

Alsace sweet and sour

15 Sept 2008 by Jancis Robinson/FT

See also my tasting notes on 169 Alsace 2007s.

TRIMBACH, Ribeauvillé

Trimbach Pinot Blanc 2007 Alsace Drink 2008-09 **15,5**

70% Auxerrois and 30% Pinot Blanc. Very fresh fruit – frank and dry finish. « It's a wonderful gloo gloo gloo wine » Jean Trimbach assures me. « Nice, clean and refreshing. To be launched in six months ».

2,7 g/l RS

Trimbach Muscat « Réserve » 2007 Alsace Drink 2008-09 **15**

The only Trimbach 2007 on the market already. Mainly Muscat Ottonel (which constitutes 80% of Muscat plantings in Alsace, Muscat d'Alsace being Muscat Blanc à Petits Grains). Only 1000 cases. The Wine Society sell it well. Rather catty on the nose, bone dry. Slightly bitter finish. Not one of my favourite Trimbach wines.

Less than 0,5 g/l RS

Trimbach Riesling 2007 Alsace Drink 2009-11 **16**

Their classic bottling. To be released spring 2009. Still very tight and dry. Certainly healthy and piercing with an interesting mint toffee undertow. Very classic – still quite austere. Wait! 12,5% alcohol – plenty, says Jean Trimbach. 10,55 euros

Trimbach Riesling « Réserve » 2007 Drink 2008-14 **17.5**

45+ year old vines from the single argilo-calcaire Haguenu vineyard in Ribeauvillé very close to the Grand Cru Osterberg. « We own half and my in laws the other. » What do your in laws do with their half? « They sell it to us. » Really intense and creamy on the nose. A real step up from the regular. To be relaeased in spring 2009 – although its extra ripeness makes it more approachable than the regular at this point. Very fine – a real match for Grosses Gewächs! Long and firm though not at all hot.

13,2% and RS less that 1g/l. 14 euros

Trimbach « Cuvée Frédéric Emile » Riesling 2007 Alsace Drink 2011-19j **18**

To be launched in five years' time! 2002 currently on the market. 2003 launched before 2001 and 2002. Gcs: Geisberg and Osterberg together – marno calcaro greseux. Very deep and complex on the nose. Extremely firm and dense with lots of extract. Strong citrus note. We love to bottle wines early such as this in April to preserve everything that needs to be preserved. Freshness and vitality. Positively hums, though you wouldn't give this to a neophyte. Long and just murmuring at the moment. The oldest vines are 68 years old.

13,5% 0,7g/l RS. 7,9 TA tartaric

Trimbach Riesling « Clos Sainte Hune » 2007 Alsace Drink 20-12-22 **19**

The 2003 has been released and 2002 will follow next year. This still comes from the same 1.3 ha plot in Rosacker Grand Cru in Hunawirh that it always has done. Calcaire predominately – 80%. Vines average 50 years old. Very fine and chewy and sinewy and lean and masses of extract. Deeper colour and denser texture than the Cuvée Frédéric Emile. Even quite surly but utterly convincing. Long and firm and very minerally. Very chewy and juicy. Put it away from ages!!!

13,15% 1,7g/l RS 7,2 TA

Trimbach « Cuvée Frédéric Emile » Riesling « Vendanges Tardives » 2007 Alsace Drink 1010-20 **19**

A VT cuvée was also made in 1989, 1990, tiny bit in 1998, 2000, 2001, (2005 was too dry) and 2007. « Wind comes from the valley behind Ribeauvillé so the grapes are rarely rot. We insist on botrytis for Riesling VT. You can do it with passerillage (drying on the vine) for Gewurz but Riesling doesn't make the jump. » The Clos Sainte Hune vineyard is even drier and there has been no Vendange Tardive bottling of Clos Sainte Hune Riesling since 1989.) Very exciting nose – positively electric in its intensity. Very firm and dense yet opulent nose – heady, lime marmelade on toast. Very firm finish. Really tingly. It does taste like a top quality Saar wine with more sunshine. Such a pure expression of Riesling. Very long. « When I smell this I jump immediately to my friend Egon Müller. »

12,35% 53g/l RS 7,4 TA

Trimbach Pinot Gris « Reserve » 2007 Alsace Drink 2009-13 **17**

Pinot Gris was picked quite early because it was so ripe and healthy. “For the last few years we have always picked all of Pinot Gris by the end of the month of September. Scent – ore like a heady perfume. Lots of body but a dry finish. Quite long. Very fine and well balanced. “Pinot Gris is our best seller in the US because it's a bit softer. Riesling is number one elsewhere. “This wine, their least grand Pinot Gris, is quite a bargain, though you need patience. It seems ready now to me but I will probably not be released before spring 2010! They are only releasing 2005.

13.5% 7.1 g/l RS 7,2 TA 13,20 euros at the cellar door

Trimbach Pinot Gris « Réserve Personnelle » 2007 Alsace Drink (2008 and) 1012-19

Not made in 2006. They're just moving from 2001 to 2002 on the market! Very complex and spiffy on the nose. Then quite rich and ripe on the palate. Grand Cru Osterberg mainly. Lovely now. Very juicy. Lovely down and the juiciness will disappear for a while. It won't be released until 2012. Big and bold. Very heady and charming. But still tightly laced too.

14,4% 11g/l RS 6,7 TA

Trimbach Pinot Gris SGN 2007 Alsace Drink 2012-22 **18,5**

Smoky, exciting, something to make those whose hearts sink at the idea of Pinot Gris get seriously excited. Really lively and botrytised and picked end September already! Toasty. Honeyed but a savoury edge too. Long. Well done!

14,5% 90 g/l 8 TA

Trimbach Gewurztraminer 2007 Alsace Drink 2009-14 **17,5**

Pretty muted nose. Bought in fruit presumably. Very full and pungent and savoury on the finish but all that exuberant fruit is held very tight too. Lots of effective corsetry here – positively Rigby and Peller (corsetières to HM the Q). Long rose petal finish.

14% 9.4 g/l RS 5.06 TA

Trimbach Gewurztraminer « Réserve » 2007 Alsace Drink 2009-2014 **17.5**

Not produced in 2006 or 2003. A selection of grapes around Ribeauvillé – different terroirs but selected grapes to make an extravagant wine. Talcum powder on the nose. Very rich, with a note of cloves. Full and very, very rich – within the canon of Trimbach style – so not obvious RS at all. Powerful. Hint of lemon peel but overall a richly spicy complex mouthful already. This probably won't close up, Jean T thinks. Will release in 2010 – though already quite delicious. « Gewurz never closes up, unlike Pinot Gris and Riesling. »

14,3%

Trimbach Gewurztraminer « Cuvée des Seigneurs de Ribeaupierre » 2007 Alsace Drink 2010-17 **16.5+**

50 year old vines from the south-facing Muhlforst vineyard. « A great Gewurztraminer terroir even though it's not classified as a Grand Cru. Always fantastic Gewurz. Argilo calcaire. « At the moment there's a slightly soapy nose. It seems to me a little galumping and unsubtle. The alcohol dominates – it seems to lack the restraint of the two lesser Gewurzes. Falls a little short. Maybe not a 100% bottle, Jean admits. Pretty chewy finish.

14.1% 11 g/l RS 5.6 TA

Trimbach Gewurztraminer Vendange Tardive 2007 Alsace Drink 2009-16 **18.5**

Actually generally comes from Cuvée des Seigneurs de Ribeaupierre but it doesn't say so on the label. At the moment not so eloquent on the nose. Very fully and almost oily! Here the potential is close to 18% so it's close to the SGN level of ripeness. Big and bold. Lush and round and like chewing a ripe peach. Long and just a hint of bacon fat.

13.4% 72 g/l RS 5.2 TA

Trimbach Gewurztraminer SGN Hors Choix 2007 Alsace Drink 2012-22 **19**

« The 1989 is delicious today! » claims Trimbach. « We only produced the 3000 bottles of this – here is no regular SGN. Difficult in this dry vintage. This is selected bits of bunches. This could be one of the best we produced, along with the 2000. » Very, very full and sweet and luscious. Very extraordinary – SO different from the Alsace usual! Lively not heavy. Lychees and golden syrup with a hint of smoked ham on the finish. Long but not too fat.

14.2% 124 RS 5.2 RA 21.6% potential alcohol.