



Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Special Issue: Auction Guide – September 2012

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

Mosel Fine Wines appears on a regular basis and covers:

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

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

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Principles

Drinking window

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

Scoring Approach

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Nomenclature

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

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



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An introduction to the auctions held in Bernkastel and Trier

Every year, two winemaker associations in the Mosel, the Bernkasteler Ring and the Grosser Ring / VDP, each hold an auction at which the supposedly best casks of its members are auctioned off. These are always proposed in minute quantities.

We regularly get many questions about these auctions: What are these auctions? Which wines are being offered? Are they the same as those available in the shops? How can one participate? Etc.

We provide here some background information on these auctions including on their origins, how they work and what are the best buying strategies.

How did these auctions come about?

The auctions were set up at the turn of the 20th century by grower associations to secure the traceability of their wines.

In order to understand the annual auctions, one needs to go back to the 19th century and have a look at how the wines were sold at the time. The wine trade in Germany was very much dominated by wealthy and powerful merchant houses. They went to the Estates, purchased wines in casks and had these transferred to their own cellars for bottling and delivery to their customers in Europe and worldwide. The demand for top German wines was immense, the prices very high and the inevitable happened: Some merchant houses could not resist the temptation and started to 'fiddle around' (blending wines, adding sweetening products, etc.). To address this problem, leading growers in different parts of the Mosel started to organize themselves into grower associations and committed themselves to some stringent practices to ensure the quality of their wines:

- Produce only *Naturein* wines, i.e. wines without any addition of sugar (be it as sweetener or for chaptalization).
- Sell their wines only through the auctions organized by their grower association.
- Bottle the wines at the Estate with an original Estate cork to ensure the traceability of the product.

Commercial considerations most certainly also played a role in setting up these grower associations, be it only to improve their bargaining power with respect to the mighty merchants.

For much of the first half of the 20th century, auctions were to be the standard approach for selling wines, with commissioners as middlemen.

Until the 1930s, all casks produced by a member of such a grower association were exclusively sold at auctions and this meant that such auctions were organized several times per year. Estates sold only full casks at auction. While this is not an issue for lesser wines, it proved more problematic for top casks of Auslese because the price and demand were often too much to handle for a single buyer. Here, 'commissioners' came into play as middlemen. They would buy the casks on behalf of several buyers and organize the orders between them. For instance, a famous cask of 1911er Aylar Kupp feinste Auslese auctioned off in the 1920s went to the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York, another part to a prince in Sweden and the remainder to private English customers.

With the development of direct sales, the auctions became an annual event dedicated to selling off selected high quality wines only.

As of the 1930s, leading Estates started to market their wines directly and to use the auctions only to sell their finest casks. With time, the smaller quantities on offer led the grower associations to reduce the number of auctions to one per year. The fact that better casks were supposed to be sold off at the auction required makers to introduce some differentiations between casks sold directly (via merchants) and those sold via the auction. Consequently, a sticker with the year and location of the auction was added on all auction bottles to distinct them from regular ones (more on how to recognize auction bottles in the last part of this introduction).

Two annual auctions take place today in the Mosel.

Many grower associations were operating at the turn of the 20th century, each holding its own auctions. These were gradually to merge to leave only two such grower associations today:

- The Bernkasteler Ring: It was set up by five growers as *Vereinigung der Weingutsbesitzer der Mittelmosel* in 1899 and was holding its biannual auctions in the casino in Bernkastel. In 1978, it merged with the *Naturwein-Versteigerungsgesellschaft Trier* (another grower association set up in 1911) and subsequently took its current name. It is sometimes referred to as the *Kleiner Ring*, i.e. the 'Small Ring', in opposition to the Grosser Ring here below.
- The Grosser Ring / VDP: This grower association, originally called *Trierer Verein der Weingutsbesitzer Mosel-Saar-Ruwer*, was set up in 1908. It merged three grower associations (one in the Middle Mosel, one in the Saar and the association of catholic Estates in Trier). Given that it had 56 members at its inception, it was referred to as *Grosser Ring*.

Today, each of these two grower associations organizes one auction per year. The one of the Bernkasteler Ring takes place at Nell's Park hotel while the auction organized by the Grosser Ring / VDP takes place at the Europahalle in Trier.



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How are the auctions working today?

Auctions are held annually in September.

They are held once a year on two consecutive days in the second half of September. The Bernkasteler Ring traditionally holds its auction on a Thursday and the Grosser Ring / VDP on the subsequent Friday. In 2012, these auctions will take place on September 20 and 21.

Auctions are open to the public and professionals.

Both auctions are open to the public with the possibility to taste the wines in the morning. The wines are then auctioned off in the afternoon in a so-called 'wet auction', i.e. the wines are served again while they are being auctioned off (this is not the case of course for some rare old bottles such as the 1999er Egon Müller Scharzhofberger Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese auctioned off in 2011).

In general, only special casks of the finest wines (not sold via traditional sales channels) are brought to the auctions.

Still today, the wines that are being sold off remain a major source of confusion, even to the most experienced Mosel wine lovers. In principle, each Estate has the freedom to decide which wine(s) to auction off: A young wine, a mature one, a special cask, etc. The only restriction is that any BA, TBA or Eiswein has to have seen at least two winters (i.e. 2 years old) before going to auction. For the rest, every winemaker has a free hand. In practice however, growers want to bring their best wines to the auctions and the following rules of thumb generally hold true for the Mosel auctions:

- Only special wines from special casks (i.e. with a distinct AP number) are brought to the auctions. These wines are therefore not available via traditional sales channels (although some Estates may offer them ex-cellar at the hammer price after the auction). On an exceptional basis, some Estates may bring unique mature rarities to the auctions (such as the bottle of 1971er Graacher Domprobst Riesling BA sold by the Willi Schaefer Estate in September 2010) that could have been sold via regular channels upon release.
- Any Kabinett, Spätlese or Auslese brought to the auctions is likely to be from the latest vintage (i.e. from the 2010 vintage for the auctions to be held in September 2011).
- The practice varies more widely what concerns BA, TBA or Eiswein bottlings. Some Estates tend to bring them to the auctions immediately after the minimum two years period (such as S.A. Prüm). Other Estates prefer to let them mature somewhat in their cellars before bringing them to the auctions. For instance, Egon Müller only sold the 1997er Scharzhofberger Riesling TBA and Joh. Jos. Prüm the 1994er Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling BA at the auction held in September 2008.
- Most wines are fruity-styled even though some producers from the Bernkasteler Ring now also propose some off-dry (Feinherb) or dry wines.

Private individuals as well as professionals can bid at these auctions.

Technically speaking, only the accredited commissioners are actually allowed to bid at these auctions. However, anyone who wishes to acquire some bottles at these auctions can do so by placing bids with their wine merchant / importer (if they offer this service) or by contacting directly one of the accredited commissioners. Bids are put in the form of 'I want X bottles of wine so-and-so for up to €Y hammer price per bottle'. After the auctions, the commissioners will contact the successful bidders for payment and shipment.

As far as we know, commissioners can ship directly to any resident within the European Union (wine lovers may still choose for easiness to work via a wine merchant / importer to avoid the logistics hassle). For bidders from outside the EU (and in particular in the United States and Canada), particular shipping / importing restrictions may apply and it is advisable to contact a commissioner or your wine merchant / importer to check how this is best organized. We provide here below the links to the lists of accredited commissioners for the two auctions (note that there are some differences between the two lists):

List of commissioners for the [Bernkasteler Ring auction](#)

List of commissioners for the [Grosser Ring auction](#)

The end price paid for the wines will be composed of the hammer price, to which one needs to add a commission fee (a few percentage of the hammer price) for the accredited commissioners, shipping costs as well as any import duties and VAT (or sales tax).

What is the best buying strategy? Should one buy auction wines?

Auction wines represent the pinnacle of Mosel Riesling.

We have personally been avid buyers of auction wines for many years as these bottlings represent for us the essence of Mosel Riesling greatness. Simply put: Not all auction wines are magical but our greatest Mosel wine memories have all come from auction wines (at least from those Estates that are members of the two grower associations).

Auction wines are not cheap and often sell at a significant premium.

The quantities of wines brought to the auctions are minute. They can go up to a few hundreds bottles for some Spätlese bottlings but sometimes not exceed 24-36 bottles for rare TBA ones. It is therefore not surprising that these wines can be very, very expensive. The price of a Spätlese or Auslese auction bottling can sometimes be three times that of an equivalent regular bottling. Prices paid for rare TBA can easily exceed €1,000 per bottle (before taxes, commissions, etc.)!



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Some relative bargains can however be made, which allow one to get the 'best of Mosel' at reasonable prices.

While auction wines are hardly cheap, some of these wines can be relative bargains. There is no wine that represents a systematic bargain every year, but each year, some bottlings sell for hardly more than regular wines. In 2008 for instance, this was the case for the great 2007er Geltz-Zilliken Saarburger Rausch Auslese. In particular, such relative bargains can be made at the Bernkasteler Ring auction, which seems to get less international exposure and very often offers the opportunity to acquire great wines at reasonable prices. For instance, the delicious 2009er Merkelbach Ürziger Würzgarten Spätlese went for only €8.20 (hammer price) in 2010.

The question of whether the premium and effort of buying at auctions is worth it is therefore a very personal one.

Anyone who 'only' seeks a good Mosel wines for everyday drinking is probably best served by buying regular (i.e. non-auction) wines from his favorites Estates. However, anyone seriously interested in Mosel Riesling should make the effort to get hold of some of these auction gems. In addition, lovers of BA, TBA and Eiswein often have no choice but to go through the auctions to be able to get their hands on some of the finest examples by say Joh. Jos. Prüm, Egon Müller or Knebel as these Estates generally only sell these wines through auctions.

Auction bottles do not necessarily need to be acquired at the auction itself: Some Estates and wine merchants / importers offer them also later.

While being made in minute quantities, auction wines can be found on the open market. Our experience is that many leading merchants / importers specialized in German wines throughout the world often acquire some auction wines to enhance their catalogue (either immediately or for release after some years). Also, some Estates offer the possibility to acquire their auction wines at the Estate after the auction, usually at or close to the hammer price. Going for this secondary market can therefore be an alternative option to acquire some of these auction wines, and one that does not require the hassle of putting bids and importing wines.

How do I recognize auction bottlings on the open market?

In principle, all auction bottles carry a round sticker to distinguish them from regular ones.

In order to differentiate them from regular wines, auction bottlings do carry a round sticker, usually stuck to a corner of the label with the indication "auctioned off at the auction held on date [so-and-so]". As an image speaks more than a thousand words, we have attached pictures of recent auction bottles.

Auction Sticker – Bernkasteler Ring



Auction Sticker – Grosser Ring / VDP



In practice, not all auction bottles do carry a sticker and then only the AP number can help out.

In principle, Auction wines should be easy to identify in a shop. In practice though, things may not necessarily be as straightforward as it seems as several Estates offer these wines ex-cellar after the auction (of course at auction prices or higher). Over the years, our experience has been that these auction bottlings do generally not carry any 'auction sticker'. In that case, the only way to know whether a bottle is an auction one is to check the AP numbers.

AP numbers may be not very consumer friendly but a little effort may allow one to make some bargains.

While this may not be very consumer friendly (who keeps track of AP numbers?), it may be worth the effort and can reward one with some nice bargains. Indeed, auction wines do appear now and then on the secondary market. However, as these wines are not widely distributed, their singular value is often not recognized and these wines sell for not much more than their regular equivalent. Savvy Riesling lovers can therefore make some nice bargains... if they can recognize these wines on the open market.



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Auctions 2012 : Bernkasteler Ring Wines Guide

Overview

We provide here a review of wines that will be auctioned off by the Bernkasteler Ring on September 20, 2012 and that we can recommend on quality grounds. This includes wines from the following Estates (presented in alphabetic order):

Bastgen	<i>Monzel</i>
Bauer	<i>Mülheim</i>
von Beulwitz	<i>Mertesdorf</i>
Ernst Clüsserath	<i>Trittenheim</i>
Clüsserath-Eifel	<i>Trittenheim</i>
Martin Conrad	<i>Brauneberg</i>
Reinhold Franzen	<i>Bremm</i>
Leo Fuchs	<i>Pommern</i>
Albert Gessinger	<i>Zeltingen</i>
Kallfelz	<i>Zell-Merl</i>
Karp-Schreiber	<i>Brauneberg</i>
Kees-Kieren	<i>Graach</i>
Heribert Kerpen	<i>Wehlen</i>
Lehnert-Veit	<i>Piesport</i>
Carl Loewen	<i>Leiwen / Longuich</i>
Alfred Merkelbach	<i>Ürzig</i>
Markus Molitor	<i>Wehlen</i>
Paulinshof	<i>Kesten</i>
Dr. Pauly-Bergweiler	<i>Bernkastel</i>
Rebenhof	<i>Ürzig</i>
FJ Regnery	<i>Klüsserath</i>
Johann Peter Reinert	<i>Kanzem</i>
St. Nikolaus-Hospital	<i>Bernkastel</i>
Bernhard Werner	<i>Leiwen</i>





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Tasting Notes by Estates

Weingut Bastgen

<u>2010er</u>	Bastgen	Kestener Paulinshofberg Riesling Auslese	11 12	<i>Auction</i>	94
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This is a cracker of a wine! It offers a show-stopper and beautifully complex nose of coconut, peach, banana and pineapple. The feel on the palate is just out of this world, with a great creamy feel wrapped in a lively kick of acidity (even if it is relatively moderate for a 2010). The finish is richly perfumed, fruity and incredibly juicy for such a high-end wine. This is gorgeous stuff! 2018-2030

Weingut Bauer

2011er	Bauer	Mülheimer Elisenberg Riesling Auslese	13 12	<i>Auction</i>	90
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Already quite golden in color, this opens up to a touch of volatile acidity which gives quickly way to rich scents of ripe white and yellow fruits. Despite the opulence, the wine is comparatively focused on the palate and leaves a clean feeling of honeyed fruits in the medium long finish. 2016-2031

Weingut Erben von Beulwitz

<u>1999er</u>	Erben von Beulwitz	Kaseler Nies'chen Riesling Auslese ***	12 00	<i>Auction</i>	93
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This wine was first auctioned off in 2000 and the Estate offers some additional bottles at auction this year. This offers a great nose of ripe juicy fruits including mirabelle and superb notes of hay and mint. The wine leaves a spectacular feel on the palate, with great freshness and superbly well-integrated creamy feel in the finish. This is just plain gorgeous and shows even slightly better than at our 1999 retrospective of two years ago. Now-2019

2011er	Erben von Beulwitz	Kaseler Nies'chen Riesling Auslese Alte Reben	04 12	<i>Auction</i>	92
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This offers a great nose of pear, pineapple, passion fruit and melon. The wine is comparatively rich (by this Estate's standards) on the palate but offers a great long finish. This is a very attractive wine made in an elegant feine Auslese style. 2021-2041

2011er	Erben von Beulwitz	Kaseler Nies'chen Riesling Spätlese Feinherb	09 12	<i>Auction</i>	88+
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This offers a simple but satisfying nose of pear, grapefruit and mint with a nice spicy feel on the palate. The finish is not terribly long but well-focused. As so many Feinherb from the 2011 vintage, this is best laid away for a few years for it to integrate the noticeable sweetness. It could then turn out to be an outstanding effort. 2014-2021

Weingut Ernst Clüsserath

2011er	Ernst Clüsserath	Trittenheimer Apotheke Riesling Auslese **	16 12	<i>Auction</i>	91
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Made with 9.5% of alcohol, this greets one with attractive notes of fruits (peach, pear and grapefruit) and smoke. It offers a rich but nicely complex feel on the palate as well as clean and delicately honeyed scents in the finish. This is quite nicely made. 2016-2026

Weingut Clüsserath-Eifel

2011er	Clüsserath-Eifel	Neumagener Rosengärtchen Riesling Auslese	12 12	<i>Auction</i>	90
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This offers a direct feel of pineapple, whipped cream and spices on the nose. The wine is delicately light and fresh on the palate and this feeling of restrained roundness carries right through the finish, which proves long and comparatively complex. This is a gorgeous wine which shines through its immediate appeal. 2016-2026



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2011er	Clüsserath-Eifel	Leiwener Laurentiuslay Riesling Spätlese	11 12	Auction	91
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This offers a quite juicy and spicy feel of pear, vanilla, mirabelle and grapefruit. The wine is quite powerful (more of Auslese dimension) on the palate but a nice acidic feel kicks in in the finish, leaving a nice sense of freshness. This is very nicely made. 2016-2026

2011er	Clüsserath-Eifel	Riesling Fähfels	21 12	Auction	89
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This wine is made from a prime parcel in the Trittenheimer Apotheke planted with over 100 years old un-grafted vines. This offers a most attractive nose of pear, grapefruit, gooseberry and delicately perfumed herbs. The feel on the palate is rich, soft and yet focused. The wine then develops a slightly broader side in the finish. This opulent expression of Fähfels should age gracefully over a good decade. Now-2021

Weingut Martin Conrad

2010er	Martin Conrad	Brauneberger Juffer Riesling Feinherb GK	15 11	Auction	88
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This off-dry wine offers a slightly broad but comfortable nose of pear, pineapple smoke and almond-driven reduction. This gives way to big, juicy and exotic flavors on the palate. The finish is nice and easy. Now-2016

Weingut Reinhold Franzen

2011er	Reinhold Franzen	Bremmer Calmont Riesling	03 12	Auction	89
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This offers a juicy and fresh nose of fruits and smoky spices with an earthy touch coming through on the palate, which adds to the overall feeling of power. The finish is firm, structured and overall quite enjoyable. Now-2017

Weingut Leo Fuchs

2002er	Leo Fuchs	Pommerner Zeisel Riesling Auslese	11 03	Auction	92
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This is a great effort by this Estate! The wine offers a gorgeous nose of yellow peach, pear, spices and herbs. It delivers these flavors with a great touch of creamy acidity on the palate. The finish is slightly broad but very elegant and refreshing, leaving a delicately honeyed after-taste. Now-2027

Weingut Albert Gessinger

2011er	Albert Gessinger	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese *** Alte Reben	09 12	Auction	92
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This BA-styled wine offers rich and ripe notes of quince, date, pear and spices. The wine is however superbly playful on the palate and leaves a great feeling of controlled power in the juicy finish. This is an outstandingly well-made Auslese lange GK wine! 2021-2041

Weingut Kallfelz

2005er	Kallfelz	Merler Königslay-Terrassen Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese	106 06	Auction	94
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Already quite golden color, this offers a great nose of candied fruits, pineapple and apricot. The wine is superbly oily and yet focused on the palate and offers a great long feel of candied fruits and cake. This is a very nice wine indeed! 2015-2040

2007er	Kallfelz	Merler Königslay-Terrassen Riesling Beerenauslese	57 08	Auction	93
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This offers a very attractive rich and round nose driven by pineapple, quince and apricot. The wine is very nicely balanced on the palate and leaves a clean and complex feel in the finish. This is a superb BA bottling. 2017-2037



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Weingut Kanzlerhof

2011er	Kanzlerhof	Mehring Blattenberg Riesling Spätlese GK	13 12	Auction	91
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This offers a rich Auslese-styled nose driven by yellow fruits and earthy herbs. This feeling of richness and opulence carries over onto the palate yet the finish remains focused and comparatively structured, leaving a great scent of herbs in the after-taste. 2021-2036

2011er	Kanzlerhof	Mehring Blattenberg Riesling Spätlese Feinherb	17 12	Auction	89
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This offers a broad yet elegant nose of pear, peach, gooseberry, smoke and dried herbs. The wine is nicely balanced on the palate and leaves an elegantly herby feel in the long after-taste. This is very nicely made. Now-2016

Weingut Karp-Schreiber

1975er	Karp-Schreiber	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese	14 76	Auction	95
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This is a cracker of a mature wine. It offers a superb nose of marzipan, candied fruits, orange peel and herbs. The feel on the palate is racy and yet silky and smooth. And all this leads to a delicately off-dry finish. This is a huge success and a wine which will delight lovers of perfectly well-matured Mosel Riesling! Now

Weingut Kees-Kieren

2011er	Kees-Kieren	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese ***	26 12	Auction	93+
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Already golden in color, this wine offers a stunning nose of dried fruits, spices and herbs. This has the intensity and concentration of a TBA on the palate and offers great focus in the rich and ripe Christmas cake styled flavors on the palate. This is immensely sweet at the moment which makes the wine seem mono-dimensional. However, with time, when the wine will have integrated this sweetness pressure, this could even turn out better than our current expectations. It is a potentially smashing wine. 2026-2051

2011er	Kees-Kieren	Erdener Treppchen Riesling Spätlese **	22 12	Auction	90
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This juicy Spätlese offers great flavors of smoke, pear and quince. This is marked by some CO2 on the palate and leaves a great mouth-watering feel to the finish. This is a gorgeous Spätlese made in a direct and straightforward style. 2016-2026

Weingut Heribert Kerpen

2011er	Heribert Kerpen	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese ***	31 12	Auction	90
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This BA-styled wine offers a rich and comparatively opulent nose of honey, apricot and dried fruits. The wine is nevertheless quite focused on the palate, with a surprisingly good acidic backbone giving structure to the whole experience. The finish is clean and straightforward with good notes of fruits and a nice direct acidity-sweetness tension. 2016-2031

2011er	Heribert Kerpen	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese *	26 12	Auction	89
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This offers an attractive flowery nose of grapefruit, pineapple, apple and pear. The wine is quite subtle on the palate with comfortable and straightforward notes of peach and honeyed pear. The finish is clean but the wine will require time to integrate its overt sweetness. 2021-2031

Weingut Lehnert-Veit

2003er	Lehnert-Veit	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Auslese	03 04	Auction	88
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This wine was first auctioned off in 2004 and the Estate offers now some additional bottles at maturity. It offers a very attractive and delicately undercooled nose of melon, hay and pineapple. The feel on the palate is juicy even if slightly earthy and the wine leaves a clean and medium intense feel in the finish. Now-2017



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Weingut Carl Loewen

2010er	Carl Loewen	Longuicher Maximiner Herrenberg Riesling Beerenauslese	18 11	Auction	95
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A staggering nose of passion fruit and pineapple leads to a most wonderful creamy feel on the palate with some great notes of honey and flowers coming through. The wine comes over as rich, spicy, fruity and all this leads to a great multi-layered and nicely zesty finish. This is a gorgeously well-made BA! 2020-2050

2011er	Carl Loewen	Longuicher Maximiner Herrenberg Riesling Auslese GK	26 12	Auction	94
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This offers a stunning nose of spices and yellow fruits including quince and pear. The feel on the palate is rich yet superbly flowery and complex despite an overall opulence in the structure. The finish is rich and ripe, but also wonderfully complex and airy. This is a great success! 2021-2041

Weingut Alfred Merkelbach

2011er	Alfred Merkelbach	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Auslese	18 12	Auction	92
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Made from parcels in the original Würzgarten and fermented with 9.5% of alcohol, this has gradually opened up over the year to deliver an incredible aromatic (almost Scheurebe in style) touch of cassis, smoke and herbs. The wine is playful and juicy on the palate and leaves a clean smoky feel in the finish. It is a great easy-drinking Auslese! 2016-2026

2011er	Alfred Merkelbach	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Spätlese	13 12	Auction	89
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Despite the 9.5% of alcohol, this offers a just incredible nose of pear, mirabelle, gooseberry and slate-driven smoke. The wine is juicy and playful on the palate and leaves a great feel of fruits and minerals in the finish. This is gorgeous Auslese-styled yet medium-sweet wine. 2016-2026

Weingut Markus Molitor

NB: The Estate does not refer to the style of wine (dry-tasting, off-dry or fruity) on the label but defines this via the capsule color: white for dry, green for off-dry and golden for fruity-styled. In order to avoid any confusion, we add the color of the capsule in parenthesis in the description of each wine for all wines up to Auslese. Readers should be aware that this is neither found on the label nor referred to as such by the Estate internally.

2006er	Markus Molitor	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese ***		Auction	99
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Well, this is flirting with perfection with its stunning flavors of dried fruits, its glorious almond-driven spices and this incredibly juicy feel of apricot, candied lime and flowers. The wine is oily and yet airy on the palate and leaves a seemingly endless after-taste on the palate. This is glorious stuff. It is still on the sweet side and is really in need of many more years of bottle age. But this is one of those great wines which seems made for eternity. This is that impressive. 2026-2086+

2010er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese *** (Golden Capsule)	28 11	Auction	96
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This offers the drama of the best of high end wines from 2010, with its incredible combination of pineapple sorbet, passion fruit and smoky slate. The aromatics are just incredibly precise and focused and this despite a BA-level oiliness. The finish is really that of a top-end BA, with all the great complexity one expects from such a wine. This is a truly remarkable effort. 2021-2051

2010er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese (Golden Capsule)	23 11	Auction	93
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This offers some delicate and elegant notes of citrusy fruits coupled with a touch of passion fruit and quite some smoky slate. The wine is very structured and focused on the palate and delivers a great fruity feel in the razor-sharp finish. This is a great wine in the making. 2018-2030

2011er	Markus Molitor	Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese *** (White Capsule)	42 12	Auction	(92-95)
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This dry wine offers a staggering nose of white peach, pear and a great creamy touch, both on the nose as on the palate. There is everything to make a great dry wine here with the aromatics, the texture and the balance of great dry Riesling. This is a stunner in the making! 2013-2026



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Weingut Paulinshof

2011er	Paulinshof	Kestener Paulinshofberg Riesling Spätlese Feinherb	06 12	Auction	90
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This offers attractive flavors of pear, grapefruit and smoke and delivers these with the chewy structure so typical for young wines from this Estate. The finish is slightly powerful and marked by some sweetness in need of integration. However, this should develop nicely over the few coming years. 2014-2021

Weingut Dr. Pauly-Bergweiler

2011er	Dr. Pauly-Bergweiler	Bernkasteler alte Badstube am Doctorberg Riesling Auslese Alte Reben	23 12	Auction	90
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Still quite reduced, this offers a rich and refined nose driven by dried spices, grapefruit, pear and quince. The wine comes over as smooth and soft on the palate and this impression carries right through the finish, which proves nicely long and opulently fruity. This is a very stylish even if rich expression of Auslese. 2021-2036

2011er	Dr. Pauly-Bergweiler	Bernkasteler alte Badstube am Doctorberg Riesling Spätlese Alte Reben	12 12	Auction	90
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This offers a gorgeous and aromatic nose of pear, citrus, minerals and laurel. The wine is quite round and powerful on the palate but leaves a classy and refined feel in the finish. 2017-2031

Weingut Rebenhof

2010er	Rebenhof	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Beerenauslese Nr. 14		Auction	92
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This offers a fascinating nose of candied pineapple and passion fruit sorbet, with some green herbs adding a touch of freshness to the experience. The wine is rich and oily on the palate and offers a deeply honeyed feel in the long and straight finish. 2018-2030

Weingut FJ Regnery

2011er	FJ Regnery	Klüsserather Bruderschaft Riesling Auslese Frieda & Greta	14 12	Auction	87+
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This comes over as quite ripe on the nose with pungent flavors of pear in alcohol, mirabelle and melon. The wine is smooth and delicately rich on the palate and leaves a clean imprint in the slightly broad finish. This needs some time to find its balance. 2016-2026

Weingut Johann Peter Reinert

NB: All wines by the Estate are bottled under VinoLok, a glass closure system developed by Alcoa which is quite popular in Germany. As this closure system has no long-term track record yet, we take a prudent (and possibly conservative) view on maturity windows.

2011er	Johann Peter Reinert	Kanzemer Altenberg Riesling Auslese	22 12	Auction	92
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Bottled under VinoLok, this special selection of berries, harvested on the same day as the regular Altenberg Auslese (AP21), yielded a meager 200 liters. The wine offers a fresh and delicately perfumed nose of passion fruit, pear, melon and minerals. It is rich and smooth on the palate and leaves a clean honeyed scent in the superbly well-balanced after-taste. This is a gorgeous expression of Altenberg. 2016-2021+

2011er	Johann Peter Reinert	Ayler Kupp Riesling Spätlese Alte Reben	23 12	Auction	90
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Bottled under VinoLok, this is still quite reduced at this stage and needs some time to show some telltale notes of smoke, citrus, grapefruit and minerals. The wine is deliciously light on the palate and offers a smoky and comparatively steely finish which is still on the sweet side. This needs some time to deliver its best. 2015-2021+



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Weingut Stiftung St. Nikolaus-Hospital

2011er	St. Nikolaus Hospital	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese ***	13 12	Auction	90
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This offers a straightforward nose of canned yellow peach, honey and apricot. The wine is rich and well-balanced on the palate with a pressure from the sweetness coming through in the clean finish. This is very attractive in its direct style. 2016-2026

Weingut Bernhard Werner

2011er	Werner	Schweicher Annaberg Riesling Auslese	17 12	Auction	88
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This offers a clean and direct nose with quite some ripe fruits. It is quite rich and ripe on the palate, with juicy notes of minerals and herbs adding some depth to the overall experience. The finish is rich and on the sweet side at this stage. 2021-2036



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Auction 2012 : Grosser Ring / VDP Wines Guide

Overview

We provide here a review of wines that will be auctioned off by the Grosser Ring / VDP on September 21, 2012 and that we can recommend on quality grounds. This includes wines from the following Estates (presented in alphabetic order):

- Geltz-Zilliken**
- Fritz Haag**
- Reinhold Haart**
- von Hövel**
- Le Gallais**
- Karthäuserhof**
- Schloss Lieser**
- Dr. Loosen**
- Egon Müller**
- Joh. Jos. Prüm**
- Schloss Saarstein**
- Willi Schaefer**
- Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Thanisch**
- Wegeler**

- Saarburg*
- Brauneberg*
- Piesport*
- Oberemmel*
- Kanzem*
- Trier-Eitelsbach*
- Lieser*
- Bernkastel*
- Wiltingen*
- Wehlen*
- Serrig*
- Graach*
- Bernkastel*
- Bernkastel*





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Tasting Notes by Estates

Weingut Le Gallais

2011er	Le Gallais	Wiltinger braune Kupp Riesling Auslese GK	07 12	Auction	97
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Harvested at well above 150° Oechsle, this wine offers a huge dramatic BA-styled nose of pineapple, canned peach, smoke, apricot, gooseberry, almond cake as well as some bakery products. The wine is incredibly intense and oily on the palate in a style more akin of that of an Auslese lange GK or BA. The feel on the palate is however just perfectly well balanced thanks to a subtle touch of acidity which kicks in in the very long and classy finish. This is quite opulent at this stage but will turn in a stunning beauty in a decade or two. This is a great effort! 2026-2051

Weingut Geltz-Zilliken

2009er	Geltz-Zilliken	Saarburger Rausch Riesling Trockenbeereauslese	01 10	Auction	98
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A mere 75 liters were made of this nectar boasting a cool 225° Oechsle (the highest ever at the Estate) and what an absolute stunner of a TBA this has turned into! An initial hint of volatile acidity is quickly washed away by powerful and captivating flavors of incredibly pure raisin, dried fruits, date, fig, blood orange marmalade, pear cream, honey, anise, Asian spices and smoke. The intensity on the palate is remarkable and, at this stage nearly painful. The finish is incredibly long with more notes of candied apricot adding a juicy side to the intensity. The sweetness (above 300 g/l) is remarkably well buffered off by firm acidity (nearly 16 g/l!) and just carries the flavors and adds length. This is a terrific TBA and certainly one of the best ever tasted from this Estate. 2019-2069

2011er	Geltz-Zilliken	Saarburger Rausch Riesling Spätlese	02 12	Auction	93
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Despite being made from clean grapes, this offers a delicately vanilla and honey touch as well as the telltale ripe expression of Rausch, with pear, quince but also fresh green herbs, spices and smoke. The wine is quite powerful on the palate but remains elegant with even a touch of raciness coming through in the finish. This gorgeous Auslese-styled wine should age gracefully for many years to come. 2017-2041

Weingut Fritz Haag

2011er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese lange GK	15 12	Auction	95
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Golden-yellow in color, this offers a most glorious tension between exotic zest and garden fruit ripeness on the nose including passion fruit, apricot, pear, mirabelle, gooseberry, honey and pineapple, all wooing for attention. The feel on the palate is ripe and rich, yet remains focused. And then a great expression of whipped cream and apricot sorbet comes through and lifts up the otherwise somewhat honeyed and sweet BA-styled finish. This is superbly well made but patience is required. 2026-2051

2011er	Fritz Haag	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese	14 12	Auction	98
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Well, what it there to say: from the moment one gets one nose in the glass, it is clear that Oliver Haag has crafted something very special here. Not because it is dramatic, ostentatious, out of whack or crazy. No, just because this wine epitomizes all the greatness of top Haag wines. The nose is just incredibly pure, with the juiciest of white peach and pear cream paired with the telltale touch of freshly whipped cream. Some delicate notes of pear and citrusy fruits add a sensation of depth without ever compromising the utter feeling of precision and balance. One needs to forget about the word Spätlese on the label as this wine is smooth, intense and rich on the palate yet it remains perfectly balanced, offering the typical clean flavors of a great feine Auslese. The finish is just to die for, being incredibly long, juicy, floral and herby. This is a very special wine! 2021-2051

Weingut Reinhold Haart

2010er	Reinhold Haart	Wintricher Ohligsberg Riesling Eiswein	22 11	Auction	95
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Harvested at over 200° Oechsle at -15°C (5°F) on December 3, this offers the telltale dramatic Ohligsberger touch of blood orange, yellow peach and exotic fruits wrapped in a scent of dried herbs, earth and a hint of volatile acidity. The wine is electrifyingly racy on the palate and the finish is driven by more zesty acidity and juicy, sorbet-styled fruits. The acidity is really structuring this wine (no wonder, at a whopping 20 g/l!) and, as it is quite irresistible already at this young age, we would opt to enjoy in its youthful stage. Now-2020



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Weingut von Hövel

2010er	von Hövel	Kanzemer Hörecker Riesling Beerenauslese	12 11	Auction	94
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Despite having been harvested with over 200° Oechsle, this stunning effort tastes every bit as juicy as one would expect from a light BA, with great notes of honeyed spices, apricot, grapefruit, passion fruit and minerals bringing a fresh side to the underlying notes of apricot and honey. The feel on the palate is concentrated without being unduly oily and the finish is just incredibly mouth-watering thanks to the particularly Eiswein-like acidity of the 2010 vintage. This tour de force of a BA is quite a success! 2021-2041

Weingut Karthäuserhof

2011er	Karthäuserhof	Eitelsbacher Karthäuserhofberg Riesling Auslese Nr. 18		Auction	93
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This offers a great, subtle and delicate nose of fine smoke, floral notes, pink grapefruit, redcurrant as well as melon, pear, honey, gooseberry and fresh herbs. Despite the relatively ripe flavors of fruits on the palate (driven by mango and yellow peach), the delicate touch of acidity brings a feeling of elegance and smoothness to the wine and adds to the classy side of this wine. This is a great Auslese in the making! 2021-2041

Weingut Schloss Lieser

2011er	Schloss Lieser	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese lange GK	18 12	Auction	97
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Wow, what a wine! This is driven by a most pure, elegant and gorgeous nose of coconut, pineapple and whipped cream. The wine is superbly silky and creamy on the palate, where delicate notes of honeyed fruits and apricot flower woo for attention. The finish is rich, honeyed and hauntingly creamy. But this richness is nicely balanced out by some superbly zesty acidity. This is a great success! 2021-2051

2011er	Schloss Lieser	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese	17 12	Auction	92
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Still very much reduced, this offers a deep and powerful nose of slightly honeyed pineapple, pear and spices. There is quite some acidic grip to give structure to the palate. This firm steely feel then leads to a long, powerful and delicately perfumed finish in which more notes of fruits come through. This multi-layered wine is still very much work in progress and, more than maybe other in 2011, really needs bottle age to find its balance. 2021-2036

Weingut Dr. Loosen

2011er	Dr. Loosen	Erdener Prälat Riesling Auslese lange GK		Auction	(94-96)
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Harvested with 145-150° Oechsle, this already comparatively deep golden colored wine offers a stunning nose driven by almond paste and marzipan, date, pineapple and quince. The feel on the palate is rich and soft but is also lifted by a delicately tickly acidity which brings some extra dimension to the BA-styled aromatics. This is a gorgeous and superbly balanced Prälat and a great tribute to how well this vineyard absorbs botrytis and high Oechsle degrees. 2021-2051

2011er	Dr. Loosen	Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Spätlese GK		Auction	(92-94)
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This offers typical clean Auslese-styled flavors of gooseberry, fresh herbs, pineapple and peach. The wine is quite opulent on the palate but the aromatic precision gives it freshness. The finish is smooth and long and underlines the Auslese character of this outstanding wine. This should age effortlessly for several decades. 2021-2041



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Weingut Egon Müller

2011er	Egon Müller	Scharzhofberger Riesling Spätlese	05 12	Auction	96
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This offers a superbly fresh and elegantly restrained nose of gooseberry, pink grapefruit, passion fruit, fresh herbs and anise. The wine is well-balanced on the palate and delivers great mouth-watering and mineral-driven flavors in a true Spätlese style. The finish is zesty and spicy. This is a great effort made in a style much akin to that of the gloriously fresh 2009 (even if the concentration and the Auslese feeling is higher) than the richer 2007. This is a gorgeous wine in the making. 2021-2041

Weingut Joh. Jos. Prüm

2000er	Joh. Jos. Prüm	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Beerenauslese lange GK	11 12	Auction	95
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Already quite dark in color (as are many high end wines from 2000), this offers a ostentatiously opulent nose of oriental dessert with almond, nut, dried fruits, saffron and other refined spices in a style not unlike that of the great 1970. The feel on the palate is delicately oxidative, with superb notes of cognac, date, plum, blood orange and candied citrusy fruits. The finish is oily yet, as so often with Prüm BAs, incredibly focused. This is a gorgeous BA to wind down on a cold winter night. Now-2020+

2011er	Joh. Jos. Prüm	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese lange GK		Auction	98
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Harvested well into BA category, this offers deep flavors of apricot, acacia honey, pear puree and quince as well as more delicate flavors coming from cassis, green herbs and undercooled fruits. The wine exhibits an almost oily structure (not unlike that of a BA or a TBA) yet remains sharp and structured. All this leads to a superbly well-integrated feel of dried fruits, raisin, pear and herbs in the long finish. This almost TBA-dramatic expression of Wehlener Sonnenuhr will be irresistible in a few decades. 2031-2061

2011er	Joh. Jos. Prüm	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese GK		Auction	93+
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Harvested well into BA level, this wine is quite marked by rather ripe notes of honey, quince, pineapple and some candied and dried fruits. Despite the opulence on the nose, the feel on the palate is sharp and, dare we say, nearly painful in precision at first, before a most superbly well-integrated feel of focused sweetness kicks in and brings more drama to the scents of candied fruits, honey and smoke in the long finish. This is much riper and much more BA in style than usual auction GK produced by this House. But lovers of this dramatic style of wine should keep a close eye on this effort as it promises to be spectacular and even exceed our expectations at maturity! 2021-2051

2011er	Joh. Jos. Prüm	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese		Auction	97
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Still quite loaded by CO₂, this offers a show-stopping and incredibly subtle and refreshing nose of peach skin, pear, grapefruit, coconut, pineapple and gooseberry. The aromatic precision on the palate is staggering, and the finish is to die for, with a great delicate feel of creamy yet undercooled fruits. This is a stunning effort in the making! 2021-2041

2011er	Joh. Jos. Prüm	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese		Auction	95
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This wine is remarkably open for a young Prüm and seduces one with delicately flowery and spicy scents of cassis, ripe pear, melon, gooseberry and passion fruit. The wine is remarkably light and fresh on the palate (where, at this early stage, notes of fermentation still overtone the aromatic profile) but what is most remarkable about this Spätlese is how light and elegant it comes over in the finish, even though it is really a light Auslese in terms of structure. This is a gorgeous wine in the making! 2021-2036

Weingut Schloss Saarstein

2011er	Schloss Saarstein	Serriger Schloss Saarsteiner Riesling Auslese GK	15 12	Auction	94
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Well, this is a great wine driven by mouthwatering notes of anise, smoke and gooseberry immersed into a sea of passion fruit, yellow peach and citrus. A touch of honey comes through on the palate which adds a dimension to the overall feel without affecting the sensation of zesty freshness. This is a gorgeously well-made and juicy Auslese. 2021-2041



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Weingut Willi Schaefer

2011er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese	15 12	<i>Auction</i>	95
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Still quite marked by notes of reduction, this offers a great nose of pineapple, melon, pear and acacia honey. The feel on the palate is precise and clean, with further notes of ripe fruits adding depth to the overall rich and comparatively broad experience (at least by Willi Schaefer standards). The finish is sublime, leaving a long ethereal feel of ripe fruits and herbs on the palate. This is a gorgeously well-made Auslese. 2021-2041

2011er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Spätlese	09 12	<i>Auction</i>	93
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This offers a most beautiful nose of white peach, pear, melon and a hint of passion fruit. The wine is superbly well balanced on the palate, with great freshness and finesse. The finish is long, pure and fresh, and remains very much Spätlese in style. This is a great effort made in a precise and easy-to-drink style. 2018-2031

Weingut Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Thanisch

2011er	Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Thanisch	Berncasteler Doctor Riesling Auslese lange GK		<i>Auction</i>	(95-97)
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This offers a great nose of pear, melon, mirabelle and grapefruit as well as other citrusy fruit. The wine is very baroque in style and impresses through its great focused version of Rheingau complexity and opulence. The finish is smooth, balanced and refined. This is clearly a special effort but one which could actually turn out to be exceptionally good. It is that impressive at this stage! 2021-2051

2011er	Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Thanisch	Berncasteler Doctor Riesling Spätlese	09 12	<i>Auction</i>	92
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This shines immediately through its captivating nose of pear, grapefruit and under-ripe pineapple immersed into a sea of smoke, anise and herbs. The feel on the palate is surprisingly firm and structured, and shows the presence of a solid Auslese. This feel of power carries over to the finish, where a touch of subtler notes of minerals and further herbs buffer off the "baby fat" so often found in young Doctor wines. This will happily repay a little bit of bottle aging in order to gain in presence and precision. 2021-2041

Weingut Wegeler

2011er	Wegeler	Bernkasteler Doctor Riesling Spätlese GK	13 12	<i>Auction</i>	91+
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Quite Auslese in style, this offers a delicious and typical nose of canned peach as well as grapefruit and pineapple. The wine is nicely spicy and elegant on the palate and leaves a clean and fresh feel in the somewhat reduced finish. We would not be surprised if this will significantly gain in aromatic precision with further bottle aging and thereby eventually warrant a higher rating. 2021-2041



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2011 Vintage Report

PART I of the comprehensive 2011 Vintage Report is available now!

July
2012
Issue

- Detailed report on the **2011 vintage in the Mosel:**
 - Vintage conditions & growing season
 - What to expect as wines in 2011
- Detailed Review **for 13 leading Estates:**
 - Jos. Christoffel jr.
 - Karl Erbes
 - Dr. Fischer
 - Geltz-Zilliken
 - Julian Haart
 - von Hövel
 - Karthäuserhof
 - Peter Lauer
 - Schloss Lieser
 - Willi Schaefer
 - von Schubert
 - Selbach-Oster
 - Weiser-Künstler

PART II will include further detailed reviews of leading Estates!

October
2012
Issue

- **Further detailed Estate Reviews** which will include:
 - A.J. Adam
 - Reinhold Haart
 - Fritz Haag
 - Immich-Batterieberg
 - Dr. Loosen
 - Egon Müller / Le Gallais
 - Joh. Jos. Prüm
 - Max Ferd. Richter
 - Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Thanisch
- In addition, **many recommended wines from other Estates** (incl. great bargains).

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