

Vintages Ending in 3 Have Been Consistently Good for Many Decades

2023 Harvest Report from the Max Ferdinand Richter Estate

The 2023 harvest was completed on October 23 - and what a harvest it was! Considerable rain in August gave our Riesling vineyards so much relief that we were able to bring in an excellent harvest. But first: The winter of 2022/2023 was very mild and wet which led to an early spring start. Compared to previous years increased moisture in the soil gave optimism for a healthy new vegetation cycle. This dry period allowed the vines to sprout without problems. Spared from late frosts, this budding began at the end of April.

The warm, sometimes hot and dry weather in May and June ensured rapid growth of the foliage and grape clusters. This was followed by picture-book blossoming, starting the 2nd week of June. Having been completed in 10 days this set the stage for a good vintage in terms of both quantity and quality.

The persistent sunshine made the early summer the hottest on record since they began recording in 1881. In order to protect the growing grapes from sunburn, we carried out a defoliation shortly after flowering. The down side to the hot and dry weather was drought which threatened to damage the freshly planted young vineyards. We had to irrigate these plots in order to protect the young vines. On the other hand, the older, deeply-rooted vines were able to cope with the record heat.

The weather changed towards the end of July. Continuous heavy rainfall in August triggered a surge in growth and ripening, which led to rotting, primarily with early-ripening grape varieties like Pinot Noir. This necessitated an early and rapid harvest with a great deal of manual labor in order to separate the damaged grapes. On the other hand, this weather was a blessing for the late-ripening Riesling grapes on steep slate slopes. The berries swelled and the must weight increased day by day. A sunny September, with warm days and cool nights, created optimum conditions for the ripening grapes to develop their aroma profile.

The Riesling harvest began in mid-September in order to pick healthy grapes for low-alcohol Kabinett wines. This was followed by the harvest of the grapes for the Trocken and Feinherb wines, as well as the premier sites for the sophisticated, "Alte Reben" and "Große Gewächse" wines. Last but not least, we were able to bring in healthy ripe grapes for the fruity late harvest Spätlese and Auslese wines. During this harvest, through painstaking, meticulous work, we were able to cull a selection of noble ripe botrytis berries for the absolute top Rieslings, "Beerenauslese" and "Trockenbeerenauslese".

The qualitative classification of the 2023 vintage is simple. Since the end of WW II, all 3rd vintages of a decade have produced above-average, sometimes outstandingly excellent wines: the exceptional 1953 vintage; the steely, robust 1963 vintage, the elegant 1973 vintage, the top 1983 vintage, the elegant and complex 1993 vintage, the super-hot, sunny 2003 vintage and the highly concentrated 2013 vintage.

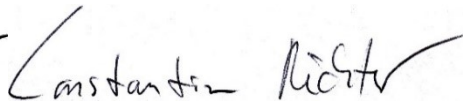
Until the new vintage is bottled, we will continue to provide you with wines from the 2022 and 2021 vintages, which have been well received by both consumers and critic. The wine guide "Vinum" honored our Wehlener Sonnenuhr Auslese***, barrel 42, 2022 as Germany's best Riesling Auslese of the vintage and the German "Feinschmecker" magazine voted the Graacher Dompropst Alte Reben, 2021, one of the five best dry Rieslings in the country a year ago.

With best wishes and best regards,

Yours



(Dr. Dirk Richter)



(Constantin Richter)

Mülheim/Mosel, November 7, 2023