



Rieslings – Germany versus Alsace!

Tuesday, May 16, 2023

Registration: 6:00 PM, Tasting: 6:30 PM

Faculty Club, Univ. of Toronto, 41 Willcocks Street, Toronto

Members' Fee: \$95; Guests'/Non-Members' Fee: \$120

Jancis Robinson, one of the world's leading wine critics, considers Riesling to be *"the world's greatest white wine grape"*. One of the noble grape varieties, Riesling is known for its complexity, versatility and variety. It is capable of producing an extraordinary diversity of white wine styles from still to sparkling, and also ranging in sweetness from dry to very sweet. The grape is highly "terroir-expressive", i.e. influenced by its place of origin. Riesling wines contain alluring floral bouquets and are filled with peach, honey and apricot fruit flavors and often its characteristic 'petrol' (kerosene or gasoline) bouquet. Also, it can last for decades. It is not unheard of in Germany for high quality dry and off-dry Rieslings to cellar up to 100 years and still taste wonderful. The reason is Riesling's high acidity and range of flavours. Generally, Rieslings have a lower alcohol level and can accompany many different foods. It is also great as a summer quaffer.

The spiritual home for this variety resides in two lands: Germany and Alsace. Given that Alsace has changed hands a number of times between France and Germany over past centuries, it is not surprising that the wines share some basic similarities, but in truth there are more differences than similarities to talk about. For our May event we have 8 wines from the 2016 vintage that highlight the distinctive characteristics of each region and tell the tale of two regions. The more northerly of the two is the German Riesling. Popularly known as Rhine Wines, the most well-known sites for Riesling follow the winding Rhine River/Valley. In this cooler climate, the best wines are known to be grown on incredibly steep south-facing hillsides to maximize exposure to sun and warmth reflecting from the river. Due to the steepness, hand-harvesting is a necessary practice that is much easier on the grapes and usually results in clean, pure flavors – which is the hallmark of German Riesling. The 2016 vintage began cool and wet, but was saved by gorgeous summer. Expect these wines to be full of elegance and charm, lighter in color, light to medium in body, and extremely aromatic — floral, honeyed, citrusy and peach with petrol notes.

Further down south, nestled between the Rhine River to the east and the Vosges Mountains to the west, we find the Alsace wine region that spans from north to south. It's a cool continental climate that sees plenty of sun during the day and cool temperatures at night. The Vosges Mountain range creates a rain shadow effect that protects the vineyards from most precipitation, giving the grapes ample sunshine to ripen and making it one of the driest, sunniest winegrowing regions in the country. This, combined with cool nights, helps the grapes to retain bracing acidity, one of the signature traits of Alsatian wines. Even with its fair share of challenges, 2016 was a warm, balanced vintage and is known to have resulted in classic and elegant Alsatian wines. Expect these to be drier, riper, fuller body and distinctly different from their German counterparts.

The event price includes reception wine, bread, appetizers and, of course, our main wines! Newcomers and those who would like more tutoring are encouraged to sign up for our Newcomers' Table on our registration page. In order for everyone to fully appreciate the aromatic characteristics of the wines, please refrain from wearing scented products to this event. Our guest speaker will be James Murphy, Founder of Oenovitale Wines and TVC Director.

REGISTER/BUY TICKETS online at [Germany vs Alsace Rieslings May 16, 2023](#) and then pay by e-transfer, credit card (via PayPal) or by cheque. E-transfer/cheques must be received by Friday, May 13. You will be sent an email confirmation after completing your registration. All ticket sales/reservations are final. **If you tried to register but did not receive your confirmation, please contact winetastings@torontovintners.org before trying to register again.**



Tasting Notes and Information
2016 Rieslings - Germany vs Alsace
(Prices are as of date of purchase)

Dr. Loosen Urziger Wurzgarten Riesling Dry GC Old Vines
Mosel Germany \$56

"The 2016 Ürziger Würzgarten Riesling GG Alte Reben is clear, deep and flinty on the nose, with herbal and mineral aromas as well as great purity and precision and a touch of tropical fruit aromas. Salty-piquant and enormously lush but also salty, this is a gorgeous Riesling with very fine tannins, stimulating crystallinity and mineral freshness. This is another highlight of the Loosen crus in 2016. This has great finesse and elegance and is enormously mouthwatering in the finish. Impressive." 95 Pts - Robert Parker

Selbach Oster Bomer Zeltinger Schlossberg Riesling Dry
Mosel Germany \$39

"Opening with nice reduction but precise and ripe fruit as well as crunchy slate aromas on the nose, the 2016 Zeltinger Schlossberg Riesling Kabinett is pure and flinty, well-structured and quite aristocratic (though a frivolous aristocrat), with a firm structure, lush fruit and a lovely lightness and buoyancy. Very stimulating and mouthwatering, but it's far too young to appreciate the full complexity it will deliver in a couple of years. Salty, grippy and fruity—just a perfect Kabinett " 92 Pts - Wine Advocate

Pfeffingen Ungstein Herrenberg Riesling Trocken GC Pfalz
Germany \$54

"Cool crystalline tones of crushed mineral persist from nose to finish here, mingling into zesty lemon and tangerine flavors. While dry in style with a full-bodied mouth-coating heft, it's a finely calibrated wine with spine-tingling lime acidity and an invigorating spray of orange blossom that lingers on the finish. Gorgeous already but it is likely to improve further, well through 2030." 94 pts - Wine Enthusiast

Kühling-Gillot Nierstein Riesling Trocken Rheinhessen
Germany \$40

"This is a thirst-quenching dry Riesling offering loads of crunchy Asian pear and tangerine flavors along with subtle smoke and crushed stone. Nimble and brisk, it's a restrained but refreshing mineral wine. The finish is marked by a hints of honey comb and white blossom. Drink now through 2023" 94 Pts - Wine Enthusiast

Trimbach Reserve Riesling Alsace France \$35

Sleek and finely knit, with a racy backbone of acidity and a subtle, honeyed overtone to the flavors of crunchy white peach, preserved lemon, lanolin and pine. Long and creamy on the minerally finish. Drink now through 2029. 93 Pts - Wine Spectator

Hugel Classic Riesling Alsace France \$29

"Glints of very ripe, juicy pear and clementine on the nose turn into aromatic mandarin on the lively, open and absolutely fruit-laden palate that has both the juiciness and tartness of ripe citrus. Despite the light body the fruit fills mouth and mind. The finish is dry, clean, fresh and has a tropical echo. 92 Pts - Wine Enthusiast

Paul Blanck Furstentum Riesling Alsace France \$34

Wet stone, with zesty aromas of fresh lemon and lime peel, creates a breezy fresh nose. With a little more air, riper citrus notions of orange and mandarin show through, but the palate majors resolutely on zesty lemon freshness. This is dry and streamlined but has a lovely hinterland of rich citrus flavors. Lovely and long with a lip-smacking finish, this is delightful now, but with great potential. 95 Pts -Wine Enthusiast

René Muré Côte de Rouffach Riesling
Alsace France \$30

The fresh nose almost has a hint of salted lemon. On the palate both lemon and tart, red apple take over but the lemon streak of bright freshness dominates for now, creating drive. The concentrated body is bone dry and comes to a mouthwatering, superclean and long finish. 93 Pts - Wine Enthusiast

BONUS WINE! Domaine Horcher - Domaine Horcher
Riesling Grand Cru Kaefferkopf,
Alsace France 2018 \$57

Kaefferkopf wines are intense, full-bodied and complex. They often express spicy notes with a round attack on the mouth. They are also marked by fresh acidity with a beautiful, delicious finish. Fourth-generation winemaker Lise Horcher says the excellence of the terroir is why she is excited to make this Riesling from the Kaefferkopf vineyard. "The granitic soil of the mythical Kaefferkopf draws out the Riesling's authenticity. The 2018 is well-balanced, lively, and has all the qualities we want in a traditional Alsatian Riesling. The East-facing slope of the Kaefferkopf are very narrow and steep and the grapes are harvested manually like all our wines." The wine is a focused, light yellow in colour with golden reflections. On the nose aromas of ripe citrus fruits mixed with a hint of minerality. On the palate expressions of pear, lemon, apples, white flowers, and distinctive minerality with a hint of saltiness on the finish. It will continue to develop 4 to 6 more years but shows beautifully right now.