

# WEINGUT JOH. JOS. PRÜM

## MOSEL, GERMANY

**2018 VINTAGE, EN PRIMEUR**



Joh. Jos. Prüm's vineyards lie in that hallowed sweep of the Mosel which runs from Ürzig in the north to Bernkastel-Kues in the south, which is responsible for some of the world's most majestic and long-lived white wines. Sitting at the centre of this meander, on the western bank, is the village of Wehlen.

Whilst the western side of the Mosel is flat here, to the east rise steeply banked slopes, a vertiginous 65% gradient in places. Directly opposite JJ Prüm's salubrious riverfront house lies the Wehlener Sonnenhur vineyard, its name standing proud in large white capitals on a lower terrace (see above) and in the centre, the famous sundial from which it takes its name.

We tasted with Katharina Prüm and her export manager, Mihailo Martinovic, before enjoying a couple of older vintages over lunch with Katharina's charming mother, Amei Prüm.

### THE 2018 VINTAGE AT JJ PRÜM

Only two days of frost were recorded in January, but February was the polar opposite, with 23 days of frost, the mercury descending below -10°C. March conformed to average, before the rapid arrival of spring in April.

Summerlike spring temperatures prompted an early flowering. The first half of May was cooler and more humid, putting a brake on growth, before a second burst of warmth in the second half of the month, resulting in flowering happening around three weeks earlier than average.

July and August were dry, sunny and hot, further speeding up grape ripening. The lead-in to harvest was dominated by sunny but cooler conditions. Harvest started on the 19th September, the earliest ever! The weather remained dry and sunny.

Unlike some producers, JJ Prüm has made wine at every Prädikat level, from early-picked Kabinett through to the noble rot selections for the BA and TBA Goldcaps. Whilst many will have "warm vintage" in their minds when approaching the 2018s, I would stress that this is not the defining stamp of these wines – yes there is lovely ripe fruit but this is balanced by a stunning backbone and freshness, which will ensure steady, measured ageing and wines for the long term.



GUY SEDDON, OCTOBER 2019

## THE VINEYARDS

### BERNKASTELER BADSTUBE

Bernkasteler Badstube lies to the south-east of the Prüm house, facing back across the river towards Bernkastel-Kues. The slopes here are marginally less steep than other parts of the estate (although steepness is all relative here!) The vines are afforded longer exposure to the afternoon sun. The wines, consequently have a tendency to be a little more flamboyant in youth, albeit with a marked mineral tension.

### GRAACHER HIMMELREICH

The Graacher Himmelreich vineyard faces south-west and has deeper soils than Wehlener Sonnenuhr, which is often described as Graacher's older brother. This soil depth provides excellent water reserves. The wines tend towards fine acidity, pronounced minerality, white flowers and spices. These tend to be earlier-drinking wines. Mihailo related driving past this vineyard in the mornings, seeing it totally in the shade until around 8.30am. It is tempting to find this cooler character in the wines.

### WEHLENER SONNENUHR

Lying opposite the family home, across the river, Wehlener Sonnenuhr is a fabulously sited and steeply sloping vineyard. It is the jewel in the Prüm holdings and one of the *grandes dames* of the Mosel. The name refers to a sundial constructed by Jodicus Prüm in the vineyard. There are five hectares of old, low-yielding, ungrafted vines here. An *Einzellage* (single vineyard plot), Wehlener Sonnenuhr produces wines defined by their warmth and impressive age-worthiness.

## 2018 TASTING NOTES

These tasting notes are based on a tasting at the estate in August 2019. The majority of the 2018s were bottled at the end of June and beginning of July 2019.

### KABINETT

This term was originally derived from the English word 'cabinet', which before the German wine law of 1971 was used as a mark of quality wines. Kabinett is the 'lowest' (least rich) of the six German wine Prädikats. Mosel Kabinetts are particularly light in alcohol and might be described as off-dry.

### BERNKASTELER BADSTUBE KABINETT

Lime cordial and lemon zest on the nose, grippingly bright, the most expressive of the three Kabinetts by far. This has a more westerly aspect, giving more afternoon sun exposure. The palate has a deft ripeness, just-so white peach and apricot, with a wet-stone minerality and a gently insistent weight on the finish.

**CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17+**

**RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2023 - 2037+**

**£170/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK**

### GRAACHER HIMMELREICH KABINETT

Flinty, sherbeted and with a dry-earth minerality on the nose, perhaps reflecting the fact that this is a cooler site, with a more moisture-retentive soil. The palate has ingratiatingly soft white peach fruit, sherbet, orange blossom and a fine line of taut acidity. This finishes wonderfully precise, in a fine point.

**CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17**

**RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2024 - 2037+**

**£180/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK**

### **WEHLENER SONNENUHR KABINETT**

A restrained nose of white flowers, citrus and white peach. The palate is more open, with the greatest sense of dry extract of the three and a brooding tension which you just know is going to resolve into a lovely, generous palate in 2-3 years' time. The slightly greater residual sugar aids the greater sense of volume here.

**CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17.5**

**RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2024 – 2038+**

**£230/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK**

**£130/CASE OF 3 MAGNUMS, IN BOND UK**

### **SPÄTLESE**

Literally 'late harvest', within the Prädikat system, Spätlese is a step up in grape sugar, as measured at harvest time. Many consider Spätlese to be the ideal expression of Riesling – where grape variety meets *terroir*.

### **BERNKASTELER BADSTUBE SPÄTLESE**

Restrained lime cordial and a cool, poised nose. The palate tends towards lychee and bergamot, with green melon, delectable, held in check by savoury fringing.

**CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17**

**RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2024 – 2036**

**£215/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK**

### **ZELTINGER SONNENUHR SPÄTLESE**

The estate has just half a hectare in Zelting. Flinty and mineral-inflected on the nose. The palate has a gratifying density, fleshy and beguilingly lovely white peach and pear fruit, with almost juicy acidity. This is so approachable, you could almost drink it now.

**CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17-17.5**

**RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2024 – 2046+**

**£115/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK**

### **GRAACHER HIMMELREICH SPÄTLESE**

JJ Prüm has over 8 hectares in Graach. Flinty and with crushed-rock minerality on the nose, as befits this cooler site. The palate is softly fruited, with white peach fruit, lemon curdle, apples and pears and a sherbety loveliness.

**CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17-17.5**

**RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2023 – 2046+**

**£240/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK**

**£130/CASE OF 3 MAGNUMS, IN BOND UK**

### **WEHLENER SONNENUHR SPÄTLESE**

Although the Wehlen Kabinett verges on Spätlese level, this is a big step up in weight and presence. Apple strudle on the nose! The palate is a textbook marriage of extract, ripeness and fresh precision. Finishes clipped and upbeat, effortless, wow.

**CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 18**

**RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2026 – 2046+**

**£280/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK**

**£155/CASE OF 3 MAGNUMS, IN BOND UK**

## AUSLESE

Meaning ‘selected harvest’, Auslese is another notch up in volume. Auslesen may also have some botrytis, or ‘noble rot’, contributing to the sense of marmaladed richness. In the best examples, as here below, this contrasts with the Mosel’s signature high-line of taut acidity.

### BERNKASTELER BADSTUBE AUSLESE

Lemon, quince and grapefruit zest on the nose. The palate has a really upbeat momentum from the off, which buoys you along on a bed of wet-stone minerality, white peach fruit and white flowers through to a long, defined finish.

**CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17.5**

**RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2024 – 2046**

**£280/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK**

### GRAACHER HIMMELREICH AUSLESE

This has the trademark flintiness of Graach on the nose, and then the equally typical softly fruited, pliant body with sherbet and candied citrus. This is the pick of the Auslesen for early drinking, supremely open and giving.

**CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 18+**

**RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2026 – 2046**

**£295/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK**

### ZELTINGER SONNENUHR AUSLESE

Green citrus and a touch of lychee on the nose, very effusive. The palate is cushioned and rich, plumply aristocratic and comfortable in its own skin. This is more spherical than linear, but none the worse for that. Hedonistic pleasure.

**CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17.5+**

**RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2026 – 2046**

**£140/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK**

### WEHLENER SONNENUHR AUSLESE

A stricter nose here – wet-stone minerality to the fore. The palate has both volume and structure, very shapely and tightly knit, driving through to a long, focused finish. This is in a different class from its peers, bringing together precision and power quite brilliantly. What a wine!

**CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 19**

**RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2026 – 2046**

**£320/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK**

**£185/CASE OF 12 HALVES, IN BOND UK**

**£180/CASE OF 3 MAGNUMS, IN BOND UK**

## AUSLESE GOLDKAPSEL

Goldkapsel, a.k.a. Goldcap in many a tasting note, refers to the gold capsule around the neck of these bottles. It is an unregulated term in Germany, but has become widely used in the Mosel to denote an additional level of quality.

### ZELTINGER SONNENUHR AUSLESE GOLDKAPSEL

Lime fruit and slaty minerality on the nose, with yellow flowers. The palate has a cushioned pliancy, with lemon, saffron and honey. Whilst this perhaps lacks the multi-faceted complexity of the next two wines, it more than makes up for it in its forceful brightness of fruit.

**CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 17.5**

**RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2026 – 2046**

**£240/CASE OF 6 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK**

### GRAACHER HIMMELREICH AUSLESE GOLDKAPSEL

Wet-stone minerality, bright citrus, orange blossom and savoury undertones on the nose – really complex, with beautiful spiced aromatics. The palate has more of the wet-stone mineral definition, with a cushioning of soft citrus and apricot fruit above. Delectable, almost chewable! Such a lovely wine.

**CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 18+**

**RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2026 - 2046+**

**£480/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK**

**£255/CASE OF 12 HALVES, IN BOND UK**

**£490/CASE OF 3 MAGNUMS, IN BOND UK**

### WEHLENER SONNENUHR AUSLESE GOLDKAPSEL

White flowers and lemongrass, with quince and grapefruit, the most energetic and charged nose of the three by a long shot. The palate has, again, the greatest sense of dry extract and weight, yet is lifted by a delicate, bright line of acidity and a mineral tension. This somehow seeps into your mouth while you are tasting it, so that there is almost nothing left to spit!

**CORNEY & BARROW SCORE 19+**

**RECOMMENDED DRINKING FROM 2029 – 2049+**

**£695/CASE OF 12 BOTTLES, IN BOND UK**

**£360/CASE OF 12 HALVES, IN BOND UK**

**£365/CASE OF 3 MAGNUMS, IN BOND UK**

## **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.

## **TO ORDER**

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