



Pinot Gris Estate 2015

A new selection "parcellaire" of carefully chosen plots of the Famille Hugel estate situated in Riquewihr in its most prestigious crus. Most of the plots chosen for this new wine are being converted into Organic viticulture. The unique clay soils of Riquewihr, in and around the Sporen give a characteristic density to wines from this remarkable terroir. A wine of depth and of patience.

The Vintage

2015 will go down as an exceptional vintage year for the whole of France. After one of the hottest and driest summers since 2003 and a harvest quality to rivals those of the great "solar" vintages of 1945, 1976, 1989 and 2009, the Alsace region will be no exception.

The year started with quite normal weather conditions, a total of 6 days below freezing (up to -6°C) during the winter. The spring was, however, pleasant and sunny. The vines budded slightly later than usual, around the 13 April, and blossomed during the first weeks of June, indicating an early vintage. This was normal considering the low rain fall, a record of only 30mm between 4 May and 24 July! These dry conditions were compounded by a heatwave that lasted for almost the whole of July.

By the time the grapes started to ripen, the vines were suffering, especially in the more well-drained soils with limited reserves of water. Riquewihr and its loamy soil seemed to have escaped the worst of this and the heavy rain that came in mid-August saved the harvest just in time.

We started grape-picking on the 10 September, three days later than the rest of the Alsace, and the first grapes to arrive in the winery gave every indication of an exceptional vintage year. The grapes were perfectly healthy and ripe; their supple acidity was a taste of great wine to come. The Pinots, especially the magnificent Pinot Noir, of this great "solar" year were highly appreciated.

Only one day of rain disrupted the harvest, which was already well underway at the time.

The rapid acceleration of the ripening during the third week and a nice outbreak of botrytis meant the most part of our Riesling de Schoenenbourg were harvested late, and once again the Engelkritt (Angels' Vine) won us not one but two of the "Sélection de Grains Nobles" awards for this grape variety, the most concentrated being at a potential of 23°!

The vines

Grapes carefully selected from within the Hugel Family estate including a high proportion from the Pflostig, strongly influenced by the chalky soils of Riquewihr.

The grapes have been handpicked into small containers such that they arrive intact to the press.

Winemaking

Gravity feed presses, no pumping or other handling.

After a few hours of decanting the must is then transferred to vats for fermentation at a carefully controlled temperature (18 to 24°C). Part of the wine (around 30%) was fermented in six to ten wine Burgundy barrels; this gives the wine body without the addition of any oaky character. A single racking before winter allowing the wine to clarify naturally without any artificial cold treatment. The wine is then lightly filtered in spring before bottling. The bottles are then laid down in our cellars before commercialisation. The whole of the vintage was corked with **DIAM**, the cork without cork taint.

> Alcohol level	14.7°
> Residual Sugar (g/l)	8.0
> Acidity (g/l)	6.14
> pH	3.27
> Grapes :	Pinot Gris 100 %

Tasting notes by Serge Dubs, World's Best Sommelier 1989

Visually attractive intense and generous concentrated colour with a fine sparkle: straw yellow, lemon, lime tree leaf, pale spring green and dense but smooth legs.

The aroma is intense, expressive and offers the spontaneity of its calm magnificence that remains balanced and harmonious just the same with acacia blossom honey, apricot, grapefruit and orange peel, zan, liquorice, fresh almonds, "Reine Claude" plums with a hint of cake and wood smoke.

On the palate it has a soft, full, juicy typically wine-like texture that combine with its fresh and dynamic dryness. The after taste is full-flavoured with a deep and refreshing finish which leaves the mouth clear, crisp and satisfied. This wine is fine to serve now and can be laid down for up to 10 years. This is a great Pinot Gris which can be enjoyed straight away but will age remarkably well over the next ten years.

Recommends with gastronomic dishes, with sea or fresh water fish with freshwater shrimp or lobster sauce, or served with spiced dishes: lamb curry, red mullet in turmeric, monkfish in saffron. With some ageing it will become an ideal companion for poultry, pheasant or other white meat dishes. Veal chops with wild mushrooms, game-bird terrine.

