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Wine Advocate

[Stephan Reinhardt](#) is the new man for Germany at [Wine Advocates](#) and released his first review to Germany's **2013** vintage. Here is an excerpt:

Dreissigacker - Geyersberg Riesling trocken 91p

Dreissigacker - Kirchspiel Riesling trocken 92p

Dreissigacker - Morstein Riesling trocken 93p

TESCH – Unplugged Riesling trocken 86p

TESCH – Krone Riesling trocken 88p

TESCH – Koenigsschild Riesling trocken 89p

TESCH – Loehrer Berg Riesling trocken 90p

TESCH – Karthäuser Riesling trocken 90+p

TESCH – St. Remigiusberg Riesling trocken 91+p

Harvest Preview

2014 has been another record setting year in Germany. In average, it has never been warmer than this year. It all began with a very mild winter without snow and almost no real winter day. Only one day in November 2013 meet the requirements to be called a "winter" day. (24 hours below zero)

According to local wine authorities, similar conditions were only known from winters 2006/07 or 1974/75

January, February and March were both too mild and too dry. Already in the first week of March we had temperatures up to 23°C. Luckily April brought some desired humidity. At the end of April, vegetation was like 4 weeks ahead compared to an average vintage. May, however, was dry and sunny and accelerated the development in the vineyards. As a result blossoming happened already around the end of May early June. Still three weeks ahead of average.

The summer period of July and August was quite average in sun hours and rain, so the development was taken forward. Until August everything looked very promising and everybody expected a good harvest with enough volume and good quality.

At this moment volume focused producers were already harvesting early ripe grapes while the quality driven producers were granting their grapes a few additional sunny days to achieve higher must weights and physiological ripeness.

September started with very warm, sunny and dry days. However, periods of sunshine and heat were interrupted by days with enormous precipitation what made the situation unpredictable. Together with continuing high temperatures not the most comfortable situation.

Due to the ingress of water in ripe grapes, varieties like white Pinot Blanc, Pinot Gris or Sauvignon Blanc came under pressure and for most producers waiting was no option. Around September 10th most producers were fully busy with harvesting grapes.

As if this situation was not challenging enough a new pest afflicted big parts of Northern Europe including Germany. From Bordeaux to Ahr particular red grapes were attacked by a little fly called *Drosophila Suzukii*. You can find more information [here](#).

Due to this fly a vineyard which looked fine today could have been almost destroyed overnight. And there was nothing to do against. So wine makers monitored their vineyards very close and as soon as they detected this fly only close to the grapes, they went out and picked it no matter the must weight. A pure rescue of grape material.

Primarily affected, however, were early varieties like Dornfelder and Portugieser mainly grown by bulk wine producers. Pinot Noir usually becomes ripe later when wine growers were sensitized already. Hence the damage for quality minded producers will be less dramatic.

But for that reason the harvest of red wine grapes continued in an accelerated pace.

Due to continuing occasional rain it remained a tense situation and there was no opportunity to relax. At the wine estate Dreissigacker, the whole harvest, usually done in 6 weeks, was over after three weeks. All wine makers experienced an exhausting and challenging time until the grapes were cellared. For another year human and technical resources were key to react when necessary. Two presses were better than one to process the grapes in the winery which were picked outside. Mechanical support to harvest grapes faster than by hand could have proved the best decision to secure quality.

So by the end of September most of the vineyards in Pfalz and Rheinhessen were harvested. Axel Pauly in Lieser finished mid October.

Only a few producers took the risk to go for noble sweet wines or even ice wine.

Now, that the first wines are fermented most producers are happy with the quality. Also the volume was very good since first estimations expect a volume of 9,4 Mio hl for whole Germany. From the quality structure we will see a very good segment of entry level quality and lower volume in the top end segment.

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