

## Joh. Jos. Prüm Wine Tasting



Date	:	Tuesday, 14 <sup>th</sup> January 2014
Time	:	6:30 to 8:30 pm
Venue	:	12/F Hong Kong Wine Vault (Wong Chuk Hang)
No. of Attendees	:	60
Wines Tasted	:	2009 Graacher Himmelreich, Kabinett
		2011 Graacher Himmelreich, Kabinett
		2011 Wehlener Sonnenuhr, Kabinett
		2008 Zeltinger Sonnenuhr, Spätlese
		2009 Zeltinger Sonnenuhr, Spätlese
		2011 Wehlener Sonnenuhr, Spätlese
		2003 Wehlener Sonnenuhr, Spätlese
		2011 Wehlener Sonnenuhr, Auslese
		2007 Wehlener Sonnenuhr, Auslese
		2002 Wehlener Sonnenuhr, Auslese Goldkapsel

When you are cooking eggs for breakfast, some like to have it boiled, some like it sunny side up, and some like it scrambled etc. ... whichever way you cook it is still the same egg, but how you cook, and what you going to have it with, can make whole lot of difference. Same can be said with these German wines we tasted today. All the wines we have tasted are made with the riesling grape, but with different terroirs and different winemaking styles, the results can be very different – as explained by Mr. Wilhelm Steifensand, the president of one of the largest wine trading company in Germany - P. J. Valckenerg, who represents one of Germany's most famous wine label - Joh. Jos. Prum (or J.J,Prum).



The Prum family have had a presence in Wehlen for over 400 years, and since 2003 the estate is managed by Dr. Katharina Prum, daughter of Dr. Manfred Prum (German Winemaker of the year 1996). Generation after generation, the Prum family has adopted the philosophy of less is more, letting nature take its course, hence they do not have regular replanting and most of the vines are ungrafted. As a result, the average age of the vine is 40-50 years, with deep roots to absorb different minerals from various layers of soil to the grapes.

Steifensand has thoughtfully arranged to showcase wines of different appellations and styles. Starting from the least “sweet” we have the Kabinett, with vintages 2009 and 2011 of Graacher Himmelreich. We didn't discuss the residual sugar levels, because these details didn't matter, but we found out that the vintage variation is much more relevant between them. While the 2011 is clearly riper and fruitier of the two with hints of rich golden apples, the 2009 has a bitterness of grapefruit and a hints of stone in the palate.

Technically “Spatlese” implies that it is late-harvested, which in J.J. Prum's case is around Mid-October to Mid-November, hence the grapes have modest degree of ripeness. Interestingly both 2009 Zeltinger and 2011 Wehlener scored 93 points from David Schildknecht of the Wine Advocate, and it is very difficult to distinguish between the two. Ripe apples, pears, honeysuckle lily, salt and wet stone are present.



*Mr. Wilhelm Steifensand explaining to our guest how these wonderful wine are produce.*



*Steep hills provide better drainage!*

J.J.Prum Rieslings with their unique interplay between fruit, acidity and minerality, and their relatively low alcohol content (average: 7.5% – 8% per vol) are very versatile wines. They can be enjoyed by themselves, as an aperitif, as well as pairing with many different kinds of food, especially with Chinese cuisines. The discreet sweetness of the wines can be paired extremely well with dishes that possess a fine natural sweetness, like seafood and poultry, vegetables etc..

These rieslings can easily age for 20-30 years, with some with the right condition can store up to 50 years. People tend to drink them young, which makes it very difficult to find older vintages, so if you would like to try these wines 20-30 years down the road, you better stock up now!

“Auslese” is made from bunches left on the vines after the Spatlese harvest, as such is truly late-harvested. Therefore the style is even sweeter than Spatlese. Steifensand also point out that there is an extensive amount of work during pre-harvest culling of negatively botrytized material in September on those very steep hills of Wehlener Sonnenuhr.

The highlight of the evening is definitely the tasting of Wehlener Sonnenuhr Goldkapsel Auslese.

This wonderful bottle offers gardenia, orange blossom, apple jelly and honey in the nose. Malt and peach join the floral and apple essences on the palate, which alternates silken and buttery textural expressions. Acidity is not at all obvious here, but its presence is felt in balanced sweetness and in finishing penetration and energy.

# Understanding German Wine Label

## Deciphering a German Wine Label

German wine labels can be intimidating, especially to the uninitiated. But they are worth deciphering because they contain useful information that can guide you in choosing a wine whose style appeals to you. The explanation here will help you to understand the terms on a label of German Riesling. Remember that sometimes, for the sake of clarity and design, producers place basic information on the back label.



### 1. THE NAME OF THE WINERY

### 2. THE VINTAGE

85 percent of the wine must come from the year stated.

### 3. THE VILLAGE

The grapes for this wine come from the village of Wehlen. Germany has more than 190 villages that may be indicated on the label.

### 4. THE VINEYARD

Sonnenuhr is a single vineyard within the town of Wehlen. Germany has about 2,600 single vineyards that may be indicated on a label; 85 percent of the wine must come from the vineyard stated.

### 5. THE QUALITY LEVEL, OR PRÄDIKAT

This is determined by ripeness of the grapes, measured in degrees Oechsle, at harvest.

German wines sold in the United States generally fall into one of two quality categories: QbA (quality wine from a designated region) and QmP (quality wine with added distinction or attributes). QbA wines may have

sugar added (chaptalization) to enhance ripeness. QmP wines cannot be chaptalized and are divided into the following categories:

**Kabinett:** The lowest natural ripeness, resulting in light-bodied, off-dry wines.

**Spätlese:** Literally "late-harvested" grapes; an off-dry wine with more richness and body.

**Auslese:** A wine from individually harvested grape bunches reaching higher sugar concentrations than spätlese; nearly always a medium-sweet wine.

**Beerenauslese (BA):** Wines from individually selected berries that have an especially high sugar concentration and botrytis (a desirable fungus that concentrates the grapes). Sweet.

**Trockenbeerenauslese (TBA):** Literally "dry berry selection;" a lusciously sweet dessert wine from individual, shriveled grapes with the highest sugar levels, concentrated further by botrytis.

### 6. ESTATE-BOTTLED

### 7. VDP LOGO

Stands for Verband Deutscher Prädikats- und Qualitätsweingüter, the most important growers' association for quality German Riesling.

### 8. ALCOHOL CONTENT

### 9. OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT APPROVAL NUMBER

All QbA and QmP wines must have this on the label.

### 10. GRAPE VARIETY

85 percent of the wine must come from the variety stated.

### 11. THE REGION

Wehlen is located in the Mosel-Saar-Ruwer region, one of Germany's 13 official regions.

### 12. THE QUALITY

Here identifies the wine as belonging to the highest quality category, QmP.