



■ Riesling vineyards on the banks of the Moselle. Picture: Wines of Germany

Celebrate the rise of Riesling

There are just a few days left of 31 Days of German Riesling, the annual July celebration of what many top wine people argue is the world's best white grape. The website:

31daysofgermanriesling.co.uk lists remaining happenings, but there is no need to stop drinking riesling once August arrives.

Ham&High readers are lucky to have arguably the UK's best riesling shop on their doorstep – The Winery, in Clifton Road, Maida Vale, where founder David Motion, musician as well as wine enthusiast, and his unstuffy but highly knowledgeable staff are currently celebrating 21 years in the specialist wine business. The next tasting is on August 14, but why wait. Go and browse 100-plus rieslings (many are superb dry styles), buy a bottle or six and become a riesling convert.

Charac



Liz Sagues
Wine Writer

This is a plea for kindness to the old, for consideration and appreciation of their qualities. I'm not talking people, but vines – and specifically South African vines. Few people think of Africa's southern tip as a place of long vinous history, but winemaking there stretches back far into the 18th century.

The elderly of today aren't approaching their 250th birthdays, however. Instead they have simply passed the age of 35, which Andre Morgenthal from South Africa's Old Vine Project defines as the moment when vines properly begin to show their quality. It is, he told a London audience late last month, the moment when "vines come into their own". They start getting into balance, and the resulting wines have greater complexity, greater character.