



WEINGUT JOH. JOS. PRÜM, GERMANY

2016 VINTAGE, EN PRIMEUR

There are lies, damn lies and then there are statistics.

2016 in the Mosel was a year which reminds us always to be wary of averages in statistics. The stats make pleasant reading, a benign year with normal temperatures, sunshine and rain. In fact it was a year where extremes were muffled or cancelled out through analysis but those who lived out the year, day by day have a markedly different memory.

The first part of the year saw dramatic temperature variations and a lot of rain – a challenging start. January saw temperatures of -9°C through to +14°C accompanied by rain. February was mild and wet and March rainy but also cold. April was rather capricious with an unseasonable high of +22°C on the 21st followed by 0°C just three days later. Bud break in the J.J. Prüm family vineyards had started in mid-April, so they were very fortunate that the dramatic fall of temperatures did not harm the vines - other vineyards fared less well. May continued the tendency towards extremes, starting with cool weather - 2°C on 4th May, 26°C on the 6th.

Some beautiful, sunny days ensued but there was yet more rain to follow. June also saw remarkable variations of temperatures, 8°C on 20th June and 34°C only three days later. Overall, in June, there was 50% more rain than usual and 33% less sunshine.

The second half of the growing season, happily, was calmer, July marking a turn with little rain and a lot of sun, though the temperatures still varied a lot (10°C on 15th July and 34°C on 20th). Although August and September were unusually sunny, with little rain, the vines rallied through these extremes allowing the grapes to ripen gracefully. Harvest started on the 10th October and lasted until mid-November under fine conditions.

The protracted harvest brought in a balanced range of Kabinett, Spätlese and Auslese with slightly botryrised Goldkapsel grapes and Beerenauslese brought in at the end of the harvest. All reflect the degree of ripeness and natural sugars in the grapes – though there was less botrytis than usual.

“We are looking forward to experiencing another unique vintage that handled its natural challenges remarkably well, in a very relaxed manner.”

KATHARINA PRÜM
OCTOBER 2017

PRÜM WINES AND FOOD

These Rieslings are remarkably versatile in matching food and wine and with such diversity in levels of richness, texture, weight and age, there are so many combinations which can be achieved which really elevate a dining experience.

Challenging elements such as smoke, spice and salad ingredients within a dish often play to the strengths of Riesling and to the Prüm wines in particular. They work extraordinarily well, both transforming and being transformed when the combinations are perfectly pitched – heartily recommended.



ALISON BUCHANAN

NOVEMBER 2017

THE VINEYARDS

BERNKASTELER BADSTUBE

This is from vineyard holdings to the south-east along the river from the house, looking towards the church in Bernkastel-Kues. The slopes here are marginally less steep than other parts of the estate, their vines endowed with longer exposure to languid afternoon sun. The wines, consequently have a tendency to be a little more flamboyant in youth than others in the portfolio.

GRAACHER HIMMELREICH

The Graacher Himmelreich vineyard is south-west exposed, a little less steep and with deeper soils than the Wehlener Sonnenuhr, situated upstream, the latter often described as Graacher's older brother. The soil provides excellent water reserves. The wines tend towards fine acidity, pronounced minerality and very particular aromatics; white flowers, spice and minerals. Often, the wines become accessible slightly earlier than the Wehlener Sonnenuhr.

WEHLENER SONNENUHR

Situated across the river from the family home, fabulously sited and vertiginous, the Wehlener Sonnenuhr vineyard plot is the jewel within the family's stunning 22 hectare holding. The name refers to a sundial constructed by one Jodicus Prüm in the vineyard to allow people a better time orientation. There are 5 hectares of old, ungrafted vines here, which naturally produce very modest quantities and which are further restricted to translate both vintage and *terroir*. An *Einzellage* (single vineyard plot) Wehlener Sonnenuhr produces wines which have a marked personality. Discreet yet proud, opulent, with a terrific *sabre* of acidity, their fine minerality and mouth-watering citrus and stone fruit, all focus on pin-point accuracy.

2016 TASTING NOTES

BERNKASTELER BADSTUBE KABINETT

£160/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

This is extremely floral, with biscuit notes, orchard and stone fruit, bright and vibrant within a rounded frame – rich, fragrant, long, focused and very pure. Bernkasteler Badstube tends to be more accessible at an earlier date than Wehlener Sonnenuhr – lovely wine.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17

(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2018 - 2030)

BERNKASTELER BADSTUBE SPÄTLESE

£205/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

This is exotic and floral, rich in almond, peach and melon, with a stony mineral dimension. Gentle and soft, on the palate, this is sweetly fruited and rather opulent in the context of the vintage - absolutely charming.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 18

(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2021 – 2032)

BERNKASTELER LAY AUSLESE GOLDKAPSEL*

£620/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

Honeyed and absolutely delicious, refined and pure. This presents a gorgeous, luscious nose which is emulated in a long and harmonious palate. Quite quite delicious, this will age with elegance.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 19

(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2022 - 2035)

GRAACHER HIMMELREICH KABINETT

£175/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

Here there is an attractive mineral base, stony notes, lilies, melon and star fruit with wild herbs and almond notes. There is lovely purity within an essentially rounded palate – a real tour de force in terms of precision through to a long, elegant, honeyed finish – superbly poised, with zesty notes – warrants patience.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17.5

(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2022- 2034+)

WEHLENER SONNENUHR KABINETT

£195/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

The wines are stylistically quite the opposite to the wines from the Bernkasteler Badstube vineyard. Taut, mineral, intense, compressed and restrained in youth, but magnificent with some age. This presents a wonderfully complex nose, yeast, wild herbs, flowers, citrus and stone fruit, with good tension. Orchard and caramelised fruit prevail on the palate which is prettily weighted and lightly peppered – controlled, poised and rather lovely.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17.5 to 18

(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2020 - 2035)

WEHLENER SONNENUHR SPÄTLESE

£255/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

£155/CASE OF 3 MAGNUMS, IN BOND UK

Late-harvested, this is ripe and full yet with a rather grown-up, taut nose. The palate is more gregarious with honeyed fruit, apricot and peach nuts and citrus zest. Poised and mineral, generous and long – wonderful balance.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 18+

(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2023 – 2040+)

WEHLENER SONNENUHR AUSLESE

£315/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

£185/CASE OF 12 HALVES, IN BOND UK

This has a beguiling, rather toffee-ed, sweet nose, exotic fruit lulling the taster into a false sense of indulgence before a wonderful attack, bright orchard fruit, apple *tarte tatin* and power by stealth – simply gorgeous.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 19

(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2022 - 2035)

WEHLENER SONNENUHR AUSLESE GOLDKAPSEL*

£660/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK

£375/CASE OF 12 HALVES, IN BOND UK

£375/CASE OF 3 MAGNUMS, IN BOND UK

What a wonderful rarity, this tugs at the heartstrings – so pure, ripe, dramatic and enchanting. The nose is superbly complex, honeyed exotic fruit and almonds, hints of tea, stony, briny minerals and very pretty floral aromatics all playing a role. This is a wonderful wine with layered richness and delicacy – all to play for - very fine.

CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 19

(RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2026 – 2046+)

GOLDKAPSEL (GK)

Until 1970, certain truly exceptional Auslese wines were labelled as finest Auslese but this was prohibited from 1971 by a new law. Unfortunately the spectrum within the quality classifications was then left rather wide. The term Goldkapsel (gold capsule) is not officially recognised by German wine law but is used by certain estates to distinguish the highest quality wines within their “special attribute” – Prädikat class (Prädikat wines includes quality levels such as Kabinett, Spätlese, Auslese, Beerenauslese and Trockenbeerenauslese. It is most often used in the Auslese category. Auslese on a label covers wines which are just above Spätlese through to those just below Beerenauslese – a broad window indeed. These Goldkapsel wines are even more limited than the rest of the portfolio, being partially reliant on one of nature’s more mystical occurrences – botrytis. Botrytis can have a form which attacks grapes and leaves them rotten but here, so-called *noble rot* causes the grapes to intensify their concentration as the botrytis absorbs the water in the grape. Such grapes are not a pretty sight but are intensely concentrated, with high sugar levels. Since there is limited botrytis, these Auslese wines are not quite Beerenauslese level but they are qualitatively different from the wines at the Spätlese side of the quality band. In order to continue to differentiate these wines, certain growers began to bottle with a gold-ringed capsule. Whilst there is no legal basis for the ranking, it does identify those super-ripe styles borne of the long, hazardous and angst-ridden wait for an attenuated harvest.

TASTING GUIDE

Our tasting notes provide full details but, at your request, we have also introduced a clear and simple marking system. We hope these guidelines assist you in your selection.

Wines are scored out of 20; it has the benefit of simplicity.

We will often use a range of scores (e.g. 16.5 to 17) to indicate the potential to achieve a higher mark. When a ‘+’ is shown it adds further to that potential. Wines from lesser vintages will, inevitably, show a lower overall score.

Wines are judged, in a very broad sense, against their peers. Why? Well, you cannot easily compare a Ford with an Aston Martin, other than they are both cars and have wheels. It is not that different with wine.

A score is a summary only. The devil is in the detail, so please focus on the tasting notes and, as always, speak to our sales team.

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