

What to drink this week
Wines from the Nahe Valley

It's worth spending a little more on elegant wines from one of Germany's most obscure wine regions, recommends **Harry Eyres**



Among all the lovely German wine valleys, I have a special soft spot for one of the most obscure, the Nahe. This charming river flows into the Rhine at Bingen and its wines have always been described as standing stylistically, as they do geographically, somewhere between those of the Mosel and the Rheingau—sharing the green-apple zinginess of the former with the firm minerality of the latter.

Why you should be drinking them

Of course, the Nahe has its own identity—a piercing transparency and purity without the earthiness of the Rheingau. There has, in fact, been something of a revolution in the Nahe, as in other German wine areas, aided by a warming climate: most of the wines that used to be made in a fruity medium-sweet style are now fermented out to virtual dryness. This makes them much more suitable as accompaniments to all sorts of cuisine.

What to drink

The Nahe has some of Germany's best vineyards and producers. Hugely respected is Helmut Dönnhoff, who still makes some wines in the medium-sweet *lieblich* style. Try the superb Kreuznacher Krötenpfuhl Riesling Kabinett 2011 (*below*, £19.50; www.bbr.com), with complex ripeness on the nose and minerality on the palate. Moving to the drier style, the splendidly named Odeheimer Kloster Disibodenberg 2012 (£26.99; www.thewineryuk.com) from Von Racknitz has searching depth and lovely purity—superb. Equally good, from what used to be the Nahe State Domaine, is the 2013 Gut Hermannsberg Niederhäuser HB (£21.99; www.thewineryuk.com): peachy, spicy, elegant and minerally.



Top photo; Oliver Kite/RHS; Morgan Strickland; Dreamstime.com; Keith Saunders