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Franken Silvaner and Ahr Spätburgunder

This may be Michael's last collection of tasting notes on 2020's GG releases, this time great German wines that aren't Riesling. The scores are some of our highest ever. Above is the Marienthal vineyard of Spätburgunder vines in the Ahr Valley.

As you can see from our [guide to coverage of German wines released in 2020](#), we have already published four reports on the Grosse Gewächse released since September 2020, all dedicated to Riesling. There are plenty of reasons for that preferential treatment: its status as the country's signature variety, and the fact that it accounts for a substantial majority of these single-vineyard wines from the [VDP](#) producers being just two of them.

But Riesling is not the only grape capable of making outstanding wines in Germany. The regional chapter of VDP Franken knew that they did not have to point this out to me, but wondered whether it would not be possible for me to take a look at their premium offerings from that other white German classic grape, Silvaner. I needed little persuasion as I have already outed myself as a great and long-standing fan of Franken Silvaner on numerous occasions.

If we do not feature Franken Silvaner as often as it deserves, it's nothing to do with lack of quality and all to do with its almost total obscurity abroad. With its area under vine limited to under 5,000 ha (12,355 acres) in Germany, only one-third of which are in Franken, this is unlikely to change, though any international gastronomic enterprise with great vinous aspirations should have at least one on their list. Franken Silvaner does not have to come from the Würzburger Stein, revered by Goethe, known for the oldest still-drinkable wine ever tasted (vintage 1540, by none other than Hugh Johnson, in 1961) and already highly praised by a top clerical envoy from the Vatican in 1471 when the Médoc would be a swamp for another two centuries. Below is Robert Haller, the director of

Bürgerspital Würzburg. Their Silvaner Stein-Harfe GG 2019 was one of my two favourite Franken Silvaners in the tasting report below.

How quickly global recognition for top German wines from grapes other than Riesling can be achieved is demonstrated by the success of Spätburgunder (Pinot Noir) outside Germany in the last 15 years or so. The first mentions in English of modern success with the variety in Germany were in two books published in 1988: the first edition of *Sotheby's World Wine Encyclopedia*, to which I was consultant, and Stuart Piggott's *Life Beyond Liebfraumilch*. And while Parker was heavily critical of German Spätburgunder in his *Wine Buyer's Guide* of 2003, in the British publication *Wine Report* I was already praising the Pinot skills of growers such as Fürst, Deutzerhof, Bernhard Huber, Bernhart and Knipser. Since 2008 these Purple Pages have provided possibly the most important platform in the English language for spreading the good news about Spätburgunder, contributing to the fast-growing representation of top producers in many export markets.

The bad news is that two days after the samples of the three 2018 Grosse Gewächse of Franken supremos Paul and Sebastian Fürst arrived at my door, I received their latest newsletter with the information that they were all sold out, only two months after they had been released! So were Adeneuer's Gärkammer as well as Stodden's Ahrweiler Rosengarten. I would be happy to take full responsibility.

The following 49 wines are grouped by region – Franken and then Ahr. The wines are listed alphabetically by producer (sur)name, with the few Spätburgunders from Franken listed after the Silvaners and a lone Weissburgunder, but you can rearrange the wines within each group using the menu below.

Select sorting option

Franken

Bickel-Stumpf, Frickenhäuser Mönchshof Silvaner Grosses Gewächs 2018 Franken

Slightly reductive at first but then gets fresher. Pleases with delicate aromas of pear and kernel, meadow herbs and flowers as well as a clean earthy notion. On the palate the Mönchshof is fresh and animating, with the merest hint of residual sugar. Its sensory appeal relies more on floral than mineral notions, although the finish returns to a clean earthy aftertaste. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2020

-

2025

17

Bürgerspital Würzburg, Würzburger Stein-Harfe Silvaner Grosses Gewächs 2019 Franken

Fresh and cool on the nose, very mineral with stony and chalky aromas, supported by delicate nuances of yellow fruit and citrus peel as well as a hint of spice. Definitely dry on the palate, but nevertheless juicy. Firm body and sound acidity back up a Silvaner which evokes mainly mineral associations, revolving around salty, chalky and earthy notes. A subtle phenolic tone adds further edge to the finish. The essence of Silvaner. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2021

-

2027

18

Fürstlich Castell'sches Domänenamt, Casteller Schlossberg Silvaner Grosses Gewächs 2015 Franken

Very restrained herbal fragrance, also with delicate aromas of exotic fruit, ripe apple and kernel. Exhibits very opulent texture and full body on the palate, quite spicity, very gentle cumin spice and herbal nuances emerge on the finish. Almost no acidity at all. An acquired taste, but probably associated with burgundian style in Germany. (MS)

14.5%

Drink

2018

-

2023

17

Michael Fröhlich, Escherndorf am Lumpen 1655

Silvaner Grosses Gewächs 2019 Franken

Opens with a gentle floral scent, also quite biscuity with an animating fresh fragrance of peach and apple flan. On the palate the acidity is fairly restrained, the flavour initially delicate fruit, followed by some herbal and mineral nuances with a hint of residual sugar. A lighter style of Silvaner GG with a slightly tactile phenolic finish. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2020

-

2024

17

Juliusspital Würzburg, Iphöfer Julius-Echter-Berg

Silvaner Grosses Gewächs 2018 Franken

A little deeper in colour than the rest, straw hue. Chalky and even a touch grassy on the nose, well balanced by notes of grapefruit and yellow fruit, a hint of almond kernel concludes the fragrant experience. A full body and moderate acidity reflect the generous 2018 vintage. An intriguing flavour combines the taste of grapefruit with nuances of aniseed and fennel, delicate notions of quinine and clove add a slightly bitter piquancy to the finish. Dry spicity finish. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2020

-

2025

17.5

Juliuspital Würzburg, Würzburger Stein Silvaner Grosses Gewächs 2018 Franken

A gently perfumed fragrance appeals to the sense of smell, spicy and floral aromas being supported by a dash of apple and vanilla. The palate raises suspicions of the influence of oak with a combination of vanilla, clove, a little hazelnut and a hint of aniseed. Acidity does not make any more than a cameo appearance, leaving centre stage to a rich texture and full body. This means that the contours appear a little blurred, although fine salty and phenolic nuances add some edge to the finish. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2020

-

2024

17

Rudolf May, Thüngersheimer Rothlauf Silvaner Grosses Gewächs 2019 Franken

The colour appears remarkably deep with a bright greenish hue. The fragrance intrigues with a composition of the scent of green olives and a clean earthy minerality. Very juicy and creamy on the palate, the Rothlauf has a really rich mouthfeel to it, all the more because acidity keeps a low profile. Earthy and stony nuances manage to get a bit of a grip on the finish. (MS)

13%

Drink

2020

-

2025

17.5

Rainer Sauer, Escherndorf am Lumpen 1655

Silvaner Grosses Gewächs 2019 Franken

On the nose the Am Lumpen 1655 impresses with a truly fresh fragrance of wet pebbles, flint, green apple and more than a hint of elderflower. Despite its very viscous texture and mouthfeel, there is no danger of blandness, as the taste of stone fruit, apple kernel and an almost gravelly minerality provide plenty of substance and grip. Fumy and earthy nuances add sensory value to the finish. (MS)

13%

Drink

2020

-

2027

18

Schmitt's Kinder, Randersacker Pfulben Silvaner

Grosses Gewächs 2019 Franken

Remarkably pale, silvery green shade of colour. Dusty gravel, gentle yellow fruit and vanilla shape an intricate alliance on the nose. The texture is rich, the body full and acidity very restrained. The taste starts off with sweet notions of apricot and vanilla, accentuated by spicy nuances on the finish, particularly clove. (MS)

14%
Drink
2020
-
2026
17

Gregor Schwab, Thüngersheimer Rothlauf Silvaner Grosses Gewächs 2019 Franken

An appealing fragrance augments the fruit of melon and gooseberry with a delicate notion of stony minerality. On the palate the Rothlauf is full bodied, shows generous texture and surprisingly little acidity. This combination could almost make it a bit bland, but a gravel-like minerality and bitter-peel piquancy add some bite to the finish. (MS)

14%
Drink
2020
-
2024
17

Zur Schwane, Volkacher Ratsherr Silvaner Grosses Gewächs 2018 Franken

Very pale green-apple hue. At first the Ratsherr seems quite shy on the nose with just a hint of lanolin but then begins to open up slowly with pleasant floral notes and a gentle scent of vanilla. Hints of vanilla and clove on the palate appear to indicate the use of oak. With very restrained ripe yellow fruit and an almost virtual absence of acidity, the virtues of this Grosses Gewächs lie in its rich mouthfeel and supple body. (MS)

13%
Drink
2020
-
2024
16.5

Am Stein - Ludwig Knoll, Stettener Stein Silvaner Grosses Gewächs 2019 Franken

An almost perfumed fragrance combines notes of citrus and stone fruit with herbal aromas and a touch of almond kernel. The taste opens with the fresh fruit of apple and grapefruit, which are embedded in a generous texture. As the flavour continues, minerality begins to state its case with a fine combination of flinty and salty stony nuances. Well-pitched acidity takes care of an animating finish. Fresh and dry. (MS)

13.5%
Drink
2021
-
2026
17.5

J Störrlein & Krenig, Randersacker Sonnenstuhl Hohenroth Silvaner Grosses Gewächs 2018

Franken

Very pale silvery hue with green tinge. A delightful fragrance appeals with delicate aromas of exotic fruit, most notably pineapple and passion fruit. On the palate the creamy, almost sherbety taste has elements of a tropical-fruit yoghurt with just a dash of vanilla and almond. I think it would be fair to say that the Hohenroth is not a Silvaner in the classic sense, but on the other hand it is a deliciously refreshing wine with plenty of substance and body. (MS)

14%

Drink

2020

-

2024

17

Hans Wirsching, Iphöfer Julius-Echter-Berg

Silvaner Grosses Gewächs 2018 Franken

Local orchard fruit and blossom, complemented by delicate chalky and herbal notions, delight the olfactory perception. Very harmonious on the palate with a perfect balance between the juicy fruit of pear and melon, chalky minerality, as well as fine peppery nuances. Full bodied and with moderate acidity, in keeping with the character of the generous 2018 vintage. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2020

-

2025

17.5

Hans Wirsching, Iphöfer Kammer Silvaner

Grosses Gewächs 2018 Franken

The Kammer Grosses Gewächs exhibits quite an aromatic fragrance with distinctive notes of ripe yellow fruit, vanilla and even a hint of gooseberry custard. Although the fruit is also generous on the palate and served on a rich texture, the wine is nevertheless dry, its flavour further enhanced by spicy, salty and earthy nuances. More of a seducer than a gripper. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2020

-

2025

17

Juliuspital Würzburg, Volkacher Karthäuser Weissburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Franken

There is no denying that the Pinot Blanc from the Karthäuser site has unashamedly called on the services of oak-ageing to increase its desirability. On the nose this works well with attractive aromas of freshly cut logs, vanilla, cedar spice and apricot. On the palate velvety texture, modest acidity and generous viscosity reflect ripeness of fruit and the character of the vintage. There's a fine bitter piquancy of Seville orange which sides with notes of dried apricot, clove and a hint of pepper. It may not be a total burgundy lookalike but it has borrowed some of that region's winemaking tradition. (MS)

13%

Drink

2021

-

2026

17.5

Rudolf Fürst, Bürgstadter Centgrafenberg

Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Franken

The fragrance may be restrained and gentle but tantalises with a great diversity of aromas, from the fruit of plum and cherry to cedar, spice and smoky bacon, perfected by a gentle woodland breeze. In the mouth the wine starts tentatively but then begins expanding in fruit and spices, juicy dark cherries enhanced by subtle nuances of smoky bacon, ginger and cedar spice, a cool mineral accent providing the finishing touch. The tannins may still be a bit raucous with astringency, but they are not bitter and work well with the animating acidity. There is nothing ostentatious about the Centgrafenberg, which is probably why it's often underrated compared with its more forward and powerful siblings. If it's elegance you're after, this is the one. I'd like to think that it will become as good as the great 1990. Sadly it's unlikely that I will find out. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2022

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2035

19

Rudolf Fürst, Bürgstadter Hundsrück

Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Franken

If the Centgrafenberg is the intellectual sibling, its Hundsrück brother has worked out in the Bürgstadt gym, developing a more pronounced fragrance, concentrated flavour and muscular body. The generous vintage of 2018 has supplied it with intense fruit, notes of cassis, blackcurrant and plum embracing the taste buds with vigour. This does not mean that it is one-dimensional, there are vegetal, spicy and smoky nuances too. But with an abundance of juice, even the strapping tannins have to work hard to get a grip. Majestic. (MS)

13%

Drink

2022

-

2035

18.5

Rudolf Fürst, Klingenberg Schlossberg **Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Franken**

I used to view the Schlossberg as a bit of an upstart in Fürst's Spätburgunder stable, but if not before, the 2018 vintage has changed my mind. It's a little more restrained on the nose than the Hundsrück, but turns this to its advantage with a diverse spectrum of aromas, fruits of the forest, plum, tobacco leaves, sweet pepper, ginger spice and subtle smoky notion, just the tip of the iceberg. If I have missed any out on the nose, they make an appearance on the palate with its velvety texture. Add sprinklings of mixed spice, ginger and cinnamon, dustings of cocoa and dark chocolate, cigar box and log-fire charcoal and you have a wine that's Christmas all over. (MS)

13%

Drink

2022

-

2035

19

**Staatlicher Hofkeller Würzburg, Grossheubacher
Bischofsberg Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs
2018 Franken**

Surprisingly deep in colour, ruby with purple rim. The fragrance combines the fruit of cherry and plum with delicate notes of cedar spice, chocolate and a hint of charcoal. On the palate smoky and charred nuances reveal some serious toasting, sweetened by notes of cherry and cocoa. The tannins are still a little raw and bitter at this early stage. Not a blushing beauty, a little rustic. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2022

-

2027

16.5

**Schmitt's Kinder, Randersacker Hohenroth
Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Franken**

Pale-medium cherry with salmon-pink rim. An almost perfumed fragrance manages to entice with a quite unusual composition of curry powder, cedar spice and tomato plant. The rich texture and full body come as no surprise with an alcohol content of 14%, but they are given sufficient contours by piquant nuances of sloe, paprika and white pepper. The tannins are quite crunchy but not too bitter, toasting has supplied an element of charcoal. (MS)

14%

Drink

2023

-

2030

17.5

Ahr

J J Adeneuer, Ahrweiler Rosenthal Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr

Medium-deep cherry red. Gentle fruit of cherry and raspberry on the nose, a little jammy still, supported by an intriguing combination of rose-hip tea and milk chocolate. Starts off with lots of juicy fruit on the palate, before notes of dark chocolate and toast make their presence felt. As to be expected the tannins are still a little obstreperous at this early stage, but will sooner or later be absorbed by the truly juicy quality. There's been a successful transition from power to elegance over the last few years. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2022

-

2027

17.5

J J Adeneuer, Ahrweiler Rosenthal Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2017 Ahr

TA 5.2 g/l, RS 1.2 g/l.

There's an amazing difference between the 2018 and 2017 renditions of the Rosenthal; the 2017 is far paler in colour but even more amazing is a pronounced cassis aroma, not to be found in the 2018. Bill Clinton may have explained; 'it's the vintage, stupid'. But the fragrance is not that one-dimensional, there are nuances of bell pepper and paprika too. On the palate an intriguing composition includes notions of blackcurrant, crunchy green pepper, sage and a piquant salty tang. Tannins are restrained enough not to mask a delightful juicy quality. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2021

-

2026

17.5

J J Adeneuer, Walporzheimer Kräuterberg **Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2015 Ahr**

TA 5.6 g/l, RS 0.7 g/l.

A sort of experimental wine in so far as the Adeneuer brothers had decided to give it three years' bottle age before releasing it for sale. Slightly baked on the nose, which could be a reflection of the vintage, 2015 another hot and dry season. With more air, delicate aromas of cherry and cassis begin to emerge. On the palate the Kräuterberg comes across as very harmonious, with a truly juicy expression of fruit well balanced by healthy acidity and a still-solid tannic backbone. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2019

-

2024

17.5

J J Adeneuer, Walporzheimer Alte Lay **Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2015 Ahr**

TA 5.6 g/l, RS 0.7 g/l.

For reasons unbeknown to the Adeneuers, the site formerly known as Domlay had its name changed to Alte Lay in 2017. That explains why I had never heard of it before, despite living virtually next door. Lay this or Lay that, the 2018 exudes a delightful fragrance with soft red-berry fruit, a little lanolin as well as delicate floral and spicy nuances. Quite gentle on the palate with the taste of cherries lending sweetness, redcurrants supplying acidity and piquancy. Subtle notions of cedar spice and smoky bacon add intrigue. I would call it the complex one in Adeneuer's range of GGs. (MS)

13%
Drink
2021
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2028
18

J J Adeneuer, Walporzheimer Gärkammer Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr

TA 5.2 g/l, RS 1 g/l.

The Gärkammer is a very small site, a monopoly of the estate, and therefore always sells out very quickly, although that would also have something to do with the exceptional quality the Adeneuer brothers coax out of its terroir. It all begins with a most seductive, perfumed fragrance of cherries marinated in spice and steeped in chocolate. The generous climate of 2018 provided the Gärkammer with a delicious juicy quality, complemented by a tasteful sprinkling of black pepper. Tannins exercise restraint but show enough presence to provide sufficient backbone. (MS)

13%
Drink
2021
-
2030
18.5

Burggarten, Neuenahrer Sonnenberg

Frühburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr

Medium depth of colour, cherry red with ruby rim. Smoky and vegetal aromas open the olfactory curtain, followed by plums and spice, augmented by an earthy notion. Cool and smoky on the palate, elements of crunchy greens and charcoal adding grip and grit to the flavour. The acidity is fresh, the tannins a little bitter. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2022

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2027

17

Burggarten, Neuenahrer Schieferlay

Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr

Medium-depth cherry red with salmon-pink rim. Cherry fruit and strawberry jam are complemented by fine aromas of caramel and chocolate. Starts off quite juicy with notes of plum and cherry on the palate, before nuances of charcoal, tobacco and bitter chocolate add some contours to a full body and rich texture. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2022

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2027

17

Burggarten, Walporzheimer Kräuterberg

Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr

Plum-red colour with some intensity, salmon-pink hue on rim. An almost perfumed fragrance revolves around aromas of plum, redcurrant and cedar spice. Opens with juicy fruit and velvety texture, before some firm contours are set by notes of charcoal, dried herbs and cedar spice. Compact and with a still-firm tannic grip, this will need a little time to mellow, but has enough substance to see it through. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2022

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2030

18

Burggarten, Heimersheimer Burggarten R **Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr**

Cherry hue with medium-intensity ruby rim. Aromas of plum, cherry, cigar box and chocolate form an intriguing fragrant alliance. The flavour opens with juicy generous red fruit, with notes of tobacco, dark chocolate and cedar spice beginning to make their presence felt mid-palate. There's plenty of body, but it is well balanced by animating acidity and youthful tannins. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2021

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2029

17.5

Deutzerhof, Mayschosser Mönchberg **Frühburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr**

Pale-medium raspberry red, ruby rim. A gentle fragrance mixes delicate floral aromas with notes of prunes, brushwood, pepper and spice. Frühburgunder tends to be a little leaner than Spätburgunder, and this goes for the Mönchberg too, although the fruit of sour plums and the customary vegetal trademark with just a dash of sorrel get on well together. A little peppery towards the finish, but the tannins are well behaved and not too astringent. Definitely dry. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2021

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2025

17

Deutzerhof, Heimersheimer Landskrone **Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr**

Medium-depth cherry-red colour with raspberry hue on rim. The nose focuses on ripe fruit, with more than a hint of blackcurrant creeping up on aromas of cherry and plum. Starts off with deliciously juicy fruit on the palate, before clove and cedar make their mark on a velvety texture. Wood ageing has been handled well so as not to dominate the flavour. Tannins are well behaved, but firm enough to lend sufficient structure. Maybe not the most complex, but a very friendly Grosses Gewächs. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2021

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2026

17

Deutzerhof, Neuenahrer Kirchtürmchen **Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr**

Seems a little more advanced than its siblings, at least in terms of appearance with cherry-red hue and pink rim. Perhaps ageing in wood has been handled a bit differently, as the pleasant composition of dark cherry and mocha seems to suggest. The palate confirms the seductive approach with velvety texture, ripe sweet fruit, acidity and tannins competing in an exercise of moderation. Tempts me to return to my bad old ways of calling a wine feminine. The reason is that the Kirchtürmchen does not grow on slate, but on loess and loam. (MS)

13%

Drink

2021

-

2027

17.5

Deutzerhof, Mayschosser Mönchberg **Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr**

Medium-depth cherry red, ruby rim. Intense dark fruit on the nose with notes of plum, cherry and blackberry, hints of mocha and coffee reflecting the contribution of oak. Almost inky. Spicy and peppery notes complement the juicy fruit, cherry on the palate, hints of dark bitter chocolate emerge. Finely grained tannins lend structure without scratching. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2022

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2030

18

Deutzerhof, Altenahrer Eck Spätburgunder **Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr**

Deep cherry red with ruby reflexes. I try to cut down on my swearing, but could not contain myself when the first bottle turned out to be corked. Fortunately my association with JancisRobinson.com entitled me to a second bottle. A very compact fragrance is hard to prise apart, but dogged persistence is rewarded with almost-stewed fruit, fruit pudding and Christmas cake. My experience of the latter one is entirely restricted to eating it, but I am sure it must contain raisins, mixed spice, ginger and nutmeg. *Panta rhei* is what Heraclitus would have said about the taste, although elements of grated chocolate and sweet tobacco add piquancy to the liquid pleasure. English Christmas cake and German Black Forest gateau manage to fuse my divided loyalties. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2022

-

2030

18.5

Kreuzberg, Dernauer Hardtberg Frühburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr

Medium-depth cherry red, salmon-pink rim. The fragrance is composed of ripe red cherry, a hint of blackcurrant and a green vegetal note. The flavour is definitely dominated by a crunchy green vegetal core, nuances of very dark bitter chocolate and charcoal adding further bite. Although juicy acidity and generous texture buffer the grip, this is not a softie. (MS)

13%

Drink

2021

-

2025

17

Kreuzberg, Neuenahrer Schieferlay

Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr

Medium-depth cherry colour, ruby rim. Delicate fruity nuances of cherry, redcurrant and blackberry are complemented by a whiff of cigar box and a fine smoky notion. On the palate the ripe fruit is served on a velvety texture and dotted with spicy accents. The tannins appear quite restrained, keeping astringency at bay. Freshness is assured by healthy and juicy acidity. Used barrels have been allowed to contribute gentle smoky and toasted nuances. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2021

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2027

17.5

Kreuzberg, Neuenahrer Sonnenberg

Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr

Medium-depth cherry colour, ruby rim. An idiosyncratic aroma of tarragon is first to the olfactory bulb, the fruit of cherry and raspberry has to be content with the status of runner-up. Positions are reversed on the palate where generous notes of plum and cherry are served on a velvety texture with slightly dusty tannins. Spices and herbs bring up the rear of the flavour. An excellent balance between body, acidity and tannins contribute to an elegant finish. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2021

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2027

17.5

Kreuzberg, Ahrweiler Silberberg Spätburgunder

Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr

Pale-medium raspberry red, ruby rim. A fascinating fragrance puts the emphasis on herbal expression with an intriguing composition of tarragon and *herbes de Provence*. A hint of cigar box reflects the tasteful employment of wood ageing. Cherry and plum might add a little fruit to the olfactory perception. On the palate the Silberberg turns out the most generous of Kreuzberg's Grosse Gewächse with oodles of cherry fruit and truly juicy acidity. Tannins may exercise moderation, but there are enough peppery and spicy nuances to add a piquant twist to the finish. (MS)

13%

Drink

2021

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2027

18

Meyer-Näkel, Neuenahrer Sonnenberg

Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr

Raspberry hue, quite deep, ruby reflexes. Truly animating fragrance mixes the fruit of plum and cherry with fresh herbs and a smidgeon of spice. Very juicy on the palate with the taste of morello cherry, but there is also a crunchy vegetal note which adds plenty of bite. A sprinkling of cedar spice and a dash of black pepper add value to the finish. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2021

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2027

17.5

Meyer-Näkel, Ahrweiler Silberberg

Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr

Medium-deep ruby red with purple rim. A generous fragrance of plum and cherry is enhanced by some subtle floral and herbal nuances, even a hint of chocolate. Generosity does not stop on the nose, but continues with oozing ripe fruit including blackcurrant on the palate. But before the taste buds become too complacent, dusty dark tannins accompanied by pepper and spice add quite a bite. A gentle smoky toasted touch enhances the finish. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2021

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2028

18

Meyer-Näkel, Walporzheimer Kräuterberg

Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr

Bright deep-plum hue with purple and ruby reflexes. Meyer-Näkel's 2018 Kräuterberg has already been showered with so many rave reviews that it would be sheer folly to disagree. The nose fascinates with its composition of herbal and fruity constituents, tarragon and ripe cherry the main contenders, a smoky mineral aroma adding the missing piece of the olfactory puzzle. On the palate you begin to understand that the other reviewers must have been simply seduced by the combination of velvety texture, juicy fruit and spicy sprinklings. You don't have to be a philistine to drink this now, but you shouldn't. I tasted back and forth between the Kräuterberg and the Pfarrwingert, and that's when I discovered that my rivals like curves and I like edges. Checkmate. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2021

-

2030

18.5

Meyer-Näkel, Dernauer Pfarrwingert **Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr**

Cherry red of considerable depth, ruby shine on the rim. Dried herbs and ripe fruit share the initial fragrant honours, before a cool and dusty mineral note brings slate into the olfactory equation. The taste starts positively sweet with the ripe fruit of cherry, plum and blackcurrant, but oozing juices are prevented from running out of control by a silky layer of tannins and a concentrated spicy finish. This is the sophisticated one, I rest my case. (MS)

13.5%

Drink

2022

-

2030

18.5

Jean Stodden, Recher Herrenberg Frühburgunder **Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr**

Medium to deep ruby with purple rim. A cool fresh fragrance mixes mineral and vegetal elements, complemented by a subtle nuance of morello cherry. Very dry and compact on the palate with tannins and acidity both showing assertive presence, slightly moderated by a generous texture. The vegetal taste of crunchy green pepper dominates the flavour, but is ably supported by notes of bitter cherry, salty minerality and sprinklings of clove and white pepper. (MS)

13%

Drink

2021

-

2027

17

Jean Stodden, Neuenahrer Sonnenberg **Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr**

Ruby colour of medium depth, with purple reflexes. On the nose the fruit of cherry and just a hint of raspberry is supported by delicate spicy notes, cedar and clove the most notable. Sour cherry and bitter chocolate complement each other well, dusty tannins are still tactile and astringent at this infant stage. Just a tad leaner than the other Stodden GGs, toasting has left a charcoaled accent. (MS)

12.5%

Drink

2022

-

2027

17.5

Jean Stodden, Dernauer Hardtberg **Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr**

Medium-depth, raspberry hue with ruby rim. Cherry, violet, dusty white pepper as well as hints of chocolate and forest floor shape the fragrance. Compared with the Sonnenberg, the Hardtberg seems to have less tannin and more acidity. The fruit is juicy with inputs of sour plum and cherry. Together with fine nuances of cedar spice and charcoal, a sprinkling of white pepper takes care of a dusty finish. (MS)

12.5%

Drink

2022

-

2027

17.5

Jean Stodden, Recher Herrenberg Spätburgunder

Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr

Pale-medium cherry red with watery-pink rim. The fragrance is quite pronounced, with aromas of cherry and plum contributing fruit while notes of marzipan and exotic spice bring in their seductive qualities. Rich and juicy start on the palate with marinated fruit. There's plenty of substance and viscosity, well balanced by animating acidity. Subtle smoky and spicy nuances enhance the finish. (MS)

13%

Drink

2021

-

2030

18

Jean Stodden, Mayschusser Mönchberg Spätburgunder Grosses Gewächs 2018 Ahr

Pale to medium brick red with salmon-pink rim. The fragrance of the Mönchberg appears a little gentler than those of its Grosse Gewächse siblings, but nevertheless more than entices the nose with delicate aromas of ripe cherry, almond and marzipan. The palate instantly wins you over with its generous juicy expression, velvety texture and ripe acidity. Appears quite accessible with its full body and sweet fruit resembling marinated cherries, even sporting a fine nuance of milk chocolate. A seductive rendition of Spätburgunder with tannins happy to stay in the background. (MS)

13%

Drink

2022

-

2030

18.5

Jean Stodden, Alte Reben Spätburgunder trocken

2018 Ahr

Bright cherry colour, medium-depth, ruby rim. A seductive generous fragrance of fruits of the forest is well complemented by the warm scent of Mediterranean herbs and a subtle notion of tobacco. The fruit is ripe, generous and sweet on the palate, complemented by subtle spicy notions, sprinklings of ginger and clove. Supple tannins contribute to a firm structure without scratching. Delicate nuances of tobacco and cigar box enhance a long finish. (MS)

12.5%

Drink

2022

-

2033

19