



Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Clemens Busch

(Pünderich – Terrassenmosel)

Clemens Busch admits being surprised by the quality of 2020: "The vintage started well with one of the finest springs on record. This led to an early outbreak and flowering. However, we were affected in our basis vineyards by the late frosts of May. The summer proved very dry but we got just enough rain, one in June and one in July, to avoid grapes getting stressed from dryness. The warm summer led us to expect an early harvest and we did indeed start mid-September ... to immediately decide to stop and wait as the sugar levels were good but the ripeness was simply not there. We did start in earnest then at the beginning of October and finished rather quickly, in 3-3.5 weeks. The high levels of humidity meant that there was a great pressure from rot. We had to be very cautious and, honestly, at that stage, I was not really sure about the quality of the vintage. After tasting the wines this spring, it became clear that 2020 was really a vintage made for dry Riesling and for Kabinett and Spätlese."

The Estate was able to produce its normal portfolio of wines in 2020, including a full range of dry and dry-tasting wines from its different terroirs in the Pündericher Marienburg. However, on the sweet side, things stopped at the Spätlese GK: "There was simply not a lot of good botrytis to go for anything higher, one has to accept what nature gives us" was the simple comment of Clemens Busch. The Estate will release a special cask of 2020er Marienburg Kabinett and of 2018er Marienburg TBA via this year's VDP Auction in Trier.

Once again, Clemens Busch underlines the quality now reached by his Estate. The 2020er collection is simply superb. Its dry wines have the lightness and elegance of past days packed with the intensity of modern vintages. In particular, the Fahrlay, Fahrlay Terrassen, and Felsterrassen are, once again, among the finest dry Riesling to be bought anywhere in Germany. But also, its "simple" village wines would put many high-end "GGs" to shame. The fruity-styled wines are delicately light and lovers of subtly exotic yet racy sweet Riesling should plunge onto the Estate's Spätlese GK. While there is no noble-sweet wine in 2020, lovers of the Estate may want to bid on the special bottling of 2018er TBA which will be released via the Auction in November: It is sheer wine perfection. Finally, if natural wines are your thing, the latest releases of the Estate's Orange and (Alter) Native are, once again, among the finest in their genre. Clemens Busch simply ticks all the boxes!

NB: The Estate is certified organic along general EU guidelines and biodynamic along RESPEKT guidelines. Its 2020er Réserve bottlings were not ready for tasting and will be reviewed upon release.

2018er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Riesling Trockenbeereauslese Fass 1890	18 21	Auction	100
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The 2018er Marienburg Riesling Trockenbeereauslese, as it is referred to on the consumer label (the reference to Fass 1890 is left for the back label), is a separation auction bottling (the Estate produced three different TBAs in 2018) made from fully botrytized fruit picked at 242° Oechsle and was fermented down to fully noble-sweet levels of residual sugar. This superbly golden-colored wine offers a remarkable nose of baked pineapple and mango, whipped cream, almond paste, dried raisin, herbs, and fine spices. Despite its sweet oiliness on the palate, the wine proves already hugely complex and subtle. Layer upon layer of candied exotic fruits, Christmas spices, and almond-driven elements add to the incredible pleasure of enjoying this wine. The finish is intensely long, alluring, and captivating, and this despite the youthful sense of sweetness which still needs to integrate. While it is truly stunning already now if you do not mind its syrupy structure, it would be a pity not to wait more than a decade and get the same thrill with more depth and even better integrated sweetness. But what a stunner in the making! 2033-2098

2020er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Fahrlay Terrassen Riesling Trocken GG	19 21		95
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The 2020er Fahrlay Terrassen GG, as it is referred to on the main part of the label, was fermented spontaneously in traditional oak casks from fruit harvested in a prime terraced part of the blue-slate Fahrlay sector. It proves still remarkably backward and does not offer much beyond some wet stone and smoke at first. It takes a while (think days rather than hours) for the wine to open up and reveal its stunning nose made of cassis, fine spices, herbs, flowers, and subtly creamy smoke. The wine is beautifully juicy on the dry but not bone-dry palate and leaves a superbly airy and playful feel in the long finish. Everything is there for making a stunning wine at maturity. But this beauty will test one's patience first. 2028-2040

2020er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Fahrlay Riesling Trocken GG	17 21		94+
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The 2020er Marienburg Fahrlay GG, as it is referred to on the main part of the label, was fermented spontaneously in traditional oak casks from fruit harvested in a blue slate part of the Marienburg vineyard. It offers a superb nose made of lemon zest, white flowers, raspberry, fine spices, and herbs. The wine is beautifully precise and playful on the nicely dry palate and leaves a superb feel of fresh fruits and subtly tart minerals in the finish. The aftertaste is all about multi-layered and finely chiseled flavors. What a huge success. We would not be surprised if it eventually exceeds our high expectations at maturity, as it develops its full balance. 2028-2040



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2020er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Felsterrassen Riesling	24 21	94
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The 2020er Marienburg Felsterrassen, as it is referred to on the main part of the label, is legally dry wine (with 8 g/l of residual sugar) fermented spontaneously in traditional oak casks from fruit harvested late in a prime terraced part of the grey-slate Falkenlay sector and which underwent an extended maturation on its lees. It offers a beautiful and subtly creamy nose driven by pear, vineyard peach, earthy spices, a dash of whipped cream, star fruit, ginger, plum, and fine smoke. The wine is juicy and also nicely smooth on the palate and leaves a superbly precise and zesty feel of orchard fruits, fine spices, and herbal elements in the beautifully tart finish. The aftertaste is precise and hugely focused. This is a gorgeous wine in the making! 2028-2040

2020er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Raffes Riesling	21 21	94
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The 2020er Marienburg Raffes, as it is referred to on the main part of the label, is a legally dry wine (with 7 g/l of residual sugar) fermented spontaneously in traditional oak casks from late-harvested fruit in a prime terraced part of the grey-slated Falkenlay sector and which underwent an extended maturation on its lees. It offers a stunning nose made of grapefruit puree, starfruit, mirabelle, earthy spices, and some smoky elements. The wine is nicely juicy and quite playful on the smooth and not bone-dry tasting palate. It is however only in the finish that this wine shows its remarkably finesse and potential. Layers upon layers of juicy fruit add to the overall sense of balance and precision to the aftertaste. This is a remarkable Riesling in the making! 2028-2040

2020er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Riesling Spätlese	06 21	94
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The 2020er Marienburg Riesling Spätlese, as it is referred to on the main part of the consumer label, was made from fruit picked at 86° Oechsle and was fermented down to sweet levels of residual sugar. It offers a backward nose made of melon, smoke, starfruit, herbs, and minerals. The wine is only subtly creamy on the overall rather racy palate and leaves a beautiful feel of ripe fruits packed into zesty minerals in the finish. The featherlight side of this Spätlese paired with its flavor intensity are simply a thing of beauty. However, this wine really needs time to reveal all its facets. 2030-2045

2020er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Riesling Spätlese GK	07 21	94
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The 2020er Marienburg Riesling Spätlese, as it is referred to on the main part of the consumer label and with a golden capsule, was made from fruit picked at 96° Oechsle from a selection of partially (10%) botrytized fruit and was fermented down to fully sweet levels of residual sugar. It offers a hugely backward and almost non-saying nose at first and the wine takes a while before revealing some faint scents of pear, melon, lemon zest, smoke, and a hint of whipped cream. However, it proves remarkably alluring on the palate where finely chiseled fruity and mineral flavors are beautifully wrapped into ripe yet zesty acidity. The finish is beautifully playful, deep, multi-layered, and refined. This modern-day equivalent of a clean Auslese GK from the 1990s is a true winner. 2030-2050

2020er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Riesling Kabinett Fass 2034	05 21	Auction	93+
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The 2020er Marienburg Riesling Kabinett, as it is referred to on the consumer label (the reference to Fass 2034 is provided in small print on the back label), was made from fruit picked at 85° Oechsle in the classical part of the vineyard and was fermented down to fully fruity-styled levels of residual sugar. It offers a slightly backward nose made of greengage, smoke, herbs, wet stone, and fine spices. The wine proves beautifully airy and playful on the palate, where white peach and apricot blossom add a sense of ripeness to the overall refreshing experience. After extensive airing, more juicy white peach driven fruitiness joins the party and gives even more depth to the beautifully playful and enticing flavors. The finish is long and hugely satisfying. This may still be on the restrained side of things at the moment but the potential is huge. 2030-2050

2020er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Falkenlay Riesling Trocken GG	18 21	93
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The 2020er Marienburg Falkenlay GG, as it is referred to on the main part of the label, was fermented spontaneously in traditional oak casks from fruit harvested in a grey-slate infused part of the Marienburg vineyard. It proves still rather backward and only gradually reveals some nice flavors of smoke, pear, mirabelle, vineyard peach, cassis, herbs, and spices. The wine is beautifully juicy on the dry (but not bone-dry) palate and leaves a superbly playful feel of ripe fruits, spices, and smoke in the long finish. The potential is there and this wine now only needs a couple of years to reveal its finest. 2028-2040



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2020er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Rothenpfad Riesling Trocken GG	16 21	92+
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The 2020er Marienburg Rothenpfad GG, as it is referred to on the main part of the label, was fermented spontaneously in traditional oak casks from fruit harvested in an iron-rich part of the Marienburg vineyard. It offers a great nose made of pear, vineyard peach, strawberry, laurel, cinnamon, and fine smoky elements. The wine proves impeccably balanced on the dry but not bone-dry palate. A ripe sense of zest provides the right structure for the elegant and playful flavors of fruits and spices right into the juicy finish. This is a gorgeous dry Riesling in the making, especially as it reveals all its charm with age. 2026-2040

2020er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Riesling Kabinett	03 21	92
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The 2020er Marienburg Riesling Kabinett, as it is referred to on the main part of the consumer label, was made from fruit picked at 85° Oechsle and was fermented down to fully fruity-styled levels of residual sugar. It offers a beautiful nose made of wet stone, passion fruit, lemon zest, earthy spices, and fine herbal elements. The wine proves rather playful and superbly alluring on the light-footed yet subtly creamy palate and leaves an airy and focused feel of minerals and spices wrapped into some subtle apricot elements in the long finish. 2028-2040

2020er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Marienburg Riesling Trocken GG	15 21	92
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The 2020er Marienburg GG, as it is referred to on the main part of the label, was fermented spontaneously in traditional oak casks. It offers a beautiful and rather subtle nose made of herbs, wet stone, spices, a hint of citrusy fruits, apricot blossom, floral elements, and smoke. The wine is superbly playful on the light-footed and subtly creamy palate and leaves a nicely intense feel of herbs and spices in the long finish. The aftertaste is alluring but beautifully complex. This dry wine is made for lovers of subtler and delicately ripe but no less intense and persistent expression of the genre. 2025-2035

2020er	Clemens Busch	Riesling Trocken (Alter) Native	(No AP)	92
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The 2020er (Alter) Native is a dry Riesling made from grey-slate sectors of the Marienburg and was bottled un-filtered and with only minimal added SO₂. It offers a superb nose of lemon zest fine spices and herbs. The wine is beautifully playful and packed with fresh and zest flavors on the palate. The finish is nicely tart and very rewarding. The freshness and dynamic side of the wine are truly remarkable. This wine made along natural lines is a remarkable success. Now-2026

2020er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Riesling Trocken vom blauen Schiefer	25 21	91+
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The 2020er Riesling vom blauen Schiefer, as it is referred to on the main part of the label, comes from early pickings in the blue-slate sector (Fahrlay) of the Pündericher Marienburg. It offers a beautiful nose made of white peach, pear, a hint of earthy spices, wet stone, floral elements, and smoke. The wine proves juicy rather than bone-dry on the palate, where riper flavors play with one's senses. The finish is still slightly rough and backward. This wine now only needs a few years of patience to fully shine. It could then easily exceed our early high expectations especially as it reveals its superbly floral and fresh array of flavors. 2024-2032

2018er	Clemens Busch	Riesling Trocken O	(No AP)	91+
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The 2018er Riesling Trocken O (O stands for Orange) is an un-filtered dry Riesling made from the grey-slate sectors of the Marienburg and saw 4 months of skin-maceration and extended aging in cask for 2 years. This orange-colored wine offers a ripe yet enticing nose made of almond, nuts, pear, fine herbs, a hint of toffee, orange zest, mango, and citrusy fruits. It proves quite marked by licorice at this stage on the palate and leaves a still rather abrupt feel in the already quite persistent and refined finish. This wine will require a few years to open up and will then prove a smashing example of orange wine, especially if it manages to develop a smoother side. 2023-2028

2020er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Riesling Trocken vom grauen Schiefer	13 21	91
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The 2020er Riesling vom grauen Schiefer, as it is referred to on the main part of the label, comes from grey-slate sectors in the Pündericher Marienburg. It offers a great nose made of flintstone, pear, wet stone, herbs, and spices. The wine proves superbly playful on the palate and leaves a beautiful feel of herbs and fine spices in the long and juicy finish. The aftertaste is gorgeously tart and hugely appealing. What a great success! 2025-2035



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2020er	Clemens Busch	Pündericher Riesling Trocken vom roten Schiefer	14 21	90
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The 2020er Riesling vom roten Schiefer, as it is referred to on the main part of the label, comes from iron-rich sectors of the Pündericher Nonnengarten and Marienburg. It proves still a bit backward and unyielding but already hints at some beautiful scents of pear, mirabelle, white peach, cassis, smoke, and aniseed herbs, especially after some airing. The wine is nicely playful and superbly focused on the herb-infused palate and leaves a beautiful feel of fruits, minerals, and herbs in the long and juicy finish. 2024-2030

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