

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

# **Special Issue: Auction Guide — September 2011**

# **Mosel Fine Wines**

The aim of Mosel Fine Wines is to provide a comprehensive and independent review of Riesling wines produced in the Mosel, Saar and Ruwer region.

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 Mosel wines are maturing.
- Perspectives on specific topics such as vineyards, Estates, vintages, etc.

All wines reviewed in 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, top Mosel Riesling wines generally go 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).
- <u>Without further reference, all wines are assumed to have in addition a drinking window of 1-3 years after the vintage</u>: 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 great Mosel Riesling is not about "more is better" but rather a combination of the following elements:

- 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.
- Reflects its terroir: Mosel Wine should carry the signature of its unique terroir into the wine. 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 Spätlese, which remains true to its style, can therefore get a higher score than, say, an average Auslese.

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

95-100	<u>Classic</u> : Is a true classic that sets standards. 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. It will offer immense pleasure and should be actively looked out for.
85-89	<u>Good to very good</u> : 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 a simple straightforward style. Price is the key driver for the buying decision.
Below 80 Not worth it: Does not show any distinction and may even have some flaws. Given the currently still quite reas price level for Mosel Riesling, there is no reason to bother.	

Mosel Riesling is an aromatic grape that rarely goes through malolactic fermentation. Therefore, bottling generally occurs five 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.



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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 Naturrein 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 Ayler 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 Trierer Ring (another small 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 *Triererverein 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 Grosser Ring / VDP takes place at the Europahalle in Trier while the auction organized by the Bernkasteler Ring will take place at Nell's Park hotel for the first time this year (it used to take place at Kloster Machern in Bernkastel / Wehlen).



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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 2011, these auctions will take place on September 22 and 23.

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 1983er Geltz-Zilliken Riesling Eiswein auctioned off in 2010).

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 reach €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.

Someone 'only' wanting good Mosel wines for everyday drinking is probably best off 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.





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

In principle, these wines are therefore easy to identify. In practice though, things may not necessarily be as easy as some 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 the '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 2011: Bernkasteler Ring Wines Guide**

## **Overview**

We provide here a review of wines that will be auctioned off by the Bernkasteler Ring on September 22, 2011 and that we can recommend on quality grounds. This includes wines from the following Estates (presented in alphabetic order):

**Bastgen** Monzel Koblenz Rhine Bauer Mülheim von Beulwitz Mertesdorf **Ernst Clüsserath** Trittenheim Clüsserath-Eifel Trittenheim Mosel Franzen Bremm Leo Fuchs Pommern Cochem **Albert Gessinger** Zeltingen Zell-Merl Kallfelz Zell-Merl Karp-Schreiber Brauneberg Kees-Kieren Graach Bernkastel Brauneberg Wehlen Heribert Kerpen Lehnert-Veit Piesport Klüsserath Carl Loewen Leiwen / Longuich Alfred Merkelbach Ürzig **Markus Molitor** Wehlen **Paulinshof** Kesten Dr. Pauly-Bergweiler Bernkastel Ürzig Rebenhof Klüsserath **FJ** Regnery Johann Peter Reinert Kanzem **Andreas Schmitges** Erden St. Nikolaus-Hospital Bernkastel

NB: We did not taste the 1994er Clüsserath-Eifel Neumagener Rosengärtchen Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese, 2006er Martin Conrad Brauneberger Juffer Riesling Trocken GK, 2010er Peter Neu Erben Wiltinger Klosterberg Riesling Auslese and 2010er Werner Schweicher Annaberg Riesling Auslese.



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## **Tasting Notes by Estates**

### **Weingut Bastgen**

2010er Bastgen Kestener Paulinshofberg Riesling Spätlese 08 11 Auction 92

This offers fresh and juicy notes of grapefruit, pineapple, flowers and even vanilla on the nose. This leads to juicy and racy notes of fruits on the palate, where some riper and more botrytis-driven aromas come through. The finish is impeccably balanced, with the weight and presence of an Auslese. This is a great crowd-pleasing wine made in a *feine Auslese* style. 2015-2025

### **Weingut Bauer**

2010er Bauer Brauneberger Juffer Riesling Auslese 16 11 Auction 93

This Estate is not (yet) well known on the international market but this could change quickly judging by this head-turner! It exhibits elegant and fresh scents of peach, pear, mint and apricot flowers on the nose as well as delicately elegant notes of honeyed spices on the palate. This all leads to a firm acidity which freshens up the finish. This wine, only bottled in magnums, is a great success in this vintage. 2015-2030

#### **Weingut Erben von Beulwitz**

2010er Erben von Beulwitz Kaseler Nies'chen Riesling Auslese lange GK Alte Reben 04 11 Auction 93

The vintage allowed Herbert Weis to produce not one, as usual, but two bottlings of Auslese Alte Reben: A regular one (which is sold via the regular channels) and this lange GK one, sold at this year's auction. This offers a beautiful, delicate and pastel-like nose of fresh fruits and minerals. The lange GK side of the wine comes through on the palate. The finish is firm and zesty. This Eiswein-Auslese styled wine is rich and firm and very hard to resist. 2015-2030

2009er Erben von Beulwitz Kaseler Nies'chen Riesling Eiswein 03 10 Auction 94

This behaves aromatically more like a BA and offers a great nose of candied and dried fruits, underlined by a touch of volatile acidity. The wine is zesty, rich and quite sweet at this stage. The finish is however incredibly airy and intense. This is a lovely BA-styled Eiswein in the making. 2017-2029

### Weingut Ernst Clüsserath

2010er Ernst Clüsserath Trittenheimer Apotheke Riesling Auslese 11 11 Auction 91

A fresh floral nose of cassis, lavender and banana leads to an elegant playful wine on the palate. This is about freshness and restrained elegance, with more sorbet-like fruity flavors coming through in the long and smooth finish. This is impeccably made. 2015-2025

### Weingut Clüsserath-Eifel

1998er Clüsserath-Eifel Trittenheimer Apotheke Riesling Auslese \*\*\* 06 99 Auction 90

Reprint of our tasting note of September 2009: This boasts some attractive intense flavors of yellow fruits, butter and some subtle notes of herbs on the nose, with just a slight touch of petrol. Delicately creamy, it is well balanced and ripe with a delicious sense of fine botrytis (showing a light honeyed touch) as well as zest cleaning the palate in the finish. This is a lovely mature wine. Now-2018

2004er Clüsserath-Eifel Trittenheimer Apotheke Riesling Spätlese \*\*\* 15 05 Auction 89

This is in an awkward muted phase at the moment, with roasted notes of almonds dominating the aromatics on the palate. Nevertheless, the wine hints at attractive notes of peach and flowers and offers good zesty sweetness in the finish. 2014-2024



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### Weingut Franzen

2010er Franzen Bremmer Calmont Riesling Auslese 07 11 Auction 94

This youthful beauty is still marked by some sulfur on the nose. After some airing, the wine offers a stunning nose of yeasts, mint, tobacco and minerals. This leads to a more fruit-driven side on the palate, with high aromatic density (from huge levels of dry extract) and a racy acidity giving the whole thing an aristocratic austerity. The finish is smooth and long. This great effort (possibly the best at this Estate for many years) needs some time to integrate its different bits and pieces (and integrate the sulfur) but should then be a smasher of an Auslese. 2022-2035

### **Weingut Leo Fuchs**

2010er Leo Fuchs Pommerner Zeisel Riesling Auslese \*\*\* Feinherb 16 11 Auction 86

With 14% of alcohol, this is a rather rich and powerful wine driven by surprisingly ripe notes of quince, pear and apricot flower on the nose. This leads to more powerful and slightly hot notes of spices and fruits on the palate and a long finish carried by a touch of alcoholic heat. This wine made to enjoy with rich hearty food will please lovers of ostentatious wines. Given the touch of alcohol, we would however opt to enjoy this in its youth. Now-2014

2010er Leo Fuchs Pommerner Zeisel Riesling Auslese \*\*\* 11 11 Auction 91

The most fascinating about this wine is its aromatic profile: It oozes blood orange, a feeling which is enhanced by some riper notes of apricot, toffee and nut oil in the background. The wine is rich and opulent on the palate, with good hearty flavors of fruits and spices, and leaves a great juicy feel in the after-taste. This is a nice and comparatively baroque dessert wine to sip next to a fire on a cold day. 2015-2025

### Weingut Albert Gessinger

2010er Albert Gessinger Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese *** Alte Reben 15 11	Auction 9	90
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The simple nonetheless very attractive scents of white peach, pineapple, passion fruit as well as a whiff of volatile acidity on the nose lead to an elegantly restrained and zesty feel on the palate. The finish is remarkably long. 2015-2025

## Weingut Kallfelz

2010er	Kallfelz	Merler Königslay-Terrassen Riesling Spätlese	114 11	Auction	89

This offers an attractive nose of melon, grapefruit, passion fruit and pear. The wine is comparatively intense, rich and racy on the palate, with a nice sense of balance in the finish. 2015-2025

### Weingut Karp-Schreiber

2010er	Karp-Schreiber	Brauneberger Juffer Riesling Kabinett Trocken	03 11	Auction	87

With 12% of alcohol, this offers simple but attractive notes of herbs, gooseberry and cassis. The wine is enjoyable with some brown spices coming through in the palate. This is nicely made in a simple and direct way. Now-2015

1976er	Karp-Schreiber	Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese	07 77	Auction	90	

This offers a telltale golden-bronze color and a very attractively complex nose of yellow fruits, camphor, frangipane, leather and toffee. A delicious touch of candied lime lightens up all these complex gentleman's cabinet flavors on the palate. The finish is now off-dry, so that it would be perfect with food (game), as an aperitif or on its own after dinner. Now



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#### Weinaut Kees-Kieren

2010er	Kees-Kieren	Erdener Treppchen Riesling Spätlese **	22 11	Auction	89
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This offers a rich and opulent nose of passion fruit, apple and honey. The wine first offers the ravish raciness of Kabinett on the palate, before this gives way to a more exotic intensity of a Spätlese in the finish. This joyful and attractive wine is hard to resist. 2015-2025

	2010er	Kees-Kieren	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese ***	26 11	Auction	92
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This offers an electrifying direct nose of crystallized citrus, pineapple and smoke. It leads to more rich honeyed flavors on the palate. These are balanced out by an incredibly racy acidity, which tightens up the whole thing. This enjoyable zesty Auslese leaves a feel of power and energy in the long and razor-sharp finish. 2015-2025

### Weingut Heribert Kerpen

2010er Heribert Kerpen Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese * 20 11 Aug	uction 88
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This offers direct scents of slightly exotic fruits on the nose driven by pineapple, peach and passion fruit. This leads to a surprisingly soft feel on the palate, where a honeyed spicy side comes through. The finish is smooth and direct, with the weight of an Auslese. 2015-2025

2010er	Heribert Kerpen	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese ***	23 11	Auction	93

This offers a beautiful citrus-driven nose of fresh white fruits, mint and pepper, with more exotic flavors of pineapple coming through on the palate. Despite the aromatic opulence, the wine is really racy and comparatively lean, with a razor sharp finish. It leaves a fascinating feel of whipped cream, white pepper and mint in the aftertaste. This is simply irresistible. 2015-2030

## Weingut Lehnert-Veit

2001er	Lehnert-Veit	Piesporter Goldtröpfchen Riesling Auslese	05 02	Auction	90

This is still somewhat closed, with almond-driven notes of reduction. The wine hints at cassis, vanilla, gooseberry and herbs, with a touch of volatile acidity noticeable on the nose. It is well balanced and direct on the palate, and leaves a clean spicy feel in the finish. This is an outstanding effort which still needs a few years of bottle age to overcome its current reductive profile. 2014-2026

### **Weingut Carl Loewen**

2009er	Carl Loewen	Leiwener Laurentiuslay Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese 20	10	Auction	93

This is a huge wine loaded with intense flavors of dried fruits, apricot, licorice and spices, as well as a touch of volatile acidity. More bakery notes and flavors of almonds come through on the palate, and these add to the feeling of glorious richness. A delicately tickly acidity freshens up the long finish. This is a full-blown TBA with decades of life ahead. 2021-2049



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#### **Weingut Alfred Merkelbach**

2010er Alfred Merkelbach Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Auslese 08 11 Auction 88

Fermented with 10.5% of alcohol, this offers a beautiful and comparatively rich "long GK"-styled nose of whipped cream, honey, melon and exotic fruits. All this exuberance seems to vanish away on the palate, which proves light and delicately racy. This feeling of lightness carries over into a slightly hot finish. Now-2015

2010er Alfred Merkelbach Erdener Treppchen Riesling Auslese 04 11 Auction 90

This GK-styled wine is driven by complex flavors of mango, pineapple, grapefruit and dried earthy spices on the palate. The wine boasts 11% of alcohol and yet this is hardly perceptible on the palate, where more spicy notes of fruits are balanced out by a great zesty feel of acidity. The finish is racy and long. Now-2018

### **Weingut Markus Molitor**

2009er Markus Molitor Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese (Golden Capsule) 23 10 Auction 94

This show-stopping beauty offers complex spicy floral scents on the nose, driven by lavender, laurel, lime and peach. This leads to further intense notes of passion fruit, acacia honey and mint on the palate. This is really an Auslese in style and aromatics, but what a wine! 2017-2034

2010er Markus Molitor Niedermenniger Herrenberg Riesling Auslese \*\*\* (Golden Capsule) Auction (92-95)

This cask sample is still very primary and backward, but hints at huge BA and even TBA-styled honeyed flavors of dried and candied fruits. The wine coats the palate with an oily feel of fruit and honey. Zesty acidity then kicks in to lighten up and add balance to the endless and smooth finish. This is a huge concentrated wine in the making. 2020-2040

2009er Markus Molitor Bernkasteler Badstube Riesling Eiswein \*\* (Golden Capsule) Auction (95-97)

This offers a fruit-driven nose of pineapple, apricot, cassis and fresh prune, which give way to glorious oily flavors of candied fruits on the palate. The after-taste is smooth, with some lavender and honey to add complexity to the overall experience. This beauty is still marked by some sulfur at this early stage and will require cellaring. But then, it should be a stunner of an Eiswein. 2019-2039

2007er Markus Molitor Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese \* 87 11 Auction 98+

This is already dark in color and offers a huge complex nose of apricot cream, blood orange, figs, candied lime, toffee, raisin and many other scents (the list would be too long to enumerate!). The wine is nearly painfully intense and oily on the palate, with a touch of led pencil and dried prunes. The wine is complex and does not seem to end. This great success may even eventually merit a perfect rating if it turns into one of these baroque Rheingau-style, Coca-Cola colored TBA legends in a few decades. 2027-2100

## **Weingut Paulinshof**

2010er Paulinshof Kestener Paulinshofberg Riesling Spätlese Feinherb 06 11 Auction 90

Still primary and yeasty, this attractive wine is driven by enjoyable notes of granny smith apple and dried spices. It is well balanced on the palate, with a racy but well-integrated touch of acidity. The finish is long and gorgeously spicy. This requires a little bit of patience for it to off-load its primary yeasty notes but should then offer an outstanding piece of winemaking. 2013-2018

#### Weingut Dr. Pauly-Bergweiler

2010er Dr. Pauly-Bergweiler Bernkasteler alte Badstube am Doctorberg Riesling Kabinett Alte Reben 22 11 Auction 89

This rich Spätlese-styled Kabinett offers comparatively opulent flavors of gooseberry, passion fruit, grapefruit and spices on the nose. The wine is firm on the palate, with racy and more under-cooled exotic flavors carrying over in the moderately long finish. Some racy acidity comes through in the finish to add freshness to the overall feel. 2013-2020



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2010er Dr. Pauly-Bergweiler Bernkasteler alte Badstube am Doctorberg Riesling Spätlese Alte Reben 17 11 Auction

Nearly white in color, this offers a beautifully fresh and complex nose of strawberry, melon and vine peach. The full-bodied wine (which boasts 10% of alcohol) is rich and powerful on the palate, and leaves a clean complex spicy feel in the long finish. It is a very attractive wine destined for food. 2015-2025

2010er Dr. Pauly-Bergweiler Bernkasteler alte Badstube am Doctorberg Riesling Auslese 33 11 Auction 93

This full-blown Auslese bursts with rich scents of whipped cream, melon, white peach and laurel. Despite all this opulence, the wine remains zesty and almost electrifying on the palate. The aromatic profile freshens up in the finish, with slightly Eiswein-styled sorbet flavors. This is a racy Auslese-Eiswein formatted wine in the making. 2015-2035

2009er Dr. Pauly-Bergweiler Bernkasteler Johannisbrünnchen Riesling Eiswein 40 10 Auction 91

After a whiff of volatile acidity, this wine offers rich scents of quince, pear, cherry and smoky peach on the nose. This gives way to a zesty feel on the palate and some notes of almond paste in the after-taste. This is nicely balanced and smooth, and should age gracefully. 2016-2027

#### **Weinaut Rebenhof**

2008er Rebenhof Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Eiswein 19 09 Auction 92

Already surprisingly dark in color, this offers a complex nose of toffee, candied fruits, smoke, quince and charcoal. The wine is racy and oily on the palate, and the finish is long and comparatively smooth. This complex wine will please lovers of more old-fashioned and more oxidative-styled wines. Now-2023

2009er Rebenhof Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Beerenauslese 19 10 Auction 95

This already hinted at its potential last year and it confirms it beautifully now: This is a great BA in the making. Great, fresh and complex notes of lavender, passion fruit, mango, dried fruits and honey literally jump out of the glass and give way to a great delineated feel on the palate. The whole thing bursts with fruits and yet remains incredibly focused and precise in the after-taste. The finish is long and racy. 2021-2039

## Weingut FJ Regnery

2010er FJ Regnery Klüsserather Bruderschaft Riesling Spätlese Feinherb 15 11 Auction 88

This is a quite exotic and full-bodied expression of Riesling with loads of notes of pineapple, apricot and smoky spices. The wine comes over as direct and powerful on the palate, a feeling which persists in the comparatively long and smooth finish. This is attractively made. Now-2017

### 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.

2010er Johann Peter Reinert Wiltinger Klosterberg Riesling Auslese 17 11 Auction 90

Bottled under VinoLok, this offers direct and light notes of anise, tea herbs, citrus and gooseberry, which contrast with the power and intensity on the palate. The finish is racy and adds to a feeling of under-cooled elegance. It is still quite reduced at this stage so patience will be required. 2015-2020+

2010er Johann Peter Reinert Wawerner Ritterpfad Riesling Auslese 18 11 Auction 92

Bottled under VinoLok, this beautiful wine offers a great feeling of water-light lightness. Notes of salt, iodine and grapefruit on the nose lead to a mineral feel on the palate. The finish is racy and smooth, with quite some power nicely harnessed by the fresh aromatic profile. This is a gorgeous Auslese. 2014-2020+



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2009er Johann Peter Reinert Wiltinger Schlossberg Riesling Eiswein 30 10 Auction 92

Bottled under VinoLok, this offers a complex zesty nose of candied fruit gums which lead to riper notes led by melon and pear on the palate. This atypical Eiswein behaves really more like a BA, with a rich, honeyed and sweet finish. It will reward the patient ones. 2015-2020+

### **Weingut Andreas Schmitges**

2001er Andreas Schmitges Erdener Treppchen Riesling Auslese \* 13 02 Auction 90

Similarly to many 2001 wines at this stage (see our detailed review of the 2001 vintage in Issue No 15), also this 2001 Auslese is still in the process of coming out of its muted phase and needs quite some air to shed its strong almond-driven notes of reduction. Then, this offers an attractive and direct nose of canned yellow peach, apple, earthy spices and honey, with a more mineral side coming through in the finish. 2013-2026

### Weingut Stiftung St. Nikolaus-Hospital

2010er St. Nikolaus Hospital Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Auslese \*\*\* 17 11 Auction 92

This offers a saturated nose of yellow peach and dried earthy spices so typical for the Graacher Himmelreich. The wine proves to be very nicely balanced on the palate, with more direct notes of fruits. The finish is straightforward and long. This remarkable effort is one of the best we have ever tasted from this historic Estate. It should age gracefully for many years to come. 2018-2030



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# **Auction 2011 : 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 23, 2011 and that we can recommend on quality grounds. This includes wines from the following Estates (presented in alphabetic order):

Clemens Busch Pünderich

Geltz-Zilliken Saarburg

Fritz Haag Brauneberg

Heymann-Löwenstein Winningen

von Hövel Oberemmel

Le Gallais Kanzem

Karthäuserhof Trier-Eitelsbach

Schloss Lieser Lieser

Dr. Loosen Bernkastel

Egon Müller Wiltingen

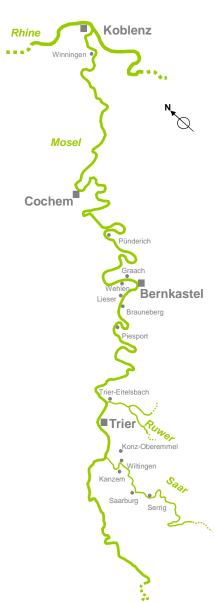
Joh. Jos. Prüm Wehlen

S.A. Prüm Wehlen

Schloss Saarstein Serrig

Willi Schaefer Graach

Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Thanisch Bernkastel





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## **Tasting Notes by Estates**

#### **Weingut Clemens Busch**

2010er Clemens Busch Pündericher Marienburg Riesling Auslese lange GK 17 11 Auction (95-97)

Still yeasty at first, this powerhouse offers most beautiful notes of cream, red berry fruit and honeyed exotic fruits on the nose. The wine has the weight and presence of a BA but, far from being weighty, the great zesty acidity makes the wine incredibly lively and mouth-watering. The finish is complex and incredibly long. This is a terrific effort made in a dynamic and zesty style. 2020-2040

### **Weingut Le Gallais**

2010er Le Gallais Wiltinger braune Kupp Riesling Auslese GK 09 11 Auction 94

This opens up to a great rich and soft nose of gooseberry, melon, white peach and some dried herbs. The wine is quite racy on the palate and this all leads to a firm long finish. The aromatic intensity and precision are superb in this long gold capsule-styled wine. 2020-2035

### Weingut Geltz-Zilliken

2003er Geltz-Zilliken Saarburger Rausch Riesling Beerenauslese 02 04 Auction 94

The nose is initially showing some powerful volatile acidity before opening up to Sauternes-like fruit-driven richness including honey, apricot, acacia and dried mango. The wine is mouth-coating and offers huge dry extract, intense notes of butter cream, orange marmalade, honey and toffee. Overall, the aromatics and structure are not unlike that of great 1976 Middle Mosel wines. It is a beautiful, rich dessert wine. Now-2033

2010er Geltz-Zilliken Saarburger Rausch Riesling Auslese lange GK 01 11 Auction 97

This wine stands out in 2010 at this Estate, as the only one to be clearly driven by botrytis-related aromatics. This beauty exhibits TBA-like flavors on the nose with intense raisin, honey, ripe fruits and a touch of toffee all wrapped in smoke. Although the level of dry extract must be colossal, the wine remains beautifully balanced on the palate, with some notes of whipped cream softening the structure. The finish is pure and very long. This is a stunning wine! 2020-2035

2010er Geltz-Zilliken Saarburger Rausch Riesling Auslese GK 03 11 Auction 95

Initially restrained and compact with notes of smoke and infused fruits, this opens up to riper notes of fruits (pear and quince) and honey. This is made in a "feine Auslese" style with mouth-coating intensity but a mouth-watering clean and pure finish. This is a refined Auslese which shows rather ripe and soft fruits. 2016-2025

2010er Geltz-Zilliken Saarburger Rausch Riesling Auslese 05 11 Auction 94

Still quite backward in style, this offers great floral notes, exotic fruits (quince, mango), citrus and chamomile which give way to superbly delineated and zesty notes of yellow peach on the palate. This is a great Auslese with quite some potential but also already frightfully delicious now. 2017-2025

2010er Geltz-Zilliken Saarburger Rausch Riesling Spätlese 07 11 Auction 93

This is still reduced and requires quite some airing. Then, it offers a very pure and fresh nose driven by complex notes of smoke, botrytis, mango and red berry fruits. It is rich and overtly fruity on the palate at this stage, with quite some subtle notes of cream. And yet, this all leads to a airy and juicy finish. This is really a great rich Auslese, but one with great finesse. 2018-2030



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#### Weingut Fritz Haag

2010er Fritz Haag Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese lange GK 15 11 Auction (95-97)

This offers a rich and comparatively opulent nose driven by whipped cream, pineapple, passion fruit, grapefruit and some honeyed spices. The wine is racy and precise on the palate, and offers an incredibly long and powerful finish. This is nearly TBA in aromatics yet retains the lightness of high level Auslese. This is a superb effort. 2020-2040

2010er Fritz Haag Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese 14 11 Auction 94

This offers a beautifully and delicately creamy nose of passion fruit, pineapple and honeyed spices. The wine is rich yet refined on the palate, and offers a great smooth and long finish. This is a beautiful wine made in a most elegant Auslese GK style. 2020-2035

### Weingut von Hövel

2010er von Hövel Oberemmeler Hütte Riesling Auslese GK Auction (93-94)

This offers great vivid flavors of passion fruit, lime, grapefruit and some delicately honeyed apricot. The wine is very racy on the palate, with great aromatic intensity, which leads to an even more electrifying finish. This is a great joyful Auslese made in a delicate and not ostentatious GK style. 2020-2035

#### Weingut Heymann-Löwenstein

2010er Heymann-Löwenstein Winninger Uhlen R Riesling Auslese GK 05 11 Auction 93

This is an opulent and baroque-styled wine with plenty of mango, toffee, bakery notes, ripe apples, tangerine and spices. The wine is rich and creamy on the palate, with powerful aromatics of apple-driven fruits and spices. The finish is very BA in style, being intense, rich and mouth-coating. 2020-2035

#### Weingut Karthäuserhof

2010er Karthäuserhof Eitelsbacher Karthäuserhofberg Riesling Auslese Nr. 43 Auction 95

This offers a most refined and elegant nose of star anise, passion fruit, gooseberry, yellow peach, mint and some dried spices. The wine is rich yet racy on the palate, with great notes of fruits and whipped cream. The finish is smooth and elegant. This is a great refined Auslese in the making. 2020-2035

#### **Weinaut Schloss Lieser**

2010er Schloss Lieser Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese lange GK 16 11 Auction (94-96)

This offers a huge succulent nose of canned pineapple, quince, minerals, smoke, honey and apricot flowers. The wine is firmly racy on the palate, which concentrates the impression of great aromatic precision. This all carries over to a great powerful and intense finish with a unique combination of opulence and aromatic precision. 2020-2040

2010er Schloss Lieser Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese 15 11 Auction 92

This firm and racy wine offers very attractive direct and fruit-driven nose of canned peach, ripe apples, brown sugar and litchi. This is balanced by a more mineral side on the palate. The finish is firm and precise. This is very attractively made in a comparatively fresh Auslese style. 2017-2030



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#### Weinaut Dr. Loosen

2010er Dr. Loosen Erdener Prälat Riesling Auslese lange GK Auction (96-98)

This offers a huge and captivating nose of quince, passion fruit, apricot and delicate notes of spices which scream Erdener Prälat. The wine is incredibly intense, focused and precise on the palate, with great TBA-like complexity and yet Auslese raciness. This tour de force of a wine is likely to be the best at this Estate since the stunning 2001. It is that impressive! 2020-2040

2010er Dr. Loosen Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling Spätlese GK Auction (92-94)

This is a most beautifully balanced and joyful effort, which offers fresh juicy notes of cassis, red berry fruits and pineapple on the nose. The wine is powerful but nicely racy on the palate and the finish is long and energetic. This is a great powerful and fun Auslese-styled wine in the making! 2020-2035

### Weingut Egon Müller

1999er Egon Müller Scharzhofberger Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese Auction 100

What is there to say? The first flavors are already so captivating that one misses words to describe the multi-layered complexity coming out of the glass. There is freshness with mint, dried herbs and some passion fruit. Yet, these are paired with stunning notes of dried exotic fruits and toffee (no doubt from perfect botrytis). The wine is fully open for business and coats the palate with layers upon layers of sumptuously rich and creamy honeyed fruits. The finish is rich, superbly intense without ever being cloying. This is a modern day legend in the making. Now-2080

2010er Egon Müller Scharzhofberger Riesling Auslese lange GK 10 11 Auction 98

This offers a most complex nose of pineapple, candied lime and mint. The wine is incredibly complex and present on the palate, with great length and loads of power under the bonnet. The finish is smooth, mouth-coating and rich, and yet complex and playful. This stunning Auslese could easily pass as a great BA. This has a terrific future ahead. 2025-2050

### Weingut Joh. Jos. Prüm

2010er Joh. Jos. Prüm Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Auslese lange GK Auction (95-98)

This offers most beautiful flavors of pineapple, flowers and lime which lead to riper notes of apricot flower and quince on the palate. The wine is creamy, with a firm electrifying structure coming through towards the finish. And yet, one is compelled to go back to get another sip. This is very BA in style, but as such, a potentially brilliant effort in the making! 2025-2045

2010er Joh. Jos. Prüm Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese GK Auction (95-97)

This offers a great and rich nose of spicy yellow fruits, passion fruit, citrus and apricot leading to a great rich and beautifully balanced palate. The wine could easily pass as a lange GK and yet, it retains the verve of an Auslese thanks to a most beautifully integrated acidity. The finish is long and razor-sharp. This is an electrifying type of Auslese which needs time to shed some of its youthful reduction. 2022-2040

2010er Joh. Jos. Prüm Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese Auction (94-96)

This offers beautiful notes of cassis, white and yellow peach and a hint of honeyed cream on the palate. This comparatively rich Auslese remains however superbly focused on the palate, with layers of fruits framed by a well-integrated acidity. This should turn into a star in a few years, after it has shed its youthful notes of reduction. 2020-2035

2010er Joh. Jos. Prüm Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese Auction (91-94)

This offers great potential with delicate yet intense and comparably rich notes of smoke, citrus and exotic fruits. The wine is comparatively rich but quite well-defined on the palate, with a long spicy finish. As is to be expected with wines from this House, they are still very primary and reduced at this early stage. However, they should repay a few years of bottle age handsomely. 2018-2030



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#### Weingut S.A. Prüm

2009er S.A. Prüm Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese Fass 59 Auction 93

This is an opulent and rich expression of TBA with loads of ripe notes of figs, nuts, dates as well as dried apricot and prunes. The wine is quite delicately racy on the palate and offers a nice and long finish. This needs some aging to absorb the touch of sulfur currently present on the nose. 2019-2039

2009er S.A. Prüm Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Eiswein Fass 69 Auction 92

This offers a fresh and enjoyable nose of sorbet-like fruit driven by passion fruit, quince, melon as well as some more earthy notes of dried spices. The wine is rich and creamy on the palate, and the finish is smooth and long. This full-bodied expression of Eiswein should age gracefully. 2017-2029

2010er S.A. Prüm Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese GK Fass 37 Auction 92

This is a quite delicate and refined wine which offers attractive notes of yellow fruits, apricot flowers and white flowers on the nose. It is quite compact and racy on the palate, and this feeling carries through the finish. The wine is precise, sharp and elegant. 2020-2035

#### **Weingut Schloss Saarstein**

2009er Schloss Saarstein Serriger Schloss Saarsteiner Riesling Eiswein 14 10 Auction 93

This offers a BA styled nose of dried fruits, passion fruit, gooseberry, nut, spices and smoke. The wine is racy and intense on the palate, and leaves a clean smooth feel in the finish. This is very attractive in a rich yet racy style. 2017-2029

### Weingut Willi Schaefer

2010er Willi Schaefer Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese 04 11 Auction 96

This superb and elegant wine offers a great complex nose of smoke, peach, passion fruit and spices. It is rich and firm on the palate, with great tension in the finish. This is certainly less ostentatiously powerful than other 2010er auction Auslese, but it is no less admirable. The feeling of sulfur in this bottling is slightly more present than in the regular wines so that it is best left alone for a good decade to allow it to integrate its elements. 2023-2040

2010er Willi Schaefer Graacher Domprobst Riesling Spätlese 11 11 Auction 92+

This offers nice, subdued and impeccably well-balanced notes of peach, smoke and some dried herbs. The wine is a true Spätlese, and as such much "lighter" than most auction Spätlese from the 2010 vintage, but it is nonetheless beautiful and elegant. This requires however quite some bottle age in order to dissolve its notes of sulfur and could eventually merit a higher rating. 2022-2035

### Weingut Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch - Erben Thanisch

2010er Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch – Erben Thanisch Berncasteler Doctor Riesling Spätlese Auction (93-94)

This offers a most beautiful and complex nose of sappy yellow peach, pineapple, grapefruit, brown spices and some earthy notes of laurel. The wine is rich yet precise on the palate, with more playful notes of fruits adding to the sensation of spicy complexity. The finish is impeccably smooth and long with plenty of underlying energy. This is a beautiful wine in the making. 2017-2030



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  - What to expect as wines in 2010
- Detailed Review for 14 leading Estates:
  - A.J. Adam
  - Joh. .Jos. Christoffel Erben
  - Jos. Christoffel jr.
  - Karl Erbes
  - Geltz-Zilliken
- Fritz Haag
- Julian Haart Karthäuserhof
- Schloss Lieser
- Mönchhof
- Willi Schaefer
- von Schubert
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# October 2011 Issue

- Further detailed Estate Reviews including:
  - Reinhold Haart Herrenberg
  - Immich-Batterieberg
- Egon Müller / Le Gallais
- Joh. Jos. Prüm Max Ferd. Richter
- Selbach-Oster
- St. Urbans-Hof
- Wwe Dr. H. Thanisch Erben Thanisch
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