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## Alsace : the new generation

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**Fresh-thinking young winemakers could be the shot in the arm that Alsace needs, as they focus more than ever on the terroir-driven, dry styles that today's wine lovers want. Panos Kakaviatos reports.**

(...) Younger winemakers, sometimes in opposition to their parents, recognise the need to focus on drier wine to better compete in international markets, which prefer dry wines. «We want acidity», said Thomas Muré, 33, of Domaine Muré in Rouffach. With near zero residual in a vintage of low acidity, his 2012 Clos-St-Landelin Riesling shows subtle opulence and an expression of herbs, grapefruit, mineral and iodine-driven verve.

In making that wine, Muré explained that he and his father René had argued over how much air to give the wine during its maturation - normally oxidation is kept to a minimum - and that his father begrudgingly allowed him to «fait ta connerie» (do it your own stupid way) and expose it to more. «After we tasted the wine in bottle, he realised I was right.»

As René Muré's children took over, a trend for drier wines began. «In the past we thought that the more concentrated the wine, the better», explained Thomas. «But we had gone too far. Green harvesting led to grapes ripening too quickly and very high sugar concentrations. Then, when it rained, we were more susceptible to botrytis» he said.

He and his sister Véronique ended systematic green harvesting, began planting vines more densely and lowered trellising to retain acidity. They also de-leaf to slow photosynthesis. As a result, their grand cru Riesling is closer to 13.5% alcohol rather than 14.5% which was more typical in the past. (...)

### Top 10 «new generation» dry wines

#### **17,5 MURÉ Crémant d'Alsace Cuvée Prestige**

Made from Pinots Blanc, Gris and Noir, and Riesling - the final blend based on a solera method of previous vintages added to the wine of the year. On lees for 12 months and then 18 months' ageing in bottle (this one disgorged in 2007). White apricot and pear, with hazelnut notes, yet floral and citrusy on the finish with still vibrant bubbles.