

GREAT WINE SEMINAR 2002

HUGEL & FILS, ALSACE

Vendange Tardive & Sélection de Grains Nobles

Presented by Etienne Hugel

Riesling Vendange Tardive 1998 ****

The nose is reserved and expressing little at this early stage. There is a hint of oiliness and a mineral background along with a suggestion of very ripe yellow fruit. The palate is focused and beautifully defined, if so very youthful. The wine gives a sense of richness more than sweetness. There is real intensity and purity, and the telltale spinal column of great Riesling marks the finale. Harvest October 21, 15.5 potential alcohol (PA), and 53 g/l RS.

Riesling Vendange Tardive 1996 **+**

The aroma is rich but restrained. There is an oiliness and a suggestion of green apple, pear, and spice. In the mouth, the concentration is noteworthy as is the incisive acidity. This is essentially a dry wine from very low yields (22 hl/ha). A long distance runner revealing the low night temperatures of 1996. Harvested November 14 and 17, 14.1 PA. 25 g/l RS.

Riesling Vendange Tardive 1995 *****

Pinpoint aromatic focus. The nose reveals a splendid range of fruits including pear and yellow plum as well as a hint of botrytis in its orange and apricot notes. The palate delivers great concentration and the acid backbone to match. This is brilliant and will live forever. Harvest October 26, 15.2 PA, 45 g/l RS.

Riesling Vendange Tardive 1990 **+**

The nose is still very youthful but has softened with time, exhibiting yellow fruits and lemon accents without botrytis. The palate is just opening and showing mineral highlights, green apple and a suggestion of blanched nut in the finish. The 1990 leaves a dry impression; i.e., this is a late-harvest wine in its concentration rather than in terms of sweetness. The ability to produce wines of this profile sets Alsace apart. Harvested October 23 and 26 and November 15, 13.8 PA, 16.5 g/l RS.

Riesling Vendange Tardive 1981 ***

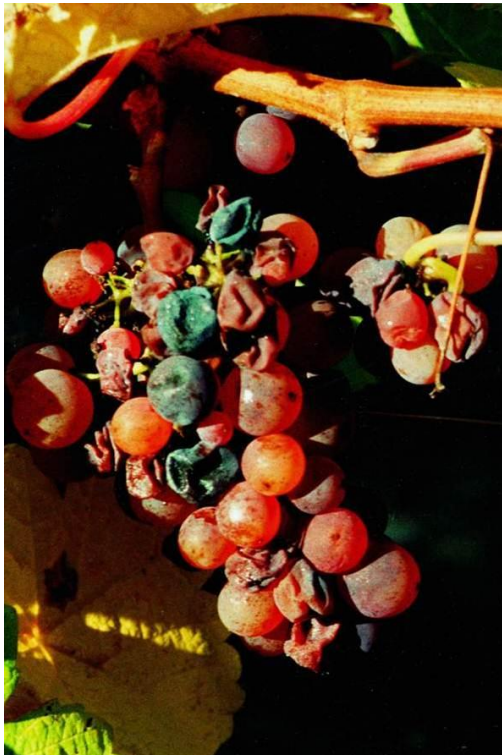
A far more developed nose offering a hint of fusel oil, honey and a mineral background. The taste is rich, clean and effectively completely dry (8 g/l RS). The finish is expressive but a bit short. Has arrived at its optimum maturity.

Pinot Gris Vendange Tardive 1996 **(*)**

Concentrated, ample, and revealing aroma of yellow peach, honey and spice cake. There is a sense of high fruit maturity. The palate confirms the lovely pure ripeness of fruit and acidity, which is high for Pinot Gris (reflecting the season). There is sweetness, but not at all excessive. Overall, the wine is clean, balanced and very youthful. This will keep beautifully. Harvest October 29 and November 1st, 15.7 PA, 42 g/l RS.

Gewurztraminer Vendange Tardive 1998 **(*)**

A striking youthful perfume, so very pure and marked by flowers and honeyed richness. In the mouth, the wine is rich, quite evidently sweet, but wonderfully balanced. All is in harmony, and the wine boasts uncommon finesse for Gewurztraminer, aided by rather low alcohol (12.1%). Harvested October 20 and 23, 16.1 PA, 68 g/l RS. Yields were 28 hl/ha.



Tasting Notes of Roger C. Bohmrich, MW

Riesling Sélection de Grains Nobles 1985 *****

A dark yellow gold color. The nose is marked by botrytis but is not aggressive or penetrating. There is terrific focus and intensity on the palate. The taste offers considerable sweetness offset by the intense acidity of botrytis-affected grapes. This is a beauty and seems to have comparatively little development. 21.5 PA, 160 g/l RS. Only 300 bottles were obtained.

Riesling Sélection de Grains Nobles 1976 *****

This wine has entered another phase. The nose is generous, but not extroverted, and has a rich undercurrent of butterscotch and brown butter. The taste is rich and buttery as well with a fabulous equilibrium of extract, sugar and acidity. Very long nuanced finish. 50 g/l RS.

Pinot Gris Sélection de Grains Nobles 1976 ***+**

The nose is broad and rich, showing compote of peaches, spice and an intriguing flowery note. The palate is dominated by toast and honey. The aftertaste is sweet and lasting with a hint of nuttiness. This SGN has entered a splendid stage of development.

Gewurztraminer Sélection de Grains Nobles "S" 1997 ***!**

A deep yellow gold color. The nose is unbelievably complex and intense, exhibiting orange blossom honey, very ripe yellow peach and ripe apricot. There is amazing concentration on the palate, yet the wine is also extremely well calibrated given its high sugar level – a rarity for Gewurztraminer. There is incredible aromatic dimension in the mouth, and the wine is very, very long. A masterpiece. Harvested 10/9, 22 PA, 172 g/l RS. "S" signifies a unique bottling with higher must weight than the "regular" '97 SGN. Produced at 7 hl/ha.

