

DR. LOOSEN

2009 GRAACHER HIMMELREICH RIESLING SPÄTLESE



The Graacher Himmelreich vineyard

THE DR. LOOSEN ESTATE

The Dr. Loosen estate has been in the same family for over 200 years. When Ernst Loosen assumed ownership in 1988, he realized that, with ungrafted vines averaging 60 years old in some of Germany's best-rated vineyards, he had the raw materials to create stunningly intense, world-class wines. To achieve that, Ernst dramatically restricts crop size, uses only organic fertilization, insists on very strict fruit selection, and employs gentle cellar practices to allow the wine to develop its full potential with a minimum of handling.

THE MOSEL REGION

The Mosel's steep, south-facing slopes create the perfect climate for Riesling, giving the vines ideal exposure to the sun. Generally cool conditions allow the grapes to ripen slowly while retaining bright acidity. Rocky outcroppings and stony soil reflect sunlight and hold in heat, creating very warm microclimates in the best sites and helping to ensure excellent ripeness. Thin topsoil forces the vines to dig deep for water and nutrients, producing vibrant wines that capture the strong minerality of the soil.

Dr. Loosen's single-vineyard vines average 70 years old, all on original rootstock (phylloxera can't survive in the Mosel, so ungrafted vines are allowed here). Old vines produce naturally lower yields, resulting in higher concentration and richness.



THE GRAACHER HIMMELREICH VINEYARD

(Graach's Kingdom of Heaven)

Graach is a small village that lies between two more-famous neighbors: Bernkastel and Wehlen. The Graacher Himmelreich vineyard is rated "First Vineyard" ("Erste Lage") in the 1868 Prussian classification of the Mosel, and "Great First-Class Vineyard" in the *Wine Atlas of Germany* by Hugh Johnson & Stuart Pigott (1995). Its steep, southwest-facing slopes and deep soils produce wines that combine the elegance of Wehlen with the rustic strength of Bernkastel. Because of the forceful minerality from the abundant blue slate in the soil, wines from Graach have excellent aging potential and will improve in the bottle for many decades.

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The Spätlese ("late harvest") designation means the grapes get a week or two of extra hang time for higher ripeness and deeper flavors than Kabinett. The Graacher Himmelreich Spätlese, from a truly "grand cru" vineyard in the village of Graach, is a fruit-

driven Riesling that combines extraordinary concentration and length with bracing minerality.

2009 tasting notes

The keywords here are "steep" (the hillside vineyard sites) and "deep" (the blue slate soil). This combination produces wines that are weighty and forceful. The minerality is pervasive, with a captivating juiciness on the mid-palate, followed by a firm, drying finish.

ACCOLADES FOR ERNST LOOSEN

- Star Winemaker, Europe, 2010, *Wine Behind the label, 7th ed.*
- Man of the Year 2005, *Decanter*
- White Wine Maker of the Year 2005, *Wine International*
- World's 50 Most Influential Winemakers, *Wine e3 Spirits*
- Germany's Winemaker of the Year 2001, *Gault Millau*