

VINTAGE 2011

Summary for the group

The foremost and most important impression on the vintage 2011 is that all wine growing areas harvested at least above average qualities. In some areas, results were even so extraordinarily good that we can already count the 2011 vintage as one of the best of the last 20 or more years.

The general outlook on the market is very positive as we should have again sufficient wine to offer after the considerable shortage in 2010. This shortage caused the wine export figures to decrease by 5%, also primarily because prices had gone up, in some cases beyond an acceptable level.

With a sigh of relief, we can predict that as at the end of the year 2011 we can satisfy again the rising demand of RIESLINGS at a tolerable price level. The moderate but satisfying acidity allows us to bottle parts of these 2011 wines already in February and March. Overall we observe that climate changes are increasingly noticeable all over Europe with a longer ripening period, while thunderstorms with hail become more of a peril than ever before

**Have a great Year 2012, of course with RIESLING.
Patrick Langguth**

The RHEINGAU estate of HANS LANG (VdP) reports:

The year started with too warm a period in March, April and May and consequently the budding took place very early and led us to assume that we were aiming at an early harvest. We had sufficient humidity, in part due to heavy snow fall during the 2010/2011 winter which helped us to outweigh the shortage of rain during April and May.

When rain started in late August, we observed that the some grapes started rotting. This situation led many Rheingau growers to start picking the grapes as early as the beginning of September.

We sent our workers through the vineyards to pre-select those grapes which had started to rot and, unlike most of the other growers, we started picking only the early grapes (Pinot Blanc and Silvaner) by September 14. RIESLING grapes were then harvested during the last days of September.

The sound and healthy grapes yielded Oechsle grades of between 93° and 97°. We had invested into machinery which automatically separates healthy from noble rot grapes. Consequently, we were able to produce not only great dry wines but also fantastic wines of Spätlese and Auslese qualities.

The 2011 vintage will certainly be rated as one of the best vintages of the last 40 years. Exceptional vintages were produced in years ending in 11 such as in 1811 and 1911. Did the result of 2011 happen merely by coincidence?

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The MOSEL wine estate ULRICH LANGGUTH

It was the earliest budding and the earliest flowering period which German wine producers can think off. This certainly did not occur for the last 75 years or even longer.

Yet, we Mosel wine producers were almost caught by an untimely frost period, a fact which we did not experience for quite a number of years. Budding took place in mid-April and May frosts came shortly afterwards. Unlike the Rheinhessen, the Pfalz and the Franconian areas which were badly hit, the Mosel region escaped by a narrow margin except for some side valleys.

The flowering period at the end of May and during the first days of June (three weeks earlier than before) was just perfect and the desired rain fall coming immediately afterwards allowed the small berries to swell quickly. We must admit that our summer period with temperatures of between 25° and 30°C was not perfect but never really disappointing and the natural rain fall was sufficient. In September we experienced one very heavy thunderstorm with hail in 3 mayor areas of the River Mosel. In several villages hundreds of roofs were badly damaged and almost a thousand cars claimed insurance coverage. However, the damage to the grapes eventually proved to be relatively limited in our estate.

By the end of September, wine growers became anxious as they discovered noble rot and what we call 'vinegar grapes', the latter ones threatening to impair the taste of the wines. Many growers started pre-selection and so did we, by throwing the immature 'vinegar grapes' away. We were very lucky during most of October, when a dry period helped us to pick grapes at our ease with the result that we could harvest a very mature quality with Oechsle degrees of between 80° and 105° gr/litre, and a sound and healthy acidity. Unlike in 2010, the skin of the grapes was thin and thus they yielded a great portion of juice.

Whilst we harvested in 2010 30 – 40% less in quantity which left us with empty cellars, this time most of the producers who were not hit by hail could complain and we shall now be in the position to supply our customers with the quantity they wish, at adequate prices, whilst we were forced to curtail our supply with good 2010 wines.

Tasting the first 2011 wines and assessing the analytical results, we foresee this vintage to be ready for the consumer earlier than the 2010 wines. The 2011 wines prove to have fruit and charm and they will be pleasant to enjoy as of May/ June 2012.

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The MOSEL estate LOSEN-BOCKSTANZ

sends a very satisfying vintage report. This estate also narrowly escaped frost and the yield was 20% higher than normal (approx. between 8.000 – 9.000 litres per hectare).

Thomas Losen and his brother are extremely happy because the Oechsle degrees still turned out to be between 85° and 155°. To top it off, the acidity was between 8.5 and 10.0 gr/litre before fermentation, guaranteeing refreshing, well balanced wines which – unlike the 2010 wines - can be consumed early.

The PFALZ wine estate ANSELMANN

already suffered frost damage during winter, when temperatures dropped to -20°C. in parts of the Pfalz area. The estate was also partially hit by frost on May 4th, just when budding had started. Temperatures fell to lower than -3 C. The vineyards not damaged by frost, however, yielded a very satisfying crop. Especially the red varieties produced exceptional qualities with an intensive quality and fruit. A high percentage of the 2011 white wines will be 'Prädikatswein'.

Due to the frost damages, the yield turned out to be slightly under average yield but the cellars are again full. The Anselmann PFALZ wines will be bottled very early due to very moderate acidities.

The RHEINHESSEN estate Geil/Eimsheim

reported a rather average yield of 70 hectolitres per hectare because of frost damage during the nights of May 3 and 4. Especially the PINOT NOIR suffered and eventually yielded only 50% of a normal quantity. All other grape varieties produced normal quantities.

The Müller-Thurgau, Merlot and Silvaner wines had to be chaptalized whilst the Gewürztraminer, Riesling and Huxelrebe wines will yield fine qualities of between Kabinett and Auslese degrees.

The BADEN wine estate SCHLOSS STAUFENBERG (VDP) did not score a satisfying yield due to considerable hail damage on August 24 which decreased the quantity to 45 hectolitres per hectare. This was 25% less than average. The hail also caused additional headache as the damaged berries had to be cut out before the main harvest started. The average Oechsle degree came up to 92° and guaranteed that the vintage 2011 will be another success in this wine-growing area of BADEN. In fact, Achim Kirchner, the Manager and wine maker of this prestigious wine estate, rates the 2011 quality better than the 2009 wines.

The FRANKEN wine estate BRENNFLECK

The Franconian wine area suffered most under the severe frost in April 2011. Brennfleck's vineyards in the Sulzfeld area were damaged up to 35%. All the same, this estate could harvest an average of 65 hectolitre per hectare with Oechsle grades of between 80° and 120° as the vineyards in Roedelsee, Iphofen and Escherndorf came out to show the best results in quantity ever. The high quality of the vintage needed much higher efforts in selecting grapes during picking season but the result of the 2011 Brennfleck wines will show a lot of fruit and great aromas.