a low alcohol level, the animated structure of the wine does come from the soil. This wine comes from the first pick across the great Kastanienbusch site; thus, all the grapes in this village wine are technically eligible for GG status. Raised exclusively in stainless steel.

Siebeldinger, Riesling vom Muschelkalk, Trocken, Ökonomierat Rebholz [23-25]

£145

Light and easy to taste with a gentle white fruited and nutty, chalky hit on the finish, not showy, but fluid and engaging. Its prettiness suggests you could drink this already. A more delicate Muschelkalk Riesling this year typically it carries a deeper structure. Produced from a combination of younger plots and declassified GG fruit from the limestone rich Im Sonnenschein vineyard. Raised exclusively in stainless steel.

ABV

Ganzhorn, Riesling, Grosses Gewächs, Ökonomierat Rebholz [19-25]

2024 £345

6x75cl

The Ganzhorn has a greener-tinged robe which already points to a cool, crystalline Riesling. Crispy and salty and a little bound-up today, it has impressive length with pure focus. Tasted from tank on the fine lees, returning to it at the end of the tasting, its class and refinement is undeniable. A gravel-rich monopole site of 1.9 hectares which sits within the wider Im Sonnenschein vineyard. Raised exclusively in stainless steel.

Schawer, Riesling, Grosses Gewächs, Ökonomierat Rebholz [31-25]

2024

Vintage

£345

More direct and sharper than the Ganzhorn, the slate acidity of the Schawer brings a "faster" feeling to the wine. It impresses immediately and rushes over like a wave. A cuvée that gets better every year. Schawer is a dark slate site, unusual in this region.

Im Sonnenschein, Riesling, Grosses Gewächs, Ökonomierat Rebholz [26-25] 12% 2024 £345

A GG that is going to take some beating this vintage, the 2024 Im Sonnenschein Riesling GG is absolutely stunning. Gorgeously intense, salty and very fine. Not a lightweight structure, more vigour and drive, underpinning notes of lemon, oyster shell, nuts and the light creaminess and high-toned character of elderflower and ginger. Top drawer. Im Sonnenschein's pure limestone soils give this Riesling a completely different shape to others in the Rebholz range, more akin to some of the southern Rheinhessen bottlings of Battenfeld-Spanier or Wittmann.

Kastanienbusch, Riesling, Grosses Gewächs, Ökonomierat Rebholz [21-25] 2024 £380

Kastanienbusch always has an inner strength that pushes non-fruit elements to the surface. Black tea, iodine and earthy notes play off fresh citrus, grapefruits, lemons and peach. Very fine and mineral, the cool vintage here producing a nicely pared-back intellectual Kastanienbusch that will make for very sophisticated long-term drinking. The great Kastanienbusch vineyard rises from 150m above sea level to over 300m and is formed of red iron rich soils that are around 320 million years old. It tends to produce complex powerful Riesling that is nevertheless transparent and full of energy. Raised exclusively in stainless steel.



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WHITES WITH BITE, REDS WITH LAYERS

2022 has cemented itself as a legendary, homogenous Spätburgunder (Pinot Noir) vintage, blessed with high points the likes of which are totally new to most tasters. Consequently, most of the wines were snapped up on release last year and will remain in cellars over the decade. However, we have one grower who has always preferred to release her wine after an extra 12 months in bottle, gifting us with what is likely to be our last bite of the 2022 apple. In tasting the Adams Wein releases, the 2022s have a shine and a mid-weight subtlety to them that makes them utterly joyful. An under-the-radar producer in the UK but one that is developing a name in German circles, Simone Adams is a young, biodynamic winemaker, backing nervy, herby, aromatic reds and full, mineralrich whites with bite, from her limestone vineyards in the northern Rheinhessen.

For most producers though, it is the turn of the 2023s, a year that pools the succulence of a warm year like 2022 and the red-fruited juice and cleanse of a cooler vintage. Sebastian Fürst, in Franken, remarked on the wines' purity and inviting character. That was echoed by the team at Huber in Baden, who describe the reds as being fruity, slender and fine, with a lighter tannic structure. They are exactly the sort of wines that disappear all too quickly over dinner. Of particular note are the Chardonnays. Not just at Huber, who have isolated exceptional clonal material for their plantings (almost exclusively from Champagne and Domaine Leflaive), but also at Battenfeld-Spanier, in the southern Rheinhessen, bordering the Pfalz. Their Chardonnay and Pinot programme in the Zellertal where the vineyards are cool, windy, dark-footed and besieged with limestone, is, in theory, coming to fruition now. The debut Mölsheim Chardonnay 2023 in the offer is a striking example not just of potential, but absolute quality. We only say, "in theory," as following the best reds they've made to date in 2022, a major blot on the GERMANY BUYER 2023 vintage copybook was a severe localised hailstorm in JUSTERINI & BROOKS

late August that wiped out 17ha of Spanier's Pinot Noir, forcing them to divert almost all the production to Rosé.

There is consensus in Germany that Pinot Noir has largely up and come - at least in qualitative terms, if not yet in price. Chardonnay is now the darling of the day. Outside of the Mosel-Saar-Ruwer, where Riesling accounts for 99% of plantings, advocacy is closing in on experimentation, and when luminaries like Klaus-Peter Keller, Oliver Spanier, Julian Huber and others are seen to back it in a big way, the rest of the industry sits up and takes note. The Chardonnay story is reaching an inflection point in Germany and there will be a lot more to come on that in future.

For the majority of Spätburgunder producers in 2023, the year can be surmised as a relatively normal one that offers pliancy and fruit over any leanness. The season was mild with warm temperatures and ample water in Spring. The warm, dry spell that followed put some under pressure, but the main challenge for growers were late summer rains that required pre-harvest work to thin the canopies and cut out bunches at the risk of rot. Harvest started in mid-September, roughly as normal. The challenge in 2023 was to pick quickly enough to beat the dreaded Suzuki fly, which attacks fully ripe Pinot Noir grapes and spoils the juice. For the most part, after selections and multiple passes during harvest, yields landed about normal, and the wines have a charming, fruit-forward, yet layered, seamless character with a fine juiciness that will permit some pleasurable early drinking. As always, the top wines will benefit from ageing.

Mark Dearing



BUYERS' PICKS –SPÄTBURGUNDER (PINOT NOIR) & CHARDONNAY

	Vintage	6x75cl
CHARDONNAY		
Malterdinger, Chardonnay, Huber [02-25]	2023	£155
Lohpfad, Chardonnay, Adams Wein	2023	£160
Auf dem Haun, Chardonnay, Adams Wein	2023	£220
Mölsheim Chardonnay, Battenfeld Spanier [29-25]	2023	£240
SPÄTBURGUNDER (PINOT NOIR)		
Auf dem Haun, Spätburgunder, Adams Wein	2022	£220
Malterdinger, Spätburgunder, Alte Reben, Huber [11-25]	2023	£255
Pinot Noir, Burgstadter Berg, Erste Gewächs, Fürst [13-25]	2023	£265
Maximin Grünhauser, Abtsberg, Pinot Noir, Grosses Gewächs [44-25]	2023	£325

MAXIMIN GRÜNHAUS MERTESDORF, RUWER

Many thought we'd never see the day that the Mosel-Saar-Ruwer had an approved Grosses Gewächs (Grand Cru dry) in Pinot Noir. To date, there is the just the one, and we are pleased to offer said 2023 Abtsberg GG from Maximin Grünhaus – the second vintage to attain this high status. In getting Abtsberg over the line as a fully-fledged GG, requiring proof in the VDP that the wine has a track record of longevity and quality, Maximin Von Schubert has achieved what the family set out to do many years ago. There is something individual about the Abtsberg Pinot, not just from a marginal climate standpoint, but also in its mineral expression, its sappiness and its slender, filigreed acidity that makes it unique to its place and time. We all know Pinot Noir as an international variety, but the proportion of Pinot grown on slate must be infinitesimally small on a global scale. The Abtsberg vineyard is planted to an even mix of German (Baden and Geisenheim) and Dijon clones. In 2023, they harvested the reds over six tranches to avoid the interference of the dreaded Suzuki fly. Once in the cellar, the grapes were entirely destemmed and aged for 20 months in second use barriques. The most serious barrels become the GG, and the prettier, more succulent wines go into the Erste Gewächs (Premier Cru).

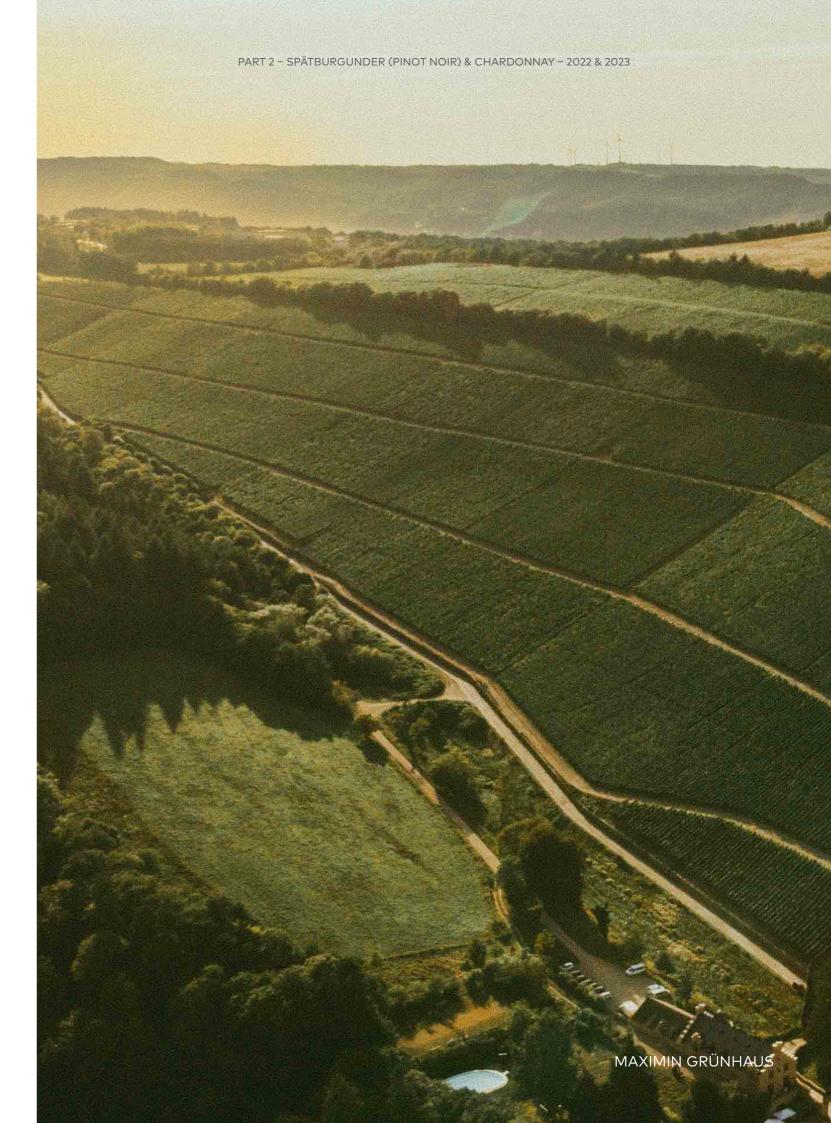
	ABV	Vintage	6x75cl
Maximin Grünhauser, Pinot Noir, 1G [43-25]	13.5%	2023	£170

Cranberry and tea leaves, fresh strawberry and some brambles and spice. Shows a kiss of oak on the bright, sappy finish – not a lush Pinot but pretty with a crisp, German identity. Fully destemmed and aged in second use barrique for 20 months.

Maximin Grünhauser, Abtsberg, Pinot Noir, Grosses Gewächs [44-25] 13.5% 2023 £325

The more delayer Pinot Noir offering up a deriver fruit been of plants and crice with some currents a hint of toost, mint and

The more deluxe Pinot Noir, offering up a darker fruit base of plums and spice with some currants, a hint of toast, mint and quality barrique notes. More structure in the GG but freshness and complexity too. Fully destemmed and aged in second use François Frères and Taransaud Burgundy barrels for 20 months.



ADAMS WEIN INGELHEIM, RHEINHESSEN

Adams Wein is a ten-hectare estate situated in the historic but lesser-known Ingelheim sub-region of the Rheinhessen. Located a stone's throw across the Rhine, immediately south of the Rheingau, the northern part of the Mainz Basin is all weathered limestone. Since taking over the estate in 2010, Dr. Simone Adams has committed to a whole cluster philosophy with the best German Pinot Noir clones. Excitingly, Simone made the decision early on to hold back her wines an extra year in bottle, so this year we offer arguably the finest red vintage in Germany's history – 2022, along with the juicy, sparky 2023 Chardonnays. "2023 sits stylistically between 2021 and 2022 – it started warm and dry, a little rain at veraison dropped the temperatures, leading into a cooler, fresher harvest period. It produced really 'drinky' wines in both colours. 2022 is now a famous, charming, crowd-pleasing Pinot vintage – the vineyards supported the warmth incredibly well given there was no rain from May to September." The style at Adams Wein is one of race, herb and nervy, stony juices; the use of whole cluster producing highly aromatic wines that are never overly dense or flashy, but fine, drinkable and focused.



Lohpfad, Chardonnay, Adams Wein

A graceful bouquet full of ripe but controlled fruit and a wash of fine acidity on the finish. The Lohpfad typically offers a bit more strength compared to the Auf dem Haun. Lohpfad is a small parcel within the Ingelheimer Schlossberg vineyard, facing southeast. It is characterised by clay marl in the subsoil and an upper layer of loam. It is the highest and technically coolest site that Adams works with, though it is protected by trees, and sees a fraction of the wind that the Auf dem Haun receives, so the jury is out as to which is really the cooler. Raised for a year in a combination of German stückfass (1200L) and French barrique, 20% new.

Auf dem Haun, Chardonnay, Adams Wein

12.5% 2023 £220

Vintage

2023

6x75cl

£160

ARV/

12.5%

Riper initially but then lighter and less concentrated on the palate than the Lohpfad. Comes from a plot in the top corner of the vineyard – deer and frost are the major challenges! The vines are a combination of ages, the soil characterised by silt atop limestone bedrock. Though it is west-facing and warmer during the day, it can be 6°C colder at night than the Lohpfad – offering a quality mix of ripeness and freshness. Just 1,000 bottles produced.

Ingelheim, Spätburgunder, Adams Wein

2022 £85

Ripe, plush forest fruits, red plums and redcurrants with a better quality of tannin this year than previously. The vines in the village blend are on average older than the single plots as the blend includes the historic parcels of the winery. An early-drinking Spätburgunder with a good bank of structure and juiciness. A blend of the three different soils in Ingelheim: clay, limestone and sand. The vines are of different ages and clones and the grapes are all co-fermented with 30% whole clusters. Raised for twelve months in 1200L casks and a further six months in tank.

Heerweg, Spätburgunder, Adams Wein

5% 2022

2 £160

A single vineyard that offers more structure and depth than the Ingelheim, with notes of mint and spice and bramble. Situated on the opposite hill facing the Lohpfad, directly below the Auf dem Haun, Heerweg is the lower part of the slope, producing a charming, accessible style of Spätburgunder. A west-facing site, the wine is fermented with 100% whole clusters and raised for 18 months in 228L used Burgundian barriques.

Auf dem Haun, Spätburgunder, Adams Wein

13%

2022 £220

The 2022 has a more composed and less nervy feel than the 2021, with a finer quality of ripe tannins, meeting dark fruits and underbrush, with real lift and vibrancy – Adams believe the extra hang time in this windier, cooler site gives them an extra level of resolve. The limestone is felt keenly on the palate. Simone Adams owns about one hectare here. From a west-facing site, the wine is fermented with 100% whole clusters and raised for 18 months in used Burgundian barrique.

Horn, Spätburgunder, Adams Wein

12.5%

2022 £350

Horn is the first of the two effective Grand Crus in the Adams range, and the step up is evident from the first nose. Silky, present rich red fruits, seriously good juice and flesh covering a wine imbued with a lot of concentration, fine tannins and impressive length. Horn is a recognised Grosse Lage (Grand Cru) and one of the region's best sites. The Adams parcel is in the upper third of the vineyard, where, in addition to limestone, there is a fine layer of silt, which they say makes for balanced ripening. Fermented with 100% whole bunches, raised in 25% new French barrique.

Pares, Spätburgunder, Adams Wein

12.5%

2022

£500

Higher-toned than the Horn, with quality oak, light toast framing some wilder blue and red berries, flowers and stones. A bit wilder overall than the more polished Horn, but full of energy and character. Full of potential, it really opens up in the glass to reveal a more linear, chalky structure. Historically the most famous vineyard in Ingelheim, Pares is also characterised by limestone and silt. In 2011, Simone Adams cleared a parcel that had been left to grow over, and re-planted with her own massale selections based on the Ritter clone, which shows great affinity with

whole cluster fermentations. Fermented with 100% whole bunches, raised in 25% new French barrique.

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BATTENFELD SPANIER HOHEN-SÜLZEN, RHEINHESSEN

Brutal hail in August 2023 hit the Battenfeld-Spanier Pinot vineyards hard. Consequently, they have opted not to release any 2023 reds this year, diverting most of the production to Rosé. Instead, the estate offers its debut Chardonnay, a wine that really turned our heads on our visit. Full of impact, stylish and intense – as you'd expect from this talented couple, it is a very serious limestone-driven wine which points to an exciting future. We knew the Pinots were good already, now we have a hat trick across Riesling, Pinot Noir and Chardonnay.

6x75cl

Mölsheim Chardonnay, Battenfeld Spanier [29-25]

12.5% 2023

£240

The debut Chardonnay from this boundary-pushing couple, and what a wine! Full, clear and intense white and yellow fruits with the spice of fashionable reduction, light toast and salts. Full of vitality and energy on the palate with a grip that takes you straight to the cool earth exposed limestone of the Zellertal. Fermented and aged in tonneaux. Just three barrels were produced, one of which was new and two were used. Watch this space.

RUDOLF FÜRST BÜRGSTADT, FRANKEN

Softly spoken with a smile that extends from ear-to-ear, Sebastian Fürst is agreed to be one of Germany's best Spätburgunder producers, and certainly the best in Franken, with a familial legacy that extends over four hundred years in the region. Breathtaking, ancient steep sandstone terraces make for warm exposures, allied to old vines. These are very fragrant, complex, red-toned Pinots that never fail to impress. For several years, they have been a hunting ground for drinkers of exalted wines from the Côte d'Or. "2023 was quite a classic year, not hot nor cold. There is good energy in the wines with a red-berried profile, a fine and juicy vintage with a pure, inviting character. Harvest started in the second week of September and was very quick. Not tricky in any qualitative way but everything needed to be picked together as there was the danger of the Suzuki fly, which has the potential to spoil a crop. In the end it was a pretty perfect harvest and yield of 35hl/ha, slightly down on 2022 but normal." The 2023s we tasted were effusive and pleasurable, neat and sophisticated. We only wish we could buy more of them...!



ABV Vintage 6x75cl 3x1.5L

Pinot Noir, Grossheubacher, Rudolf Fürst [01-25] 13%

2023

£190 the vines mature.

A village wine from a Grand cru vineyard, Bischofsberg. It will be considered a GG wine as the vines mature. Located in western Franken, in Grossheubach, along the Main River, with iron-rich, stony, red sandstone soils with loess deposits. South/southwest facing. The slope ranges from 20 to 45 percent, 200 to 250m altitude. Fermented with 50% whole clusters and aged in used French barrique only.

Pinot Noir, Klingenberg, Rudolf Fürst [12-25]

2023

£250

Tight red fruits with a kick of baking spice and camphor, nice and lively and detailed, with a crisp fine finish. A top-drawer village cuvée produced mostly from "young" vines in the Grosse Lage Schlossberg averaging 25 years of age. Fermented with 45-50% whole clusters and raised in 20% new French oak.

Pinot Noir, Bürgstadter Berg, Erste Gewächs, Rudolf Fürst [13-25] 13% 2023 £265

The Erste Gewächs (1er Cru) unfurls with the hallmark Fürst rich aromatics. A beautifully expressive strawberry and cherry laced wine with a salty, savoury edge carrying hints of iron and white pepper with a little bite of smoke on the finish. The Erste Lage (Premier Cru) Bürgstadter Berg acts as the younger sibling to the Centgrafenberg and Hundsrück GGs, being a blend of the two sites. Aged in 20% new French oak.

Pinot Noir, Centgrafenberg, Grosses Gewächs, Rudolf Fürst [18-25] 13% 2023 £460 £485

Super elegant, not heavy or forced, this GG builds with silky, effusive spicy red fruits and fine mineral grip. Intense and persistent yet the whole feels a touch lighter and neater than the Bürgstadter Berg, which as a Premier Cru reveals its succulence of fruit earlier. Centgrafenberg has always served as the 'home' vineyard of the estate and the steep vineyard terraces here mean that the grapes rarely struggle to achieve good ripeness. Fermented with whole clusters and aged in French barrique.

Pinot Noir, Schlossberg, Grosses Gewächs, Rudolf Fürst [19-25] 13% 2023 £635 £660

Intense and driven, the Schlossberg 2023 is articulate with great lateral tension. It fans across the palate with notes of blood orange and red plums, finishing firm and stony – outstandingly good. Of the three GGs, Schlossberg is typically the most accessible wine on release, though there is some serious minerality here. Fermented with 100% whole cluster and aged in French barrique.

Pinot Noir, Hundsrück, Grosses Gewächs, Rudolf Fürst [20-25] 13% 2023 £825 £845

The Hundsrück is always its own beast. High-toned, more dramatic wilder fruits, spicy and intense, firm and focused, more backward and long-term but so pure and persistent in a supremely classy, unshowy way. The feather in the cap of the Fürst estate, the Hundsrück has been recognised as an individual terroir since at least the 16th century. An intensely rocky, cool site, the wines often require more time to reveal themselves, rewarding those with patience. Fermented with 100% whole cluster and aged in French barrique.

Pinot Noir, Grosses Gewächs, Collection Case, Rudolf Fürst 2023 £640

Two bottles of each of the GGs in an original wooden case. Limited quantities available.

BERNHARD HUBER MALTERDINGEN, BADEN

Huber is the King of Baden, itself the traditional seat of Spätburgunder (Pinot Noir) and Chardonnay in Germany. Located in the south of the country, just a few hours in fact from Burgundy, over the Rhine from Alsace, the climate here is not dissimilar and nor are the soils (until you get up into the volcanic Kaiserstuhl). Now that the best producers have access to the best clonal material too, there is little to stand in the way of estates like Huber making truly world-beating wines that still retain a cool climate character. 700 years of Spätburgunder history in the village of Malterdingen now meets the precision of modern winemaking, and a young, incredibly talented custodian in the form of Julian Huber, who is building on his late father's legacy with some style. His first vintage alone was 2014, and for the first few years he pursued a leaner, early-picked style focusing primarily on freshness, inspired by a similar movement in Burgundy. Post-2017, the wines have pivoted back to a more even-keeled position, offering a bit more fruit weight and generosity, more pleasure and happiness, but with a contemporary sense of chisel and minerality. A blend of Burgundian and German clones (the whites are almost exclusively Champagne and Domaine Leflaive clones, in the spirit of crisp Chardonnay), whole clusters not exceeding 40% and pumpovers taking precedence over punch downs results in expressive, vigorous wines in both colours, with the highest quality tannins. Ageing is in 30% new oak over 18 months. They see 2023 as being a "juicier vintage with lighter skins; it is elegant and fine, delightful even, already. The GGs have great potential for ageing, and we are incredibly proud of our whites." The reds have always been stellar, and you can't buy them for love nor money in Germany. Tasting their range of Chardonnays and the Breisgau (a traditional Baden blend) in recent years has proven that the whites are every inch as exciting as the reds, transmitting the force, complexity and finesse of the area, its soils, and the ambition of the young team behind them.



ABV Vintage 6x75cl 3x1.5L

Breisgau, Weiss (Pinot Blanc, Pinot Gris), Huber [01-25] 13% 2023 £115

The most important wine of the estate from a non-Chardonnay or Pinot Noir perspective, the Breisgau cuvée (the name referencing the wider appellation), represents the best of the Weisserburgunder and Grauburgunder (Pinot Blanc and Pinot Gris) that the estate works with. Over time, much of their plantings were grafted over to Chardonnay, so those that remain are of exceptional quality. Fermented and aged in barrel in the same way as the rest of the whites, the result is a tense, lightly reductive, citrus-driven white with just a lift of florality and white fruit. The perfect summer white, there is a lot of substance in this ostensibly junior white wine.

Malterdinger, Chardonnay, Huber [02-25]

12.5% 2023 £155

The estate Chardonnay officially qualifies as a village level wine but meets the quality requirements of a wine far above that status. Barrel fermented and aged with stylish toast and flinty reduction, nosing the wine one would be hard pushed to distinguish it from a GG. Fine leesy notes with concentration and depth and tons of salty acidity, it's only as you climb up the range that its slightly gentler, white fruits become more evident. It is all the better for it. A knockout Chardonnay.

Malterdinger, Chardonnay, Alte Reben, Huber [03-25] 12.5% 2023 £255 £270

The Alte Reben Chardonnay was more backward and austere at our time of tasting from barrel, as it had not been racked, but within it there is a fabulously precise through-line of shimmering acidity and sinewy, vibrant citrus fruits and crushed stones. As it opens up it shows delicate hints of almond and wispy, flinty smoky notes – this Alte Reben a long way from the oily, fruity Chardonnays that Baden was once known for. Aged in 30% new French oak.

Bienenberg, Chardonnay, Grosses Gewächs, Huber [04-25] 12.5% 2023 £480

Firm and white-fruited with a tight citrus core, the GG Bienenberg comes with high intensity and a powdery, nervy acidity that delivers a thrilling impression of race and verticality. Stunning. Just 2000 bottles were produced. Aged in 30% new French oak.

Schlossberg, Chardonnay, Grosses Gewächs, Huber [05-25] 12.5% 2023 £700

Reductive at first but there is a modicum of calm below; certainly, compared to the nervy Bienenberg. Fresh yellow fruits, salts and a light bitterness even adds to its appeal. Notes of turmeric and paprika, smoke, with waxed lemon and chamomile. There is power and breadth here, met by the intrinsic quality and youth of the Chardonnay. Aged in 30% new French oak.

Malterdinger, Spätburgunder, Huber [10-25] 13% 2023 £155

This fruit forward red is expressive and pliant with supple red and dark fruits and hints of sandalwood. There is a lovely gloss to this wine – a flat-out delicious Pinot Noir that is designed to offer more flattering fruit and accessibility in youth. The fruit all comes from young vines in the Bienenberg in spots where there is a bit more loess in the soil. Entirely destemmed and aged for 16 months in 30% new oak French oak barrique.

Malterdinger, Spätburgunder, Alte Reben, Huber [11-25] 13.5% 2023 £255

More concentrated and nervier compared to the Malterdinger, the Alte Reben offers showy rich red and brambly fruits, dark cherries and hints of cocoa. Really gorgeous and radiant. It comes from different parts of the Bienenberg up to 20-65 years old. The plant material is 60% Burgundian clones and 40% German. Aged for around 18 months in 30% new French oak barrique.

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BERNHARD HUBER MALTERDINGEN, BADEN

ABV Vintage 6x75cl

2023

2023

2023

13.5%

£480

£480

£700

Köndringer, Alte Burg, Spätburgunder, Grosses Gewächs, Huber [13-25] 3.5% 2023 £480

Complex bullace, fresh flowers and rocky spice notes mingle with dried lavender and rosemary, very Pinot in profile, juicy and delightful – the layers of sweet fruit and generous mid-palate impact makes this feel quite irresistible already. From vines planted 20 years ago to the south of Malterdingen on similar iron and limestone soils to Bienenberg, the main difference is that the Alte Burg is more wind exposed, producing thicker skins, and there is a uniformity of clones. First bottled as a standalone GG in 2018. Aged for around 18 months in 30% new French oak barrique.

Bienenberg, Spätburgunder, Grosses Gewächs, Huber [15-25]

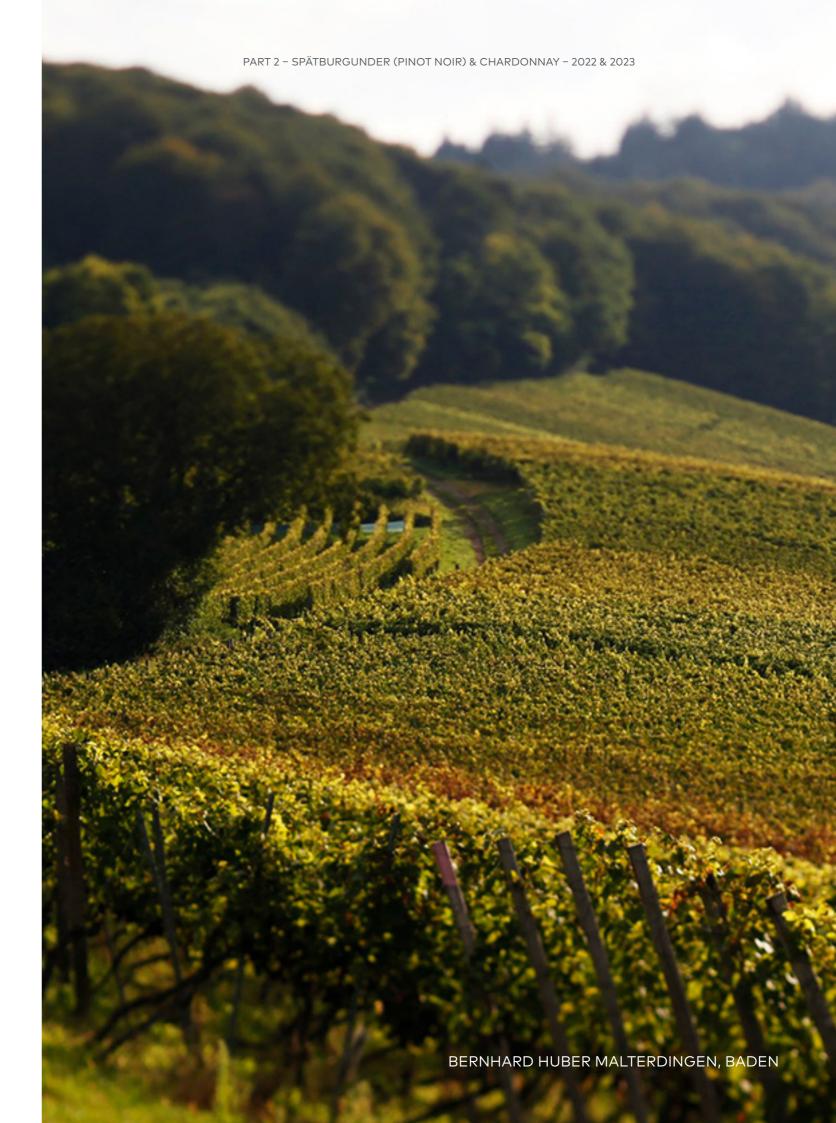
Layered and spicy, the Bienenberg offers an intense melange of red and dark fruits, grated cocoa and earth. There is a breadth of fruit with the tannic and mineral impact of limestone, deep and fizzing, with supporting notes of toast and herbs. There is enormous potential here, a great GG. Bienenberg is the home vineyard of the estate planted on a mix of loess and yellow limestone. Aged for around 18 months in 30% new French oak barrique.

Sommerhalde, Spätburgunder, Grosses Gewächs, Huber [14-25] 13.5%

Lacy and expressive with transparent, cooling forest fruits, the 2023 comes with lovely energy and finesse, not as concentrated as the Alte Burg, but darker-fruited with a finer acidity and light austerity derived from its freshness and something elemental. Sommerhalde is planted at 300m elevation with cooling winds coming down from the forest on top. There is a little more iron in the soil along with loam that helps water retention in warmer years. A cool site blessed with powerful soils. Aged for around 18 months in 30% new French oak barrique.

Schlossberg, Spätburgunder, Grosses Gewächs, Huber [16-25]

Denser than the other wines on this showing, a consequence perhaps of its warmer exposure, it is a little more closed aromatically, but the palate is all silk and velvet, yielding spicy and floral notes of lavender and camphor atop kirsch, dark cherry and strawberry. Round, long and intense with a pliant tannic structure. It drinks like a Grand Cru and will reward cellaring. Aged for around 18 months in 30% new French oak barrique.



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