Swen Klinger, the Estate manager since 2004, reports that, “although 2016 was a very challenging vintage, we are particularly satisfied by the resulting wines and how well they show at this early stage. The growing season couldn’t be more contrasted. A very dry entry into the year was followed by far too much rain especially in May and June. Just getting into our vineyards to treat the vines proved an arduous task: The soils were soaked with water and muddy. I was really surprised at how good the weather turned out to be as of July. The weather was very dry but this was no issue as we had enough water in our soils. October delivered ideal harvesting conditions. We had cool temperatures with sunny days meaning that the grapes could fully mature and gain that extra layer of complexity on the vines. Harvest was thankfully a relaxed affair as there were quite some differences in levels of ripeness and we had to work really selectively. Botrytis came late but did not really develop. Even without botrytis selections, our yields were low, at only 35 hl/ha.”

The harvest lasted from October 6-7 and was completed by November 2. It allowed the Estate to bring in fruit with sugar levels ranging from 76° to 94° Oechsle. As a result, the Estate was able to produce its full portfolio of wines right up to an Auslese from the Kanzemer Altenberg. This includes GG bottlings from the Bockstein and the Altenberg. As the grapes were ripe and clean, the Estate did rely on some pre-fermentation maceration, as it usually does. It will bring the same bottlings to this year’s Auction as it did last year, namely a special cask of Kabinett and of Spätlese from the Altenberg.

The von Othegraven produced its probably finest collection in a long time (in fact we would be hard pressed to find a better one). The remarkable thing is that this success ranges across all stylistic directions and concerns the smaller wines as well: The Kanzemer Trocken is a superb dry Riesling that can defy many GG. The off-dry Wawerner is simply stunning. Also the fruity-styled wines prove hugely successful, with, among others, the Spätlese from Altenberg and the Kabinett from the Altenberg, Bockstein and Kupp likely to make it on the list of Vintage highlights: They are THAT impressive.

NB: The two auction wines will be reviewed in the dedicated issue to be released before the Auction and the two GG (Bockstein and Altenberg) will be reviewed in our October Issue.

2016er von Othegraven Kanzemer Altenberg Riesling Spätlese 11 17 94

This delivers a very delicate nose of citrusy fruits, orange blossom, candied grapefruit and a touch of fresh mango. The wine is packed with flavors on the palate and explodes with a myriad of ripe yet zesty fruits. The interplay between fruit ripeness and zest is quite breathtaking here. The finish is more on the supple side at the moment, as the sweetness still needs to integrate into the wine. This is therefore best left alone for a decade. It will then prove a stunningly elegant, slightly Auslese-styled expression of Riesling at maturity. 2026-2046

2016er von Othegraven Kanzemer Altenberg Riesling Spätlese Alte Reben 13 17 93+

Rather restrained at first, this delivers a beautifully multi-layered nose of mango, pear, pineapple, vanilla cream, coconut and lead pencil. This richness is even more ostentatious on the palate where quite some creamy fruits are joined by honey and rhubarb. The wine is still pretty much on the sweet side at the moment, and only time will enable the underlying acidity to come through and balance out the sweet feel as this recedes at maturity. This could ultimately warrant a higher scoring than anticipated if it gains in freshness and depth at maturity. 2026-2046

2016er von Othegraven Kanzemer Altenberg Riesling Auslese 14 17 93

This delivers quite some ripe yet clean fruits including conference pear, candied mango, mirabelle and peach with a touch of spices and smoke. The wine proves intensely juicy and creamy on the palate with plenty of honeyed fruits giving a creamy and smooth side to the long finish. However, this will need a solid decade to fully blossom. 2026-2046

2016er von Othegraven Kanzemer Altenberg Riesling Kabinett 08 17 93

Quite reduced at first, this only gradually develops its beautiful scent of citrus, smoke, grapefruit and white flowers. The wine is delicate and smooth on the palate and ripe creamy fruits give a feeling of Spätlese presence to the wine. The finish in turn, with its juicy acidity and great feel of lightness, is very Kabinett in style. All this climaxes in a gorgeous after-taste of smoke and citrusy fruits. This is a stunning delicately Spätlese-styled fruity-wine in the making! 2024-2036

2016er von Othegraven Ockfener Bockstein Riesling Kabinett 05 17 93

Still slightly closed at this early stage, this only gradually reveals a very fresh expression of fruit with plenty of mint, grass, gooseberry, lime and grapefruit all wrapped into some yeasty notes. The wine shows a touch of presence and ripeness on the palate where apricot and yellow peach join the party and add smoothness and juiciness. The finish is, in turn, superbly focused and precise. This is a great success! 2026-2036+
Weingut von Othegraven
(Kanzem – Saar)

2016er von Othegraven Ockfener Bockstein Riesling Spätlese 10 17 93

Intense flowery notes are joined by superbly fresh mint, yellow peach, smoke and yeasty residues of spontaneous fermentation on the nose of this superb wine. The wine is juicy yet the acidity is directly present, making the fruity side feel fresh and animating. This is a very playful Spätlese, which is very easy to knock down yet there is quite some depth and complexity which will eventually fully emerge at maturity. 2024-2042

2016er von Othegraven Wiltinger Kupp Riesling Kabinett 04 17 93

This immediately captures one’s attention through a most beautifully perfumed nose driven by some yeasty notes from spontaneous fermentation as well as vineyard peach and dried flowers. The wine dances on the finely textured palate and delivers plenty of complexity without weight. The finish is feather light and with great Kabinett definition. This is breathtakingly beautiful wine. 2024-2036

2016er von Othegraven Wawerner Riesling Feinherb 16 17 92

The 2016er Wawerner was made from vines planted in 1964 in the Herrenberger vineyards. It offers a gorgeous and delicately ripe nose of quince, almond cream, ginger, greengage, anise and earthy spices. The wine is packed with gorgeous flavors of fruits and spices and offers superb presence on the palate. It proves impressively assertive but without any heat (well the wine has only 11.5% of alcohol!) in the finish and leaves one with an almost dry-tasting feel in the smoky after-taste. What a great complex piece of (just) off-dry Riesling! 2018-2026

2016er von Othegraven Wawerner Herrenberger Riesling Kabinett 06 17 91

Superbly smoky elements are joined by delicate flowery notes, almond and coconut on the nose. The wine is creamy and almost soft initially, yet the finish delivers more presence and zesty fruits. This is quite long and mouth-wateringly delicious in a rather direct and ripe style. 2023-2036

2016er von Othegraven Kabinett Riesling Feinherb 03 17 90

A quite reductive nose of yeasts, almond cream, gooseberry, coconut and pear gives way to lovely juicy and ripe fruits on the palate. The whole balance is on the smooth and supple side at the moment, yet the finish proves already nicely focused and zesty. The wine remains truly Kabinett in style in a mouth-wateringly light-bodied and focused finish. This only needs a few years in the bottle to show its full potential. 2020-2031

2016er von Othegraven Kanzemer Riesling Trocken 19 17 90

Made from highly ripe grapes harvested in the left part of the Altenberg, this proves quite restrained and intensely smoky at first before revealing a delicately exotic touch of almond cream and candied grapefruit. The wine is superbly lively and playful on the structured and medium-bodied palate. The finish proves long and deliciously tart and a touch of power and tartness in the after-taste adds to overall pleasure of enjoying this “little” GG. 2019-2026

2016er von Othegraven Riesling Trocken Max 15 17 88

The 2016er dry Max is made from grapes harvested in Wawerner Herrenberger (young vines) as well as in the lower part of the Altenberg. It delivers a superbly spicy and zesty nose driven by grapefruit, ginger, almond and a touch of bakery notes. The wine flows with good intensity on the palate and lovely citrusy fruits make for a nice feel of freshness. There is still a touch of tartness in the finish (amplified by the CO2 still trapped in the wine), which needs to integrate. This will be a quite nice dry Riesling in a year or two. 2018-2022
Weingut von Othegraven
(Kanzem – Saar)

| 2016er von Othegraven | Riesling Feinherb VO | 01 17 | 86 |

The 2016er Riesling Feinherb VO is made from purchased grapes and was fermented down to 15 g/l of residual sugar. It delivers a nicely airy nose driven by flowery elements, citrusy fruits and almond. This gives way to a zesty feel underlined by good structure on the palate. The just off-dry and deliciously tart finish makes one want to go for more. 2018-2022

About Mosel Fine Wines

Independent publication on Mosel Riesling (and beyond!) with reports on vintages, Estates and wines at maturity.

Covering every year up to 1,000 wines from the current vintage from all leading Estates of the region, of which the best make it into the Issues.

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