

Mike's Wine Dive's First Annual Summer of Riesling 2011



why riesling? Simply put, Riesling is the most loved and hated grape in the world. The poor guy gets thrown in the corner with **Sauernes, Diet Pepsi, Wendy's Frosty's and High Fructose Corn Syrup**. What is the significance? Well, the four things listed are all very *sweet*, while Riesling is **NOT**. It can be but it also cannot be. Riesling is very misunderstood (unlike Congressman Weiner – who is quite understood). Riesling wants to be thought of the way we revere Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and (OH GOD!) Pinot Grigio. The truth is in many circles it is held to the highest of standards. This is nearly every sommeliers favorite grape and with good reason.

*“a bit of identity problem?
slightly.”*

To put it in simple terms, Riesling at its core is a skeleton of insane structure and **MINERALITY** with layers of muscle (acidity) and flesh (fruit). Minerality is the heart of what makes Riesling so great. Become an acidhound and drink more Riesling!

Please enjoy this new annual tradition of deliciousness and absorb the singularity and greatness of Riesling!

Summer of Riesling 2011

The Motherland (AKA Germany)

Not sure it gets much better than this (the page on the back is a solid bet though). Germany is the home of Riesling and it is one nice monstrosity too. The various soils (slate, volcanic, clay, loam, loess, chalk, gravel, etc) are found throughout the country. These wines taste of the place they came from and none other. These are mystical glasses of fermented grape juice.

glass and bottle

07 Selbach-Oster 'Zeltinger Himmelreich' Kabinett Halbtrocken
Mosel. Germany.

eleven per glass
fifty-five per bottle

Soil: blue slate over weathered clay and loam

This 'heavenly domain' is known as a borealis of slate sandwiched by lime and grass

09 Meulenhof 'Wehlener Sonnenuhr' Spätlese
Mosel. Germany.

ten per glass
fifty per bottle

Soil: pure blue slate

The 'sundial' of the Mosel, think a conversation between green energy and animated slate

bottle only

06 Dönnhoff 'Felsentürmchen' Spätlese

seventy-five

07 Dönnhoff 'Kreuznacher Krötenpfuhl' Spätlese

eighty-five

08 Dönnhoff 'Schlossböckelheimer Kupfergrube' Spätlese 1.5L

one hundred and ninety



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Only the Strong Survive (AKA Austria)

In 2010, Austrian wines saw their largest sales in the United States...did you know that? We describe German wine as mystic, then Austrian wine must be corporeal, even sexual. Austrian Riesling is more than merely Riesling, they are as celestially mystic as this varietal can ever be. They are the most graceful "high alcohol" wines on this planet, they captivate you in a daze.

glass and bottle

08 Nikolaihof 'Vom Stein' Federspiel
Wachau. Austria.

Soil: gravel and humus over primary rock

The first certified biodynamic estate in the world, ethereal, and in constant motion.

thirteen dollars per glass
sixty-five dollars per bottle



bottle only

99 Hirsch 'Gaisberg'
02 Hirsch 'Gaisberg'
03 Hirsch 'Gaisberg'
04 Hirsch 'Gaisberg'

seventy five dollars
seventy five dollars
seventy five dollars
seventy five dollars

Pedal to the Metal (AKA France)

Rarely do you think of French wines as boisterous, flamboyant, and even showy, with the exception of parts of the Rhône and Southern France. Alsace is an interesting dichotomy. The sun and heat during growing seasons makes for large, rich, unctuous wines, while the incredible diversity of soils shed unique qualities not unlike Germany. The inherent aromatics of Riesling really show.

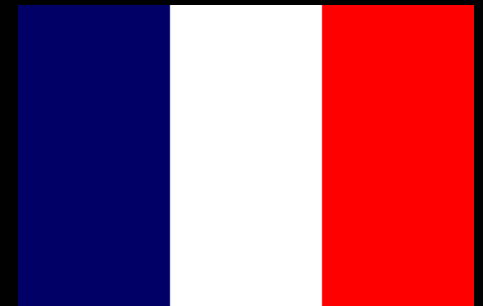
glass and bottle

08 Kuentz-Bas
Alsace. France.

Soil: loess and silt over limestone

A wine that jabs rather than uppercuts, one of the most delineated wines of Alsace.

nine dollars per glass
forty-five dollars per bottle



riesling for dummies

So you have something to take home with you of consequence, I have a little Riesling cheat sheet for you:

1. Austria = Dry. When you see the little red/white striped capsule on top (Austrian flag), then you have about a 99% chance of that wine being dry unless you see words like *Ausbruch*, *Beerenauslese*, or *Trockenbeerenauslese*. Get ready to have your teeth kicked in by copious amounts of minerality and acidity.
2. Australia = Dry. Dry is a generalization, but a safe one at that. Some of the world's greatest Riesling hails from the cool climate of the Clare Valley, yet very few people think of it. Here the wines tend to be ultra racy but with an incredible petroleum note that hits you upside the head and says "mate, there are utha grapes down unda' besides that silly leetle Shee-razz."
3. France = Dry. Not dry like Austria or Australia, these wines lack minerality in the sense they are not crunchy, but they are subtle. The fruit and power is far from subtle, as Alsace is the Manny Pacquaio of Riesling. The relative high alcohols of this region make for full-throttle body blows compared to Austria's left jabs.
4. Germany = The Pinnacle. Not trying to play favorites, but the diversity and greatness of German Riesling single handedly makes this one of the greatest wines in the world, least of all Rieslings. Here are the ripeness levels (not sweetness) of Germany in ascending order: Kabinett, Spätlese, **Auslese**, **Beerenauslese**, **Eiswein**, **Trockenbeerenauslese**. The levels in **bold** are always sweet. The word trocken (dry), halbtrocken (half-dry) and feinherb (also half-dry) will appear on a label to further indicate sweetness levels. See, this country has five lines to everyone else's three...it must be better ☺

quick note from mike

We are the only restaurant/wine bar from Kansas participating in the 2011 Summer of Riesling Tour across the U.S. of A. Master Sommelier, Paul Greico, started this concept in 2007 with the idea of promoting his single favorite grape. Paul is an anomaly in the Sommelier world, he actually has personality, lots of it. He is not a wound up, tight, stuffy, snooty Somm, but rather unpretentious, fun and extremely eccentric.

Paul was pretty excited when I spoke with him that we wanted to be involved. Please let me know what you think about this. This is one of the great grapes of the world and it should be celebrated!

Please follow Summer of Riesling 2011 on twitter – Summerriesling

If you are not following me on twitter (shame on you), please do that as well – Mikeswinedive

Thanks again,

Mike