



Mosel Fine Wines

"The Independent Review of Mosel Riesling"

By Jean Fisch and David Rayer

Weingut Carl Loewen

(Leiwen – Middle Mosel)

Christopher Loewen was all smile when talking about their 2020 vintage: "2020 was a captivating but also a challenging vintage. We had some rains at the beginning of the year followed by good weather during bud break. The weather then became much drier, but as we use no weedkiller in our vineyards, I feel that this helped retain some moisture in our soils and vines in this vintage. For me, what really made the difference in this vintage was the moment of harvest, namely before or after the rain. One can literally taste this difference in the wines now. We started our harvest on September 28. Unlike previous vintages, we started with our best vineyard in 2020, which is one we normally pick on the very last day. We continued at steady pace with our other top vineyards during the first week. We finished our harvest by October 13 by picking grapes for our Estate wine. The Oechsle degrees were comparatively low but the aromatic profile of the grapes was already ripe and of high quality! I find 2020 completely different to all other vintages. I never experienced such a vintage where the analytic data is so different from the tasting experience. I find the vintage particularly well suited for dry wines which were made from grapes with up to 92-96° Oechsle, i.e. not excessive levels. But we were also able to harvest two Auslese before the rain and one BA from a small plot where we still had some grapes left after the end of the main harvest."

The Estate was able to produce its usual full collection of wines, including the top dry and dry-tasting wines (Ritsch GG, Maximiner Herrenberg GG, and 1896) right up to sweet and noble-sweet wines (Ritsch Auslese, Maximiner Herrenberg Auslese GK, and Ritsch BA, the latter being earmarked for a future Auction). As Christopher reported, "the fermentations went well and the dry wines are even slightly drier than in previous vintages, something we were also looking for, even if we are at the mercy of our spontaneous fermentations."

Carl Loewen produced a superb collection which shines through presence, finesse and intensity. As Christopher mentioned it, the vintage proved a remarkable one for the Estate's dry wines, in particular for its beautiful Ritsch GG. However, we feel that the true stars of the collection are its range of dry-tasting and off-dry wines. The "simple" Alte Reben is anything but simple and will give many premium wines a good run for their money. The 1896 is, again, a stunning effort and, again, a candidate for off-dry wine of the vintage. The noble-sweet wines are luscious and full of character. Its BA, a rare beast at any Estate in 2020, is simply stunning. Besides Riesling, lovers of Pinot Blanc should definitively have a closer look at Carl Loewen's rendition: This wine is truly superb!

2020er	Carl Loewen	Thörnicher Ritsch Riesling Beerenauslese	19 21	Auction?	97
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The 2020er Ritsch Riesling Beerenauslese, as it is referred to on the front label, was made from 100% of botrytized fruit picked at 150° Oechsle, and was fermented down to noble-sweet levels of residual sugar (171 g/l). This already lightly yellow-golden-colored wine offers a beautifully concentrated and deep nose of acacia, honey, date, dried apricot, herbs, licorice, fig, candied and sweet exotic fruits, hazelnut paste, and earthy spices, all wrapped into a whiff of volatile acidity. It reveals a magnificent botrytis impact on the palate where concentrated flavors of exotic fruits and honey make for a velvety feel but also a creamy sense of viscosity and oiliness. There is sweetness in spades, but the finish is very, almost painfully, intense, and focused thanks to an admirable and even forceful zesty acidity presence. This juicy yet intense and electric BA is really admirable! 2030-2050

2020er	Carl Loewen	Longuicher Maximiner Herrenberg Riesling 1896	13 21		95
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The 1896, as it is simply referred to on the front dark-grey label (the reference to the vintage and the vineyard is left for the back label), is a just off-dry wine (with 11 g/l of residual sugar) picked on century-old un-grafted vines (planted in 1896) in the Longuicher Maximiner Herrenberg, and was made using traditional winemaking methods dating back to the early 1900s. It immediately catches one's attention through a refined yet very complex and layered nose of fine spices, aniseed herbs, pear, fresh pineapple, almond, greengage, and a dash of passion fruit. The wine is hugely delicate and creamy on the smooth and suave palate packed with flavors of almond, coconut milk, and fine spices. It leaves one with an immense sense of focus in the hugely long and gorgeously intense finish. A touch of off-dry sweetness still needs to integrate in the spicy and salty aftertaste. This is a magnificent and playful Riesling mixing delicacy with intensity and focus. 2024-2040

2020er	Carl Loewen	Longuicher Maximiner Herrenberg Riesling Auslese GK	17 21		94
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The 2020er Maximiner Herrenberg Riesling Auslese, as it is referred to on the front label, was made from 80% of botrytized fruit picked at 115° Oechsle and fermented down to noble-sweet levels of residual sugar (102 g/l). It offers a complex and elegantly flowery nose of pear puree, candied grapefruit, aniseed herbs, vineyard peach, and spices. The wine is gorgeously juicy and suave on the refined and creamy palate. Its rich and mature side are magnificently well taken care of by minty herbs, anise, and candied citrusy fruits. The finish has cut, focus, and great energy. The aftertaste is all about almond cream, smoke, and grapefruit zest. This is a gorgeous Auslese GK in the making! 2030-2060



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2020er	Carl Loewen	Thörnicher Ritsch Riesling Trocken GG	11 21	93
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The 2020er Ritsch GG, as it is referred to on the front label, comes from old and partially still un-grafted vines and was fermented spontaneously and aged on its gross lees in traditional Fuder cask for 6 months. It immediately catches one's attention with its intensive and smoky notes of herbs, ginger, pear, candied grapefruit, almond, and pineapple. The wine is superbly delicate and smooth on the palate and delivers plenty of finesse and freshness in the hugely long, smoky, and intense finish. The aftertaste is intense, focused, and hugely multi-layered. This is a stunning dry Riesling in the making! 2024-2030

2020er	Carl Loewen	Thörnicher Ritsch Riesling Auslese	16 21	92+
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The 2020er Ritsch Riesling Auslese, as it is referred to on the front label, was made from grapes picked at 97° Oechsle and was fermented down to sweet levels of residual sugar (82 g/l). It offers a refined and subtly ripe nose of coconut cream, pineapple, honeyed yellow peach, melon, pear, rhubarb, a touch of dried apricot and minty herbs. With more airing, riper scents of toffee and butter cream join the party and give the wine an Auslese GK touch. The wine proves still very much on the sweet side on the palate, where plenty of yellow and ripe fruits add to the currently smooth, suave, and rich feel. The finish is delicately smooth and creamy. This ripe and luscious expression of sweet wine will not reveal all its facets for another decade if not more. But it could then even surpass our high expectation as it develops its finesse. 2030-2060

2020er	Carl Loewen	Longuicher Maximiner Herrenberg Riesling Trocken GG	12 21	92
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The 2020er Maximin Herrenberg GG, as it is referred to on the front label, comes from un-grafted vines planted in 1902 and was fermented spontaneously and aged on its gross lees in traditional Fuder cask for 6 months. It offers an aromatic and attractive nose of anise, pear, grapefruit, yellow peach, blackberry, apricot blossom, and plenty of herbs and a touch of camphor. The wine comes over as ample, supple, and almost smooth at first on the palate, before quite zesty and herbal flavors of lime, ginger, and pear kick in. It leaves one with some earthy and salty elements in the fully dry finish. This rather aromatic and ripe expression of dry Mosel Riesling will need a few years in order to integrate its tartness and reveal its full complexity. 2024-2028+

2020er	Carl Loewen	Leiwener Laurentiuslay Riesling Spätlese	15 21	91
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The 2020er Laurentiuslay Riesling Spätlese, as it is referred to on the front label, was harvested at 94° Oechsle from grapes situated higher up the main hill and was fermented down to sweet levels of residual sugar (71 g/l). It offers a quite juicy, aromatic, and ripe nose of pear, apricot, pineapple, grapefruit, almond cream, toffee, and some herbs in the background. The wine coats the palate with juicy and ripe fruits, a hint of honey, coconut cream, and pear puree more characteristic of an Auslese but reveals more Spätlese character in the light-footed but smooth finish. Some sweetness still needs to integrate in the intense, persistent, and ripe aftertaste which means that this wine is best left alone for a decade or so. 2030-2045

2020er	Carl Loewen	Riesling Alte Reben	07 21	91
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The 2020er Riesling Alte Reben is a just off-dry wine (10 g/l of residual sugar) made from very old vines planted between 1949 and 1962, mostly situated in the Leiwener Klostergarten and for a tiny part in the Detzemer Würzgarten. It offers a beautifully spicy, fresh, and zesty nose of lime, orange blossom, fresh herbs, mint, a hint of almond cream, anise, and smoke. The wine is superbly balanced on the palate where some fine fruity and creamy elements are wrapped into playful and animating zest. It leaves a great sense of focus and almost sharpness in the long finish. The aftertaste is still rather monolithic but hints at greatness to come. This hugely successful dry-tasting wine cruises far above its mere Estate Riesling level! All it needs now is a few years of bottle aging to reveal its underlying complexity 2023-2030

2020er	Carl Loewen	Detzemer Maximiner Klosterlay Riesling	08 21	90
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The 2020er Riesling Maximin Klosterlay, as it is referred to on the front label, is a just off-dry wine (10 g/l of residual sugar) made from 45-year-old vines in the central part of the vineyard. It offers a quite aromatic and attractive nose of pineapple, pear, a hint of quince, earthy herbs, anise, plum, smoke, and cherry. The wine proves quite imposing on the palate, where plenty of herbs, zesty, and spicy elements are wrapped into juicy tartness and a touch of power. A touch of breadth in the dry-tasting finish would make us opt to enjoy this wine in its flamboyant youth. 2022-2025



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2020er	Carl Loewen	Leiwener Laurentiuslay Riesling Trocken Alte Reben	09 21	89
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The 2020er Laurentiuslay Alte Reben Trocken, as it is referred to on the front label, comes from up to century-old un-grafted vines in the steep and central part of the vineyard. It offers a beautifully aromatic, herbal, and minty nose of lemon, grapefruit, earthy spices, rosemary, smoke, and anise. The wine shows some juicy and ripe yellow fruits wrapped into good grip, spices, and herbs on the palate and leaves a quite intense and even slightly powerful feel in the tart and very spicy finish. The aftertaste is quite enjoyable in an aromatic and demonstrative style. 2023-2026

2020er	Carl Loewen	Longuicher Herrenberg Riesling Kabinett	14 21	89
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The 2020er Herrenberg Riesling Kabinett Bis zu 100 Jahre alte Wurzelechte Reben, as it is referred to on the front label, is made from grapes harvested at 84° Oechsle on over 100-year-old un-grafted vines situated high up the hill and was fermented down to barely fruity-styled levels of residual sugar (35 g/l). It offers a still rather reductive nose of herbs, lime, and smoke enhanced by yellow peach, pear, and anise after some airing. The wine proves delicately smooth and quite juicy on the palate, where some Spätlese fruit intensity and ripeness make for a supple feel. The finish reveals more structure, intensity and even a touch of power. This rounder and smoother expression of Kabinett is quite delicious in its direct way but will however benefit from a couple of years in order to better integrate its smoothness. 2024-2030

2020er	Carl Loewen	Pinot Blanc Trocken	04 21	89
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The 2020er Pinot Blanc Trocken is a dry Fuder-fermented wine made from grapes picked on grey slate in the Leiwener Klostersgarten from vines planted in the early 2000s. It offers a quite aromatic nose of Conference pear, yellow peach, tangerine, mint, rosemary, anise, and spices. The wine coats the palate with ample creamy and ripe fruits. A superb sense of freshness, from the wine's spicy and zesty elements, adds focus and depth to the whole experience. Rather than becoming broad, the wine proves nicely focused and fresh in the quite aromatic finish. The aftertaste is smoky, herbal, and long. We would opt to enjoy this in its primary phase, when it still has this very nice focus and freshness. Now-2023

2020er	Carl Loewen	Riesling Quant	21 21	87
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The 2020er Riesling Quant is a barely off-dry Riesling (11 g/l of residual sugar) from younger Estate holdings in the Leiwener Klostersgarten, Thörnicher Schiesslay, and Longuicher Hirschlay planted with a mix of massal selection from the Estate's 120-year-old vines in the Longuicher Maximiner Herrenberg and 30-40-year-old vines planted with conventional clones. It offers a quite direct and very aromatic nose of pear, candied zesty fruits, earthy herbs, and yellow peach, with a hint of petrol. The wine shows a ripe, juicy, and ample structure on the palate and leaves a nicely broad and animating feel in the finish. This light off-dry Riesling has quite some power in the aftertaste and will best be served with some food. Now-2025

2020er	Carl Loewen	Riesling Trocken Varidor	22 21	86
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The 2020er Riesling Trocken Varidor is a dry wine made from grapes harvested in the steep part of the Leiwener Klostersgarten and in the Thörnicher Schiesslay from 10 to 25-year-old vines (coming from a massale selection from the vines planted in 1896). It offers a very aromatic and intense nose of lemon, pineapple, thyme, rosemary, anise, grapefruit, and licorice. This intensity of aromatics is also very present on the light creamy and subtly ripe palate. An herbal and tart side adds some freshness to this overall big and ostentatious expression dry Estate Riesling. This will be great to enjoy in its youth in its intense and direct style. 2022-2024

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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