



Robert Parker's  
Wine Advocate

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## The Independent Consumer's Bimonthly Guide to Fine Wine

### WILLI SCHAEFER

2014	GRAACHER DOMPROBST RIESLING KABINETT	MOSEL	(\$30.00)	WHITE	92
2014	GRAACHER HIMMELREICH RIESLING	MOSEL	(\$30.00)	WHITE	91
2014	GRAACHER HIMMELREICH RIESLING	MOSEL	(\$39.00)	WHITE	92
2014	GRAACHER RIESLING	MOSEL	(\$23.00)	WHITE	87+
2014	GRAACHER RIESLING FEINHERB	MOSEL	(\$23.00)	WHITE	88
2014	GRAACHER RIESLING TROCKEN	MOSEL	(\$23.00)	WHITE	87
2014	GRAACHER DOMPROBST RIESLING SPÄTLESE (VERSTEIGERUNG)	MOSEL	(\$90.00)	WHITE	93

"No, I don't need a harvest like this anymore in my lifetime," says Christoph Schaefer. "When we started on October 4, everything was still fine. We had a very good ripeness, but after the massive rainfalls on October 7 and 8, everything turned to the worse. The grapes took the water, the berries were bursting and lost about 10 *Oechsle* in one day. So we had to go straight and quick to save the harvest and picked our four hectares with up to 30 people in less than 14 days. We did strict selections and the result is that nothing above Spätlese could be produced, simply because the grapes did not have the concentration we need for higher predicates. Our yields were not particularly low, but rather normal. All in all, it's a good vintage with classic Mosel Rieslings, although we did not produce more than seven wines. Although the vintage did not have a good reputation from the very beginning, I am pretty happy about the very fine and filigreed everyday wines we have produced. Our customers don't want to drink Auslesen every day, so they might be happy with the delicate 2014s." In fact, Schaefer's 2014 Rieslings seem to be light (and they really are in terms of alcohol) but they are firmly structured and reveal a stunning complexity and length. The Kabinett wines are remarkably good.

The **2014 Graacher Domprobst Riesling Kabinett** has a bright, deep and sensual bouquet of ripe fruits intermixed with the smoky aromas of the Domprobst. Round and intense on the palate, this wine is very juicy and quite rich, but at the same time pure and mineral. This Domprobst is a serious, darker-toned and expressive *terroir* Kabinett that tastes less racy and piquant than the stony Himmelreich, though maybe even deeper, richer, rounder and more 'grand cru-like'. This is an exceptional Kabinett that will go for more than 20 years. Anticipated maturity: 2019-2036.

The **2014 Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Kabinett** shows lovely, elegant and refined fruit with very delicate slate flavor. This Kabinett is beautifully intense and fruity but also elegant, delicate and full of finesse. The finish is complex and piquant, and reveals a lingering salinity and pure minerality that is a perfect expression of the stony character of the Himmelreich. A beautiful Kabinett bottled with 'moderate,' rather medium-sweet 40 grams of residual sugar, which stresses the structure and complexity of this excellent Kabinett. Anticipated maturity: 2019-2034.

Schaefer's **2014 Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Spätlese** opens with an intense, yet refined and lovely, smoky bouquet of fully ripe grapefruit and Riesling flavors. Juicy and piquant on the densely

textured palate, this is a mouthful of elegant Riesling whose sweetness is balanced by a racy and still vehement acidity that leads to a complex and mineral finish. Keep this excellent Spätlese for another 6-10 years before you slowly start enjoying it. Anticipated maturity: 2021-2034.

Schaefer's 9% alcohol **2014 Graacher Riesling** displays a charming fruit of yellow-skinned apples on crushed and slightly smoky stones. Bottled with roughly 35 grams of residual sugar, this is a round and elegant, lovely and light, but intense and juicy Schaefer classic. It has a rich fruit intensity, grip and a lovely salinity in the quite persistent finish. Keep this wine, if you want, and it will become even finer with the years. Anticipated maturity: 2020-2030.

Bottled with less than 20 grams per liter of unfermented sugar, the **2014 Graacher Riesling Feinherb** (Estate Riesling in the U.S.) displays delicate fruit of yellow-skinned apples intertwined with piquant slate and Mediterranean herbal aromas. The slate shines through even more on the lovely, round and fruity palate, where the mineral salinity and piquant acidity gives this wine a lovely purity and a stunning grip and structure. I find this 11% alcohol Riesling more balanced and harmonious, and not less expressive than the dry Graacher. Anticipated maturity: 2018-2030.

Picked with 75 to 78 *Oechsle* and slightly chaptalized to 11.5% alcohol, the **2014 Graacher Riesling Trocken** has a clear, fresh and coolish stone aroma intermixed with green and yellow apple, as well as citrus aromas. Quite intense and juicy on the straight and well structured palate, this is a medium to full-bodied, dry and fruity Riesling with a stunning fruit intensity and power. This QbA demonstrates very well that you don't need high must weights to earn intense and structured Riesling when it is grown in a top site. Anticipated maturity: 2016-2024.

The **2014 Graacher Domprobst Riesling Spätlese (Versteigerung)** was auctioned in September 2015 and contains those botrytis berries that could have made up for an Auslese that finally wasn't made. Since there was no 'regular' Domprobst Spätlese bottled from the 2014 vintage, you have to pay some more Dollars to keep your Domprobst vintage collection updated. The 2014 displays an intense botrytis flavor intermixed with aromas of dried and stewed apricots. On the palate, this is a rich and concentrated, piquant and focused Spätlese that tends to be an Auslese. The finish is long, mineral, salty and very piquant, and the aftertaste replays the concentrated stone fruit flavors. It's a matter of taste if you prefer a big Spätlese like this or a less hedonistic, but more drinkable one like the corresponding Himmelreich. Anticipated maturity: 2020-2040. Importer: Skurnik Wines, Inc., [www.skurnikwines.com](http://www.skurnikwines.com)