

Max Ferd. Richter 2018 Vintage Report
Summer, Sunshine, Dryness

What a summer!! Sunshine and heat from April to November 2018 – a vintage to be remembered!!! After the mild and rainy months of December and January we saw a wintry chill with frosty temperatures through mid-March, leaving a feeling of real winter. By April sunshine and warm temperatures led directly to a feeling of summer. Cherry and apple trees blossomed. The awakening of all types of vegetation led to perfect bud break in the vineyards. It seemed that nature wanted us to forget the devastating late frost of 2017 that ruined orchard trees and cut back hopes for a rich grape harvest.

Sunny days carried on and by the end of May all vineyards were flowering to perfection, three weeks earlier than normal. Continuing dry conditions interrupted by small amounts of rainfall, ample sunshine, and hot summer temperature allowed the grapes and canopies to flourish. There was little pressure from fungus and insecticide diseases. A perfect season. Drought conditions continued through the summer. Older vines with deep roots able to penetrate the slate remained healthy. Newly planted vineyards needed to be irrigated. Although temperatures were extremely hot they never reached the extremes of 2003 - 40°C (105° F), that caused many problems for that vintage.

Similar to 2017 grape harvest started early – by mid-September. Grapes were ripe and healthy to perfection. Quantity was ample, compared to recent years. For the first time in 10 years we feel comfortable to have sufficient stock to supply our customers. Weather through harvest cooperated, allowing the rigorous manual work to flow smoothly. Thus, after multiples passes through the vineyards we were able to harvest all categories of juice – from entry level village Qba's, to Prädikat and even botrytized noble sweet grapes suitable for BA and TBA. As usual we have left grapes in our Mülheimer Helenenkloster monopole vineyard for a possible Eiswein, harvest later in December or in the beginning of the New Year.

Journalists, the wine trade and consumers have high expectations into vintage 2018. At an early stage we can state that the new wines are extremely pure, rich in bouquet and expose opulent and aromatic fruit structure. Comparisons to previous vintages are difficult to tell right now, but there are similarities to the 2016 and way back the 1964 vintage.

Right now the focus is directed towards the 2017 vintage. The small harvest produced tightly structured, minerally rich, mouthfilling wines with built-in fruit acidity. This gives promise for excellent ageing potential and longevity. Leading wine critics, such as Mosel Fine Wines, Vinum and Gault & Millau have highlighted our collection of 2017 Estate wines. We have been awarded medals for the best Riesling Kabinett in Germany (2017 Wehlener Sonnenuhr) and the best noble sweet wine in Germany (2017 Brauneberger Juffer Sonnenuhr TBA). The latter was given a 100 point score, only our second win in that category after the 2001 Mülheimer Helenenkloster Eiswein. Those accolades confirm our ongoing efforts to offer Riesling wines of worldwide acclaim.

We wish you happy holidays and a prosperous New Year 2019.



(Dr. Dirk Richter)



(Constantin Richter)

Mülheim/Mosel, 16th Nov. 2018