

T H E
W I N E R Y

RIESLING!

31 Days Of German Riesling 01.07.15

July is the “31 Days Of German Riesling”, an initiative by Wines of Germany, celebrated annually. As many of you know, we at The Winery are fairly strict observers of “365 Days Of German Riesling” and, as someone pointed out, 366 every Leap Year. Tonight, we are going heavy on Mosel and Rheingau.

Our following event will be on **Tuesday 14th July - The Winery Wine Course Module featuring German Riesling** – at **Kandoo** Restaurant, Edgware Road from 19.30-21.30h – with tickets at £40, the event is almost sold out.

SPARKLING

Zum Krug Riesling Sekt Brut 2013, Josef Laufer (Hattenheim/Rheingau)

12.99

The Rhine takes a sharp turn west at Mainz before turning north again at Rudesheim. The Rheingau is the south-facing slope on the north bank between the two plus its two flanks (the northwestern flank around the corner as far as Lorch and the eastern flank at Hochheim and Wicker). Thick with castles, convents and vineyards, this is the classical home of Riesling with evocative names like Steinberg, Marcobrunn, Johannisberg, Hochheim.

Hotel Zum Krug in Hattenheim, is a magical place. The sort of place that may have existed in mediaeval Germany, atmospheric twists and turns in a wooden interior straight out of a fantasy grotto from ancient legend. Josef Laufer, owner and font of Rheingau knowledge, always gives us a warm welcome and we start with a glass of his brilliant dry Sekt made from top class Rheingau fruit just outside the village - a wake-up call to the senses in all its petrolly splendour.



WHITE

Riesling trocken 2014, Becker-Landgraf (Gau-Odernheim/Rheinhessen)

12.99

From the ashes of Rheinhessen rises the twin-headed phoenix of modern dry Riesling and Spätburgunder (Pinot Noir). A local grower threw a party early last decade, hoping his daughter would catch Johannes Landgraf's eye. Johannes made a bee-line for another winery's daughter, Julia Becker, and so in 2004, Becker-Landgraf was born. Among other things (Pinot Blanc, Rivaner, Dornfelder and so on) they determined to make top-class, cool-climate, dry Riesling and silky Pinot Noir, slap bang in the rural centre of the region. This is their limey, mineral-driven dry Riesling.

Bernkasteler Graben Riesling Kabinett trocken 2012, Studert-Prüm (Wehlen/Mosel)

16.99

This was one of last year's UK Top 50 German winners - a beautiful example of high-toned, slate-driven, dry Riesling from the heart of the Middle Mosel.

Wehlen is one of the most highly renowned wine villages in Germany. Its vineyards cling to the slope on the opposite bank of the Mosel, a slope of uninterrupted Grand Cru sites from Bernkastel through Graach and Wehlen up to Zeltingen, where the river starts another loop. Wehlen is best known for its Sonnenuhr (Sundial) vineyard. It is also inextricably linked with the family name of Prüm. There are several Prüms in the village. Gerd Studert's mother is one of the SA Prüms whose estate was divided between her and her sister. Gerd, his brother Stephan and nephew Michael have five hectares of vines, which may not be much, but the fact remains that they are all in great vineyards in Wehlen, Graach and Bernkastel. We have been keeping an eye on Studert-Prüm for a long time. It was a bottle of Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese trocken 2009 which we drank at the Moselschild in Ürzig that brought us knocking.

The style is lean and focused. Restrained and elegant. The wines can be shy when first opened and reveal their beauty and class with air and time in the glass.

T H E
W I N E R Y

Eltviller Rheinberg Riesling trocken 1997, JB Becker (Walluf/Rheingau) 16.99

Like something out of Laurel and Hardy, Maria Becker sloshed some Riesling out of the window anointing a surprised postman - and so the crazy world of the Beckers continued to unfold around us. They are one of the best double-acts we have encountered in Germany, complete with an excitable dog and the moustachioed brother Hans-Josef, the winemaker who looks suspiciously like a circus ringmaster, who has a spring in his step following his recent marriage to Eva Engel, a woman 30 years his junior.

Brother and sister team, Hans-Josef and Maria Becker, make distinctive Riesling in their maze-like buildings and cellar by the Rhine at Walluf. The style is utterly traditional and utterly distinctive, untouched by fashion. Maria often turns up beautifully mature bottles from the darkest recesses of their dark, damp cellar for us. She uncovered some dry 1989 Spätlese and a fruity 1990 Spätlese for us recently. Tonight we're opening some of their fast disappearing, mature, dry Riesling 1997 from the Rheinberg, their steeply-sloped (well, steep for the Rheingau) vineyard which is directly on the Rhine riverbank. This is what Old School dry Rheingau Riesling becomes with a decade and a half of ageing.

Max Riesling trocken 2012, von Othegraven (Kanzem/Saar) 19.99

Terroir. It's a sense of place. It's the expression of the earth, of the geology. Here on the Saar, like the Mosel that it feeds, it's all about slate. The slate here sparkles with Quartz, which often gives the wine a dizzy, spicy, almost tropical character.

We always loved Dr Heidi Kegel, the charming former Head Anaesthetist from Cologne hospital, who was left the historic von Othegraven estate by a maiden aunt in the early 1990s. When we phoned she would say "what time would you like to come?" "How's 11.00h?" "Would you like to stay for lunch?" We have many memories of lunch with her, her husband and our friend Andreas Barth, her winemaker (whose Lubentiushof wines we also adore). There would always be a moment when she would say, "Andreas, can you bring up something old from the cellar?" Unfortunately Dr Heidi became ill and decided (at 70-something) it was probably time to sell. Enter Günther Jauch, generally held to be the most popular man in Germany. An unassuming man, he's a TV host and commentator, a national treasure, a kind of David Attenborough figure (without the nature programmes). Günther is a distant relative of earlier owners and has brought a new energy to his new acquisition. The same team is onboard and Andreas continues to make exquisite wines, a world away from the searing acidity of the old-school Saar wines. Effortless. Max, named after Maximus von Othegraven, is from Kanzem Altenberg, the Grand Cru slope behind the von Othegraven house.



Fass 2 Riesling trocken 2011, Florian-Peter Lauer (Ayl/Saar) 21.99

Ayl is just a couple of villages from Kanzem towards Trier. Young wine-maker Florian Lauer is cocky - he's good and he knows it - and who are we to tell him to be modest? He's been showered with awards in Germany over the past couple of years. He works the family vines in top vineyard "Ayler Kupp", one of the most hallowed vineyards on the Saar. Florian took over full responsibility for the wines almost a decade ago, leaving dad Peter to focus on the hotel they own south of Trier, with a splendid view of the valley - although, when the fog rolls in, it's difficult to see much of anything! His wines carry the number from the steel tank each is made in. And here are the fabulous contents of tank number 2.

SWEET

Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese 2006, Studert-Prüm (Wehlen/Mosel) 17.99

Although we specialise in dry Riesling at The Winery, the charms of sweet Riesling are not wasted on us. 2006 was a great vintage for sweet wines on the Mosel: moisture was high and botrytis (Noble Rot) spread through the vineyards like wildfire - quicker than anyone had seen since 1976. If you are trying to make dessert wines it's a godsend, as it shrivels the grapes, concentrating the sugars and adding the hedonistic honied, coconut, dried exotic fruit notes. Lush, succulent and yet always with that piercing Riesling freshness which stops a wine from becoming cloying.

OLIVE OIL

Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Lumière de Provence, Mas de Cadenet (Provence/France) 500ml - 22.99

Just arrived with our latest hit of Provençal Rosé, peppery Extra Virgin Olive Oil from the Négrel family.

LUNAR CALENDAR OBSERVERS – today is a **Flower Day**.

Join us for our Monthly Tastings

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