Originated in the Rhine region of Germany

1st mention of it was in 1435 when a noble of Katzenelbogen in Rüsselsheim listed it at 22 schillings for Riesling cuttings

Riesling comes from the word “Reisen” means “fall” in German...grapes tend to fall off vines during difficult weather at bud time

Riesling does very well in well drained soils with an abundance of light, it likes the cool nights.

It ripens late so cool nights are essential for retaining balance

• An aromatic grape with high acidity
• Grows in cool regions
• Shows Terroir: sense of place

Momma and papa

Parentage: DNA analysis says that Gouais Blanc was a parent.

Uncommon today, but was a popular wine among the peasants during the middle ages.

The other parent could have been a cross of wild vines and Traminer.
Riesling flavors and aromas:
lychee, honey, apricot, green apples, grapefruit, peach, gooseberry, grass, candle wax, petrol and blooming flowers.

Aging
Rieslings can age due to the high acidity.

Some German Rieslings with higher sugar levels are best for cellaring.

Typically they age for 5-15 years, 10-20 years for semi sweet and 10-30 plus years for sweet Rieslings. Some Rieslings have aged 100 plus years.

Likes and Dislikes:
Many Germans prefer the young fruity Rieslings.

Other consumers prefer aged

They get a petrol note similar to tires, rubber or kerosene.

Some see it as fault while others quite enjoy it.

It can also be due to high acidity, grapes that are left to hang late into the harvest, lack of water or excessive sun exposure.
Germany
Riesling originated in Germany in the Rheingau

It is harvested between September and November.

The late harvest wines can be harvested as late as January.

Rarely Blended

Rarely use oak

Riesling is the most common grape in Germany
21.9% of the areas planted to grapes

13 German Wine Regions: Anbaugebiete “aun-bah-gu-beet”

Ahr (reds Spatburgunder)
Baden (warmest and sunniest, Spatburgunder)
Franconia/Franken (in Bavaria, chalky soil, Sylvaner)
Hessische Bergstraße (In Hesse known for Riesling)
Mittlerrhein (middle part of the Rhine river, Riesling)
Mosel (once known as Mosel-Saar-Ruwer, Riesling)
Nahe (Near Nahe river, volcanic soils, Riesling)
Palatinate/Pflaz- (2nd largest region, North Riesling & South reds.)
Rheingau (Riesling and Spatburgunder)
Rheinhessen (largest region, Riesling dry and powerful)
Saale-Unstrut (Eastern Germany, most Northern)
Saxony (Eastern Germany, southeastern)
Württemberg (Red grapes)

39 Bereiche: (ba-rye-sha)Sub-regions

160 Großlagen: (Goss-la-gen) Small collection of vineyards

2,632 Einzellagen: (Aye-zen-la-jen) Single Vineyards
German Wine Law of 1971
Quality levels or Ripeness levels: determined by a wine's sugar content at time of harvest (not the final wine)

Two Types of Wine: Table wine and Quality wine

**Tafelwein or Landwein:** not a lot is made and very little exported

**Quality wine:**
**QbA (Qualitätswein bestimmter Anbaugebiete)**
Quality wine from a specific region (best-tem-etat)

**Prädikatswein QmP** (Qualitätswein mit Prädikat) Superior quality wine (qua-lee-tates-wine met pre-dee-kat)

QbA comes from one of the 13 Regions (Anbaugebiete) and must be on label. The ripeness level of grapes are fairly low.

Must weight 51°-72°Oe. **Oe= Oechsle** a measurement of degrees of mass and water. In other parts of the world they measure Brix. At least 7% alcohol and can use chapitalization
68°Oe = 17 Brix

Can be dry or semi-sweet

**QmP (quality wine with special attributes)**
They cannot use Chapitalization
Dry to very sweet
Must be from one of the sub regions (Bereich) of the 13 wine-growing areas.
**QmP LABELS**

**Kabinett:** “cabinet” wine to keep in cabinet for ageing
- 67-82° Oe, 7% alc
- Ripe wines from the main harvest, can be semi-sweet or dry

**Spätlese:** (Spate-lay-za) “late harvest”
- 76-90° Oe, 7% alc
- Can be semi-sweet, sometimes dry. Fruiter than Kabinett.
- Picked 7 days after normal harvest.
- More full bodied if fermented dry.

**Auslese:** (Ous-lay-za) “Select harvest”
- 83-100° Oe, 7% alc
- Very Ripe and hand harvested, can have noble rot.
  - If fermented dry it is big and powerful.
- Can be designated as a dessert wine.

**Beerenauslese:** (Bay-ren-ous-lay-za) “Select Berry harvest”
- 10-128° Oe, 5.5% alc
- Overripe grapes, usually have Botrytis (noble rot).

**Eiswein:** “ice wine”
- 110-128° Oe, 5.5% alc
- Grapes naturally frozen on the vine with a ripeness level of Beerenauslese. These are hard to produce.
  - Grapes are pressed while frozen which leaves pure nectar.

**Trockenbeernenauslese:** (Tro-ken-bay-ren-ous-lay-za)
“Select dry berry harvest”
- 150-154° Oe, 5.5% alc
- Hand harvested berries infected with noble rot.
- Trocken = dry but means dried berry or shriveled berry.
Final wine sweetness levels:

- Trocken: Dry
- Halbtrocken: half-dry
- Feinherb: off-dry
- Lieblich: semi-sweet
- Süß or Edelsüß: Sweet

Vineyard Classification

- Erste Lage = top site
- Erstes Gewächs (Ese-res Ge-vecs) = great growth 1er cru
- Rheingau
- Grosses Gewächs = Grand Cru

Goldkapsel = Gold Capsule
Wines of higher quality, richer, sweeter, from great producers
Mosel

Region near the Moselle River. Once called Mosel-Saar-Ruwer

**Slate soils, steep slopes**
red slate in Erden, Blue Slate in Mittelmosel

Bremm has steepest vineyard called “Calmont”

Romans planted many vineyards Created light sweet wines.

Low temps did not allow for complete fermentation.

St. Maximas Abbey owned vineyards in 17th century and devoted them to Riesling.

Today the Maximin Grünhaus vineyard is one of the best in Germany (Herrenberg & Abstberg)

**6 Bereiche:** Bernkastel, Burg Cochem, Moseltor, Obermosel, Ruwertal & Saar
**Continental climate.**

Vineyards planted along the river for reflection of sun.

Best vineyards face south with direct sunlight.

**Slate** has good drainage and retains heat.

Not a hot climate in summer temperatures range around 65°.

**Upper Mosel,** where river begins in Voges Mtns France and Luxemburg

**Mittelmosel,** main area near Piesporter and Bernkastel known for slate mineral flavors.

**Lower Mosel,** furthest North near Zell. Steepest slopes in Germany. Burg Cochem (Uhlen vineyard in Winningen is best) Sweeter style.
Dates back to 900 AD to the early church when Benedictine monks cultivated vines.

Some of the best vines date back to Charlemagne where he planted vineyards near today’s famous Schloss Johannisberg. (where late harvest wine was founded by accident)

1st Riesling 1st wienabeiget

1 Bereiche: Johannisberg

Vineyards are planted in valleys and hillsides along the Rhine River.

courtesy of the guild of sommeliers
Soils: Facing south, quartzite, chalk, slate and clay soils

Sunny Climate 50th parallel
Reflection of heat from Rhine

Cool temps protected by Taunus Hills

Close to 80% of grape production is devoted to Riesling

35% of vineyards are “ERSTES GEWÄCHS” strict regulation of vineyard soils, harvesting and final product. Wines need to be harvested after Sept 1st.

Charta a classification in the Rheingau reserved for wines that pass sensory testing and whose musts start at a higher weight.

Elegant wines with a refined and sometimes spicy fragrance; a fruity, pronounced acidity; and a rich flavor

Rheingau Flote = Brown Bottle
Nahe

Named after the Nahe River

Planted by Romans in 6th century but did not get acclaim until much later than Mosel and Rheingau

1 Bereiche: Nahetal

Diverse soils create diverse style of wines

Steep soils with red clay create spicy whites with elegance. The soils on the flats are of sand and loess which create lighter fragrant wines.

Climate is mild and gets some frost

Upper Rhine is to the east where the River ends, slate and sandstone. Warmer region and known for late harvest wines

Bad Kreuznach: clay and loess soils, Large wine estates

Lower Nahe: Quartzite and slate soils more mineral and citrus flavors
Rheinhessen: Largest region in Germany

3 Bereiche: Bingen, Nierstein, Wonnegau
Top Vineyards: Rothenberg (Nackenheim) Morstein (Westhofen)
Sackträger (Oppenheim)

Bordered by the Nahe River and the Rhine River

Region is surrounded by hills and forests which keep cool temps out
Soils are of loess, limestone, clay and quartzite and red slate in Nierstein and Nackenheim

“Land of a thousand hills”

Climate is one of the warmest in Germany. Allows for eco-farming

Soils are varied sandy, gravely, chalky, pebbly soils

**Liebfrauenmilch** wine (Lovely Woman’s Milk).
The Vineyard was known as (Church of our Good Lady) was in the Rheinhessen which became the name for a sweet style wine from Worms. (Can be blended w/ muler-thurgau, sylvaner and is semi-sweet) Otherwise known as:

**Blue Nun** ruined the reputation of the Rheinhessen.

Today making quality wines

Soft, fragrant, medium-bodied and mild in acidity
Celts were first to plant
Romans brought Riesling
Charlamange influenced
Pfalz is known as Rhine-Palatinate named after the Palatine counts of the Holy Roman empire.
Region became known as Charlamagne’s wine cellar
30yr war ended Church ownership
Napolean divided vineyards and gave rise to influential families
1814 became part of the Kingdom of Bavaria, German rule
region was divided up by tax codes
Gave rise to Grosses Gewach system
Won’t see on labels some use caps that say “PC” or GC” to denote top sites
2nd largest region in Germany
One of the warmest and sunniest regions of Germany

To the east highlands which stretch to the Voges Mtn in Alsace block moisture
to east are the Rhine river and Black Forst Mtns

Soils are volcanic, sandstone, limestone and maarl.

**Two Beiereich:**
Südliche Weinstraße
(southern wine region)
Mittelhaardt-Deutsche Weinstraße
(Central Haardt-German Wine Route)

2/3 of wine production s white
Riesling makes up 23%
Wines are typically dry & full-bodied
Riesling was introduced to Alsace in the 15th century
Wines were once traded with German wines
After WWII the styles changed in which Alsace wines were drier
Riesling is found along the Rhine River
25% of grapes in Alsace are Riesling
Balanced and dry wines range from flower aromas in their youth to more mineral notes with age
Three types of wines: Alsace AOP, Alsace Grand Cru and Cremant d’Alsace

**AOP Alsace** is from the region of Alsace and 100% needs to be Riesling to say Rielsing on the label.

**Communal Geographical** name has strict regulations: Blienschwiller, Saint-Hippolyte, Côtes de Barr Scherwiller, Côte de Rouffach, Vallée Noble, Klevener de Heiligenstein, Val Saint-Grégoire, Ottrott, Wolxheim, Rodern.

**Lieux-dit:** the name of a vineyard within an appellation might be on label. It has very strict regulations such as yields, pruning, trellising and ripening.

**Grand crus:** Lieux-dits classified in 1975.

There are 51

Alsace is one of the only regions in Franc where the Grape is on the label.
Wines are noted by the bottle shape of tall skinny bottles flûtes d’Alsace

Late harvest wines are denoted:
VT = Vendage Tardive: late harvest similar to spätlese in Germany
SGN= Selections de Grains Noble: wines with noble rot
Alsace is a long strip with the Vosges Mountain to the west and the Rhine river to the east

Bone dry wines

Aromas: citrus, citronella, pear and peaches.

Floral aromas of white nettle, honeysuckle. Spices such as anise, fennel and cumin.

Certain vineyards give aromas of petrol, flint and mineral.

Slate, schist soils which provide good drainage and retain heat

Alsace is a cool region and needs as much sunlight as possible.

No Oak and no Malo-lactic fermentation

Alsatian Rieslings are dry and linear.
Winemaking has been here for 4,000 years. Romans planted many vines in Austria.

Much of the vineyards were destroyed after Roman rule and barbarian invasion.

Charlamagne and Otto the great rebuilt viticulture in Austria.

Wars and heavy taxation in the 16th century put a halt to production.

The Imperial decree of 1784 encouraged people to grow wine and sell with their food.

The 19th century Austria was devastated with mildew and phylloxera.

By 1980’s Austria established itself as a bulk wine producer.
In 1980 the anti-freeze scandal (diethylene glycol) destroyed Austrian wine credibility.

Wine is grown on eastern part of the country along Danube river.

Regions known for Riesling are: **Wachau, Kremstal, Kamptal & Treisental**

**Wachau**

is one of the coolest regions in Austria located in Lower Austria.

Constant circulation of air allows for long ripening.

Good acids and phenolic maturation.

Soils are rocky, granite and slate and vineyards are terraced like the Mosel. More sandy soils closer to the river.
**Classification:**

**Steinfeder** = light wines Must weights of 15–17°KMW (like the oeschle) less than 11% alc

**Federspiel** = riper wines Must weights of at least 17°KMW & 11-12.5% alc

**Smaragd** = Must weights of at least 18.2°KMW & at least 12.5% alc. Must have a cork enclosure

**Kremstal**

Warmer area

The town of Krems and the region known as Stein is known for similar soils as Wachau, rocky

Further east we see more Gruner grown on terraced vineyards with deep soils

Humid cool winds form the north and dry air from the Pannonian plains in the east Produces reds
The river Kamp flows through the region

Two styles of Riesling:
  > medium body and dry
  > reserve which is opulent and dry

Soils have a volcanic base and are mostly rocky

Steep vineyards are terraced and south facing

More sunlight and gets hot from Pannonian plains

Tafelwein: 10.7°KMW, can come from several regions

Landwein: 14°KMW, 11.5% alcohol, comes from 1 region

Qualitätswein: 15°KMW, 9% alcohol, comes from a single wine district.

Kabinett: 17°KMW Qualitätswein with no chaptalization, 12.7%.

Prädikatswein:
  • Spätlese: 19°KMW, released after March 1st
  • Auslese: 21°KMW, bad grapes removed
  • Beerenauslese: 25°KMW, bad grapes removed
  • Ausbruch: 27°KMW, botrytised grapes, can use late harvest grapes
  • Trockenbeerenauslese: 30°KMW, only botrytised grapes
  • Eiswein: 25°KMW, frozen grapes
  • Strohwein: 25°KMW, grapes dried on straw mats.
Riesling was first planted in 1838 by William Macarthur in New South Wales.

Most noted regions are Clare Valley and Eden Valley.

Riesling has thicker skins in Australia because of the climate.

Soils have a limestone base with red top soil.

Wines are fermented in stainless steel.

Aromas of lime and petrol are common for Australian Rieslings.
**Clare Valley**
is in South Australia and is considerably cooler than the rest of South Australia

Higher elevation

Dry summers keep vines fungus free

Red clay soils over rocky base

More lime flavor

**Eden Valley**
is in South Australia on the Western side of the Barossa

Big difference in climate due to higher elevation

Just as large as Barossa

High Eden is the coolest part of that region

More floral quality
Oregon is known for light dry fruity effervescent Rieslings. 1st planted in 1961 by Richard Sommer, it lost popularity to Burgundy varietals. Cool climate and ancient soils
Dry 40%, Medium Dry 25% Medium Sweet 12%, Sweet 23%

Washington state has been growing region for sometime. Wines made by Dr. Loosen “Erorica” always win blind tastings. F.W. Langguth Co. invested millions on Riesling, which led to expansion of Washington wine. Tend to be medium dry to medium sweet

Michigan and Wisconsin are making quality Riesling. Wollersheim Vineyards of Wisconsin recently won best in show for it’s Riesling at the SD international wine competition

In Canada the regions of British Columbia’s Okanagan Valley & Ontario are known for excellent ice wines. limestone-based shale, clay loam.

Mostly planted with Mosel clones

Inniskillin is most famous in Niagra
is making a name as a serious Riesling producer

Planted in early 1800’s & Became ava in 1982

AVA includes four lakes: Canandaigua Lake, Keuka Lake, Seneca Lake and Cayuga Lake

Dr. Konstantin is most note worthy, gained world acclaim early. 1998 his wines win gold in Alsace and in Strasbourg’s Rieslings of the World Competition.
Vineyards slope towards fresh water lakes, cool air helps prevent late frost

The sun warms waters prevents early frost

Soils are glaciers which deposit shale

Rieslings are dry and highly mineral in flavor

Good producers: Dr. Frank Vinifera Wine Cellars, Heron Hill Winery, Lamoreaux Landing Wine Cellars & Ravines