



# Mosel Fine Wines

*"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"*

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

## Weingut Willi Schaefer

(Graach – Middle Mosel)

Christoph Schaefer is really satisfied with his 2019 vintage: "We had a relatively late bud break and flowering, and initially thought that we would start our harvest in October. But everything speeded up during the summer. By early September, everything looked great and even the grapes started to be already quite tasty. We decided to call in our harvesting team for an earlier schedule than expected, and could start already on September 25. With hindsight, I am really happy that we took this decision as it allowed us to harvest some beautiful grapes for our Kabinett wines. The weather proved changing, with spells of rain alternating with dry weather. Fortunately, the weather was cool and the grapes remained clean and dry. We could actually harvest quite a lot of grapes during this first phase. We had to discard some sunburnt grapes, but that proved no major issue. We then had a beautiful and quite warm first week of October, which we used to do selections, especially for our Auslese bottlings, even from the vines directly [Note from the authors: usually selections are done berry by berry on each grape, here the entire grape could be harvested for Auslese]. We were able to harvest Auslese grapes in all our three vineyards this year, which is quite uncommon. Some grapes also dried up on the vines, which led to some picture-book botrytis. Rain then started to affect the harvest as of October 10 but, fortunately, we only had few grapes left at that stage. The quality reminds me of a blend between 2012 and 2001, probably more 2012 for the Kabinett wines, a vintage which was also very classic with fine and elegant fruity complexity as well as great acidity structure. But the wines also have the acidity profile and minerality of the 2001s."

The Estate was able to produce its usual collection of wines right up to a Domprobst BA, except for a GG. The collection includes a second wine from the Wehlener Sonnenuhr, an Auslese in addition to the Spätlese. As every year, a special cask of Domprobst Spätlese and Domprobst Auslese will be released via the Trier Auction.

Christoph Schaefer dished up a magnificent collection of 2019s. All wines are outstanding if not outright classic. We feel that the sweet spot lies at Auslese level, which simply prove breathtaking (all Auslese and the BA are modern classics in the making). A special mention also goes to the magnificent Domprobst Kabinett, one of the greatest Kabinett we had ever the chance to taste. The only drawback of the collection is yields, as quantities are small. However, no stone should be left unturned in order to lay one's hands on some 2019 Willi Schaefer wines: The Schaefer family did (again) a stunning job. Bravo!

*NB: The auction wines will be reviewed in the August Issue (released ahead of the Auction).*

2019er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese	14 20	98
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The 2019er Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese AP 14 was made from partially botrytized grapes harvested different sectors of the vineyard. It offers a stunningly refined, complex, and delicately smoky nose of yellow peach, yellow flowers, minty herbs, Conference pear, anise, and spices. The wine starts off with unleashing a magnificently smooth and almost unctuous side on the palate, yet gains in structure, focus, and presence as it develops into energetic and multi-layered finish. The aftertaste shines through its sublime fruit-zest tension. This rich noble-sweet Riesling proves a stunning expression of Auslese in which the sweetness is not dominating. What an amazing wine in the making! 2029-2069

2019er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Beerenauslese	16 20	98
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The 2019er Graacher Domprobst Riesling Beerenauslese was made from a selection of fully botrytized grapes. It offers a gorgeously ripe yet elegant nose of William's pear, pineapple, honeyed peach, toffee, hay, mirabelle, tar, and fruit paste. The wine coats the palate with plenty of honeyed candied fruits, apricot and mango, but also quite some zest and intensity. The finish is very intense, almost tight, and magnificently focused. The wine starts off on the opulent side but leaves an outstanding and vibrating feel of candied citrus and tangerine in the after-taste. This is a great fruit-driven and clean expression of BA in the making! 2034-2089

2019er	Willi Schaefer	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese	18 20	97
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The 2019er Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese offers a highly aromatic, fruit-driven, and perfumed nose of William's pear, pineapple juice, apricot, passion fruit, banana flambé, honeyed peach, and melon, all wrapped into some white mint and a hint of toffee. The wine is superbly sweet, unctuous, and delicately smooth on the beautifully layered and intense palate. A tickly touch of acidity adds a gorgeous sensation of lightness to the nicely energetic and intense finish. This may be a comparatively opulent and rich expression of Auslese, at least by the Estate's standards, as it flirts with BA presence. It proves no less fascinating and will be a pure joy to drink at maturity. 2034-2069



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2019er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Auslese	09 20	96
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The 2019er Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Auslese was made with only little botrytis impact. It offers a stunningly pure and delicate nose of yellow peach, pear, almond cream, smoke, white minerals, candied grapefruit, and aniseed herbs. The wine proves smooth, juicy, creamy, and slightly on the sweet side on the palate at this stage, but its lightness and finesse are breathtaking. Despite all the sweetness and richness at play, there is a subtle sense of balance. The finish is tighter and more focused. This noble-sweet wine will require quite some time to integrate its richness and intense flavors but it will be a smasher at maturity. 2034-2069

2019er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Kabinett	03 20	96
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The 2019er Graacher Domprobst Riesling Kabinett was fermented down to fruity-styled levels of residual sugar. It offers an absolutely tantalizing and hugely complex nose made of yellow peach, minty herbs, grapefruit, lime peel, a hint of whipped cream, and fresh lily flowers, all wrapped into fine residual scents from the spontaneous fermentation. The wine has grip, energy, and great focus on the palate, yet remains at all moment extremely light and balanced. A bracing and spicy touch of acidity then kicks in, giving the wine structure and blending the flavors together as well as whipping them up right into the tight and hugely long finish. This remarkable Kabinett in the making is set to become a modern-day legend! 2027-2043 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 51 – May 2020)

2019er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese	11 20	95
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The 2019er Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese AP 11 was made from fully ripe grapes harvested with little botrytis in the Gerdgrub sector of the vineyard. It is quite restrained and only reveals some reductive notes of smoke and aniseed herbs at first. After some airing, scents of pear, honeyed yellow peach, spices, fresh herbs, violet, and bergamot gradually join the party. The wine develops some gorgeous playful sweetness on the light-footed and delicately zesty palate, and leaves some gorgeously direct flavors of fruit basket and candied grapefruit in the finish. This joyful and fruit-driven Auslese will prove irresistible at maturity, at a decade or so. 2029-2054

2019er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Spätlese	05 20	95
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The 2019er Graacher Domprobst Riesling Spätlese AP 05 was made essentially from grapes harvested in the Fergert sector of the vineyard, and was fermented down to fruity-styled levels of residual sugar. It proves beautifully restrained and reveals a greatly fresh, pure, and wonderfully floral nose vineyards peach, pear, candied grapefruit, anise, herbs, spices, and tangerine. The wine develops some gorgeous fruity presence underpinned by ripe yet refined yellow fruits on the palate, and leaves a sense of smooth delicacy in the hugely long and intense finish. There is still a feel of intense and Auslese-styled sweetness, but the acidity comes through in the after-taste to add spices and cut. This truly remarkable wine only needs some patience in order to fully shine. 2032-2054

2019er	Willi Schaefer	Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese	17 20	95
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The 2019er Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese offers a delightful and finely aromatic nose of pear, tangerine, lime, herbs, yellow peach, red apple, dried apricot, and smoke. The wine proves develops the fruity creaminess of an Auslese, certainly by the Estate's standards, on the delicately honeyed and juicy palate, but delivers this with telltale lightness and juiciness in the superbly elegant, creamy, and long finish. This sweet wine will need a good decade to enter its drinking window and reveal its stunning nuances, but patience will be rewarded! 2029-2049

2019er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Domprobst Riesling Spätlese	10 20	94
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The 2019er Graacher Domprobst Riesling Spätlese AP 10 was harvested mainly in the Fergert sector of the vineyard, and was fermented down to sweet levels of residual sugar. It offers a most beautiful nose of vineyard peach, spices, almond cream, smoke, anise, and herbs. The wine is magnificently creamy, delicate, and smooth on the intense palate and leaves some subtle and fresh notes of candied zesty fruits in the long and lingering finish. This fruity-styled wine develops some Auslese presence in the after-taste, certainly for the Estate's standards, but, as such, it is a superb fruity-styled wine in the making. 2029-2049 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 51 – May 2020)



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The 2019er Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Spätlese was fermented down to sweet levels of residual sugar. It captures one's attention with a quite primary, smoky, and floral nose of white peach, herbs, grapefruit, citrus, and lots of spices. The wine develops some succulent yellow and canned fruits as well as a hint of apricot cream on the direct palate. All these elements are well wrapped into a dynamic and focused acidity, which whips up the flavors in the long and delicately fruity and honeyed finish. This wine needs a good decade to integrate its touch of upfront richness and sweetness on the palate, but everything is present for a great Spätlese at maturity. 2029-2049 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 51 – May 2020)

2019er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Kabinett	02 20	93
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The 2019er Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Kabinett was fermented down to fruity-styled levels of residual sugar. It offers a beautifully aromatic and elegantly ripe nose of yellow peach, orange blossom, tangerine, mint, smoke, and a hint of apricot. The wine proves delicately creamy and superbly juicy on the palate, driven by fruity flavors of peach, apple, and pear. While intense, the wine proves refreshing and animating in the beautifully balanced finish. It leaves a stunning long, chiseled, and animating feel in the aftertaste. This wine may develop some Spätlese flair, but it is a truly remarkable one! 2027-2039 (Reprint from Mosel Fine Wines Issue No 51 – May 2020)

2019er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Riesling Feinherb	07 20	92
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The 2019er Graacher Riesling Feinherb comes from the Himmelreich, and was fermented down to off-dry levels of residual sugar. It proves quite restrained at first and does not reveal much beyond some faint notes of smoke, herbs, and spices. After some airing, delicate notes of green apple, grapefruit, lime, and white peach kick in and add to the overall feel of freshness and tightness. The wine proves superbly balanced on the palate, where some creamy and lightly fruity elements are superbly wrapped into zest and spices. It leaves a dry-tasting rather than fully off-dry feel in the magnificently long, pure, and vibrating finish. This great example of a light-footed, just off-dry wine has depth and concentration. This great success now simply needs a couple of years to fully develop its aromatic complexity. 2023-2034

2019er	Willi Schaefer	Graacher Riesling Trocken	06 20	90
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The 2019er Graacher Riesling Trocken comes from the Himmelreich. It offers a superbly refined and herbal nose of mint, white peach, under ripe pineapple, red apple, a hint of almond, and smoke. The wine reveals a touch of cream and nice fresh fruits wrapped into intense spicy, saline, and zesty elements on the delicate and refined palate. It leaves a nicely tart, spicy, and fully dry feel in the long, pure, and energetic finish. This great expression of dry and airy Riesling only needs a few years to develop its balance and shine. 2022-2029

### About Mosel Fine Wines

[Independent publication](#) on Mosel Riesling (and beyond!) with reports on vintages, Estates, and wines at maturity.

Covering every year up to [1,500 wines from the current vintage](#) from all leading Estates of the region, of which the finest make it into the Issues.

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