



VILLA WOLF

2024 Harvest Report: A Wet but Promising Year

The effects of heavy rain and uneven flowering required über-diligent work in the vineyards.

WACHENHEIM/PFALZ, GERMANY

The Pfalz region fared better than the Mosel in 2024, but there were still plenty of challenges due to the rainy conditions that prevailed throughout the growing season and into the harvest.

The year began with a very wet winter, which ensured that the soils were well-saturated for the growing season. The drought of recent years had caused the soils to suffer greatly and having adequate moisture was a promising start to the year. March was particularly mild in 2024, which ensured that the vines developed quickly. Budding occurred in April and was followed by the rainy months of May to August.

In contrast to the Mosel, the Pfalz was spared from frost and hail events. However, due to the persistent rains at the beginning of June, the Pfalz region had a similarly delayed flowering that lasted for three weeks. This led to the flowers wilting, which means that those flowers were not fertilized and produced no berries. With such an extended flowering period, the flowers bloom unevenly and erratically at different times, so you end up with grapes in different stages of development in the same cluster. This reduces the potential yield, makes scheduling the harvest difficult, and encourages botrytis.

Combating vine diseases is a particular challenge at Villa Wolf, because the estate vineyards have been converted to organic farming and only a limited number of plant protection products are allowed. The abundant moisture caused great risk of downy mildew in the vineyards, so it was extremely important to carry out plant protection regularly and without delay. At the end of August, there was particularly heavy rainfall, with up to 100 liters per square meter (3.9 inches). Grape varieties with a compact grape structure, such as Pinot Gris and Riesling, had to be harvested earlier because the berries soaked up the excess water and began to crush each other, which further encouraged the development of botrytis.

The harvest proceeded quickly and was completed in just over three weeks. The yields were average, with moderate sugar levels and good acidity. The supply of nutrients was good this year, which contributed to rapid fermentation. Due to the pressure caused by advancing botrytis, precise grape selection was required, which is a very time-consuming task. But the result was worth the extra effort. The 2024 Villa Wolf wines are already presenting the vintage very positively and promisingly.



Picking healthy Riesling at Villa Wolf.

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