



VINOUS - April 2018

ALSACE : THE 2016 & LATE - RELEASED 2015

Winemaker Thomas Muré told me that in 2016, grape maturity was reached at lower potential alcohol strength, and so his wines are bright and fruity without all the octanes derived from high alcohol. I found that at Muré the terroir really shines through in the 2016 wines, as there was no surmaturity (as in air-drying directly on the vine) that can mask it. The wines are really dry, in a positive sense, and carry very little residual sugar, if any. The estate is planning to replant another 0.3 hectares of Sylvaner in the Steinstück lieu-dit, which has proven to be a great site for this unfairly forgotten variety that nevertheless sells very well at Muré (as it should, since the estate's Sylvaner wines are all outstanding).

98 MURÉ Riesling 2015 Clos St Landelin Sélections de Grains Nobles

Bright medium-dark golden yellow. Very intense, pure aromas of ripe citrus fruit, mango, crystallized ginger, vanilla, caramel and concentrated spicy noble rot. Then rich, suave and dense, displaying delightful purity to the ripe tropical and honeyed fruit flavors. Finishes very long and suave with repeating noble rot nuances of varnish, candied orange peel and sweet spices. A memorable sweet wine of uncommon balance and precision that is delightfully light on its feet despite real concentration that sneaks up on you. About 90% of the berries were hit by noble rot, and they were harvested relatively early. Check out these numbers: 260 g/L residual sugar and an almost unbelievable 13 g/L total acidity, which helps make the wine seem much less sweet and opulent than it really is. One of the best wines I've tasted so far this year. 2022-2045

94 MURÉ Sylvaner «Cuvée Oscar» 2016 Clos St Landelin

Luminous straw-green. Mosel-like aromas of nectarine, green apple, jasmine and lemon verbena carry a strong minty note. Then rich but suave, offering precise flavors similar to the aromas. Finishes long and luscious with a youthfully chewy bite and a strong note of ripe pear. Will prove very ageworthy, and reminds me of the outstanding 2008 Cuvée Oscar. Véronique Muré told me she believes that the site's heavy clay and calcareous soils help push Sylvaner's ripeness levels while adding a strong mineral edge. Drop-dead gorgeous wine. 2020-2035

93+ MURÉ Riesling 2016 Zinnkoepflé Grand Cru

Bright straw-green. Lemony notes complement strong mineral and pomaceous fruit aromas. Then bright, juicy and lively, featuring saline flavors of stone fruit and apples. Finishes long and bright. Still very young, this elegant Riesling offers a lovely finishing note of grapefruit. From roughly 15-year-old vines planted on the lower sections of the grand cru, on pink sandstone soils. Knockout wine of sneaky complexity and concentration (a characteristic of many wines from this grand cru). 2022-2032

93 MURÉ Pinot Gris 2016 Lutzelal

Bright golden-tinged straw green. Aromas and flavors of pear nectar, baked apple, strawberry syrup and spicy herbs. Juicy and suave, offering a luscious mouthfeel and noteworthy length on the bright, focused finish. Knockout wine that is the essence of Pinot Gris; though it's a little on the sweet side (think of it as off-dry rather than classically dry), it has the backbone and even the tannins to handle the sweetness well. The Lutzelal is a well-known lieu-dit in Alsatian wine circles, but I have no doubt it will be elevated to premier cru status when the new classification is announced. 2021-2029

93 MURÉ Sylvaner 2016 Steinstuck

Straw green. Enticing aromas of green fruit, kiwi, mint, and marzipan have a piercing quality. Then also fresh and juicy in the mouth, but dense too, with a crystalline set of flavors (green apple, pear, nectarine and minerals). Finishes long and vibrant with noteworthy minerality. From a massal selection of 60-year-old vines. Outstanding white wine that will be marvelous with scallops and shrimp and anything involving coriander. 2019-2028

92+ MURÉ Pinot Noir 2016 Vorbourg

Vivid red-ruby. Red cherry, strawberry and mineral aromas and flavors; this is a lesson in terroir, as both nose and palate are really flinty and mineral, bringing to mind the strong iron content of the Vorbourg's red soils. Harmonious but lively acidity nicely focuses the red and blue fruit notes at the back. Finishes long and smooth, with lovely violet lift and cut. Aged in barriques and 500-liter barrels for about 10 months. 2024-2034

92 MURÉ Gewürztraminer 2016 Zinnkoeplé Grand Cru

Pale golden-tinged yellow. Refined aromas of rose water, tarte tatin, kiwi and pear cider. Enters juicy and fresh, but also very dense; turns a bit austere in the middle, then fresh again toward the back. Notes of chalk and stone fruit linger nicely on the vibrant, floral finish. An understated Gewürz typical of the vintage but with class and refinement in spades. This spent roughly 10 months on the lees (and also has a youthfully chewy tannic mouthfeel that comes from the use of a vertical press). The grapes are picked from 20-year-old vines growing in the lower sections of the Zinnkoeplé on pink sandstone. This is an important vineyard for Muré, as the family historically always owned vineyards in this area (though the Clos Saint Landelin vineyard, with which the Muré estate is most famously associated, was actually bought much later, in 1935, by Thomas and Veronique's great-grandfather). 2022-2028

91 MURÉ Pinot Noir 2016 Lutzeltal

Good medium red-ruby. Spicy red berries and red cherry compote plus a floral topnote on the enticing nose. Very saline in the mouth, where juicy acidity nicely extends the red berry fruit flavors on the long finish. This is bottled unfiltered and unfiltered. The vines grow on very poor soil (about a foot of clay and the rest calcareous-sandstone) where they have to fight for nourishment, so the resulting wines are naturally very tannic. Aged in barriques and 500-liter barrels for about 10 months. There is no better Pinot Noir producer in Alsace than Muré; only Albert Mann comes close. 2021-2029

90+ MURÉ Riesling 2016 Signature Bio

Straw-green. Lovely aromas and flavors of licorice, green apple, and minty herbs. Bright and juicy, delivering delightful lemony zing on the fresh, classically dry finish. (Muré's back labels include a sweetness scale with three levels: sec (dry), demi-sec (off-dry) and sweet. This one is tagged as "dry," and rightly so.) This is Muré's négociant line, established back in 1982, and they have had bio wines within the portfolio since 2014 (so this is the third vintage of a bio wine). Thomas Muré pointed out that half of the growers who supply these grapes (sourced from the Noble Valley and Eguisheim) are actually farming biodynamically. 2019-2024

90-93 MURÉ Riesling 2016 Clos St Landelin

Vivid straw-green. Bright aromas and flavors of ripe citrus fruits, herbs and a hint of diesel fuel. The diesel note is a result of the combination of very ripe grapes and the vertical press used by Muré, who believes that the grapes of the Clos deserve higher pressurage values to help extract all they have to offer. The wine gains further complexity thanks to its spending roughly 15 months on the lees. As is typical of many 2016 Alsace whites, the Clos Saint Landelin's warm microclimate shines through in this wine's aromas and tastes of Mediterranean herbs, capers and olives. This is just about to go into bottle, but I tasted it when it was still in cask, hence my score in brackets. It will go on sale in one year. 2023-2031

88 MURÉ Pinot Gris 2016 Signature Bio

Straw-yellow. Simple pear and apple aromas and flavors are juicy and round but nicely focused. Finishes long but a little soft. This was bottled only two weeks before my visit, so my score might be ungenerous. 2020-2028