

# Decanter | buying guide

earmarked a 'hollow' character to some of the wines, possibly caused by the quicker ripening. This was especially true of the lesser Mosel wines.

■ **Were the regional variations notable?** Very much so. 'Some of the drier Mosel wines have that superficial character you can get in a short growing season,' said Hunt. 'I found a lot of them to be lacking depth and fruit.' Nick Dumergue agreed, adding that he felt the conditions in Mosel also resulted in 'less of that biting, exacting acidity and purity of fruit'.

The grapes in the Mosel weren't lacking sugar, and Hunt felt the sweeter wines were more consistent – thanks to the sugar levels filling the 'hole' detected in the drier wines – but not necessarily more successful: 'The speed at which the ripening happened may not have

allowed time for depth of flavour to develop,' argued Hunt.

■ **How about the Rheingau wines?** 'Serious, concentrated and expensive,' said Freddy Price. 'The quality across the board was very good,' said Martin Campion. 'I'm not a fan of dry Germans, and I was concerned that the exceptional ripeness of 2003 could lead to imbalance, but the drier Rheingau wines were good, rich wines that should keep. They are not the tart offerings they would have been 20 years ago...'

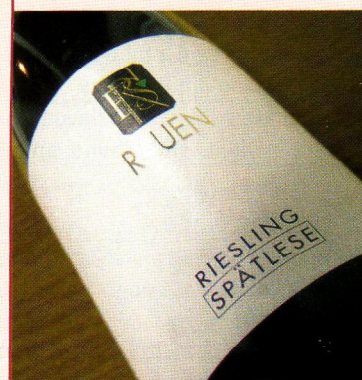
■ **Will most of these wines age well?** Not to the extent that one has come to expect from fine German Rieslings. 'There were a few that were surprisingly ready and almost showing some tired character, partly due to the low acidity levels,' said Tim Mason. 'But the

**WEINGUT FAMILIE  
RAUEN, DETZEMER  
MAXIMINER KLOSERLAY,  
MOSEL SAAR RUWER**

**£7.49** ★★★★★












Grapey, mixed with green plums. Excellent balance of sugar/acid/fruit and a nice long finish. Sweet. 5–10 years.

Ths  17.33



**Best value  
wine of the month**

## highly recommended ★★★★★

wine name	price	tasting note	drinkability	stockist	mean score
■ Weingut Ernst Clüsserath, Trittenheimer Altärchen, Mosel Saar Ruwer		'Underdeveloped. Perfect freshness and poise. Wonderful fresh fruit Mosel flavours with fine acidity. 2–10 years.' (FP)		N/A UK	18.33
■ Weingut August Eser, Oestricher Doosberg, Rheingau		'Clean, pale lemon. Yeasty tones, rich, ripe. Very good concentration. Honeyed, ripe and long. Very ripe. Quality. Medium-sweet. 10 years+' (MC)		N/A UK +49 6723 5032	17.62
■ Weingut Balthasar Röss, Rüdeshheimer Berg Rottland, Rheingau	£16.95	'Whole peach, toast, caramel. Peach, limes, guava, tropical. This is like a New World Riesling. Acidity good. Very long. 2–5 years.' (GMD)		May	18.25
■ Weingut Johannishof, Rüdeshheimer Berg Rottland, Rheingau	£10.95	'Cloves, apples and honey. Ripe spicy (clove) fruit, apples – nice length and balance – goes on and on. Sweet. 10 years+' (MMC)		WSo	18.25
■ Weingut Hallenbach, Merler Königslay-Terrassen, Halbtrocken, Mosel Saar Ruwer		'Fresh. Firm activity to develop over 10 years or more. 5–10 years.' (FP)		N/A UK +49 6542 41521	18
■ Weingut Oswald Ahl Nachf, Trittenheimer Apotheke, Mosel Saar Ruwer	£7.49	'Brilliant purity with breeding. Not too sweet. 2–10 years.' (FP)		Ths	18
■ Weingut Paulinshof, Brauneberger Kammer, Feinherb, Mosel Saar Ruwer		'Vivid gold, plants and honey. Powerful fruit – long, long finish and a lovely balance. Off dry. 5–10 years.' (MMC)		N/A UK +49 6535 544	18
■ Weingut Robert Weil, Rheingau		'Clean, ripe, pineapple. Citrus, sweet, concentrated, guava, passion fruit. Lovely (if not classical Rheingau). Sweet. 10 years+' (MC)		HBJ	18
■ Domaine Schloss Johannisberger, Rheingau	£16.95	'Vivid lemon, loads of fruit, pineapples, hints of petrol. Initial honey, then powerful apple fruit appears – longish and balanced. Medium-sweet. 5–10 years.' (MMC)		Hal	17.75
■ Peter Jakob Krühn, Oestrich Lenchen, Rheingau	£16	'Quite dark lemon. Clean, ripe. Touch of botrytis, honeyed, very concentrated fruit, mango, apricot, honeycomb. Lovely. Sweet. 10 years+' (MC)		Mnt	17.75
■ Schloss Schönborn, Erbacher Marcobrunn, Rheingau	N/A	'Caramel nose. Full, packed, so far still shows distinct power. 5–10 years.' (GMD)		C&B	17.75
■ Schloss Vollrads, Goldkapsel, Rheingau	N/A	'Fragrant and juicy. Very modern style, probably fermented and kept in stainless steel. An auslese level offered as spätlese. Sweet. Up to 10 years.' (FP)		Lib	17.75