

January 2018

Max Ferd. Richter

2016 Riesling Mühlheimer Helenenkloster Eiswein

Mosel, Germany

91 Points

It wasn't cold enough on November 30 to harvest Eiswein in the Helenenkloster, reported Richter, but it was on December 5. It stayed so cold for so long that he was able to organize two passes on the same parcels in a single morning (as far as he knows, the first time this has happened at the estate), of which this wine represents mostly the second tranche, which included botrytized bunches. Mango and papaya preserves are lightly glazed with caramel and brown sugar and accompanied by prickly, faintly volatile notes that combine the aggressiveness of which both botrytized and frozen Riesling are capable. The midpalate here is almost custardy in richness and density yet also reflects Eiswein-typical brightness despite being low acid (at 8.5 grams) for the genre. Typical, too, is the confectionary aura of candied citrus peels and of fruits preserved in sugar. The finish here is overridingly sweet but impressively persistent. This will be amenable to serving either with or as dessert. (It's worth noting once again that on principle the Richters do not pack their rows of vines destined for Eiswein in protective plastic film, but rather leave them open to the air and covered only with loose netting to at least deter less determined avian predators.) (DS)