



## Germany, Mosel: Part 2 – Focus on the 2017s & 2018s from Saar & Ruwer, Plus 2018s from the Middle Mosel featuring Max Ferd. Richter reviewed by Stephan Reinhardt

August 2019

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### **2018 Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese \*\* Fass 97**

Bottled in July this year, just one week before I tasted it at the very end of the month, Richter's 2018 Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese \*\* Fass 97 is a lovely, subtle, pure, fine and refreshing sweet wine whose grapes were picked at 125° Oechsle in the family's best plots of the cru, the Falkenberg and the Lay. "Originally planned as a part of the regular TBA, the must was very concentrated and tasted very special from the very beginning," says Konstantin Richter. Inspired by some Auslesen from Markus Molitor, Konstantin decided to let the must ferment in a relatively new Fuder to add some more tannins and structure to the wine and give it the balance it needs. In fact, the oak is very discreet here (though rather unusual for the MFR style) and pairs brilliantly with the fine tropical fruit and slate aromas of the JSU. The palate is filigreed, finessed and really frisky and playful, with delicate fruit ripeness and texture and beautiful balance. This two-starred 2018 Auslese is a gastronomic wine since its sweetness is not upfront but is seamlessly interwoven with the mineral and phenolic grip, the still palatable oak, the crystalline, vital and playful acidity and the perfectly ripe fruit. Needless to say, not a single rotten berry was processed here. Botrytis was perfectly clear in 2018 and accounts for 15% to 20% in this Auslese, while the healthy berries were perfectly ripe. This 2018 is a very delicate, tight and tensioned yet filigreed Auslese that is lightweight yet complex. You shouldn't miss it! **(94 points)**

### **2018 Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese**

Sourced in all the sections of the cru and picked with 270° Oechsle and perfect botrytis, the yellow-golden 2018 Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese is deep,

intense and refreshingly spicy and mineral on the compact and complex lime-zesty nose that reminds me of stewed apricots and sweet fig mustard with lemon zests. Incredibly rich, round and viscous but also finessed, fresh and vital on the palate, this is a highly elegant and perfectly balanced TBA with a long, intense and even stimulatingly vital finish. Compared to the filigreed, more crystalline Wehlener Sonnenuhr sibling, this is far more rich and oily textured, yet I can't avoid taking a large sip again and again, hedonist that I am! Thanks to the lower acidity, this is a smooth and sweet but still fine and delicate TBA that tastes fruity, fresh and highly digestible even at this early stage. All the components are already perfectly interwoven, and it's just a question of personal taste if you prefer to have this TBA sweet and smooth or matured and smooth. It's a marvelous wine in any case. It took a long ferment, until the end of June this year, which might have added a bit more complexity compared to the Wehlener Sonnenuhr. Tasted at the end of July and again in later August 2019 when the wine had already closed. **(96-98 points)**

### **2018 Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese**

Exclusively from the family's oldest plot and from 80- to 120-year-old vines, the intensely citrus-yellow colored 2018 Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese is dense and concentrated on the nose and palate but, at the same time, also incredibly clear, tight and fresh. Picked at 235°- 240° Oechsle and fermented in stainless steel until the end of March, the spicy, grapefruit-tinged nose is insane in its freshness, precision and piquancy. This is so clear! Any botrytis here? "Yes," says Constantin Richter. "Botrytis set in in late August when the berries were already fully ripe but still had a good share of acidity. Since the rest of the autumn was dry and sunny, the ingredients were more and more concentrated so that in the end we got relatively high must weights and high acidity levels. The botrytis was perfectly clean; I guess I never saw a better one. We immediately tasted the extraordinary character of the extremely clear and healthy juice after the pressing and after we had stopped the fermentation, which went through quickly given this highly lively concentration. Because everything was so clear, bright and fresh, we didn't need as much sulfur as we normally do. Thus, I even taste the Sonnenuhr character here, if I may say so about such a sweet and concentrated wine." Viscous and certainly very sweet on the palate, this is a highly elegant and refined TBA with remarkable freshness, piquancy and great balance. It really drinks beautifully already, so take a glass instead of a spoon. This is a highly filigreed, playful and homogeneous TBA that flows quietly and serenely over the palate. The finish is terribly stimulating. This is going to be expensive drinking fun... **(97 points)**

### **1973 Mühlheimer Sonnenlay Riesling Spätlese**

The 1973 Mühlheimer Sonnenlay Riesling Spätlese displays a white-golden color and a delicately bright, elegant and pure bouquet of apricot jam, fresh raspberries and even strawberry seeds. Fresh and very clear on the palate, this has a slightly minty, super lush but

filigreed, fresh and precise, straight, stimulatingly salty and refined fruit character. A highly delicate, stimulating and lithe Riesling that is great fun to drink. **(92 points)**

**1963 Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Auslese**

Intensely yellow-golden in color, Richter's 1963 Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Auslese offers an intense and rich, very floral and concentrated nose with stewed stone fruit, wisteria, wax and honey aromas. The palate is round and lush but also fresh and elegant, with a salty-mineral structure that reduces the perception of residual sugar. Very charming. **(91 points)**

