

HOW TO READ A GERMAN WINE LABEL

Of all the wine labels in the world, German wine labels are the most...well, German. Besides giving the producer and region - to which they add details of village and vineyard area - German labels are handy in two ways. Firstly, like neighbouring Alsace they state the variety (and no, it isn't always Riesling). Secondly, most quality wines indicate their sweetness. Or rather, by specifying sugar levels at harvest, German labels give useful clues about style, sweetness and/or body.

THE VILLAGE & VINEYARD

This will be the most prominent detail after the producer. This wine is from the Treppchen vineyard, in the village of Erden.

GERMAN WINE CLASSIFICATION

Quality German wines are categorised under one of two programmes:

QUALITÄTSWEIN BESTIMMTER ANBAUGEBIETE (QBA)

Quality wines from one of 13 designated wine-growing regions.

PRADIKATSWEIN

This is the top level of German wines, produced from allowed varieties grown in 39 sub-regions of the 13 wine growing regions. They will display a ripeness level on the label.

THE PRODUCER



DR. LOOSEN

THE VINTAGE

2013

Erdener Treppchen

THE GRAPE

Riesling Spätlese

ALCOHOL

Alc. 7.5% / Vol.

Mosel

750 ml e

THE REGION

PRÄDIKATSWEIN

This wine falls under the classification system for the top German wines, Prädikatswein.

PRÄDIKAT LEVELS

Germany's Prädikat system classifies wines based on the ripeness level of the grapes at harvest. Generally, though not always, the higher the ripeness level the sweeter the wines.

KABINETT - The first tier, made from ripe grapes that generally produce off-dry to medium wines with refreshing acidity.

SPATLESE - From grapes that are riper than Kabinett. Spatlese wines are often, but not always sweeter and fuller than Kabinetts.

AUSLESE - Made from very ripe grapes, sometimes with botrytis (noble rot) influence and can be fully sweet dessert wines.

BEERENAUSLESE - Made from super ripe grapes, often with botrytis (noble rot) influence. These are rich and sweet.

EISWEIN - Made from grapes frozen on the vines, concentrating the sugars and resulting in concentrated dessert wines.

TROCKENBEERENAUSLESE - 'Trocken' (dry) refers to the shrivelled, overripe grapes dried in the vine. This results in extremely concentrated, rich sweet wines.

