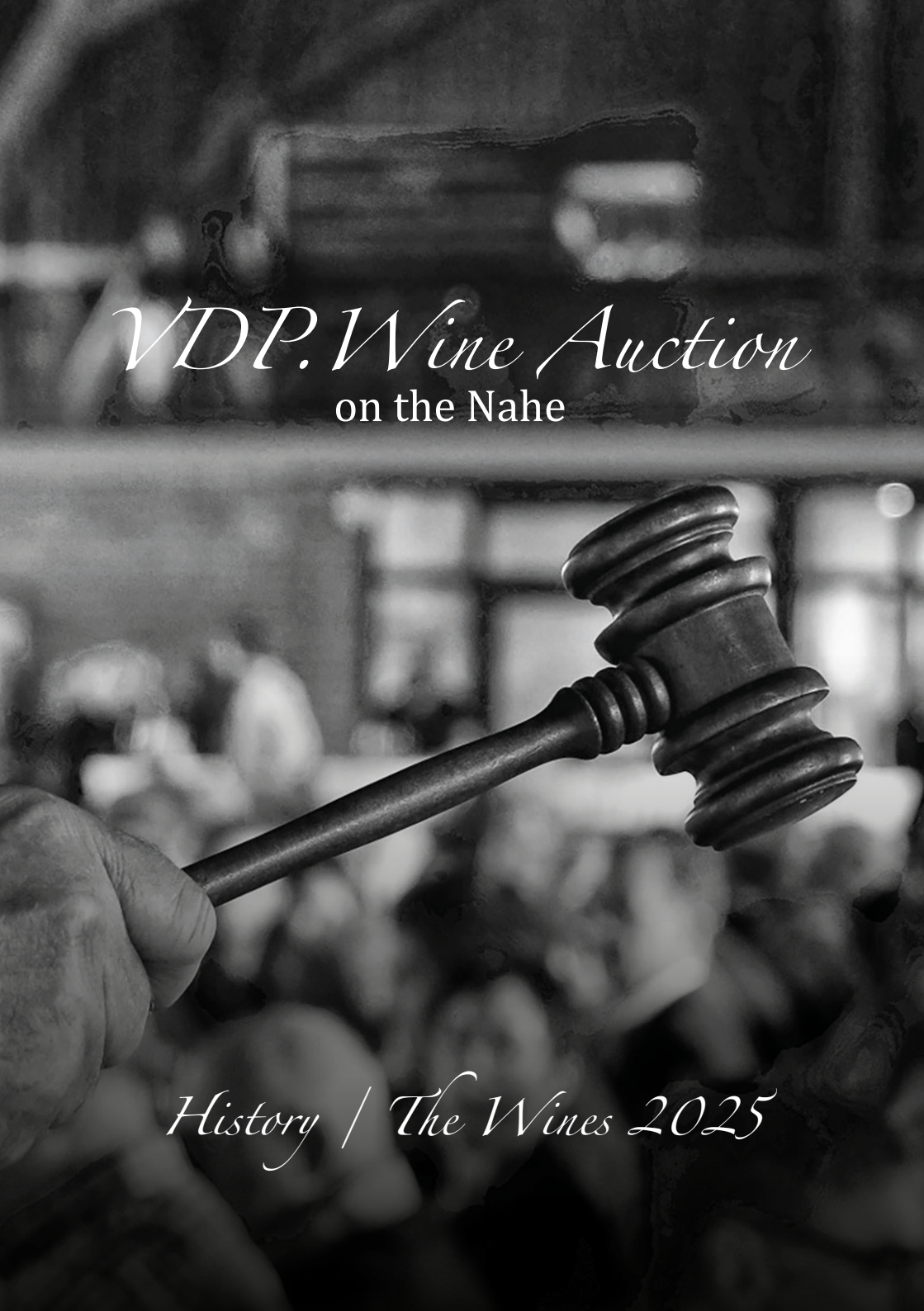


VDP. Wine Auction
on the Nahe

History / The Wines 2025

GREETINGS

I can‘t remember when I first wrote or said that Riesling is the best white wine grape in the world. It was so long ago that it may even have been in the midst of the Chardonnay craze of the 1980s, so some people may have thought I was crazy.



© Colin Hampden-White

Anyway, who‘s laughing now? When I first said that, admittedly not all German wines were outstanding. And the first dry Rieslings of the modern era were certainly not sublime. But the variety and quality of German Rieslings available today is truly breathtaking. Lucky bidders at auction get some of the best examples in all styles, from feather-light Kabinett wines to magnificent GROSSE GEWÄCHSE to some of the finest nectars in the world.

One of my greatest joys today is seeing how Germany has developed into a great red wine producer. When I think back to the sweet, grey-pink wines that were my first experience of Spätburgunder almost 50 years ago, I would never have believed that so many German winemakers would rival Burgundy.

Jancis Robinson MW

THREE QUESTIONS FROM DR. STEFAN PEGATZKY TO MICHAEL PRINZ ZU SALM-SALM

Stefan Pegatzky: When you are seen at a VDP auction, people might think that you are having the most fun that day.

Michael Prinz zu Salm-Salm: That impression is deceptive; an auction is extremely stressful. The spotlight is terribly dazzling, and I cannot make a single mistake!

Stefan Pegatzky: Why do you still put yourself through this?

Michael Prinz zu Salm-Salm: It has to do with responsibility, which is in our family‘s blood. I have withdrawn from almost all other offices in recent years. But I am so attached to the auction that I don‘t want to stop yet.



Stefan Pegatzky: But hopefully you still have a little fun?

Michael Prinz zu Salm-Salm: I am what others call a ‘show-off’. Although I hope I have a little more elegance than the usual category. And I love interacting with people. Especially, of course, when it comes to top wines.

Michael Prinz Salm-Salm has been the honorary auctioneer of the wine auction in Bad Kreuznach since 2018. The long-standing president of the Association of German Prädikat Wine Estates (VDP) managed the family winery in Wallhausen until handing it over to his son Felix.

THE VDP AUCTION IN BAD KREUZNACH

“Going once, going twice - sold!“ Even those who only know auctions from the internet know how exciting they can be. After all, each purchase here is unique. The products on offer are very limited or even one-of-a-kind, and the behavior of potential buyers is unpredictable. Expectations are also raised at a “wet wine auction“ by the opportunity to taste the auction wines in advance. Many a wine lover has lost their heart to one or another of these wines, but has hardly ever regretted it when they subsequently bought the object of their desire at auction. Even though it is of course also possible to bid online at the VDP auction on the Nahe, a unique atmosphere unfolds on site at the Römerhalle Museum in Bad Kreuznach. However, few of those present know how closely the creation of top wines is linked to the history of wine auctions
– especially on the Nahe.



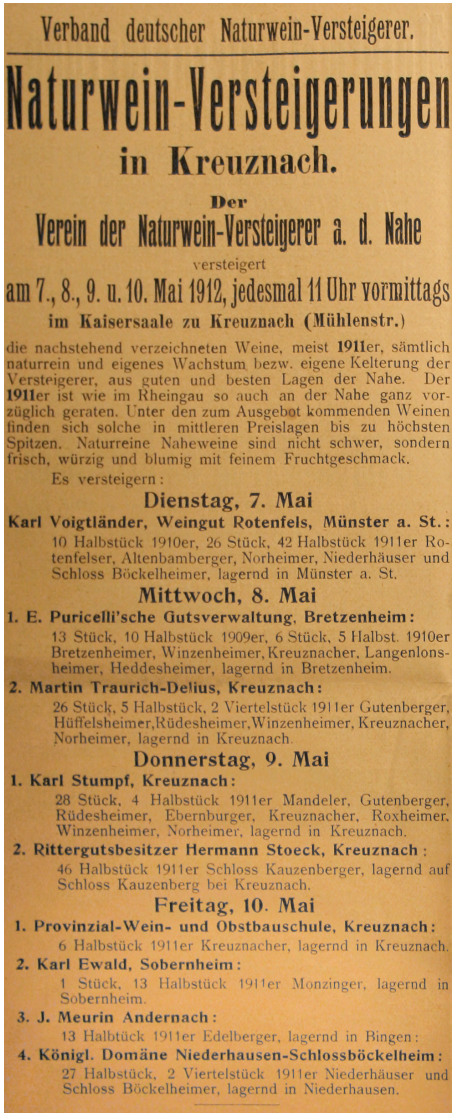






THE CRADLE OF EXCELLENCE

Wine auctions on the Nahe have a tradition dating to the 18th century. In the 19th century, renowned wineries in particular used auctions, including prior tasting in the spring, to sell higher-quality wines from the previous year, while sales conditions for simpler wines were agreed with retailers immediately after the harvest. In 1912, the “Verein der Naturweinversteigerer an der Nahe e.V.“ (Association of Natural Wine Auctioneers on the Nahe) was founded in Kreuznach, the “soul of vine culture on the Nahe“ (Heinrich Wilhelm Dahlen, 1895). August Schulte, director of the Provincial Teaching Institute in Bad Kreuznach, recognized early on that winegrowers needed to join forces in order to gain a stronger position vis-à-vis the trade. In 1902, he founded the Winegrowers‘ Association for the Nahe and Glan and, in 1905, initiated joint wine auctions for Nahe winegrowers in Kreuznach that were held from then on. In 1912, he was the driving force behind the founding of the Association of Natural Wine Auctioneers on the Nahe.



Verband deutscher Naturwein-Versteigerer.

Naturwein-Versteigerungen in Kreuznach.

Der Verein der Naturwein-Versteigerer a. d. Nahe

versteigert

am 7., 8., 9. u. 10. Mai 1912, jedesmal 11 Uhr vormittags

im Kaisersaale zu Kreuznach (Mühlenstr.)

die nachstehend verzeichneten Weine, meist **1911**er, sämtlich naturrein und eigenes Wachstum bezw. eigene Kelterung der Versteigerer, aus guten und besten Lagen der Nahe. Der **1911**er ist wie im Rheingau so auch an der Nahe ganz vorzüglich geraten. Unter den zum Ausgebot kommenden Weinen finden sich solche in mittleren Preislagen bis zu höchsten Spitzen. Naturreine Naheweine sind nicht schwer, sondern frisch, würzig und blumig mit feinem Fruchtgeschmack.

Es versteigern:

Dienstag, 7. Mai

Karl Voigtländer, Weingut Rotenfels, Münster a. St.:
10 Halbstück 1910er, 26 Stück, 42 Halbstück 1911er Rotenfelser, Altenbamberger, Norheimer, Niederhäuser und Schloss Böckelheimer, lagernd in Münster a. St.

Mittwoch, 8. Mai

1. E. Puricelli'sche Gutsverwaltung, Bretzenheim:
13 Stück, 10 Halbstück 1909er, 6 Stück, 5 Halbst. 1910er Bretzenheimer, Winzenheimer, Kreuznacher, Langenlonsheimer, Heddesheimer, lagernd in Bretzenheim.

2. Martin Traurich-Delius, Kreuznach:
26 Stück, 5 Halbstück, 2 Viertelstück 1911er Gutenberger, Hüffelsheimer, Rüdesheimer, Winzenheimer, Kreuznacher, Norheimer, lagernd in Kreuznach.

Donnerstag, 9. Mai

1. Karl Stumpf, Kreuznach:
28 Stück, 4 Halbstück 1911er Mandeler, Gutenberger, Rüdesheimer, Ebernburger, Kreuznacher, Roxheimer, Winzenheimer, Norheimer, lagernd in Kreuznach.

2. Rittergutsbesitzer Hermann Stoeck, Kreuznach:
46 Halbstück 1911er Schloss Kauzenberger, lagernd auf Schloss Kauzenberg bei Kreuznach.

Freitag, 10. Mai

1. Provinzial-Wein- und Obstbauschule, Kreuznach:
6 Halbstück 1911er Kreuznacher, lagernd in Kreuznach.

2. Karl Ewald, Sobernheim:
1 Stück, 13 Halbstück 1911er Monzinger, lagernd in Sobernheim.

3. J. Meurin Andernach:
13 Halbstück 1911er Edelberger, lagernd in Bingen:

4. Königl. Domäne Niederhausen-Schlossböckelheim:
27 Halbstück, 2 Viertelstück 1911er Niederhäuser und Schloss Böckelheimer, lagernd in Niederhausen.



Under Schulte‘s chairmanship, the ten founding members, including the teaching institute, the Royal Domain and the winery of Karl Voigtländer, joined the Association of German Natural Wine Auctioneers, which had been founded two years earlier.

It is a connection that can be described as historic, one that still exists today among the successor organisations, the national VDP and the regional association VDP.Nahe. The very first (four-day!) auction in 1912 was a great success. The "Mitteilungen des deutschen Weinbau-Vereins" (Newsletter of the German Winegrowers' Association) reported in its June issue: „On 7, 8, 9 and 10 May, the eagerly awaited auctions of the Association of Natural Wine Auctioneers took place on the Nahe. With the exception of a single day, attendance was very high, so that the spacious Kaisersaal auction hall proved almost too small. On the last two days, almost 500 people filled the hall. The highlight of the natural wine auctioneers' event was the third day, when Mr H. Stoeck, owner of the Kreuznach estate, auctioned off the Schloß Kauzenberger wines and set a new record price for Nahe wines at 12,040 marks per bottle."
For over 25 years, the best wines from the Nahe region were successfully auctioned in Kreuznach by the "Verein der Naturweinversteigerer" (Association of Natural Wine Auctioneers) – until disaster finally struck. The post-war association chairman Egon Anheuser reported that around 1936, the united winegrowers were still able to fend off an attack by the SA (paramilitary organization associated with the Nazi party) on the mostly Jewish wine commission agents. The following year, however, there were no longer any commission agents of the Jewish faith. Around 1940, auctions ceased due to the war, and in the immediate post-war period, they were no longer permitted because the association had been banned.



Wine auction in Trier in 1925



Auction preview in Bad Kreuznach in the early 1990s

A DIFFICULT NEW BEGINNING

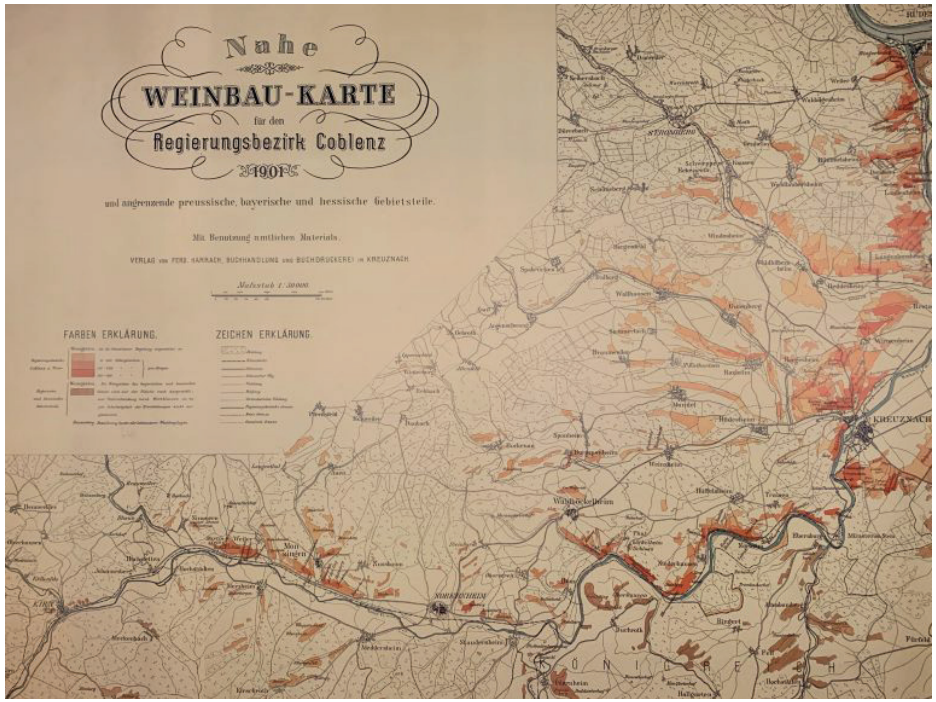
After the war, the first meetings of wineries took place in 1946 with the aim of jointly improving the economic situation. In 1948, winery owner Heinrich Ewald, a member of the former natural wine auctioneers' circle, proposed the founding of the Kreuznach Wine Club (KWC) – but it took until 29 March 1951 before the auction association was re-established. The constitution was based on the last version of the old statutes of the natural wine auctioneers, but the name was changed to "Versteigerungsring der Naheweingüter e. V." (Auction Ring of Nahe Wineries). The membership requirement of producing "naturally pure wines" was changed to "quality wines". Even though the statutes were not signed by the seven founding members until February 1954 (and the name changed to "Erster Versteigerungsring der Naheweingüter e. V." in 1961), the first auction took place in 1952. A new era had begun.

However, structural changes in the wine trade and changes in consumer drinking habits significantly altered the nature of wine auctions in the decades that followed. While auctions of full and half barrels were common until the 1960s, the range of wines on offer soon shifted entirely to bottled wines. Initially, the lot sizes were considerable, but these then shrank from year to year. Even simple QbA wines were auctioned, with the final price remaining identical to the original asking price. In 1975, the Staatliche Weinbaudomäne (State Wine Estate) wrote an angry letter to the association, stating that the auctions had become "unacceptable" for the company, especially since the ministry and the Court of Auditors were demanding the "most efficient sales channel" from the state-owned enterprise. Unlike the teaching institute, which left the association in 1986, the Staatliche Weinbaudomäne remained in the association for the time being. In 1977, after the unique wine vintages of 1975 and 1976, the domain achieved the best auction results in its history. By 1982, it was the only company still offering wines for auction.

THE GERMAN WINE MIRACLE

The shockwave of the 1985 glycol scandal of 1985 shook German viticulture, including the Nahe region, was also to herald a change for the better. More and more wineries once again committed themselves to quality wine production in the Nahe region. The four remaining founding members of the Nahe Auction Ring were joined by the first newcomers: Weingut Crusius in 1984, the Prinz zu Salm-Dalberg estate in 1986 and Schlossgut Diel in 1989. Of course, the interest of the "young wild ones" in the Nahe Auction Ring had an ulterior motive: membership in the association automatically made them members of the VDP, the Association of German Prädikat and Quality Wine Estates, the successor organization to the Association of German Natural Wine Auctioneers. In the early 1970s, the latter had transformed itself from an auction association into what was probably the most important representative of the interests of Germany's leading estates. At the end of the 1980s, it became the driving force behind the beginning of the German wine miracle. Consequently, in 1991, the "First Auction Ring on the Nahe" became the VDP.Nahe, a regional association of the federal VDP. That year, the Dönnhoff winery joined the VDP.Nahe, followed by Kruger-Rumpf in 1993, Emrich-Schönleber in 1994, Schäfer-Fröhlich in 2001, Gut Hermannsberg (as successor to the Staatsdomäne) in 2009 and, most recently, Joh. Bapt. Schäfer in 2013.

The pioneering role that the Nahe region played at this turning point for top-quality German wine was embodied by two individuals in particular. In 1990, Michael Prinz zu Salm-Salm became chairman of the Nahe Auction Association and, the following year, took over as chairman of the federal VDP. Under his leadership, the "new VDP" made the principles of integrated, i.e. environmentally friendly viticulture and rigorous harvest restrictions, mandatory for its members. At the same time, Armin Diel of Schlossgut Diel became regional chairman of the VDP.Nahe in 1993. His crowning achievement was the "Riesling Statute" of 1997, which was based on the aforementioned classification of vineyard sites for the Nahe region from 1901, which had only been rediscovered and republished in 1995. In it, the members of the VDP.Nahe committed themselves to exclusively use vineyard names for Riesling wines from top sites. The Nahe „GROSSE GEWÄCHS" was born. In 2002, the federal VDP under Michael Prinz zu Salm-Salm also adopted its statute for the classification of ERSTE and Große Gewächse. The new national and increasingly international attention for this rebirth of top German wines was also reflected in a renaissance of German wine auctions. It was thanks in no small part to Armin Diel that the auction in Bad Kreuznach once again became a must-attend event in the annual wine calendar. In 1994, quality wineries from the Ahr region joined the VDP.Nahe and have been enriching the auction with first-class Pinot Noir wines ever since. In 2007, wineries from the VDP associations in Rheinhessen and the Pfalz also joined the VDP auction in Bad Kreuznach. These regions had also long been at the forefront of German viticulture in terms of quality – however, local auction traditions had been broken here, not least due to the introduction of the "Mainzer Weinbörse" in 1974. The broader participation significantly increased the relevance of the Kreuznach auction.



Historical Nahe viticultural map for the administrative district of Coblenz from 1901

TO NEW HEIGHTS

Under the chairmanship of Frank Schönleber, elected in 2016, the event reached completely new heights, especially in terms of auction sales. By now, the German wine miracle was recognized worldwide, and top wines from the Rhine and Nahe regions were also considered sought-after investment objects internationally. In 2024, the VDP wine auction on the Nahe became the highest-turnover VDP wine auction in Germany. As diverse as the range on offer in Bad Kreuznach has become – even German sparkling wines are now auctioned – the range of great dry Rieslings, perhaps the most important achievement of the German wine miracle, is unrivalled in Bad Kreuznach. Here, the Emrich-Schönleber winery, as a pioneer, handed the auction an important key to future success in 2008 with the creation of a very limited dry wine reserved exclusively for the auction in Bad Kreuznach – and the members of the association enthusiastically followed suit.

Experiencing exclusive excellence together on one day of the vintage, tasting the top wines of the year and deepening the experience through discussions between winemakers and wine lovers: this is what makes the VDP auction in Bad Kreuznach so relevant and appealing.



VDP.Nahe Chairman Frank Schönleber and auctioneer Michael Prinz zu Salm-Salm 2024



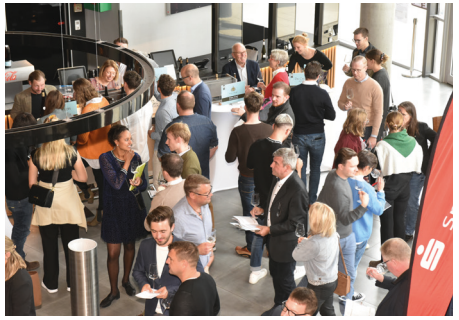














H. J. KREUZBERG *(AHR)*
2023 DEVONSCHIEFER R, SPÄTBURGUNDER

Ludwig Kreuzberg: The Devonschiefer R is a powerful, profound Pinot Noir with plenty of spice and fine herbal notes from our best barrels from our grand cru vineyards on Devonian slate.
Stefan Pegatzky: Transparent ruby red in the glass, dark smoky bouquet, with the expressive notes of a Pinot Noir grown on slate, accompanied by plum, cloves and delicate smoke. Sinewy and cool on the palate, with precise, cremy fruit and very good length.



SCHLOSSGUT DIEL *(NAHE)*
2020 PINOT NOIR ARA, SPÄTBURGUNDER

Caroline Diel: The ARA comes from a single, outstanding barrique, which is only filled in special vintages and is characterized by elegance, finesse and complexity. It is dedicated to our children and is more than just a wine to us: it is a little piece of ourselves.
Stefan Pegatzky: Dark, almost opaque ruby red, seductive cherry aromas on the nose, but also blackberry and dark chocolate. The silky, downright luxurious texture is characterized by the finest tannins and ripe acidity. Of course, this conceals a powerful underlying structure.



K. F. GROEBE *(RHEINHESSEN)*
2019 KIRCHSPIEL, RIESLING GRANDE RÉSERVE

Fritz Groebe: The KIRCHSPIEL vineyard in Westhofen is predestined for fine, long-lived Riesling wines of the highest quality, both dry and with varying degrees of residual sweetness. Its calcareous marl soils produce wines of great grace, cool character and elegant minerality.
Stefan Pegatzky: Fine petrol notes, ripe garden fruit and some wood on the nose. Beautiful texture with a magnificent balance between freshness and density. Now at a wonderful first plateau, but the good acidity and a hint of residual sweetness promise even more.

2024 KIRCHSPIEL, RIESLING KABINETT

Stefan Pegatzky: Still a reserved, delicate bouquet with hints of citrus fruit, young yellow stone fruit and only subtle yeast notes. Initially pure as spring water and very delicate, the wine becomes increasingly full-bodied and creamy in the glass until it finally makes a statement, completely at ease with itself.



JOH. BAPT. SCHÄFER *(NAHE)*
2024 GOLDLOCH, RIESLING KABINETT

Sebastian Schäfer: The Kabinett from GOLDLOCH comes from the oldest Riesling vines at the estate and is unique in its precision and vibrating interplay of sweetness and acidity!
Stefan Pegatzky: Pale yellow-green, yeasty and herbal fermentation aromas remain on the nose, but also peach skin and ripe apples. Almost weightless on the palate despite its density. Acidity and sweetness are perfectly integrated, and the initial creaminess transforms with air into an almost Mosel-like precision.



GUT HERMANNSBERG *(NAHE)*

2018 KUPFERGRUBE,
SCHLOSSBÖCKELHEIM,
VDP.SEKT PRESTIGE
RIESLING SEKT EXTRA BRUT

Karsten Peter: This strictly limited edition sparkling wine from our cult vineyard KUPFERGRUBE impressively reflects its origins. Five years on the lees give it depth, complexity and balance, while its distinctive minerality bears the signature of the terroir.
Stefan Pegatzky: Pale golden color, purist bouquet of white flowers and a hint of white bread, still very young on the palate and with razor-sharp precision. Powerful acidity and invigorating saltiness on the finish. The Avize of German Riesling Sekt.



EMRICH-SCHÖNLEBER *(NAHE)*

2024 AUF DER LEY,
RIESLING GG

Frank Schönleber: The Grand Cru from the AUF DER LEY vineyard comes from our oldest vines and focuses the stony, cool minerality of the mountain in its purest form. The stimulating climate between a windy high elevation and warm air that rises along the steep southern slope, creates maximal tension.
Stefan Pegatzky: A Riesling as if chiseled from the cliff: fresh vineyard peach, young mirabelle plums and bergamot on the nose, taut and very pure on the palate with a radiant acidity. The wine currently only hints at its enormous potential, but already a fascinating monument.



SCHÄFER-FRÖHLICH *(NAHE)*

2024 FINAL,
RIESLING TROCKEN

Tim Fröhlich: The Final comes from over 60-year-old vines in the VDP. GROSSE LAGE FELSENECK in Bockenau. Grown on slate and quartzite, it is the ultimate expression of this terroir. Just one barrel was made, and it is available exclusively as an auction wine.
Stefan Pegatzky: Powerful herbal-spicy „sponti“ notes on the nose, accompanied by flint, yellow fruit and Amalfi lemon. Truly spectacular, even if it‘s nearly impenetrable at the moment. Beautiful texture, yet enormously clear and bone-dry despite all the complexity. So salty that it crystallizses on the lips.



WAGNER-STEMPEL *(RHEINHESSEN)*

2024 EMT,
RIESLING TROCKEN

Daniel Wagner: The Riesling EMT comes from the oldest and most exposed parcel of the VDP.GROSSE LAGE HEERKRETZ and, year after year represents to us the stylistic quintessence of the Siefersheim terroir.
Stefan Pegatzky: The bouquet hints at a fruit basket full of raspberries and apricots, interspersed with an assortment of herbs. Despite its present acidity and grand architecture, it is sensual, almost hedonistic on the palate. Already in great early form, yet still a wine for long storage.



WITTMANN
(RHEINHESSEN)

2024 LA BORNE,
RIESLING TROCKEN ALTE REBEN

Philipp Wittmann: Grown above the MORSTEIN centerpiece in high-elevation site on Westhofen's slop, La Borne displays the limestone minerality of this terroir in its purest form.
Stefan Pegatzky: Some citrus and menthol, otherwise still cool, almost dismissive. Instead, there is an idea of powerful, austere grandeur, an almost unique style in which the fruit is only secondary. Impressive acidity, impressive texture and a hint of grandeur that is yet to be revealed.



GUNDERLOCH
(RHEINHESSEN)

2024 FENCHELBERG,
RIESLING GG

Johannes Hasselbach: The FENCHELBERG parcel on the border between Rothenberg and Pettenthal was once the birthplace of our legendary 100-point TBAs. Today, unique dry Rieslings are produced from this cool oasis on the Roter Hang, fed by its own water supply.
Stefan Pegatzky: Very complex nose of celery, fennel (really!), celery, mirabelle plum, curry leaves and wild yeast. Floating and transparent on the palate. Thanks to well-integrated acidity and a hint of residual sweetness, it has excellent drinkability despite its density.



KELLER *(RHEINHESSEN)*

Klaus-Peter Keller: With their old, partly ungrafted vines, steep slopes and minimal yields, the auction wines from PETTENTHAL and SCHUBERTSLAY are not only witnesses to a centuries-old winegrowing tradition, but also the unique expression of a winegrowing family that has been producing wine with great dedication and passion for 10 generations.

2024 PETTENTHAL,
RIESLING GG

2024 was a great vintage for the Roter Hang in Nierstein, and so the PETTENTHAL GG is slate-spicy, profound and mysterious.
Stefan Pegatzky: A sphinx. Probably the least accessible and most secretive of all the wines in the auction. Still very closed, reductive nose. On the palate, it is less the acidity that fascinates than the enormous, almost oily density. Again, hardly any fruit, but almost bottomless depth. There is only one barrel here, and it is available exclusively as an auction wine.

2018 SCHUBERTSLAY (MOSEL),
RIESLING KABINETT (60 JAHRE)

Klaus-Peter Keller: The vintage 2018 Kabinett magnums from a parcel of 60-year-old vines show how uniquely the wines from SCHUBERTSLAY mature.
Stefan Pegatzky: A Kabinett like something from a parallel universe. Fresh apple, lemon and pear skin on the nose. Slim and weightless on the palate, completely round and perfect, yet incredibly fresh and almost ageless. A dreamlike harmony of acidity and fruit. Long finish.

2023 SCHUBERTSLAY (MOSEL),
RIESLING SPÄTLESE ALTE REBEN

Klaus-Peter Keller: The 2023 SCHUBERTSLAY Spätlese is the first of its kind that we have had the honor to harvest from this magnificent slate slope planted with ungrafted vines.
Stefan Pegatzky: Beautiful ripe stone fruit aromas and considerable spice in the bouquet. Also denser and more complex on the palate than the Kabinett. But also younger and still clearly undeveloped. Already wonderful to drink and yet the darker and more enigmatic of the two wines.



PHILIPP KUHN *(PFALZ)*
2024 PHILIPPSBRUNNEN,
RIESLING GG

Philipp Kuhn: PHILIPPSBRUNNEN is one of the oldest documented vineyards in the Pfalz. Today, we press a distinctive, dry Riesling from this vineyard as a pure auction wine with just 500 bottles made.
Stefan Pegatzky: Citrus fruits, but also orange peel and elderflower on the nose. Very present, straightforward and powerful mouthfeel. Massive, but not heavy, acid-driven, but optimally balanced. With its self-assured nonchalance, it is the Harrison Ford of the auction wines.



DÖNNHOFF *(NAHE)*
2021 BRÜCKE,
RIESLING EISWEIN „MITTWOCH“

Cornelius Dönnhof: Our auction gem comes from the BRÜCKE monopole, perhaps the best terroir for ice wines worldwide. Harvested selectively in the early hours of the morning during frost and imbued with crystalline acidity, it is the pure expression of one of Germany‘s most legendary Riesling sites.
Stefan Pegatzky: Astonishingly bright in the glass and with an almost dramatic bouquet of lychee, quince and star fruit. On the palate, a hint of glacier candy: incredibly clear and clean with an acidity arc like a peacock‘s tail and a uniquely dense, creamy texture.

LEGENDARY *PRICE RECORDS*

AT THE VDP.NAHE WINE AUCTION IN BAD KREUZNACH



2020 PETTENTHAL, Riesling GG in double magnum from Weingut Keller: at ***€16,100 net (€20,116.95 gross)****, it achieved the record price at a VDP auction for a bottle of dry wine.*



14,994 euros (gross) for a wine of the century: 1921 Schloss Böckelheimer Kupfergrube Trockenbeerenauslese from the Staatliche Domäne Niederhausen-Schloss Böckelheim.

2015 Niederhäuser Hermannshöhle Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese in magnum from the Dönnhoff Winery, with a hammer price of ***€18,000 net (€22,491 gross)****, the most expensive wine ever at a VDP wine auction in Bad Kreuznach.*



19 10

VDP. DIE PRÄDIKATSWEINGÜTER
NAHE

VDP.Die Prädikatsweingüter Nahe e.V.
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