



VINTAGE
PROFILE



**GERMANY 2005: Golden October (Part 2: Mosel and Saar)
February 28, 2007**

Readers are urged to consult [Issue #167](#) for details on the exceptional quality of the 2005 vintage along the Mosel and its tributaries, together with detailed tasting notes on the wines of 23 estates. Below are the balance of my notes on the best remaining Mosel collections and those of the Ruwer, tasted by me in the course of late July and August visits to 84 German addresses and in a few subsequent tastings. Following standard *Wine Advocate* convention, wines tasted prior to bottling are given a parenthetic point spread rather than a specific score. — David Schildknecht

Karthausenhof

Picking took place here throughout October and into early November, with some genuine Kabinett-typical must weights (a rarity for 2005) in the initial stages and an astonishing, virtually unprecedented array of nobly sweet wines selected on and off throughout the harvest.

2005 Karthausenhof Eitelsbacher Riesling Auslese-

Rating: 89 points

The 2005 Eitelsbacher Karthausenhofberg Riesling Auslese smells and tastes of melon, white currant preserves, and honey. Rich and imposing on the palate, dominated by sweet berry preserves and caramelized pit fruits but not without a measure of fresh fruit juiciness, this just misses the clarity of the best wines, and turns in a bitter-sweet direction in the finish, suggesting melon rind and pungent herbs. But I suspect it simply needs to get its act together and will taste more harmonious in time. - David Schildknecht

2005 Karthausenhof Eitelsbacher Riesling Spatlese Trocken-

Rating: 90 points

The 2005 Eitelsbacher Karthausenhofberg Riesling Spatlese trocken displays smoky, red-berry and herbal aromatics leading to a firm, bright, lithe palate infused with smoky, salty, and stone-broth expressions of minerality and a juicy, red-berry- and citrus-dominated, invigorating finish that is unusually sassy for the vintage. - David Schildknecht

2005 Karthausenhof Riesling Auslese Eitelsbacher Karthausenhofberg #33-

Rating: 91 points

The 2005 Eitelsbacher Karthausenhofberg Riesling Auslese #33 smells of grilled pineapple, smoky, candied grapefruit rind, overripe melon, banana, caramelized peach, and marzipan. In the mouth, this is opulent, oily in texture and very sweet, displaying the gaudy diversity of fruits suggested by the nose. While the finish is rather dominated by sweetness and the caramelized side of the fruit flavors, this imposingly rich Auslese is undeniably complex and should cellar well for at least a couple of decades, during which the sweetness will back off.- David Schildknecht

2005 Karthausenerhof Riesling Eitelsbacher Karthausenerhofberg Kabinett-

Rating: 88 points

The 2005 Eitelsbacher Karthausenerhofberg Riesling Kabinett (halbtrocken or feinherb variations on Karthausenerhof terroir having this year regrettably been stricken from the estate's roster) smells mouth-wateringly of red berries, citrus and salt spray, and offers a bright, sappy concentration of currant, lime, brown spice, salts, and wet stone that really sticks to the palate. I could do with a bit less overt sweetness, frankly (which might also enhance the wine's clarity) but I suppose one could always wait a dozen years before trying to enjoy it at table!- David Schildknecht

2005 Karthausenerhof Eitelsbacher Weissburgunder Trocken-

Rating: 88 points

A rarity of Christoph Tyrell's estate is his Pinot Blanc, and the 2005 Eitelsbacher Karthausenerhofberg Weissburgunder, with its aromas of sage and raw hazelnut, its nutty richness, subtle creaminess of texture and brothy minerality, and its refined, wet stone-kissing finish is well worth experiencing at one's dinner table. - David Schildknecht

2005 Karthausenerhof Eitelsbacher Riesling Auslese [cask]#18-

Rating: 93 points

The 2005 Eitelsbacher Karthausenerhofberg Riesling Auslese #18 – with only 7.5% alcohol, this product of early picking is also the “littlest” in Oechsle of the eight Auslesen – introduces us to realms of clarity and refinement not approached by the preceding Auslesen. Red currant jelly, mint and apricot in the nose precede a palate of honied richness, fresh and jellied red currant, apricot nectar, and a subtle interplay of herbal, spice, tea, and mineral shadings with the ripe, persistently juicy fruit. The finish exhibits the clarity of the Spatlese but with more subtle complexity, lift, and elegance. Delicious now, I see no reason to doubt that it will mature magnificently for at least two decades. - David Schildknecht

2005 Karthausenhof Eitelsbacher Riesling Auslese [cask]#28-

Rating: 92 points

With 2005 Eitelsbacher Karthausenhofberg Riesling Auslese #28 offers scents and aromas of over-ripe honeydew melon, honey, and raspberry liqueur. With a palate so sweet (at 128 grams of sugar), thick and glossy, this behaves almost like a honey and red berry syrup. In the finish though, it manages to pull back from going overboard in sweetness thanks to subtle red berry tartness and hidden springs of fresh fruit acid, and instead comes off with amazing elegance and lift. One senses that this ultra-concentrate is by no means revealing its inherent complexities, many of which might not emerge for years. (And this surely seems a candidate for three decades of cellaring.)- David Schildknecht

2005 Karthausenhof Eitelsbacher Riesling Auslese [cask]#30

Rating: 88 points

The 2005 Eitelsbacher Karthausenhofberg Riesling Auslese #30 (a cask number now prominently displayed on the neck label – as at Grunhaus – so that one need no longer search for the A.P. #) is the first of eight (!) such numbered Auslesen this vintage, all but one of which I tasted, and any one of which would have represented a high point of any vintage prior to 1988. (Incidentally, all were conveniently bottled in halves as well as 750s.) Jellied red fruits, peach jam, and brown spices scent the nose, smoky botrytis and brown spices accent a sweet, rich palate dominated by caramelized pit fruits, and this finishes with intensity but a compressed, fruit paste-like concentration, and certain opacity. At nearly 10% alcohol and 83 grams of residual sugar, this is the driest of the many 2005 Auslesen here this year. - David Schildknecht

2005 Karthausenhof Eitelsbacher Riesling Auslese [cask]#31

Rating: 91 points

With 2005 Eitelsbacher Karthausenhofberg Riesling Auslese #31 we arrive at Riesling heavily influenced by botrytis. Smelling of mango, maracuya, and caramelized peaches, it comes onto the palate viscous and creamy yet possessed of a surprising amount of fresh fruit juiciness for something this ripe and ennobled. The finish here too surprises one for its sense of lift and refinement as well as its mineral accents of smoke and wet stone, despite the thickness and honeyed botrytization also in evidence. - David Schildknecht

2005 Karthausenhof Eitelsbacher Riesling Auslese Gold Capsule [cask] #35

Rating: 92 points

A 2005 Eitelsbacher Karthausenhofberg Riesling Auslese Gold Capsule #35 offers voluminous, estrous aromas and palate concentration of caramelized peach, fried banana, distilled pit fruits, pungent wood smoke and nut brittle. Oily, viscous and honeyed on the palate, this manages – while being undeniably gaudy – to balance a huge load of residual sugar without becoming treacle. A hint of refreshing saltiness peaks out from beneath the seemingly overwhelming load of over-ripe fruits and sheer sweetness in the finish. - David Schildknecht

2005 Karthausenhof Eitelsbacher Riesling Auslese Gold Capsule [cask]#37

Rating: 95 points

The 2005 Eitelsbacher Karthausenhofberg Riesling Auslese Gold Capsule #37 (an auction lot) smells of ripe melon, mint, and honey. Rich, creamy and polished on the palate, but in dramatic contrast with # 37 ethereal and light in touch as well as ultra-refined in flavors, this displays an alluring amalgam of quince preserves, strawberry jam, herbal-floral distillates, juicy, ripe honeydew melon, and honey. The finish is deft but insistent, sweet yet refreshingly juicy, superbly concentrated yet elegant, and full of floral, herbal, and fruity nuances. There has not been a collection of Auslesen here remotely like this since 1976, when an array of them were vineyard-designated, but when prevailing standards of quality did not approach those here today. This Auslese #37 is a fine milestone for those standards that should still be getting talked about and enjoyed in forty years.—David Schildknecht

2005 Karthausenhof Eitelsbacher Riesling Auslese Trocken

Rating: 90 points

Already in the nose, Tyrell's 2005 Eitelsbacher Karthausenhofberg Riesling Auslese trocken signals something considerably riper and more voluminous than the corresponding Spatlese. Scents of honeydew melon, red currant jelly, lime zest, and pungent wood smoke lead to a juicy, savory, smoky, salty mouthful of red fruit and slate. In the finish, this is full (at 12.5% alcohol), generous, and blemish-free, if not so enticingly bright or red-fruit saturated, nor as site-typical as the Spatlese trocken. I found this year's "S" version of Auslese trocken – generally Tyrell's pride and joy – reached for too much ripeness and was punished with bitterness, heat, and lack of clarity. "In a year it will be different," he insists.—David Schildknecht

2005 Karthausenhof Eitelsbacher Riesling Beerenauslese [cask]#32

Rating: 94 points

A 2005 Eitelsbacher Karthausenhofberg Riesling Beerenauslese #32 smells of raspberry preserves, honey, and lemon meringue. On the palate, it offers a dense yet bright and satisfyingly juicy concentration of red berry, citrus, and honey, finishing with a laser-like purity and penetration. While this might not seem so obviously (or riotously!) complex as a few of the other botrytis wines tasted, it will not want for further complexity if one cellars it for two to four decades, and none of this year's Karthausenhof Rieslings are better candidates for such treatment than this—David Schildknecht

2005 Karthausenhof Eitelsbacher Riesling Spatlese A P #9-

Rating: 92 points

The 2005 Eitelsbacher Karthausenhofberg Riesling Spatlese A.P. #9 adds apricot to the red berry aromas and flavors typical for this terroir, presents an imposingly rich, honeyed, creamy, and polished palate impression, yet remains light and bright with its high residual sugar well integrated rather than obtrusive. A refined, complex finish layers subtly caramelized apricot, fresh and jellied red currant, honey, sweetly aromatic herbs, and brown spices. This Karthausenhof classic – while delicious now – should cellar admirably for two decades. (This is the estates “regular” – albeit distinguished – Spatlese. I mention the A.P. # because there is also an auction Spatlese, which I did not taste.) . —David Schildknecht

**2005 Karthausenhof Eitelsbacher Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese
[cask]#20**

Rating: 95 points

The 2005 Eitelsbacher Karthausenhofberg Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese #20 – which will eventually be auctioned – boasts yet more ripeness than the #34. And while it is by no means heavy for all of its viscosity, and is shot through with electric citricity, it lacks the levitating power or riveting multi-layered personality of its sibling, hard though it is to imagine how a wine with such phenomenal concentration as this could stand in the shadow of another. Intensely tart jellied and dried red fruits, sweet caramelized peach, compressed dried apricot and fresh lemon build to a monstrous crescendo, but for harmony and counterpoint one needs to look much further down the road – or rather, the decades.—David Schildknecht

2005 Karthausenhof Eitelsbacher Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese [cask]#34

Rating: 97 points

The 2005 Eitelsbacher Karthausenhofberg Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese #34 was harvested relatively early, which Tyrell points out is typical for this genre here: later harvests – by further exposing the shriveled grapes to the vicissitudes of weather – are much less likely to capture such a wine. An intensely penetrating nose of lime meringue, fresh and jellied strawberry and red currant, smoke, and honey leads to a multi-layered palate of citrus and herb concentrates, fresh and jellied berries, caramelized and preserved pit fruits, and a clear, pure, refined finish that seems positively weightless. The counterpoint of almost buttery texture with clarity of fruit and vivacious acidity is utterly striking. Among the most splendidly concentrated wines of the vintage, I doubt that even such legendary Karthausenhof wines as their 1959 Trockenbeerenauslese (and certainly none since the early 1960s) were ever on a par with this.—David Schildknecht

Joh. Jos. Prüm

“We made what I think was the right decision to harvest relatively early,” says Manfred Prüm, before botrytis became the most prominent element in the wines’ character as in his opinion had been the case in 1976. Still, the Prüms were blessed this year with terrific quality but cursed with a dearth of material that could legitimately be bottled even as Spatlese let alone Kabinett. (Note: There is usually more than one bottling and therefore more than one eventual A.P. number chez Prüm for any given Kabinett or non-auction Spatlese and even some Auslesen. The differences in character, they promise, are kept to a minimum, and indeed in many cases it is a matter of the same base wine temporarily stored in more than one tank. For that reason, I was as usual not privy to the A.P. numbers of the un-bottled, non-auction wines that I tasted.)

2005 Joh Jos Prüm Bernkasteler Badstube Riesling Spatlese

Rating: 91-92 points

The 2005 Bernkasteler Badstube Riesling Spatlese – like the other Prüm wines I tasted, finished but not yet bottled – while undeniably rich, retains remarkably bright, fresh, crisp fruit and citrus acidity as well as pleasantly tart and chewy citrus zest and berry skin notes, nicely offsetting the sweetness and lending an invigorating drinkability that one does not always associate with the wines of this estate in their extreme youth. Deep suggestions of toasted walnut, cherry pit, and wet stone inform the silken-textured palate of this ravishing juicy, bell-clear Riesling. The nose of cherry, citrus, and spice is very slightly muted by fermentative aromas but the rest of this wine represents unrestrained satisfaction that one could begin deriving surprisingly early or defer for several decades.—
David Schildknecht

2005 Joh Jos Prüm Riesling Auslese Graacher Himmelreich

Rating: 93-94 points

The 2005 Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Auslese smells of flambéed peach, lemon meringue, and black currant preserves. On the cusp of B.A. in must weight and honied richness, it preserves the liveliness and lightness of touch and sheer drinkability conveyed by fresh grapes. Seductive inner-mouth perfume of flowers and spices overlie a tropically opulent, subtly botrytized pool of fruit that remains transparent to mineral nuances. Insistent citricity keeps the flavors lively through to a finish of refinement and lift. For all of its youthful sweetness, this has undeniable immediate appeal, yet one can be confident of at least three decades satisfying development in the bottle.—David Schildknecht

2005 Joh Jos Prum Riesling Spatlese Graacher Himmelreich

Rating: 91-92 points

The Prum 2005 Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Spatlese smells of talcum and lemon and black raspberry candies. Creamy and faintly oily in texture and impressively clinging in its citrus, berry, vanilla, and wet stone character, this rich Spatlese preserves invigorating fresh fruit acidity even as it nods subtly in a caramelized, honeyed direction.—David Schildknecht

2005 Joh Jos Prum Riesling Auslese Wehlener Sonnenuhr

Rating: 92-94 points

The 2005 Wehlener Sonnenuhr Auslese, unlike its Himmelreich counterpart, was relatively shrouded in fermentative aromas on the occasion of my tasting, but site- and vintage-typical suggestions of baked apple and vanilla were clearly in evidence, and even more so on the palate, where dripping florality, vanilla cream, and nut paste add considerable allure. The finish here is formidably long and polished, with complexities of flowers, spices, and mineral already very clearly in evidence. This is another sure bet for at least three decades of bottle maturation from an impeccably consistent source.—David Schildknecht

2005 Joh Jos Prum Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese A P #22

Rating: 94-95 points

An auction lot of 2005 Wehlener Sonnenuhr Auslese A.P. #22 exudes lightly caramelized apple and white peach while preserving a clear, luscious citricity, although its counterpoint of creaminess and brightness is not quite as striking as that exhibited by the auction Spatlese. Even as one recognizes how concentrated this wine is by botrytis and how honeyed the consequent palate impression, it retains a remarkable degree of refreshing juiciness, delicacy of texture, and refinement of flavor, all especially evident in the finish. And one can rest assured this has the structure to age satisfyingly for 30 or more years.—David Schildknecht

2005 Joh Jos Prum Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese GKA A P #23

Rating: 95-96 points

Each of the lots presented to me on this occasion had been chosen with uncanny insight to occupy its particular place in the Prum scheme, representing a steady increase in quality that did not stop when one came to a 2005 Wehlener Sonnenuhr Auslese Gold Capsule A.P. #23, also destined to be auctioned. The nose exhibits a degree of botrytis ennoblement – honey, hints of white raisin, and apple jelly – as well as an oily-rich texture typical of Beerenauslese. But this too draws on a reservoir of bright, juicy, fresh fruit. Mango, pineapple, caramelized apple, apricot preserve, vanilla, white raisin, warm honey, and brown spice all contribute to the abundant richness on display here, yet there are fine notes of flowers and mineral salts and a lovely sense of lift despite such far-gone ripeness, botrytis, and sheer density as this likely 50-year wine displays. “This fruit exhibited a fresh botrytis,” says Prum, which he associates with its managing – while strikingly ripe and viscous – never to become at all broad, fat, or obvious—David Schildknecht

2005 Joh Jos Prum Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese LGKA A P #24

Rating: 96-97 points

In Prum’s 2005 Wehlener Sonnenuhr Auslese Long Gold Capsule A.P. #24 – again, destined for auction – one immediately notices a new dimension of spiciness and fruit in the nose and on the palate: nutmeg, cocoa powder, marzipan, fig, date, and sultana, as well as a new level of creamy, silky viscosity. Quince preserve, caramelized apple, and vanilla cream emerge in a more site-typical fashion, in this wine’s extraordinarily imposing finish, from amid its bounty of fruits and spices. A sense of refinement and near-weightlessness prevail for all of the wine’s sheer viscosity, and I don’t doubt that this will outlive the overwhelming majority of present readers.—David Schildknecht

2005 Joh Jos Prum Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spatlese A P #21

Rating: 94-95 points

An auction cuvee of 2005 Wehlener Sonnenuhr Spatlese A.P. #21 introduces a striking florality in aroma and delicacy and refinement of fruit and mineral on the palate to what has gone before. Honeysuckle, apricot preserve, caramel apple, key lime, and pink grapefruit generously inform the custardy-rich yet refreshing palate, and the finish displays a purity of fruit, transparency to slate nuance, and wafting levity that left me laughing in delight. —David Schildknecht

Dr. F. Weins-Prüm

Bert Selbach picked his entire crop in just two weeks beginning the tenth of October, preserving healthy acidity throughout his range, even when it is sometimes covered by overt sweetness in the youthful wines.

2005 Graacher Domprobst Riesling Spätlese feinherb

Rating: 89 points

Displays lovely toasted-nut character typical of this site, along with aromas and flavors of baked apple and bosc pear. The balance of just-noticeable sweetness is lovely for current consumption with a wide range of cuisine, and the wine's finish is satisfyingly sappy, bright, and lingering, with lip-smacking salt and wet stone mineral notes.—David Schildknecht

2005 Graacher Domprobst Riesling Kabinett

Rating: 87 points

Leads with baked apple, pineapple, and grapefruit. The palate impression here is estereous and (even at a relatively high-for-Kabinett 9% alcohol) quite sweet, reinforcing the ripeness and gentle acids of the vintage. The finish reveals nut oil and wet stone character typical of the site and mysteriously preserves elegance, lightness of touch ... in short, true Kabinett virtues. I would personally opt not to drink it for 5-7 years while waiting for its sugar to back off a bit.—David Schildknecht

2005 Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Kabinett

Rating: 87 points

Displays a snappy, bright, fresh apple and citrus character in the nose and on the palate, with discrete vanilla and walnut oil notes and boasting a finish of considerable refinement and infectious juiciness. Less richly ripe and more restrained than the Domprobst, it offers more refreshment now but suggests less potential.—David Schildknecht

2005 Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Spätlese

Rating: 90 points

Displays subtle aromas of black currant and lemon curd, comes onto the palate with a honeyed yet juicy cast to its currant and lemon themes, and evinces youthful refinement and lace-like intricacy of berry, mineral and citrus flavors, as well as an almost Kabinett-like delicacy rare in this ripe vintage. Subtle undertones of black currant, black walnut, and vanilla lend a bitter-sweet edge to this lovely example of an often under-appreciated site. Savor it any time over the next 20 years. —David Schildknecht

2005 Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese

Rating: 87 points

Suggests ripe Golden Delicious apple, banana, pineapple, and lilies in the nose and mouth. Sweet fruit character and overt richness are still balanced by sufficient brightness of acids and one gets a nice sense of lift in the finish. I'm sure this can be cellared for 12-15 years but I fancy its greatest appeal in youth to those who would like considerable sweetness and very forward fruit in their Mosel Riesling.—David Schildknecht

2005 Graacher Himmelreich Riesling Auslese

Rating: 90 points

Displays black currant, honeysuckle, and lemon meringue in the nose, comes onto the palate bright and juicy, and finishes with a fine balance of snappy, crisp, clear and faintly bitter black fruit and citrus with honied richness, botrytis-induced spice and invigorating salt and wet stone minerality—David Schildknecht

2005 Graacher Domprobst Riesling Auslese

Rating: 91 points

Smells of pineapple, mandarins, and honey. Juicy and invigoratingly bright and salty in the mouth like its Himmelreich counterpart, this adds a further dimension of richness with honey, vanilla, and nut paste flavors wreathed by flowers and citrus. One can taste the layers of subtly botrytized fruit and of lightly-shriveled but still green-gold, healthy fruit that made up the harvest here. Fresh mandarins, honey, vanilla, toasted nuts, and black tea inform a finish combining richness and refreshment. This is very satisfying now and will certainly reward a couple of decade's further attention.—David Schildknecht

2005 Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Auslese

Rating: 90 points

Smells and tastes of spiced apple jelly, pink grapefruit, and banana, with underlying notes of wet stone and vanilla. Quite opulent on the palate, it exhibits truly generous richness in its finish, a refined, impeccably-balanced and very soothing expression of the Sonnenuhr already imposing but apt to display more complexity over 10-20 years of aging.—David Schildknecht

2005 Erdener Prälat Riesling Auslese

Rating: 92 points

Smells of pineapple, sassafras, candied ginger, and licorice. In the mouth, liqueur-like and fresh citrus characteristics richly yet refreshingly coexist, and the finish here displays real thrust, brightness of ripe acids, and a well of fruit essences that should put it on track for up to a quarter century's positive evolution in one's cellar. (The sugar-free dry extract of this wine, incidentally, is almost freakishly high.) Prälat exhibiting this degree of clarity and mouthwatering acidity is an exceptional experience—David Schildknecht

2005 Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Beerenauslese

Rating: 93 points

Juxtaposes aromas of caramel apple and vanilla with fresh lemon and pineapple. Fresh, sappy, and full of the aforementioned fruits on the palate, this B.A. displays creamy richness and a persistent contrast of baked, dried, and caramelized fruits with bright citrus. A brown spice-dusted, fruit cake-like impression of dried fruits, nuts, honey, and white raisins in the still finish manages to display, just as Selbach wanted it, "juiciness without thickness or exaggerated sweetness." Around thirty percent of the fruit here, he says, was shriveled yet still healthy and green-gold. I would revisit this beauty in a dozen or so years and expect it to mature harmoniously over at least a quarter-century—David Schildknecht

Wegeler

Technically known as the *Weingüter* (“wineries) Wegeler, as they also have enormous holdings in the Rheingau with their press house in Oestrich, the team last year came under the direction of Michael Burgdorf (formerly of Freiherr Heyl) after Oliver Haag left to take the helm of his family’s Fritz Haag winery.

2005 Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Kabinett

Rating: 87 points

Smells of cider and vanilla, and comes onto the palate creamy, nutty, decidedly sweet, and saturated with a liqueur-like intensity of peach and apple, tinged with vanilla and caramel. The drawbacks of this bottling are a dominance of finishing sweetness and virtual false advertising, as I can see no reason to call it “Kabinett” rather than “Spätlese.” —David Schildknecht

2005 Wehlener Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese

Rating: 90 points

Offers an aroma like that of a noble Norman cider. In the mouth, the site-typical apple and vanilla are joined by honey and caramel for an effect of enormous richness and creaminess of texture, yet also genuine delicacy. Vivacity or minerality are not what the opulently sweet 2005 Spätlesen *chez* Wegeler are about, but this displays more elegance and interplay of flavors than the others in the collection, and would almost certainly blossom further over 15-20 years, as it sheds some fat and sweetness—David Schildknecht

2005 Bernkasteler Doctor Riesling Spätlese

Rating: 89 points

Displays an alluring, musky, honied, and tropically-fruited nose. In the mouth, house-typical opulence and overt sweetness is informed by mouth-coating flavors of banana, grilled pineapple, nectarine, praline, and baking spices. When this sheds enough of its sweetness, it may well display further flavor interest and refreshment value – but that might take two decades! Almond paste, apple jelly, peppermint, musk, brown spices, and honey are the dominant elements in the nose and mouth—David Schildknecht

2005 Bernkasteler Doctor Riesling Auslese

Rating: 90 points

Like its Spätlese counterpart, this is oh-so sweet and the elements of marzipan and botrytis honey in the finish only emphasizes the effect of its residual sugar. But there is additional aromatic intrigue here, as well as a thread of welcome grapefruit coursing through the wine to give it some lift and refreshment. If the Doctor was a Burgundy wine, it would have to be Le Montrachet, not just on account of its tiny acreage and high pricing, but also its uniquely and mysteriously decadent aura. If one is willing to part with the price of two typical top-flight Auslesen in order to have (or to discover 20 years from now when pulled from the cellar) the experience of Doctor, this seems the wine on which to put one's money. (Doctor Riesling from the sites three other holders have definitely disappointed in recent years.)—David Schildknecht

2005 Bernkasteler Doctor Riesling Auslese Gold Capsule

Rating: 92 points

Offers both more opulence and more mystery than its “regular” Auslese counterpart, although this is sure to come at a high auction price. Toasted pralines, musk, brown spices, apple jelly, and honey rise from the glass. In the mouth, apple jelly, peach preserves, maracua, and honey barely enlivened with grapefruit are backed by dominant sweetness, particularly in the finish. Spicy botrytis character is amplified as this opens in the glass, but it is clear that sheer dehydration is responsible for much of the wine's concentration. Creamy and plush, it is undeniably imposing and will almost certainly gain in clarity and complexity as it matures. But I would be prepared to wait 12-15 years before approaching a bottle.—David Schildknecht

2005 Bernkasteler Doctor Riesling Trockenbeerenauslese

Rating: 94 points

Unlike its Doctor Auslese Gold Capsule, Wegeler's is being sold on its regular price list – but what a price! Here one encounters the honey, grapefruit marmalade, maracua, pralines, almond paste, musk, and brown spices that typified its predecessors, but with an even more liqueur-like intensity, more creamy texture and viscosity, more overt sweetness, and an utterly palate-coating finish. Furthermore, there is a sense of brightness and energy that reflects an enormous concentration of acidity to balance the wines opulence and sheer sweetness. Given its recent bottling and the intensity and plush ness of its raw material, this may well display more of its character even in the course of 2007. After that, I would close the cellar door on it for at least a quarter century.—David Schildknecht