

*Cellars International, Inc.*

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*Rudi Wiest*

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S E L E C T I O N S

*Purveyors of Fine Wine*



## 2008 German Vintage Report



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# Phenological Data

## *Mosel Data*

VINTAGE (RIESLING)	2008	2007	2006	2005	LONG TERM AVERAGE
BUD BREAK	1-MAY	16-APR	27-APR	24-APR	30-APR
FLOWERING	16-JUN	26-JUN	18-JUN	17-JUN	25-JUN
START OF RIPENING	18-AUG	10-AUG	15-AUG	14-AUG	30-AUG
START OF HARVEST	10-OCT	3-OCT	1-OCT	10-OCT	13-OCT

## *Rheingau Data*

VINTAGE (RIESLING)	2008	2007	2006	2005	LONG TERM AVERAGE
BUD BREAK	28-APR	14-APR	26-APR	21-APR	29-APR
FLOWERING	4-JUN	25-MAY	16-JUN	15-JUN	19-JUN
START OF RIPENING	10-AUG	3-AUG	1-AUG	13-AUG	25-AUG
START OF HARVEST	4-OCT	22-SEP	14-OCT	1-OCT	11-OCT

## *Pfalz Data*

VINTAGE (RIESLING)	2008	2007	2006	2005	LONG TERM AVERAGE
BUD BREAK	27-APR	12-APR	26-APR	17-APR	24-APR
FLOWERING	4-JUN	23-MAY	13-JUN	18-JUN	16-JUN
START OF RIPENING	14-AUG	2-AUG	17-AUG	13-AUG	20-AUG
START OF HARVEST	30-SEP	15-SEP	25-SEP	28-SEP	5-OCT

## 2008 Overview



NACKENHEIMER ROTHENBERG VINEYARD

**2008** was a vintage where patience, especially during harvest, was a virtue. To produce wines that would reach the potential of the vintage entailed significant risks. Late in the vintage the weather remained relatively cool with sporadic rains which delayed the start of harvest. However this delay was extremely important for development in two specific areas:

- 1) The delay helped settle and ripen the higher than normal acids, thus allowing the berries to increase their proportion of tartaric acid.
- 2) The added hang time also allowed for a slow, but nevertheless continued physiological development of the fruit allowing the grapes to increase their Öchsle (density / sugar content).

The 2008 vintage yielded wines that are very ripe with a near electric poise on the palate. This coupled with wines that have more of a “pre global warming” body and character makes for an excellent collection of Rieslings and Pinots. They offer lighter, juicier fruit with a zippy, clean, and bright profile which appeals to Riesling enthusiasts and new customers alike.

Ironically, although acidity is higher than the past few vintages, we feel one could make a strong case for 2008 being the most typical Riesling vintage we’ve seen since ‘04. While ‘04 was leaner with good acidity, 2008 has more acid verve, and its fruit has more punch. When tasting better examples from ‘08 you see shades of 2004, but it’s as if the fruit and acid volume have been turned up a few notches. It is important to communicate that virtually all the wines we tasted are balanced and show great tension between their zesty acidity and ripe fruit profiles. Oliver Haag, of Weingut Fritz Haag, says that for him 2008 is appealing because it is a return to what he considers to be “the” classic Riesling profile.



THE CELLAR AT DR. F. WEINS-PRÜM

Compared with 2007, the weather in 2008 fluctuated quite a bit. Bud break was fairly normal – earlier in the North and later in the South. Similar results occurred during flowering – early along the Mosel, Nahe, Rheingau, Rheinhessen, and Pfalz, whereas in the South it was actually late. Important about this year’s flowering, and also decisive for the development of the grapes, is its duration of almost three weeks. Because of unstable weather in some regions, flowering came to a complete stop which resulted in grapes at different stages of ripening on the vines. To preserve quality, a careful pre-selection was required and later again during the main harvest. The mix of sunshine and clouds in the summer months allowed for an even and stable development of the fruit. The vines had the resources to bring forth fruit that was not only healthy but also contained substantial levels of dry extract.

The summer, much like 2007, wasn’t a season for sun worshippers but was very good for the grapes. Overall temperatures in ‘08 remained slightly above the long term average. By the end of August the vineyards were in great condition with vegetation running two weeks

ahead of the norm. The summer season allowed for rapid development in the vineyards which was, however, slowed due to a very cool and rainy September. For those not displaying steadfast resolve, picking too early in September and not letting the fruit hang into October would prove to be a critical decision. Why? In 2008 physiological development had all but paused in September, and the acid levels were just too high to begin picking. Fortunately, cool nights were also part of this scenario, not only important with regard to the fruit, but cool temperatures mitigated the risk of rot and gave growers the opportunity to let the fruit continue hanging into October. In addition, cool nights also provided the wonderful aromatics found in the better 2008 selections. The estates in the Rudi Wiest Selections portfolio started harvest with absolutely healthy grapes. While October was not golden, it did bring enough golden days, and the end result was a vintage with a total hang time of more than 130 days. While the hang time in 2008 was not quite as long as in 2007, it was still longer than average. This extended hang time was critical for two reasons: First it ripened and lowered acidity in what would have otherwise been a high acid vintage; and second it raised the level of dry extracts which help buffer acidity in the finished wines. There was a lot of "harvest poker" being played due to the continuous mix of sunny days and intermittent showers, and 2008 required an intuitive sense of when to pick and when to wait. Fritz Becker, of Weingut Friedrich Becker in the Pfalz, described 2008 as a vintage of two harvests – those who picked in September, and those who began picking in mid October. Fritz feels the quality of the fruit was quite good given the weather in late September, and is extremely happy with his results in 2008.

Many growers continued harvesting into November, bringing in highly aromatic, complex, mineral driven berries. Although picked late in the season, the grapes were still ripe, with fresh acidity, and a superb potential for long term aging. Unlike some recent vintages, where Kabinett and Spätlese wines were often declassified Auslese selections, 2008 offers "real" Kabinett and Spätlese wines that are light, ripe, and unique. This is a style of wine that only Germany's wine growing regions can deliver. Meager quantities of noble sweet wines and some very late picked, potentially great, Eiswein were also produced. Cellar master Tim Fröhlich, at Schäfer-Fröhlich in the Nahe, explained that 2008 once more brought the complete range of Riesling, including BA, TBA and Eiswein. The selection was incredibly labor intensive, and they only collected a miniscule amount of noble sweet wines. While these selections will not

contribute anything to the "bottom line" they will continue to build the image of this great young estate. Schäfer-Fröhlich's 2008 collection is a statement of their passion and zeal to produce great Rieslings in the Nahe.

Another important factor in 2008 was the extended lees contact in the cellar. Almost every estate commented that in 2008 this was desirable. In fact some estates still had all of their wines resting on the lees when we conducted our tasting tour in February 2009. This extended lees contact yields a "creamy" texture on the palate, and is ultimately another piece of the puzzle which gives the better selections their balance.



GUNDERLOCH ESTATE

The style of the 2008 vintage is unique on yet another level, with the fruit being quite ripe but without the higher alcohol levels we've seen in recent vintages. Certainly the lower alcohol is a welcome development for wines destined for the table. Even in the dry selections, alcohol is often less than 13%, with the fruit exhibiting a superior physiological ripeness. The acids are slightly higher than normal and have a very high percentage of tartaric acidity. Gunter Künstler, of Weingut Franz Künstler in the Rheingau, feels 2007 and 2008 are comparable qualitatively, but reinforced to us that the estates had to work three times as hard in 2008 to achieve that quality. Gunter made a point of how important selection was in 2008, and that without a carefully timed harvest, combined with diligent selection, there would not be the ripe and mature profile found in many of the top 2008 wines. Enjoy !

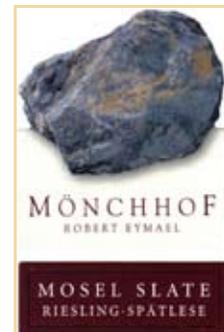
# Mönchhof

Ürzig / Mosel



MÖNCHHOF CELLAR

Robert Eymael was very upbeat in his comments about the 2008 vintage. Despite intermittent rain during the harvest, Robert expressed great confidence about what he saw in the vineyards. Robert feels 2008 is a vintage for great vineyards. While some began harvest on the 10th of October, Robert completed a detailed review of the vineyards, and felt more hang time was in order. To tame the high acidity while at the same time allowing physiological development to advance, Robert delayed the start of harvest until October 17th. He feels the vintage compares favorably to his 2007 collection. The '08 collection is quite good, with layered fruit, a terrific underlying mineral drive, and well integrated acidity.



From the Mönchhof Riesling, with its classic mineral tones, to a voluminous Ürziger Würzgarten Kabinett, that shows more like a Spätlese, the '08 Mönchhof collection impresses. Robert also harvested Ürziger Würzgarten Spätlese, Auslese and an Erdener Prälät Auslese.

## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Riesling – Estate

A blend of fruit from Robert's Ürzig, Zeltingen, and Erden properties. Wonderful iron mineral details in the nose. On the palate the wine exhibits a refreshing citrus component with pear and white peach fruit. Perhaps the juiciest QbA Robert has produced to date. The fruit is bright, focused and very crystalline in style.

### 2008 Riesling Kabinett - Ürziger Würzgarten

A Wine Spectator Top 100 Wine of the Year for two years running, this 2008 has some big shoes to fill, and it does not disappoint. Selected from the best portions of the Würzgarten vineyard, what is most striking about this Kabinett, is with its great weight and texture it shows more like a Spätlese. The wine displays a rich, juicy citrus, pineapple and pear fruit with a delicate minerality and dusty slate notes.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – "Mosel Slate"

Sourced 100% from the Erdener Treppchen, there are aromatics of white peach, stone, and blue slate. On the palate it is sleek, but still rich. Not quite the intricacy of the Würzgarten Kabinett, but that's not what Robert is after. This is a more affable, generous "I'll make you love me" Riesling. There was about 20% of botrytis here which dusts the white peach and red fruit with the slightest touch of saffron and honey. A real value if you're considering a Riesling Spätlese.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – Ürziger Würzgarten

At this point, the aromatics are more precise and offer a blend of iris, spice, slate details, and citrus. That said, the palate is richer than you'd think. Great concentration, but it is crystalline pure in its delivery. The white peach fruit is peppered with a wonderful minerality, and the finish is awash in a tangy citrus lime. Great length.

### 2008 Riesling Auslese – Ürziger Würzgarten

Similar to the Spätlese aromatics, but it expresses a more finely detailed nose of minerals than a huge rush of fruit. There's also a little more botrytis here than in the Spätlese, about 35%. On the palate the wine offers fresh picked, sweet white and yellow peach and lime, all soaking in the wonderful Würzgarten minerality. Breathtakingly juicy and ripe.

# Wegeler

*Bernkastel / Mosel*

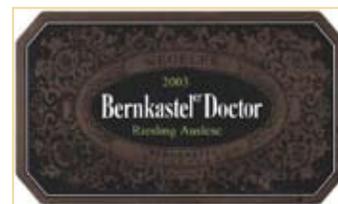


BERNKASTELER DOCTOR VINEYARD

Norbert Breit, cellar master at Wegeler in the Mosel, describes '08 as a classic Riesling vintage. When compared with 2007, where the weather was ideal, the 2008 harvest was marked by intermittent rain and conditions that our growers in recent years have managed with great skill. In 2008 the fruit did not shrivel or concentrate as in previous vintages. The '08 collection at Wegeler is more reminiscent of "pre-global warming" vintages with racy, lean, and sleek Rieslings.

Norbert led us through a bevy of wonderful Rieslings, which at this Middle Mosel estate, perhaps more so than any other in our book, offers the most electric combination of acidity and fruit. Must weights ranged from 80 – 100 Öchsle, while acidity spanned a range from 7.8 – 9.9 gm/l, and overall yield was 75 hl/ha. Harvest began

on the 10th of October, and Norbert described the weather conditions as fair. There was a limited amount of botrytis in a selection originally destined for Auslese; however the decision was made to blend this fruit into the Doctor Spätlese. Tom Drieseberg, and his cellar master Norbert Breit, both felt a key to the vintage's quality was having healthy grapes throughout the harvest. They feel the ear mark of their collection, and the '08 vintage, is the excellent concentration balanced by the vintage's crisp acidity.



## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Riesling – Estate

A selection of 100% Bernkastel fruit, this QbA offers a classic slate and green apple nose. On the palate this wine truly feels like it's plugged in, its acidity doesn't just "lift" the wine, it makes it sizzle! On the palate you find stony flavors, with notes of freshly picked apple and citrus. While the structure is firm, the fruit profile is very ripe.

### 2008 Riesling Kabinett – Wehlener Sonnenuhr

Stony minerals, with hints of pear and slate. Like the QbA, the acidity here is quite determined, and it gives this Riesling its sleek, racy profile. On the palate one finds flavors of pear and white peach fruit, but the wine is very compact and sleek at the time of tasting. This Kabinett joyfully reminds us of days when a Kabinett was a light, crisp and refreshing wine and not a Spätlese in a cape and mask.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – Wehlener Sonnenuhr

Slate tones in the nose; it is more open than the QbA and Kabinett, and also has a richer texture. It exhibits a particularly intense and juicy quality. The fruit is exceptionally layered in this example; it shows white and yellow peach fruit, with a hint of cassis and raspberry. It is obvious these grapes had excellent physiological ripeness, with the wine's superb acidity, great length and power.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – Bernkasteler Doctor

This is the first time the estate has used 50% wild yeast in the fermentation of this selection. One finds spicier slate aromas in the nose. palate is dominated by a sappy white peach fruit and the core is packed with an ashy minerality. The acidity is firm, steely, and very dominant. The fruit picks up considerably over the Sonnenuhr Spätlese, and takes on more of a tropical form, with hints of red fruit, rhubarb, and freshly cut pineapple. The acidity is amazing, so firm, yet it manages to remain balanced and integrated. This Spätlese successfully walks the acid high wire, and leaves you grabbing your glass for more.

# Joh. Jos. Prüm

Wehlen / Mosel



DR. MANFRED PRÜM

Dr. Manfred Prüm and eldest daughter Katharina feel 2008 is classic in form, and perhaps most similar to 2004, but with a tick more zip and fruit power. The heart of the vintage is their superb Kabinett and Spätlese selections. However there are some very promising Auslese selections here in '08 as well. Inspecting the vineyards during the first half of October made it clear much patience would be required to achieve ripeness and they needed to allow the aromas and flavors to develop more completely. The Prüm's began harvest with a preselection on October 10th, delaying the start of the main harvest until late October, and finishing on the 17th of November.

Both the '07 and '08 vintages at Joh. Jos. Prüm are particularly expressive of Manfred Prüm's belief that Kabinett and Spätlese Prädikat wines should be examples of delicate and graceful Riesling. The Kabinett and Spätlese wines from the Himmelreich vineyard are light in form but offer deeply extracted soil notes, while the examples from the Sonnenuhr vineyard are delicate and crystalline pure with pinpoint slate mineral details. There was also a small amount of Auslese selected, and in mid

November, small lots of botrytis affected berries were selected which will most likely be offered as Gold Capsule Auslese. The pinnacle of the vintage were two very concentrated Eisweins picked at extremely cold temperatures on December 30th in the Graacher Himmelreich, and on January 7th 2009 in the Wehlener Sonnenuhr.



## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Riesling Kabinett – Graacher Himmelreich

The wine was still on the yeast at the time of tasting, but it is easy to see the citrus notes which will play a role in this wine's aromatics. On the palate there is no escaping the appeal of this wine's crisp zesty lemon tinged acidity which blends with delicate white pear fruit, all accented by dusty Himmelreich minerals. The finish is mouth drying, with Himmelreich mineral residue sticking to the roof of your palate.

### 2008 Riesling Kabinett – Wehlener Sonnenuhr

More giving than the Himmelreich at this point. It offers the same crystalline purity, but in a more elegant, flowing form with white peach and citrus details. There's even a cool hint of red fruit in the mid palate. Wonderfully fine details of gray Sonnenuhr slate make this example very intricate.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – Graacher Himmelreich

Tasted after the Kabinett selections, one can see this is a Joh. Jos. Prüm Spätlese, with just a tick more weight and power than the Kabinetts. However, if it were in a blind tasting, you'd probably guess Kabinett because it still maintains a classic lightness. When it hits the palate, there are hints of a slightly richer profile, but the acidity zips it back up and hammers this Spätlese fruit back into a sleek Kabinett like form. There is a stony, slate minerality wrapped within its white peach fruit, with hints of kiwi and raspberry – a more typical Graacher style than the Kabinett.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – Wehlener Sonnenuhr

Nose yields bright white peach and pear fruit. On the palate the wine is very compact. It displays more of a mountain spring like freshness; it is so light and pure. It offers flavors of stony pear and white peach. It manages to walk the high wire, balancing a firm structure while allowing the ripe, but elegant, fruit profile to shine through.

# Dr. F. Weins-Prüm

Wehlen / Mosel



BERT SELBACH

Bert Selbach has, quite literally, handmade an exceptional collection of 2008 Rieslings. His 2008 collection truly shows the artist farmer at their best. While there are many, many excellent wines to select from, we feel Bert offers one of the top '08 collections in our book.

As with many estates, must weights were lower than the past few vintages, and ranged from 83 – 97 Öchsle. Bert made it clear that while the Öchsle numbers are lower than recent vintages, they are in fact quite good when compared to the vintages of the 90s. Yield at Dr. F. Weins-Prüm was approximately 78 hl/ha. Bert began harvest on 10/18, and finished on 11/10. Bert compares his 2008 wines to 2004, but feels the acidity is better integrated. High praise indeed. Bert commented that the level of ripeness achieved in 2008 brings excellent aromatics as well as wonderful flavors to the palate along with well integrated, ripe acidity.

Why are we so enamored by Bert's '08 collection? The wines not only have what you'd expect from top '08s, with their ample acid zip and pure fruit, but they have more facets to their fruit and slightly more intensity on the palate than other wines we tasted. In addition Bert's wines mark a return to lower alcohol Rieslings, and that wonderfully delicate Mosel style which makes Riesling infinitely approachable and cerebral. The style and quality is consistent throughout the collection; it doesn't matter if you taste the basic Dr. F. Weins-Prüm QbA or a Prädikat wine from Graach, Wehlen, or Ürzig -- all the wines are enchanting.



## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Riesling – Estate

Riper, and more aromatic than many QbA's we tasted. On the palate it becomes clear exactly how good this "little" QbA is, with its delicate slate notes, and mouth watering acidity. We love it because it is delicate yet offers ample fruit. Superb example of QbA.

### 2008 Riesling Kabinett – Graacher Domprobst

This Kabinett makes an impressive statement about the quality of Bert Selbach's fruit in 2008. Even at this lighter level of ripeness, there are hints of tropical fruit in the aromatics. On the palate there is yellow peach, red fruit with a hint of pineapple. The minerality has a classically spicy Graach quality, and the finish lasts forever.

### 2008 Riesling Kabinett – Wehlener Sonnenuhr

Fine aromas of slate in aromatics, with a hint of pear fruit. On the palate the wine offers extremely intricate mineral details, and the fruit is ripe, with pear, cassis and red fruits. It offers a level of refinement and elegance we rarely find with Kabinetts.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – Graacher Domprobst

Deep earth tones, mineral spice, and white peach flow from the glass. On the palate the wine is so bright and round. The mid palate offers a huge mineral push giving the wine excellent structure. The mouth feel is probably the most fetching attribute of this Riesling; it's so ripe and unctuous.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – Wehlener Sonnenuhr

Very fine aromatics, much like the Sonnenuhr Kabinett, and has more detail than the Graacher. Citrus, pear, peach and strawberry on the palate, the purity in this example is staggering. It maintains a classic Spätlese weight and mouth feel and is supported by wonderfully filigreed slate details.

# Schloss Lieser

Lieser / Mosel



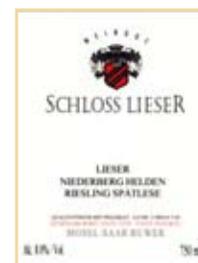
SCHLOSS LIESER ESTATE

Thomas Haag told us the vegetation period at Schloss Lieser was fueled by a mixed bag of weather in '08. This included everything from extremely hot and cool temperatures, windy days, a smattering of hail, and finally intermittent rain during harvest. While many of the grapes Thomas left hanging for noble sweet selections appeared, on the outside, to have the onset of good botrytis, the weather never fully cooperated. With fog and / or rain occurring every two to three days, the grapes never had an opportunity to completely dry. Thomas commented that they needed six or seven absolutely dry, sunny and windy days, to dry out the fruit and make noble sweet wines, but that was not to be. That said, Schloss Lieser did select all must weights up through GKA, and this includes GKAs from both the Niederberg Helden and Brauneberger Juffer Sonnenuhr sites.

Thomas began his harvest approximately one week later than 2007, on October 13th and finished on November 6th. Thomas described

the selection process in '08 as incredibly tedious, but with extra effort, it was possible to bring in very healthy fruit, with almost no botrytis and good acid levels. Thomas feels 2008 is similar to 2007. Yield was approximately 65 hl/ha and must weights ranged from 80 – 125 Öchsle. Acidity, on average, is in the 8 – 9 gm/l range. Thomas feels 2008 is a very classic Riesling vintage which is perfect for the market.

The lighter Estate QbA and Kabinett examples have great acidity, they really snap on the palate. When you hit the single vineyard Brauneberger Juffer, Juffer Sonnenuhr, and Niederberg Helden examples, things really pick up. The Brauneberger Juffer Kabinett is superb, with its deep rich fruit profile and incredibly long finish. The Niederberg Helden Spätlese and Auslese Rieslings exhibit more tropical notes.



## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Riesling – Estate

A bit shy at the time of tasting (just fined). This QbA was selected from Thomas' holdings in Lieser, Graach, and Bernkastel. It is nicely balanced, with bright white peach and a mouth watering acid structure, all balanced by a firm minerality.

### 2008 Riesling Kabinett – Estate

A big dose of minerals in the aromatics, accented by white peach and lime. More reserved than the 2007 was at this point in time, but it is also more structured, with just the right undercurrent of terroir. On the palate the wine has classic white peach fruit all supported by deep earth and stone terroir notes.

### 2008 Riesling Kabinett – Brauneberger Juffer

Slightly richer notes in the nose than the Estate Kabinett, more a blend of yellow and white peach fruit. Picked at 90 Öchsle, this Kabinett hits a high level of physiological ripeness and also offers red fruit notes. One also finds cassis intertwined with the juicy white peach and tangy lemon-lime acidity. A superb balance between terroir, fruit, and acid gives this wine awesome structure.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – Niederberg Helden

The nose is a little tight, but it does reveal some earth and citrus tones, it will open considerably with some time. On the palate it really shows itself to be special. The wine is ethereal, so ghostly, yet so powerful. It morphs from more classic Spätlese profiles in the front and mid palate, to a rush of more tropical pineapple fruit on the finish. Again, as with the Juffer Kabinett, the balance is amazing.

### 2008 Riesling Auslese – Niederberg Helden

As one would expect, the aromatics here are the flashiest of the bunch. On the palate it is so lush, with pear jelly, guava, plum, pineapple, and peach notes. Again, one finds remarkable density working in harmony with a pure and elegant character. The wine has impressive length in the finish.

# Fritz Haag

*Brauneberg / Mosel*



OLIVER HAAG WITH HIS FATHER WILHELM HAAG

At Weingut Fritz Haag, starting with the 2008 vintage, Oliver Haag is making significant changes to the selections available from the estate:

- 1) Any dry, or feinherb, Riesling will be offered as QbA dry only. This includes selections from the Brauneberger Juffer and Brauneberger Juffer Sonnenuhr.
- 2) For the Brauneberger Juffer Sonnenuhr wines fermented in the dry style, picked at a minimum must weight of Spätlese, the wine will be designated as a Grosses Gewächs (released by decree September 1 following the vintage).

3) All wines with residual sugar, Spätlese and up, will be offered as Erste Lage selections.

4) Brauneberger Juffer wines, Spätlese and up, remain unchanged and will be offered as they've always been. Brauneberger Juffer wines will not carry the Erste Lage designation.

5) Brauneberger Juffer Kabinett will cease to exist, and going forward will simply be offered as a village wine, i.e. Brauneberg Kabinett. This selection can be vinified, dry, medium-dry, or in the fruity style.

As with all great estates, the 2008 vintage at Fritz Haag produced terrific Rieslings from QbA – Auslese must weights. Oliver is an admirer of 2008 because it marks a return to what he considers a classic Riesling style. His '08s are light, focused Rieslings, delineated by a simmering acid structure. Oliver began the main harvest between the 10th and 12th of October. There were some scattered showers during harvest, but nothing affected the fruit. After three separate passes through the vineyards, over a three week period, the 2008 harvest was complete. Acidity at Haag in 2008 is in the 8 – 8.5 gm/l range. The dry wines are finished very much the same as the '07s, while the '08 Prädikat wines have slightly higher levels of residual sugar. Oliver has not lost his father Wilhelm's touch, as the '08's continue to express the ethereal lightness and delicate crystalline purity that has always made the Fritz Haag wines so special.



## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Riesling – Estate

In the aromatics one finds slate, honeysuckle, pear, citrus and green apple. On the palate the wine has a crystalline fruit structure with pleasing volume. It is bright and polished, a classically tooled Haag QbA.

### 2008 Riesling Kabinett – Brauneberger

Deep slate aromas in the nose mix with pear fruit. On the palate the wine doesn't have the volume of some recent vintages of Haag Kabinetts, but we enjoy that it doesn't. It is so ripe and juicy, with pear, peach, pink grapefruit, and raspberry notes on the palate.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – Brauneberger Juffer

Here the fruit picks up a bit of density vs. the Kabinett, and shifts from the more delicate white tree fruits, to a white peach profile. On the palate there is a wonderful combination of lightness and power so many of the better '08s exhibit. White peach, tangerine, pear, and raspberry are all notes found on the palate.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – Brauneberger Juffer Sonnenuhr

A very pretty Spätlese, with a shift in density, as this wine picks up more yellow and red fruit profiles than the Juffer Spätlese. Very elegant, and it is easily the most intricate Riesling in Haag's QbA - Spätlese range.

### 2008 Riesling Auslese – Brauneberger Juffer

Picked at 100 Öchsle and finished with 100 gm/l residual sugar, it is more brooding and monolithic in character. On the palate there are flavors of lemon curd, custard, red fruit, and a hint of apricot. The palate is so creamy (from lees contact) and is supported by a brisk acidity. It has great volume and fruit density for an '08 Auslese.

### 2008 Riesling Auslese – Brauneberger Juffer Sonnenuhr

More detailed slate terroir in the aromatics than in the Juffer. As you would expect from the nose, the wine is also more structured on the palate, and also exhibits a brighter fruit profile. One finds pink grapefruit, orange, raspberry, cassis, white and yellow peach fruit on the palate. The finish is packed with long, sleek details of slate. The wine has superb purity and detail.

# Reinhold Haart

*Piesport / Mosel*



THEO HAART



THE VILLAGE OF PIESPORT

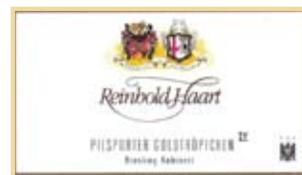
At Reinhold Haart we were treated to another array of dynamic Mosel Rieslings. Here too, the focal points of the vintage are Haart's QbA – Auslese selections. During the course of our tasting, Theo Haart raised the question as to whether we felt '08 in Piesport would go down in history as a "classic" or just an "average" vintage?

With Theo, and son Johannes by his side, we discussed the conditions which made 2008 unique. We were told that after a very mild winter, conditions were decidedly ordinary in Piesport, and included a timely bud break in late April. April and May were followed by flowering in mid-June, and as Johannes put it "really nothing out of the ordinary." Johannes felt, for the most part, the vintage was proceeding well through the months of June and July. The warmer summer temperatures brought a mix of rain and sunshine, which posed difficulties with rot for some. In addition, scattered hailstorms did damage in certain neighboring vineyards. However, as Mother Nature was doing her best to fray everyone's nerves, Reinhold Haart and their Piesporter Goldtröpfchen escaped these weather conditions relatively unscathed.

The fall presented bigger challenges—with unusually high acid levels and an uneven ripening of berries. These conditions required patience and a careful pre-harvest selection. Only the period from late October to mid-November finally delivered fruit that

met the standards of physiological ripeness that the Haart's were looking for. From late October until mid-November an excellent assortment of Spätlese and Auslese wines were selected. To both Theo and Johannes' amazement the musts were surprisingly aromatic.

Theo feels the '08 wines show much promise, and that their excellent structure is accented by a wonderfully crystalline, site specific terroir. He feels the '08s will age for many years, supported by their invigorating, brilliant acidity that is reminiscent of a style and quality not seen since 2001. For an average year, without extremes, '08 does have all the elements of a "classic" Mosel vintage.



## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Riesling Kabinett – Piesport

Deep earth mineral tones in the nose. On the palate the wine has a firm and zesty acid structure balancing its succulent white peach, black current, and lime notes.

### 2008 Riesling Kabinett – Piesporter Goldtröpfchen – Erste Lage

Very deep Goldtröpfchen earthy notes here, that morph into an almond like profile. The palate is dominated by cassis, red fruit, pear and white peach. The structure is extremely resolute, with its laser like Riesling acidity.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – Piesporter Goldtröpfchen – Erste Lage

Deep Goldtröpfchen aromas, similar to the Kabinett, but with riper fruit aromas. On the palate the wine offers an intense mix of succulent fruit, including raspberry, tangy cherry, fresh cut pineapple, and guava. This is a Riesling lover's Riesling, with approximately 9 gm/l acid, the wine has a tremendous framework containing the succulent fruit.

### 2008 Riesling Auslese – Piesporter Goldtröpfchen – Erste Lage

Even riper fruit profiles than the Spätlese, with many exotic and tropical aromas. On the palate the wine opens with a fantastic creamy texture and by mid palate the thrilling acidity pulses throughout, lifting and delineating the many exotic profiles. There are primary flavors of strawberry, pineapple, and yellow peach fruit with a wonderful coco hued minerality and a hint of honey (30% botrytis).

# Karthäuserhof

*Eitelsbach / Ruwer*



KARTHÄUSERHOF ESTATE

2008 marks the end of an era at Karthäuserhof, and the transition from legendary wine maker Ludwig Breiling to Christian Vogt. We will miss Ludwig, who since 1966 has quietly managed the Karthäuserhof cellar. However, as with anyone who has invested many decades in the pursuit of their passion, Ludwig will remain available to the Karthäuserhof as a consultant.

Christoph Tyrell described 2008 as a good year, with a wet harvest period. All Prädikat levels up through Auslese were selected. Tyrell also mentioned that the wines have a lot of extract as a result of the precipitation. Flowering and bud break was slightly behind the 2007 dates, but of course still ahead of the long term average. The Karthäuserhof

team began the main harvest on the 13th of October and completed it on the 7th of November. The overall balance of the wines is beautifully light and delicate, with acids averaging approximately 7.5 gm/l. On the 30th of December, they were able to select an Eiswein at 170 Öchsle, at a very cold -10 degrees Celsius.

During our visit, Christoph shared a story we'd not heard before about the genesis of Karthäuserhof's unique label. It seems Christoph's great grandfather very much enjoyed hanging out with his friends, but didn't want his wife to know. His cover for leaving the house was that he needed to take the family dog for a walk. Earlier in the day, he would have an employee hide some bottles of Karthäuserhof Riesling in the stream that flows at the base of the vineyards. As soon as he was out of sight with the dog, he would grab the bottles, and meet his friends in a building at the back of the property. As the story goes, the problem with traditional labels placed on the bottom of the bottle was the labels would simply disintegrate while sitting in the water. Needless to say, these anonymous bottles began causing a certain amount of confusion at his clandestine gatherings. Then one day Christoph's grandfather had an idea, he'd use a small neck label at the top of the bottle. With this new neck label, the bottles could chill in the water and still be clearly labeled when he retrieved them. So the next time someone asks about the unique Karthäuserhof label, we hope the story of Christoph's grandfather brings a smile to everyone's face.



## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Riesling – Estate

A fine, almost dust like, minerality in the aromatics. On the palate this is delicate Riesling at its best. The palate is a feathery mix of wispy iron minerality and notes of violet and stony pear. The wine is incredibly light with a finely detailed character that makes it so special.

### 2008 Riesling Kabinett – Eitelsbacher Karthäuserhofberg

Much like the Estate Riesling above, this example is very much "old school" Kabinett - something we have not experienced in many vintages. Picked at 82 Öchsle, here's proof you don't need 95 Öchsle Kabinett wines to make Riesling exciting. While the wine is light and delicate on the palate, it still impresses with juicy pear and red fruit flavors all delivered with an exceptionally creamy texture.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – Eitelsbacher Karthäuserhofberg

A very intricate nose, with fine mineral details, and a pungent iron spice. Like the Kabinett, it has a wonderfully creamy quality on the palate. The Kabinett has more verve, but this is more succulent. Juicy white peach and lime with a long spicy, iron soaked finish with excellent purity and ripeness.

### 2008 Riesling Auslese – Eitelsbacher Karthäuserhofberg

Takes the Spätlese aromas to the next level, with even more heady iron notes and deeper slate and stone aromas. On the palate it gives the impression more of a big Spätlese, but it definitely has Auslese intensity. The palate is dominated by white and yellow peach fruit, but there are additional shades of raspberry, strawberry, cassis, grapefruit and lime that the Spätlese does not exhibit. The terroir here is not only more dominant, but also more filigreed on the finish, with a great blend of ashy iron notes and almond paste.

# von Hövel

*Oberemmel / Saar*



ADT IN THE HÜTTE VINEYARD

The wines of 2008 are very low in quantity but of good quality. Overall yield at von Hövel was 50 hl/ha. Adt von Kunow described the wines as very concentrated and elegant. Adt feels the structure of the wines is a very typical Saar profile, steely, firm acidity, with a succulent citrus profile. At this point Adt feels the 2008 wines resemble the 2001 vintage most.

The style for us is very light and delicate, even Adt's Oberemmeler Hütte Spätlese has a must weight of only 90 Öchsle. The fruit is clean and delicate, and the harvest yielded QbA – Spätlese. There is a very limited quantity of wine at von Hövel in 2008.



## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Riesling – “Balduin” von Hövel

Nose shows green apple and citrus aromas. On the palate the wine exhibits a steely acidity, with a good dose of mineral extract buffering the acidity. Pear and green apple again on the palate. Good length, an electric QbA.

### 2008 Riesling Kabinett – Oberemmeler Hütte

Lemon, lime and pear are found on the palate. The wine has a good mineral kick, and exudes the vibrant and vigorous qualities that make a great Saar Riesling.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – Oberemmeler Hütte

A riper, more precise selection, even though must weights for the Kabinett and Spätlese are almost equal. This wine is a perfect example of must weights not telling you anything about physiological ripeness. This Riesling is filigreed on the palate, with good tension, fine minerality, and shows pear and a lighter quality red raspberry fruit. It offers a wonderfully detailed structure, with a very persistent finish.

# Zilliken

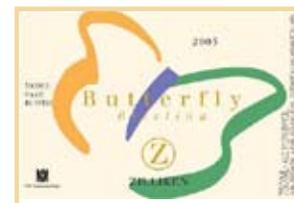
Saarburg / Saar



HANNO ZILLIKEN

Hanno Zilliken says his 2008 collection is very classic in style. He feels the weather during the vintage was neither harmful nor helpful, and that Mother Nature more or less gave the vines what they needed, when they needed it – no more, no less. As with many other growers, there is a feeling at Zilliken that vintages like 2004 or 2008 mark a return to the type of Riesling vintner's enjoy most, the light and delicate style, with a racy acidity. Because of the high dry extracts, Hanno feels the minerality in the '08 wines is quite dominant, and he enjoys this trait. Hanno feels the vintage is perhaps most similar to 1988, and that the wonderfully harmonious acidity is a testament to the quality of the fruit harvested. Here all wines up through Spätlese, with the addition of an Eiswein, were selected. Must weights ranged from 78 – 156 Öchsle, and harvest began on the 10th of October and was completed by the 30th of the month. The Eiswein was selected on December 30th at minus 10 degrees Celsius.

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## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Riesling – Butterfly

Fine mineral notes in the nose. On the palate it tastes of freshly picked pear, it is so clean and bright. At mid palate there's a little flint nuanced mineral push, the wine has a very filigreed structure.

### 2008 Riesling Kabinett – Saarburger Rausch

More intense mineral notes in the nose here than in the Butterfly. On the palate the wine has volume, but a ghostly character. Ripe pear, green apple, and a hint of cassis are found on the palate. The finish is packed with pungent minerality permeated by notes of lime and has great length.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – Saarburger Rausch

As opposed to Kabinett and Spätlese combinations we've tasted at other estates, the Spätlese here is quite a step up. The nose picks up considerably, with even more mineral, citrus, and white tree fruit detail vs. the Kabinett. The mouth feel is superb, offering fine and intricate textures. On the palate there is sweet red fruit, pear, white peach, and the acidity is just mouth watering, giving the wine great length. Super!

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese AUCTION – Saarburger Rausch

The fruit is actually a bit shy at the time of the tasting offering only a floral rose note, but the minerality is very intense and steely, with its slate and flint details. On the palate the acidity (9 gm/l) is quite dominant and has more nerve and tension than the normal Spätlese. The palate is also a bit shy, only giving clues as to its pineapple, orange, cassis and peach flavor profiles. Ultimately a greater wine than the regular Spätlese, but it will take some time to show its stuff.

### 2008 Riesling Eiswein – Saarburger Rausch

Picked at 156 Öchsle, at minus 10 Celsius on 12/30/08. It has 220 gm/l residual sugar, and 12 gm/l acidity. This selection is extremely pungent, with a searing minerality in the nose, and a very intense citrus component. On the palate there are notes of passion fruit, cassis, and pineapple. The finish has great length combined with Eiswein intensity.

# Robert Weil

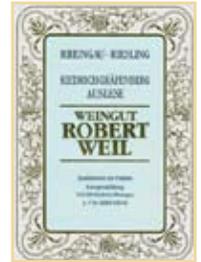
*Kiedrich / Rheingau*



WILHELM WEIL

At first glance, 2008 seemed like an average year. Despite many a cloudy day in summer, the weather during the growing season was once again warmer than long term average. The above average rainfall was good for fruit and soil, and fueled the levels of dry extract in the fruit. Flowering was two weeks early, yet the main harvest did not begin until the second week of October, resulting in 120+ days of hang time. While the total hang time did not quite match that seen in 2007, it was still much better than average. Because sugar development was slow the 2008 crop was able to achieve outstanding levels of physiological ripeness.

The level of ripeness was confirmed during harvest, with the grapes, and later on with the musts, showing remarkable aromatics. Even the Estate Riesling easily reached Kabinett level must weight. In fact must weights were so good, that only 10% of the Estate Riesling was slightly chaptalized. We feel this is quite an achievement considering that in 2008 Öchsle was much harder to come by. This is what makes these wines so special, a unique combination of lower alcohol in concert with outstanding levels of ripeness.



The dry wines from the Estate Riesling, up through the three single vineyard bottlings from the village of Kiedrich, the Klosterberg, Turmberg, Gräfenberg are all of superb quality. The Erstes Gewächs from the Gräfenberg is also very good, and we feel it is one of the top dry Riesling made in 2008. The Estate wines and Kiedricher Gräfenberg wines with residual sugar are also impressive. The crowning achievements of the vintage were two TBAs, one selected in the Turmberg, and one in the Gräfenberg, both near 200 Öchsle. All together, the wines make for a remarkable collection; a result of the phenomenal efforts by the team at Robert Weil.

## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Riesling Dry – Estate

Perhaps the best example crafted by Weil to date. It is incredibly bright and clean, with pure lemon and lime citrus notes. While it has a firm '08 structure, it manages to maintain an elegance with great volume and texture on the palate. Wonderful.

### 2008 Riesling Dry – Kiedricher Turmberg

A finer nose here than in the Klosterberg. On the palate it has a flowing elegance, with white peach fruit, but doesn't have the mineral snap of the Klosterberg. It seems a bit reserved at the time of tasting, it will surely open.

### 2008 Riesling Dry - Kiedricher Gräfenberg

More earth and stone in the nose than the Turmberg or Klosterberg. At this point it appears to be a blend of the Klosterberg, with a firm earthy character, but also has the juicy white peach fruit profile of the Turmberg.

### 2008 Riesling Dry - Gräfenberg - Erstes Gewächs

More depth in the nose here than the Premier Cru example, as one would expect. Its rich aromas of ripe white peaches intermingle with earth, stone, slate and spice notes as they flow from the glass. On the palate the wine is extraordinary, pushing the outer limits of density and physiological ripeness for a dry Riesling. The wine's power and finesse are superb, one of the best Erstes Gewächs wines we've ever tasted.

### 2008 Riesling Kabinett Medium-Dry – Estate

Very focused nose of pear and mineral. On the palate the wine offers flavors of slate, pear and citrus and has a very lean character. Good tension, with a salty finish.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – Estate

Great ripeness here, with yellow peach and grapefruit in the nose. On the palate it is lush, and juicy, all delivered with classic Robert Weil precision. At 103 Öchsle the wine is big for a '08 Spätlese compared to many we tasted, but it maintains a crystalline purity, with great concentration that adds a touch of acacia honey to the fruit profiles.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – Kiedricher Gräfenberg

Tempting nose of white peach, and a hint of pink grapefruit. On the palate the wine adds red raspberry and strawberry notes to the juicy white peach profile. An excellent example of the flowing richness and power that the Gräfenberg vineyard is renowned for displaying.

# Franz Künstler

*Hochheim / Rheingau*



PINOT NOIR GRAPES

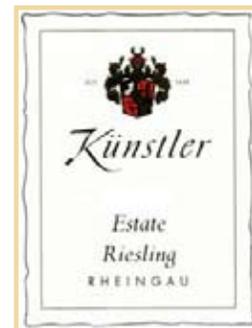
The 2008 vintage at Franz Künstler was helped by super weather conditions. The temperatures in Hochheim were significantly above the long term average. Even though March and April were quite cool, bud break occurred in late April, a little later than normal, but a warm May rapidly advanced the vegetation and the flowering in early June was two weeks ahead of average.

From June to August the weather was a mixed bag, with both cool and warm temperatures and timely rains which allowed vegetation to continue to advance. While nobody in Hochheim was sunbathing during summer, the grapes loved the weather. The vintage hit a bit of a wall in September, with cooler weather and very cool nights. The latter, thankfully, prevented the formation rot. While the ripening process was more

gradual, the '08 crop had a total hang time of more than 130 days, and produced fruit with excellent levels of physiological ripeness.

Künstler continues on with a passionate focus toward producing not only excellent dry Riesling, but also top quality Pinot Noir. Gunter showed us two excellent Pinots, including his basic Tradition and a Hochheimer Reichstal Erstes Gewächs. Then we moved into several dry Rieslings, which included a series of stunning Dry Kabinett selections. Künstler's '08 Hochheimer Stielweg "Old Vines" is one of the better examples we've tasted of the wine in some time, very well done.

Perhaps most surprising was the Hochheimer Hölle Auslese Gunter showed us. Now you'll have to remember we haven't seen a Franz Künstler Auslese since 2003. While tasting it, Gunter commented that it took almost the same effort in 2008 to make this Auslese, as it did for him to select his 2003 TBA. The '08 Auslese was selected during the last part of October.



## TASTING NOTES

### 2007 Pinot Noir – Tradition

Always one of our favorite Pinot Noirs. A bit more classic Pinot "meat" in this example than one finds in other regions, which makes it very approachable and easy to like. Red cherry and raspberry fruit on the palate, with moderate tannin levels, finishing with notes of toast and cherry spice.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese Dry – Old Vines

Nose is almost a little exotic, more than you'd expect from this wine. On the palate the wine displays flavors of grapefruit, gooseberry, lemon zest, and yellow peach. Firm acidity provides great grip on the palate.

### 2008 Riesling Kabinett – Hochheimer Reichstal

Aromas of freshly canned white and yellow peach in the nose. On the palate it is extremely bright and juicy. The mid palate picks up quite nicely as the acid really lifts this full sized Kabinett. Then there is an intense rush of juicy peach and red fruit permeating your senses. It is so succulent but also very well structured.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – Hochheimer Kirchenstück

A powerful nose, similar to the Kabinett, but there are finer mineral details here and more red fruit in the nose. On the palate the wine has a pleasing sweet and sour quality, all held within a creamy texture. The yellow peach, strawberry, red raspberry and cassis flavors dominate the palate, and the wine has a very long finish.

# Wegeler

*Oestrich / Rheingau*



TOM DRIESEBERG WITH WIFE ANJA  
AND SON JULIUS

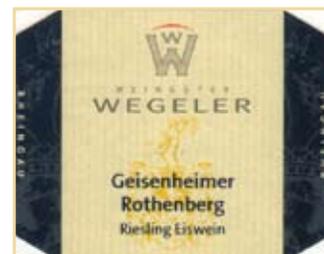
Tom Drieseberg, owner and director of the Wegeler properties, described 2008 as relatively uncomplicated vintage in the Rheingau. Yield for the 2008 crop was 66 hl/ha, which averages in the fruit selected for Wegeler's Sekt production that is picked several weeks earlier and at higher yields. Must weights ranged from 74 to 184 Öchsle with finished (after fermentation) acids from 7 gm/l to 12 gm/l.

Wegeler's harvest began, with some initial pickings, on the 20th of September. The main harvest, for Wegeler's Riesling wines, began during the end of the first week in October. Tom pointed out that the acid levels didn't drop much, if any, from late September until the start of harvest. However, the Riesling grapes experienced a healthy increase in Öchsle – which was very important when considering the vintage's more robust acidity.

Drieseberg explained that while there wasn't much rain in 2008, temperatures were cooler, and this weather is the primary reason the acidity is so crisp. Here at Wegeler, Drieseberg estimated that the acidity in the finished wines is 75% tartaric. Across the whole harvest the fruit was described as healthy and ripe, with virtually no botrytis.

The exception being a Geisenheimer Rothenberg Auslese, and the

crown jewel of the vintage, a miniscule 50 liters of Geisenheimer Rothenberg TBA, picked at 184 Öchsle. There was also approximately 500 liters of Eiswein selected on the 31st of December, at -9 degrees Celsius. Overall the 2008 Wegeler wines have a classic Rheingau density, and elegance, but the acid gives them a Mosel like spark.



## TASTING NOTES

### 2007 Riesling Spätlese – Geheimrat J

Sleek, mineral toned nose. On the palate the wine has an excellent depth of fruit. Stony mineral notes blend with white and yellow peach fruit, it is wonderfully integrated at this point; and shows very, very well. Classic Rheingau Riesling, with power and elegance.

### 2008 Riesling Kabinett – Rudesheimer Berg Schlossberg

Nose is a little shy at the time of tasting. On the palate there are earthy minerals, stone and yellow peach fruit. Very rich for an '08 Kabinett, with a tangy lime soaked acidity. The finish is long, and the fruit actually morphs and turns a little exotic with hints of pineapple.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – Rudesheimer Berg Rottland

Finer slate, stone and mineral details pepper the nose. It hits the palate with a rich, viscous, fruit forward style, but maintains its focus. Peach, strawberry, marzipan, passion fruit, and cassis flavors are all found on the palate. This is a Spätlese wines that pushes that physiological edge, where the flavors are so intense and ripe, it borders on what some would consider being the profile of an Auslese. The palate offers great texture and richness, with a very exotic profile.

### 2008 Riesling Auslese – Geisenheimer Rothenberg

Like the Kabinett, the nose is a little tight, only offering whiffs of mineral and stone at this point. On the palate it has that "still finding itself" gelatinous feel – it is just so dense and layered. There are hints of spicy raspberries, white pepper and yellow peach, it simply needs time to unfold.

# Pfeffingen

Bad Dürkheim / Pfalz



JAN WITH HIS MOTHER DORIS EYMAEL

A very good vintage here at Pfeffingen in 2008. One very interesting fact here in Ungstein is that the acidity was noticeably lower vs. the Middle Haart where von Buhl is located. Jan Eymael attributes this mostly to the weather, where in Ungstein they avoided the hail, and some of the rain that passed just to the south. As many other vintners, Jan left the finished '08 wines on the fine lees for an extended period of time to provide increased harmony in the wines, and pick up a creamier mouth feel.

Yield was approximately 73 hl/ha, with must weights for Riesling ranging from 83-103° Öchsle. After a very mild winter, bud break occurred on the 27th of April, about three days later than average. Frequent rainfalls in March and April, as well as high temperatures in May allowed for a quick development in the vineyards. As a result, flowering was very early, on June 4th – which gave the vines an approximate 12 day head start versus the norm. Ideal weather conditions in June and July allowed the vineyards to progress very nicely and as a result ripening occurred more quickly at Pfeffingen vs. the traditional Middle Haart and South Pfalz.

Jan noted that heavy rainfall on September 13th reminded many winemakers of the 2006 vintage. However, the big difference in 2008 were the cooler temperatures, especially at night. In 2008 the average temperature in September was 9° Fahrenheit lower than in 2006. These cooler temperatures not only prevented rot, but also preserved high acid levels.

The Riesling harvest started on September 30th and ended on October 20th, a total of four weeks. Jan said the weather conditions allowed for a long harvest which allowed Pfeffingen to select all wines up through TBA. Almost four weeks after the end of the main harvest, on November 18th, Pfeffingen selected two dessert wines, a Scheurebe Beerenauslese with 145° Öchsle and a Scheurebe Trockenbeerenauslese with 173° Öchsle – both in the Ungsteiner Herrenberg. A Riesling TBA was selected on October 8th at 180° Öchsle and it is their first Riesling TBA in 11 years.



## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Dry Riesling – Estate

Intense piquant minerals in the nose. On the palate the minerality is also dominant, with notes of lemon and lime citrus and yellow peach. It has excellent volume for a QbA, and the acid is very firm.

### 2008 Riesling – Mardelskopf – Grosses Gewächs

Fine, dusty mineral details from the chalky soils. Picked at 30 hl/ha, the palate is very intricate. A real terroir wine, as a Grosses Gewächs should be, with the same fine chalky mineral texture on the palate as found in the aromatics. The wine has excellent ripeness, with wonderfully juicy white peach fruit peppered by a fine mineral structure.

### 2008 Riesling – Weilberg – Grosses Gewächs

Not surprisingly, when tasted next to the Mardelskopf, there are more intense iron infused mineral notes than found in the chalk soils of the Mardelskopf. This is a classic “Terra Rosa” nose, with a powerful minerality, exotic spices, and floral aromas. On the palate it offers chewier yellow peach fruit, with hints of cassis and red raspberry. The Weilberg is easily the “power” Riesling of the two Grosses Gewächs wines selected at Pfeffingen.

### 2008 08 Riesling Kabinett Medium - Dry – Pfeffo

Fine mineral notes and lemon zest in the nose while sweet grapefruit and peach shimmer on the palate. The wine offers excellent tension between the minerals, acids, and ripe fruit components.

### 2008 Gewürztraminer Spätlese – Estate

A superb Gewürztraminer, easily the best example Pfeffingen has produced in many years (we like it even better than the '04). Spicy pink grapefruit, and rose petals in the nose. The palate is creamy and lush, packed with sweet orange, grapefruit, exotic spices and hints of oily cashew and almond. The finish lasts forever; superb!

### 2008 Scheurebe Spätlese – Ungsteiner Herrenberg

Black current and citrus in the nose. On the palate there are lychee, grapefruit, clove, cassis and red raspberry flavors. It is so exotic and juicy, in the same league as the Gewürztraminer, but the Scheurebe offers darker, more exotic hues, which make it very charming.

### Also tasted

**Scheurebe GKA – Ungsteiner Herrenberg, Scheurebe BA – Ungsteiner Herrenberg, Scheurebe TBA – Ungsteiner Herrenberg, Riesling TBA – Ungsteiner Herrenberg**

# von Buhl

Deidesheim / Pfalz



VON BUHL ESTATE

Christoph Graf, export manager at von Buhl, commented that in certain respects, the 2008 vintage can be compared to 2007. The summer weather was described as fairly average. Start of flowering occurred on the 1st of June, which is in line with the long term average.

The biggest hurdles during the vintage were two hail storms: one around Friedelsheim where 37 acres were damaged on the 30th of May, and one in Ruppertsberg where 19 acres were damaged on the 30th of July. Fortunately, the overall yield was not affected by the two hail storms. Harvest ultimately began on the 15th of September, but this initial selection was for base fruit used in the production of von Buhl's Sekt. The initial fruit had good levels of acidity, with average must weights in the 75-80° Öchsle range, all well in line for the production of proper sparkling wines.

Beginning in October, von Buhl's focus turned to Riesling and Pinot Noir. Perhaps more than in any other region, nerves around von Buhl were quite frayed after the two hail storms earlier in the season. A stable high pressure system moved into place, and provided excellent weather conditions for almost all of October. From the 13th of October onwards, it was clear that 2008 had the potential to come very close in quality to the 2007 vintage. The physiological ripeness in top sites such as the Forster Ungeheuer, Kirchenstück, and Pechstein was outstanding and the Riesling fruit selected for the Grosses Gewächs wines was also of optimal quality. von Buhl selected all Prädikat levels including Auslese, BA and TBA.



## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Riesling – Maria Schneider “Jazz”

Citrus and grapefruit in the nose. On the palate it shows an intense acidity. The green apple, white peach, cantaloupe and lemon citrus notes peak through a dominant curtain of minerals and the wine's long salty finish.

### 2008 Riesling Kabinett – ARMAND

Very attractive nose of yellow peach and stony minerals. Has good concentration for an '08 Kabinett. On the palate it is juicy with fine mineral details. Has a similar firm acidity as the Jazz Riesling, but the residual sugar here is higher and gives the wine a juicier character.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – Forster Jesuitengarten

Nose is filled with citrus and peach aromas, with a hint of darker earth tones. On the palate it has a creamy texture on entry, and shows primary yellow peach, apple and red raspberry fruit. The firm acidity pushes through the fruit by mid palate and the wine morphs from what would otherwise be a typically fruit dominated Spätlese, into a wine that is influenced more by its terroir and citrus notes.

### 2008 Riesling Auslese – Forster Ungeheuer

Denser nose than the Spätlese above, with deeper yellow fruit notes and a trace of spicy volcanic minerals. On the palate there is both white and yellow peach, apricot, cassis and a hint of saffron and honey. Once again, the acid here is really amazing and gives the wine a remarkable structure. This is one zippy bottle of Auslese.

### 2008 Riesling BA – Ruppertsberger Reiterpfad

There are hints of honey in the nose, with apricot and yellow peach. On the palate one finds honey, orange, cassis, date, and apricot notes. Great example of a BA with lots of residual sugar and stout acidity – this BA sings. Despite a viscous, creamy front palate, which does its best to persist texturally through the mid palate, the fruit is incinerated on the finish by the wine's acidity, and you're left with the ashy exotic remains all soaking in creamy citrus mineral bath.

### Also tasted

2008 Riesling BA – Forster Kirchenstück, Riesling BA – Forster Ungeheuer

# Becker

Schweigen / Pfalz



FRITZ JR. AND FRITZ SR.  
IN THE CELLAR

Here's an estate that in some ways is similar to Schäfer-Fröhlich in the Nahe, because they are relatively new to our portfolio, and like Schäfer-Fröhlich, the Becker wines improve with every vintage. What Schäfer-Fröhlich does for Riesling in the Nahe, Becker is doing for Pinot Noir and Pinot Blanc in the Pfalz, not only for Germany, but also when benchmarked against the best in the world. There is a strong feeling within Rudi Wiest Selections that the Becker estate will continue to grow in popularity not only due to the high quality standard, but also because the basic Estate Pinot Noir and Pinot Blanc offer great value. In less than three years, the Becker Pinot Noir has become one of the best selling red wines in our book.

Fritz Becker described 2008 as a vintage of two harvests -- those who panicked and picked early, finishing harvest in September and those who waited and picked in October.

Fritz said he understood why some vintners picked when they did, employing the "something is better than nothing theory." However,

with the mixed weather, waiting took nerves of steel in '08. There were points during early September where even the most seasoned vintners worried that '08 might end up a total bust. Becker was one who waited, and it paid off big time when they began their harvest in mid October. The harvest brought a surprising amount of high quality fruit with astonishing ripeness but also with acid levels that were more manageable. An added benefit was that much of the fruit had nearly the physiological ripeness of 2007, all the result of an additional thirty days of hang time.



## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Pinot Blanc – Estate

Very pretty nose of white nectarine and pear. On the palate the wine is spicy, with great length, and has good weight for an entry level Pinot Blanc picked at 85 Öchsle. For under \$20 retail, it's a steal.

### 2008 Pinot Blanc – Limestone

More aromatic than the Estate Pinot Blanc, with riper, brighter profiles of white peach. On the palate it is surprisingly racy for a Pinot Blanc, a result of the '08 acidity. It has a good depth of fruit, with a stony mineral finish.

### 2008 Riesling – Estate

Stone and pear fruit in the nose, but has a steely note from the acidity that can only come from Riesling. On the palate it is clean, and nicely balanced with lemon rind, lime, and grapefruit flavors.

### 2008 Riesling – Laissez Faire

For those of you familiar with the Gunderloch Three Star Auslese, this wine has the same feeling, although it is lighter. This example has very fine citrus and mineral notes in the aromas. On the palate the wine feels "plugged in" with its electric acid structure. That acidity holds the juicy white and yellow peaches, grapefruit, orange and strawberry fruits in check. While it is very succulent, the acid zips it up nicely at the finish, leaving a coating of steely minerals on the palate.

### 2007 Pinot Noir – B

You find more red than black cherry in the nose. On the palate it is classic German Pinot, with a little extra lift from the extra tick of acidity. The tannins are not very dominant, but provide good structure and the wine has nice flavors of cherry and coco. Good length and for an entry level German Pinot it will surprise almost anyone.

### 2007 Pinot Noir – Kammerberg – Grosses Gewächs

Wow, look out Burgundy. Anyone who thinks Germany can't make Pinot needs to pick up a bottle of Kammerberg Grosses Gewächs – it's really incredible how much the quality of these selections has increased over the past 5 – 10 years. We are literally now at the point where the best German Pinots can stand alone with ANY Pinot – no matter where it comes from. This wine is rich, dense, and packed with blackberry, plum, and black cherry fruit. Added to this there is a great texture with firm tannins. The finish is a mix of minerals, toast, coco, and tobacco notes. These notes work together to give the wine incredible length. If you didn't know where it was from, you'd guess Grand Cru Burgundy.

# Rebholz

Sieboldingen / Pfalz



IM SONNENSCHN VINEYARD

Hansjörg Rebholz explained that a cool March and April delayed bud break to late April, and got the vintage off to a slow start. However, flowering was two weeks early as a very warm May allowed vegetation to catch up. Hansjörg described summer as “optimal” for the vines and development.

During early September, humidity levels ran high, and in some instances botrytis became an issue. Fortunately after the initial bout of humidity passed, the weather turned cooler, especially the nights, and stopped botrytis from doing any further damage. However, the cooler tempera-

tures also slowed metabolism in the plants and affected sugar assimilation and also the ripening of acids. On September 20th a pre-selection removed 30 – 40% of the fruit, of which at least half was discarded. The fruit they set aside from the preselection was used for Sekt and lighter style Kabinett wines which would later be “blended up” with fruit from the main harvest. The main harvest began on October 20th and was completed on November 20th. The additional hang time between the preselection and main harvest allowed the acids to settle and brought nominal gains in must weights. While discussing the vintage, Hansjörg made the comment “I thought that with climate change the days of fighting for every degree of Öchsle were past. Not so in 2008.”

The main harvest was intense. Hansjörg noted some interesting facts detailing exactly how much effort was invested in the '08 harvest: 1) There were 25 total days of picking in '08 and 2) 4,266 total picking hours, all completed with a vineyard workforce of 49 people. Looking at it another way, the harvest required a total of 258 picking hours per hectare (2.47 acres). Overall yield was only 55 hl/ha. Must weights ranged from 84 – 250 Öchsle, the latter produced only 65 liters of “Zeit and Geduld” (Time and Patience) TBA. Hang time was again significantly above the norm. Hansjörg feels the earmark of 2008 is the vintage’s high minerality but with an elegant form and great finesse.



## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Riesling – Im Sonnenschein – Grosses Gewächs

Yellow fruit and light mineral tones in the aromas. On the palate it continues what the aromatics revealed, with its deep yellow peach notes mixing with fine mineral notes. The finish is filled with salty mineral notes; it is so persistent and intricate.

### 2008 Riesling – Ganshorn – Grosses Gewächs

The Ganshorn is a newly classified vineyard which actually lies within the Im Sonnenschein. The Ganshorn terroir is red sandstone as opposed to the Sonnenschein’s limestone. As expected, the different terroir yields a unique nose that is more citrus driven with notes of grapefruit and lemon zest. The mineral details are finer than in the Im Sonnenschein and on the palate it has a more elegant texture. The acidity and minerals push hard on the finish.

### 2008 Riesling – Kastanienbusch – Grosses Gewäch

Sweeter and riper aromatics than the two other Grosses Gewächs selections. It seems to be the most refined of the Grosses Gewächs selections because of the remarkably filigreed mineral structure. It offers yellow peach and cassis fruit profiles on the palate and still has the wonderfully salty finish. Showing very well at the time of tasting.

# Wirsching

*Iphofen / Franken*



WIRSCHING ESTATE

Uwe Matheus described 2008 as a vintage that is clean and bright. Given the comments during our tasting, it seems here on the eastern edge of Franconia, vintners experienced better weather in 2008 than in any other region of German. Harvest here was remarkably uncomplicated, and the weather was perfect. Needless to say, with such optimal weather conditions, Wirsching is very excited about their 2008 collection. Uwe mentioned that 2008 is again one of the warmest vintages since record keeping began in 1900.

Interesting here is that acidity, on average, is actually lower in 2008 than in 2007. Flowering took place early, during the end of May, which is about two weeks ahead of average. There was a brief cold spell during the end of August and beginning of September,

which pushed the start of harvest back a bit. After a long ripening period, very healthy fruit was selected, and the weather allowed for multiple passes in the vineyards as harvest continued through the end of October. Overall yield was 60 hl/ha and the average must weight was 89 Öchsle.

As some are aware, the 2007s at Wirsching were quite good, and you can extrapolate that the 2008s are near equal quality. We should mention that the 2008 Silvaners seem to be the strength of the 2008 vintage here in Iphofen, and even the entry level estate Silvaner could be mistaken for a more sophisticated single vineyard example.



## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Silvaner Dry – Estate

The wine's minerality is very forward this vintage and combines with a light perfume of pear fruit. Despite having a delicate body, on the palate it is impressively detailed for a "QbA" due to the filigreed mineral and fruit details.

### 2008 Scheurebe Kabinett Dry – Iphöfer Kronsberg

Classic Franken Scheurebe in the nose, with lime, rose and a light exotic perfume. On the palate it displays pink grapefruit, juicy lime, rose, and a hint of cassis. Good length.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese Dry – Iphöfer Kronsberg

Very shy at the time of tasting, with only hints of pear fruit. On the palate the acid structure is quite assertive, with lean pear and citrus flavors. The finish leaves your mouth watering from the wine's mineral and tangy citrus tinged acidity.

# Fürst

*Bürgstadt / Franken*



PAUL, WIFE MONIKA, AND SON SEBASTIAN

A wet and cold spring and a very warm May brought flowering one week early. Unfortunately during flowering a severe hail storm destroyed 6 hectares of Pinot Noir in the Bürgstadter Centgrafenberg, whereas the Riesling and Pinot Blanc were mostly spared.

Fürst's son Sebastian described the summer weather as normal and this helped advance vegetation nicely. However, in late August and throughout most of September cooler temperatures prevailed and this slowed the development of Riesling, while the earlier ripening Pinot Noir could be harvested in the warm Klingenberg vineyard as early as September 22nd. Most of Fürst's Pinot Noir was selected at a must weight of 100 Öchsle with a yield of 30 hl/ha. Because of the superb quality of the fruit, the very first

Grosses Gewächs Pinot Noir was produced from the Klingenberg vineyard. The Pinot Noir harvest in the Bürgstadter Centgrafenberg was delayed due to aforementioned hail damage. It ran from September 26th – October 8th.

Since Riesling needed more hang time, Fürst delayed this harvest until October 24th. Yield was 60 hl/ha with a narrow range of must weights from 90 Öchsle for the "Pur Mineral" up to 97 Öchsle. The quality of the fruit was very good. For the Riesling Grosses Gewächs, yield was reduced to a meager 35 hl/ha, the result of a very labor intensive hand selection, looking for only small and healthy golden grapes. The Rieslings are vibrant, have good tension, and are balanced by ripe, crisp acids and a perfect crystalline profile.

In the village of Volkach, the Fürst's harvested one of the best Chardonnays we ever tasted in Germany. It was picked from ten year old vines, on September 23 at 30 hl/ha, with a must weight near 100 Öchsle. The vines were from an ATVB clonal selection in Burgundy. In addition in Volkach, the Pinot Blanc "Pur Minearl" was picked at 90 Öchsle and a Silvaner at 88 Öchsle.



## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Riesling – Pur Mineral

Very focused nose of citrus, with a light mineral perfume. On the palate it offers pear and lime flavors. The wine is both bright and delicate, and the acid and minerals are tightly wound. A very intense Riesling with a laser like focus.

### 2008 Riesling – Bürgstadter Centgrafenberg

Slightly more density than the Pur Mineral in the aromatics, with white peach fruit, but still has a very assertive mineral aromatic. On the palate it has good weight and fruit with a tick more richness and texture. Where it really shows its stuff is in the details. It has a complex structure, and a strong salty mineral finish giving the wine great length.

### 2007 Pinot Noir – Tradition

A great example of the high quality of Pinot which Fürst produces. It shows ripe red cherry fruit, good tannins, and a wonderfully delicate spicy mineral note. A very refined character and quite possibly the best bottle of Tradition the estate has produced.

# Schäfer-Fröhlich

*Bockenau / Nahe*



TIM FRÖHLICH

The high a praise we had for young Tim Fröhlich's 2007s has changed. It's gotten better. In 2008 young Fröhlich has delivered yet another amazing collection from the Schäfer-Fröhlich estate. The family invested more time and money than ever getting their vineyards into the best conditions possible. In fact, the harvest here in the Nahe did not begin until the 20th of October. Tim smiled during our meeting, recalling how many of his Bockenau colleagues thought he was crazy after they finished harvest and he hadn't even started. Tim is patient though, and knowing they'd hardly had any rain in Bockenau, he stood his ground. In addition, he knew that the berries were still very healthy with thick skins, so he simply waited for the perfect time to begin his harvest. Here in Bockenau, the must weights came more easily than in other regions, and Tim allowed the grapes to hang chiefly so that the tartaric acid content would improve providing the best balance possible in his '08 collection.

Overall yield was identical to 2007, with 53 hl / ha, and 25 hl / ha for the Grosses Gewächs wines. Tim loves 2008 because it has the minerality and extract of 2005, but a racier acidity. Tim is a big fan of this unique combination; he really feels the grip in 2008 is what sets this collection apart from anything he'd produced to date. 2008 also yielded BA and TBA wines, but like so many other growers, Tim expressed that they really had to fight to make them in 2008. An extraordinary amount of time was invested in the selection of these wines.

There is a Bockenauer Felseneck BA selected at 160 Öchsle, and a Bockenauer Felseneck Auslese picked at 106 Öchsle. All the selections from Auslese up are from 100% botrytis affected fruit. However, Tim feels his crown jewel is a Bockenauer Felseneck Eiswein, picked at 230 Öchsle, with 13 gm/l acidity, at a bone chilling -16 degrees Celsius. Tim said it took more than two hours before the first drop came from the press. All of Tim's '08 Rieslings were fermented with wild yeast and they are distinguished by their amazing grip and tension on the palate.



## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Riesling Dry – Bockenau

Picked at 93 Öchsle, it offers grapefruit and deep, earthy minerals in the aromas. On the palate, it is not quite as “skeletal” as a Rebholz example, but it has the same feeling and level of detail. The grapefruit carries over to the palate, but it adds a ripe, juicy white peach note. The combination of it being so juicy, yet offering so much detail is really stunning.

### 2008 Riesling Dry – Bockenauer Felseneck

Different than the Schlossböckelheimer, offering more power and finesse. There is pear and yellow peach on the palate, with a hint of cassis. The detail here is even more refined than in the Schlossböckelheimer, it feels like a fine carving on the palate, surround by citrus, peach flavors. The finish has a wonderful acid zing and savory salty minerals.

### 2008 Riesling Dry – Felseneck – Grosses Gewächs

Finer mineral notes than in the Kupfergrube, with aromas of citrus. On the palate the fruit is brighter than the Kupfergrube, more grapefruit, cassis, white peach and lemon rind, all delivered in a viscous body. The minerality has a ting of spiciness, is incredibly filigreed, and the acid profile is quite steely.

### 2008 Riesling Medium-Dry – Estate

100% Bockenau fruit, with 16 gm/l residual sugar. The nose has a delicate pear and citrus profile. On the palate this QbA is very well balanced, so pure, with flavors of pear and lemon packed within a core of fine minerals.

### 2008 Riesling Kabinett – Estate

Slightly exotic nose for a Kabinett, which gives a clue as to the ripeness of the grapes selected. It is nicely structured on the palate, with grapefruit, pear and a hint of fresh cut pineapple. While the minerals might be more subdued in this example, the finish is aglow with succulent fruit.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – Bockenauer Felseneck

Very ripe nose, with aromas of lemon grass and freshly picked white peach. The palate is filled with fresh fruit, again the white peach and lemon from the aromatics, but adding orange, and a hint of strawberry. The wine's lime toned acidity is stout, mouth watering, and provides a well-proportioned framework within this very impressive Spätlese.

# Gunderloch

*Nackenheim / Rheinhessen*



FRITZ HASSELBACH IN THE  
NACKENHEIMER ROTHENBERG

2008 is a very good vintage at Gunderloch, maybe more in line qualitatively with the 2004 collection from QbA – Spätlese. Fritz explained that in 2008 there was a great focus on quality via harvest management. With varying conditions vineyard to vineyard, the Hasselbach's felt additional training for the harvest team was in order to show the pickers how to precisely select the grapes. While this method was costly, Fritz felt the net benefit was that Gunderloch pulled the best fruit possible out of their vineyards.

All wines up through Auslese were selected by Gunderloch in 2008, and must weights ranged from 83 – 95 Öchsle. The 2008 harvest lasted longer than average at Gunderloch. The Hasselbach's actually began harvest during the middle of September with earlier ripening grape varieties such as Pinot Blanc, Pinot Gris and Silvaner. This initial picking involved a preselection in the vineyards and a second selection at the sorting table. These varieties were the focus of harvest until the middle of October, when Riesling achieved the necessary ripeness to be picked. In the middle of October Gunderloch started harvesting the different varieties, including Riesling, in parallel. The main Riesling harvest started at the end of October and continued on through almost all of November.



While 2008 will not offer much in the GKA, BA and TBA categories, both the estate wines and Rothenberg Spätlese are outstanding. From the Gunderloch Riesling Dry, to a weighty and powerful Jean Baptiste Kabinett to the delicious Diva Spätlese, the '08 Gunderloch Estate wines impress. The Estate wines continue to deliver value in 2008, with a good volume of 90+ Öchsle fruit making it into many of the selections this year.

## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Riesling Dry – Estate

Sleek notes of citrus and red earth in the aromatics. Pear and white peach fruit are balanced by a steely acidity. There's a moderate dose of spicy mineral on the finish, accented by zesty lemon acidity.

### 2008 Riesling Kabinett – "Jean Baptiste"

We tasted two separated tanks, which will ultimately be blended together. The first tank was dominated by grapefruit, mineral and citrus notes, and had a very sleek profile. On the palate the wine had great volume for a 2008 Kabinett, and it actually showed more like a Spätlese. The second tank was not as detailed as the first tank, but more lush and opulent. We recommended a blend of 60% of tank 2 with 40% of tank # 1 for the "Jean Baptiste" Kabinett.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – DIVA

White and yellow peach in the nose. On the palate the wine shows red fruit, lime, and peach with excellent balance. This wine seems to benefit in 2008 from the declassified fruit that was used to craft it. This is a result of the more stringent process Gunderloch used for the Rothenberg Spätlese and Auslese selections, and as a result the DIVA benefits, and shows more complexity than usual.

### 2008 Riesling Spätlese – Nackenheimer Rothenberg

Very mineral driven nose, smells of red earth and clay. On the palate there are assertive flavors of white peach, hazelnut, grapefruit, and cassis. It's lighter than in past vintages, but no less interesting; with fine soil details and what we feel is a classic '08 crystalline style.

### 2008 Riesling Auslese – Nackenheimer Rothenberg

This offers a very heady nose of peach and spiced minerals, with a hint of yellow fruit. A Riesling with this must weight might have been bottled by many as a Spätlese in a vintage like '03, but the reality is that this '08 marks a return to a more classic Auslese profile. Wonderful canned yellow peach fruit and cassis are surrounded by tart lime tinged acidity. There are also hints of sweet red raspberry on the palate. The striking part about this Auslese is more about what it's not, and the fact that it is compact (for an Auslese), concentrated and so finely detailed.

# Schnaitmann

*Fellbach / Württemberg*

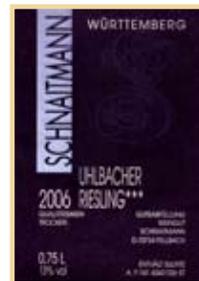


RAINER SCHNAITMANN

The 2008 Vintage in Württemberg started with a mild winter followed by a relatively humid spring, which was very useful because of the very dry conditions during the second half of 2007. An extremely warm month of May accelerated vegetation to an earlier than average flowering starting in the first week of June. Summer weather was a mixed bag with very different rainfall even in neighboring villages only two kilometers away from each other. Ripening continued at a quick pace even though the weather stayed fairly cool. A cloudy September, with chilly nights, held any rot or botrytis in check. It also increased hang time and physiological ripeness of the fruit. The resulting late harvest stretched over two months, from mid-September to the third week in November. In fact, it was not until the third week of November when the best Rieslings, Lembergers, and Cabernet Francs were selected. These late picked wines have lower alcohol levels, yet display the ripeness of the best 2007's. The Pinot Noir selection was more difficult, and while rot was not a problem in well cultivated vineyards, timing exactly when to pick was very tricky. When Schnaitmann saw the correct balance

between fruit and alcohol, the pickers descended on the vineyards en masse, and the Pinot Noir was harvested in just one week.

On December 30th a Riesling Eiswein was selected at -12 degrees Celsius, with 165 Öchsle, and 11 gm/l acid. It will finish fermentation with approximately 220 gm/l residual sugar. Average yields for the white wines were 55 hl/ha, and for the reds 48 hl/ha. Must weights for Riesling ranged from 90 – 95 Öchsle, for Pinot Noir from 92 – 100 Öchsle, and finally for Lemberger 93 – 97 Öchsle. Rainer Schnaitmann feels 2008 is special because of the lower alcohol levels and excellent ripeness.



## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Rose – Evoe!

A blend of mostly Pinot Noir with Pinot Meunier and 10% Simonroth material; one third of the cuvee when though a malolactic fermentation. Very attractive floral and cherry nose, then notes of strawberries flood the palate with juicy cherry and citrus. Mouthwatering, crisp, and refreshing, with more brilliant acidity than the 2007, well done!

### 2008 Muskat Trollinger – Estate

This was mostly a selection of large berries like the Trollinger grapes. The clusters are very loose providing a low risk for rot. The must soaked four hours on the skins, followed with a soft pressing, and then fermentation in stainless steel. The aromatics are unique, displaying pear, cherry, and a hint of spice. On the palate it is both rich and crisp, offering flavors of strawberry and lime. While it's refreshing and fun, you can't help but recognize that this is some very serious Rose.

### 2008 Riesling – Uhlbacher Götzenberg – Grosses Gewächs

Flavors of white and yellow peach, orange peel, and ripe apple. Fine mineral structure, this wine has great potential.

### 2008 Riesling Dry - Fellbacher Lämmeler – Grosses Gewächs

White peach, peach skin, melons, and pear. This wine has a more "chalky" minerality which gives the wine good richness and depth on the palate.

### 2008 Riesling Dry - Fellbach \*\*

Offers a very intense nose of citrus and mineral. On the palate the wines adds pear and hints of red fruit, all supported by a robust acid structure.

### 2008 Lemberger Dry \*\*

Sweet dark berry fruit in the nose mixes with spice and pepper notes. On the palate there is a hint of oak, with well integrated soft tannins. Very concentrated, with blackberry and plum fruits, that is balanced by a long earthy finish.

# Heger

Ihringen / Baden



JOACHIM AND WIFE SILVIA HEGER

2008 is a vintage that very much expresses the traditional varietal and terroir profiles of the Heger estate. '08 got off to a slow start but with a warm May the vegetation caught up and in the beginning of June, flowering followed the long term average. The weather was a hodgepodge of warm and cold days, with intermittent, but timely, rains. The nights were cool, which moderated sugar accumulation, while preserving acids and aromatics. These conditions delayed the harvest by a full month when compared to 2007.

The Pinot Noir harvest began on September 20th and was complete by October 6th. Must weights at Weinhaus Heger ranged from 85 – 95 Öchsle and at Dr. Heger from 92 – 94 Öchsle. The top must weights were selected in the Achkarrer Schlossberg and the Ihringer Winklerberg. A preharvest was done for all the Pinot Noirs to

remove any grapes affected by rot or botrytis. The complex 2008 Dr. Heger Pinot Noirs are earmarked by bright cherry fruit and will be matured on their skins in new or partially new barriques.

The white wine harvest started September 30th and was complete by October 30th. Must weights at Weinhaus Heger for the Pinot Gris and Pinot Blanc were tightly banded around the 90 – 92 Öchsle range. For Dr. Heger they topped out near 102 – 103 Öchsle, with top selections reserved for the Grosses Gewächs wines. To settle the higher than normal acids, and to add more stuffing to the wines, Heger used longer maceration on the skins being careful not to introduce bitter notes. In November Heger also selected a series of noble sweet wines topped by a Scheurebe TBA at 200 Öchsle, and on December 20th, a Muskateller Eiswein at 180 Öchsle with 13 gm/l acidity.

Average yields at Weinhaus Heger were 75 hl/ha and at Dr. Heger 40 hl/ha. The refreshing acid levels and the moderate amount of alcohol makes these wines extraordinarily delicate and animating. Even full bodied Spätlese wines are in no way plump, but rather please with their minerality, elegance and fruit. We feel 2008 is a superb vintage at Heger.



## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Weinhaus Heger Pinot Gris – Estate

This is a softer, lighter, wispier style of Pinot Gris. On the palate there are delicate notes of pear, cashew, and a hint of cantaloupe. It is clean and bright, and has a surprisingly long finish for being so fine.

### 2008 Dr. Heger Pinot Noir – Mimus

The wine offers aromatics of cherry, blackberries, plums, with hints of cinnamon. These notes carry over to the palate, where the wine displays a wonderful silky texture, great balance, and good staying power. This Pinot is beautifully put together, and we dare say it is our favorite example of the wine to date.

### 2008 Dr. Heger Pinot Blanc – Ihringer Winklerberg “Young Vines”

Aromatics of melon and citrus. This repeats on the palate, adding flavors of melon, but most impressive is the wine's stunning purity on the palate. It's really fetching, so bright and clean, with a finish offering a long, finely etched detail of minerals.

### 2008 Dr. Heger Pinot Blanc – Ihringer Winklerberg – Grosses Gewächs

As one would expect, there's not only more richness here, but also a more filigreed fruit profile. On the palate there are flavors of pear, melon, red fruit and lime zest. It's delivery is linear, complex, sleek, and has impressive grip and depth. The wine finishes with a wonderfully firm citrus soaked, salty, mineral tang.

### 2008 Dr. Heger Pinot Noir – Ihringer Winklerberg – Grosses Gewächs

A beautiful nose, with rich aromas of red and black cherry fruit, highlighted by an intense mineral perfume. On the palate, the cherry fruit just glows – it is so ripe – with wonderfully intricate details of bacon and exotic spices lying at the core. The wine has a very good structure coupled with a persistent finish.

# Salwey

*Oberrotweil / Baden*



KONRAD SALWEY

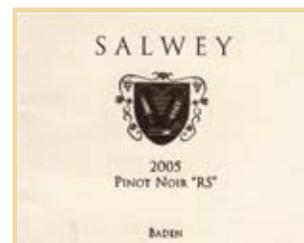


SALWEY ESTATE

Konrad Salwey reports that compared to other wine regions in Germany, flowering for the 2008 vintage was two weeks late in the Kaiserstuhl. Cool nights throughout the entire summer kept a firm hold on both acids and aromas in the fruit. The upshot was one of the latest ever harvests in the Kaiserstuhl. For example, the 2007 harvest started August 14th while in 2008 it wasn't until September 22nd that the early ripening Müller-Thurgau was first picked. The selection for Pinot Gris and Pinot Blanc commenced September 29th and Pinot Noir not until October 5th.

Because must acids were quite high, long skin contact was used for the white wines. For both Pinot Gris and Blanc the acids settled at 7 gm/l after fermentation, a little higher than normal, but also riper because of the extra hang time. The 2008 whites are typical, but also more finely structured than we've seen in the past. The Pinot Gris' are lively, very vibrant and have good richness, while the Pinot Blancs come with great clarity, they are direct and crystalline pure.

Salwey's Pinot Noirs were picked at approximately 103 Öchsle. The Pinot Noirs were kept 20 days on the stems and malolactic fermentation was not complete until April. An early assessment of the 2008 wines is that the extra tick of acid gives them more finesse and refinement; they are more Burgundian in style. The 2007s are more about power, weight and have a markedly more tannic structure.



## TASTING NOTES

### 2008 Pinot Gris Kabinett – Estate

25% maceration on the skins for one week, 25% skin contact for two days, then everything pressed within 12 hours. Really feel the impact of the skin contact, pithy, really attacks the palate. There are primary flavors of orange, orange rind and citrus on the palate with good density.

### 2008 Pinot Blanc Kabinett – Estate

This wine exhibits a bright, crystalline purity with apples, melons, and gooseberry flavors on the palate. For a Pinot Blanc, it really dances on the palate, and has a lingering finish of citrus and salty minerals.

### 2008 Pinot Gris – “RS”

Perfumed nose of floral notes, orange peel, pears and cantaloupe. On the palate the aromas translate very much into the flavors found on the palate, with a clean finish of citrus laced minerals. A bit too much oak for our taste, but the fruit is very good, coming from the best parcels of the Käsleberg.

### 2008 Pinot Blanc – “RS”

A long maceration was used for 40% of the fruit, while another 40% was fermented in stainless steel tanks, and 20% was put in new barriques for four – six weeks. The oak is moderate, and the palate shows flavors of pear, citrus, orange, melons, and hazelnuts. A full bodied Pinot Blanc, with a persistent, clean salty mineral finish.

### 2008 Pinot Gris - Henkenberg - Grosses Gewächs

We tasted two different selections of this Grosses Gewächs, which will ultimately be blended together. Both lots had ample skin and stem contact; with the first half being fermented in new oak, giving the wine very heavy toasty, caramel notes. Like the RS, for us, the oak influence in this half of the Grosses Gewächs was quite strong. The second half was fermented in large oval barrels and expressed a fresher, more appealing style. There are flavors of orange peel, cantaloupe and a hint of hazelnut. We feel the final blend will make for a very, very good Pinot Gris.

# Meyer-Näkel

*Dernau / Ahr*



WERNER NÄKEL

2008 was another super Pinot Noir vintage at Meyer-Näkel. Similar to the other northern wine growing regions, March and April were cool resulting in a delayed bud break but a warm May reeled in vegetation and flowering actually finished ahead of the norm. Very good weather conditions from the middle of September to the beginning of November with warm sunny days and cool nights retarded sugar assimilation and mostly prevented rot and botrytis. A preharvest at the beginning of October removed all foul and botrytis affected grapes. This allowed for increased hang time such that after October 15th healthy, ripe Pinot Noir fruit could be selected through the end of October.

Must weights started at 95 Öchsle and topped out for the Grosses Gewächs selections at 103 – 105 Öchsle. The Frühburgunder harvest started two weeks earlier with must weights reaching 99 Öchsle in the Dernauer Pfarrwingert. Average yield for the estate was 53 hl/ha. The resultant wines are ripe with good tension on the palate. They appear lighter, getting extra lift from the higher than normal acids with soft tannins and great aromatics.

\*\*\* Final 2008 blends could not be tasted during our February 2009 visit. We revisited the 2007 vintage and these selections are starting to show the potential predicted during last year's visit.







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