

GUNTHER JAUCH AND VON OTHEGRAVEN: THE RESURRECTION OF A CLASSIC



Weingut von Othegraven has a documented tradition of more than 600 years. Today's owner is Gunther Jauch, right.

TV presenter Gunther Jauch, 64, is the most famous German you've never heard of. His quiz show *Wer Wird Millionär?*, or "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?" screens during primetime on Monday evenings on the RTL channel and typically attracts more than 5 million viewers. But there is another side to the intelligent and witty Jauch – he is also the owner of the Weingut von Othegraven wine estate in Kanzem in the Saar sub-region of the Mosel.

When Jauch and his wife, Thea, purchased the estate in 2010, he was an outsider who had jumped into the wine business without training or experience. On another level, however, he was an insider: The seller, Dr. Heidi Kegel, was a relative of his, so von Othegraven is now the seventh generation of family ownership. Jauch recalled how as a child he often played in the estate's park-like grounds. Back then, in the 1960s and '70s, the estate's reputation was at its zenith. "At dinner, we children always got a very small glass of wine," he told me. That seems to have positively infected him with the wine bug.

Today it's rare to get a chance to taste a von Othegraven wine from that period, and even rarer to taste a handful of the best the estate has ever made, as I did recently in Berlin with Jauch himself.



Jauch is well known for his role as the presenter on the German version of "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?"



Chris Radic of Pracht Berlin (left), senior editor Stuart Pigott (center) and Gunther Jauch (right).

When the quality of the von Othegraven wines became erratic at the end of the 1970s, it turned many collectors off. Mature wines from top Mosel producers of the period who always made top-quality wines, like Egon Müller-Scharzhof or Joh. Jos. Prüm, are much easier to find. Then in July 2020, Chris Radic of Pracht Berlin had a stroke of luck when Christie's auctioned the collection of Benjamin Ichinose in San Francisco. Radic bought some very rare bottles, and they enabled him to stage a tasting that took participants back to the heyday of von Othegraven.

The very first wine, the incredibly complex and super-elegant von Othegraven Riesling Mosel Kanzemer Berg feinste Auslese 1959, rated 99 points and showed why the reputation of this estate was then unexcelled in the region. For its age, the wine was incredibly fresh, and time had perfectly integrated the natural grape sweetness to create a near-perfect harmony. It proved what a spectacular site the Kanzemer Berg – which is now known as Kamzemer Altenberg – really is.

“The vineyard is as steep as the Matterhorn – that’s a 65% grade from the foot to the summit,” Jauch said, sounding as though he were a contestant answering a question on his own quiz show.



Exclusive vintages that senior editor Stuart Pigott recently tasted in Berlin.

Today the von Othegraven estate has 17.3 hectares (43 acres) of vineyards, in a handful of steep sites, with slate soils all planted 100% with riesling, but during its first period of glory, the estate’s holdings totaled just five hectares. Von Othegraven’s first heyday began in 1921 when Max von Othegraven took over the estate and landed a coup with his first harvest, making one of the legendary wines of this vintage of the century. After his death in 1968, his widow, Maria, kept the fire alive for a further decade.

The estate reminds me of one of the beautiful smaller chateaux in St-Emilion, like Figeac, or Vieux Chateau Certan in Pomerol, except for that fine Matterhorn right out back. “Because von Othegraven history goes back into the Middle Ages, visitors think the house must be old, too,” Jauch explained. “They’re often disappointed to hear that it was actually built in 1954 after the previous buildings were badly damaged at the end of World War II.”

During the last decade, the focus of Jauch and his winemaker Andreas Barth (who also makes wine at his own Lubentiusshof estate in the Mosel) has been to rebuild the reputation through ever-improving wine quality. No further expansion of the vineyard area or new products are planned. The closest Jauch has come to the latter is the von Otheграven Riesling Mosel Wiltinger Kupp GG 2018, one of the many remarkable dry wines the estate has produced in recent years. It is very cool and refined for the exceptionally warm growing season, and that's the kind of comment that was often made about the von Otheграven wines during the estate's first heyday. This fact, along with our many other recent high ratings for these wines, is good reason to state that von Otheграven is back.

To experience one of the estate's mature jewels, you can visit Jauch's Villa Kellermann restaurant in Potsdam, where several of them feature on the wine list. "I don't cook there, so you don't need to be afraid to go!" Jauch noted with his usual irony.

– Stuart Pigott, senior editor

TASTING NOTES

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL KANZEMER BERG FEINSTE AUSLESE 1959

Country Germany	Score	For more than 60 years of age, this is extraordinarily alive with just a hint of sweetness. Very complex nose, ranging from dried apricot to forest floor, from bitter orange to beeswax. Very concentrated, but equally refined with vibrant acidity that drives the cascade of dried-fruit character at the incredibly long finish. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel	99	
Vintage 1959		

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL ALTENBERG AUSLESE 1976

Country Germany	Score	Lovely, super ripe peach and apricot nose with hints of candied orange and creme brulee. Stunning concentration and focus for a vintage that often moves in a heavy and oily direction. Then comes the enormously long, filigree finish that takes your breath away. From the last top vintage of this estate's first golden age. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel	98	
Vintage 1976		

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL ALTENBERG GG 2019

Country Germany	Score	Still a bit shy, but this has fantastic, floral delicacy on the nose. Concentrated, but so sharply focused and precisely delineated on the palate, this is a giant of finesse. Super long, stony finish that lights up the sky. Just wait until this has a couple more years of bottle age! Drink or hold.
Region Mosel	98	
Vintage 2019		

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL ALTENBERG AUSLESE 2019

Country Germany	Score	Super fragrant and filigree, this is a great Saar Auslese that impresses with finesse, rather than power. So many delicate, exotic-fruit and floral notes. The power shows only right at the end, in the crescendo finale. From organically grown grapes with Fair'n Green certification. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel	97	
Vintage 2019		

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL ALTENBERG AUSLESE GOLD CAP 2017

Country Germany	Score	Hard to resist the floral honey, a tropical-fruit-coulis character and breathtaking balance of this great sweet riesling. The racy brilliance of the Saar marries well with the heavenly sweetness, which makes you want to ask time to stop. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel	97	
Vintage 2017		

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL ALTENBERG KABINETT 2019

Country Germany	Score	97	Where can you find a more classic Kabinett than this? The stunning nose of cassis, white peach, honeysuckle and parsley sucks you into this supernaturally fresh wine that has so much to give, yet remains feather-light. Breathtaking purity and minerality at the finish. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2019			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL BOCKSTEIN GG 2019

Country Germany	Score	97	Effusive, floral and spicy notes with something yeasty, too. Stunning concentration and brilliance with such a filigree and uplifting finish you just want to bathe in this masterpiece of delicacy. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2019			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL ALTENBERG AUSLESE 2017

Country Germany	Score	96	Lush and delicate at the same time. This has everything you'd expect from a great Saar Auslese. More importantly, the combination of dynamic freshness and mineral intensity offers decades of aging potential. You could certainly drink this now, but then you'd miss some of the mystery.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2017			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL ALTENBERG GG 2016

Country Germany	Score	96	A young Altenberg with a smoky, rather closed bouquet, but behind that is a stunning dry riesling from this producer with a whiplash mineral acidity driving it along at a serious speed. Better from 2018 and for some time after.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2016			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL ALTENBERG SPÄTLESE 2018

Country Germany	Score	96	Plenty of creme caramel here, as well as dried apricots, brioche and almond granita. This may be a Spätlese with only 7% alcohol, but the acidity feathers the medium sweetness with extreme precision and dynamism, creating a remarkable sense of tension and poise. The finish is long and very mineral. Drink in 2022.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2018			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL ALTENBERG SPÄTLESE (AUCTION) 2017

Country Germany	Score	96	Super fine and racy, this has the brightness of an electric discharge. The mineral freshness at the finish doesn't want to stop. Drink or hold. This surely has enormous aging potential.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2017			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL ALTENBERG SPÄTLESE ALTE REBEN 2017

Country Germany	Score	96	Like a giant walking on tip toe, this wine has enormous power that you can barely feel at present. Hints of honey and caramel that beautifully complement the mineral freshness at the very long finish. Drink or hold. The longer you wait the more this will amaze you.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2017			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL ALTENBERG SPÄTLESE ALTE REBEN 2019

Country Germany	Score	96	Don't be taken in by the first, charming ,peachy and floral impression this great Spätlese gives, because if you are a little patient, then so much more will follow. I love the orange-blossom and honeydew-melon aromas, then the oh so precisely delineated succulence of the rather sleek palate. Then comes a tidal wave of minerals on the intense yet pristine finish. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2019			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL BOCKSTEIN AUSLESE 2017

Country Germany	Score	96	Breathtaking interplay of floral honey, nectarines and a caramelized citrus character. Intense mineral freshness and acidity combine to illuminate the aromas like a fireworks display does for a garden party in summer. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2017			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL KANZEMER BERG FEINSTE AUSLESE 1964

Country Germany	Score	96	Very distinctive nose of pine resin and marzipan with hints of dried apricot and cooked peach. Very rich and creamy, this feels like fine silk on the palate, thanks to the way the sweetness, body and acidity are beautifully integrated. Very long, graceful finish. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 1964			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL ALTENBERG GG 2018

Country Germany	Score	95	Attractively flinty, stony aromas with fresh lime-juice notes lead to a palate that has a smooth and concentrated feel with dry, grapefruit and lime flavors, delivered in a stony, smooth texture. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2018			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL ALTENBERG KABINETT 2018

Country Germany	Score	95	Aromas of chamomile flowers and lemons, as well as grapefruit. This has a sleek and focused feel with succulent, elegant and taut style on the palate. Lemon and white-peach flavors abound. Superb. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2018			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL ALTENBERG KABINETT (AUCTION) 2017

Country Germany	Score	95	Concentrated and deep for Kabinett. This also manages to be super precise. The touch of sweetness underlines this beautifully. The finish is like a searchlight probing the darkness. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2017			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL ALTENBERG SPÄTLESE 2017

Country Germany	Score	95	Some great wines are easy to understand, and this is one of them. In spite of the stunning fruit, it also has a dark mineral side that creates tension. And it makes this wine so exciting. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2017			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL BOCKSTEIN GG 2016

Country Germany	Score	95	Still slightly closed in the nose, but peach and blossom notes slowly unfurl with each swirl of the glass. However, on the palate this is a compelling wine with enormous mineral drive and a very long finish that gives no quarter. Better from 2018 and for years after.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2016			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL HERRENBERGER AUSLESE 2018

Country Germany	Score	95	Not only are dried apricots and poached peaches around in abundance, but there are subtle undertones of bitter lemons and jasmine. Rich and sweet, but simultaneously bright and pure, this packs luscious flavors of lemon drizzle cake into an imposing, glycerol-like structure. The acidity sings out with confidence on the finish. Drink now or hold.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2018			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL HERRENBERGER SPÄTLESE 2017

Country Germany	Score	95	This super elegant Spätlese seems to have gathered all the flowers of spring, and the sweetness of the wine is composed of their nectar. Yet, hidden behind all this effusiveness is a serious structure carrying the very long and complete finish. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2017			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL KUPP GG 2018

Country Germany	Score	95	A very cool customer for the exceptionally warm vintage, this has delicate apricot and star-fruit aromas, but also a hint of damp moss. Extremely elegant and refined on the palate with totally underplayed power. Long, graceful herb and wet-stone finish. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2018			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL ALTENBERG KABINETT 2017

Country Germany	Score	94	A whole garden of tropical flowers and a stunning interplay of racy acidity, minerality and generous fruit, ranging from lemons to passion fruit. A very long, enormously refreshing finish. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2017			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL BOCKSTEIN KABINETT 2018

Country Germany	Score	94	Fresh notes of grapefruit and lime peel with pastry and flinty reduction. The palate has a sleek and fleshy feel, nicely chiseled flesh and very elegant acidity to fire the finish along in a clean and assertive mode. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2018			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL BOCKSTEIN KABINETT 2019

Country Germany	Score	94	I love the basil, parsley and white-currant aromas of this very sleek and pure Kabinett. Super crisp, thanks to the lemony acidity, this has so much mineral drive through the very long finish. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2019			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL BOCKSTEIN SPÄTLESE 2017

Country Germany	Score	94	Brimming with peaches, nectarines and floral notes, this is a succulent and refined Spätlese with near-perfect balance. A long, polished and silky finish. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2017			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL HERRENBERGER KABINETT 2017

Country Germany	Score	94	A beauty to behold. This is arguably the most floral and delicate 2017 Saar Kabinett, showing the poise of a great ballet dancer en pointe. Fine orange notes at the long graceful finish. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2017			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL KANZEMER TROCKEN 2019

Country Germany	Score	94	Where is the seafood? A very exciting and energetic young Saar wine with a ton of mineral, herbal and lees character that neatly fill out the medium body, the long filigree finish seeming to vibrate on the palate. Drink or hold. Screw cap.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2019			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL KUPP AUSLESE 2017

Country Germany	Score	94	Although this is lush and creamy with very attractive notes of floral honey and candied lemon peel, it isn't at all massive. It is much less heavier than you might think. Extremely clean at the long finish. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2017			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL ALTENBERG AUSLESE 2016

Country Germany	Score	93	A wild cocktail of fruits and a hint of funk make this a very exciting riesling. Although its not dry, it has every bit as much character as a high-end dry white. The best thing is that it's not a jot too sweet or too powerful and that's what makes it seriously drinkable now or anytime during the next decade.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2016			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL ALTENBERG AUSLESE 1975

Country Germany	Score	93	Fully developed nose of candied orange and roasted coffee bean. Medium-bodied with a cool, elegant personality. After 46 years, this now tastes almost as dry as a modern GG at the long, elegant finish. Drink now.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 1975			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL ALTENBERG KABINETT 2016

Country Germany	Score	Very effusive nose that is really complex. Great balance of juicy fruit and mineral freshness, then a finish which is so tense, vibrant and mineral that it takes your breath away. A stunning kabinettt that is great now, but will be even better during the next five to 10 years.
Region Mosel	93	
Vintage 2016		

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL ALTENBERG SPÄTLESE 1993

Country Germany	Score	Still very fresh (I'd have guessed 2008 or 2010 blind), this has long since shed the puppy fat of youth and is now super crisp with notes of parsley and dill through the live-wire finish. Almost Nordic personality! Drink or hold.
Region Mosel	93	
Vintage 1993		

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL BOCKSTEIN KABINETT 2017

Country Germany	Score	Succulent and elegant, this is a very seductive Kabinett with floral delicacy and plenty of peachy fruit. Very straight with crystalline clarity and a long citrusy finish. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel	93	
Vintage 2017		

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL BOCKSTEIN SPÄTLESE 2016

Country Germany	Score	A cool and elegant wine with a lovely succulence and freshness. A very good balance at the long finish. The smoke and cassis aromas are striking. Drink now or mature for 5 to 10 years.
Region Mosel	93	
Vintage 2016		

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL HERRENBERGER KABINETT 2019

Country Germany	Score	Still extremely youthful with vibrant, mint and apple aromas, this certainly doesn't smell like it comes from a warm vintage. In fact, the wine has a totally cool and northerly personality. Long, super clean finish with only hint of grape sweetness. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel	93	
Vintage 2019		

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL WAWERNER FEINHERB 2016

Country Germany	Score	The bouquet is such an explosion of herbs and summer fruits so you hardly notice the hint of funk. Brain-jolting effusiveness and brilliance, then stunning interplay of fresh fruit aromas and herbal-mineral freshness. Delicious now but with a decade of life ahead of it.
Region Mosel	93	
Vintage 2016		

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL WAWERNER FEINHERB 2017

Country Germany	Score	Still very youthful with notes of smoke and licorice. With aeration, it shows orange blossoms and lilac. Medium-bodied and rather dry, this has very elegant acidity and real refinement for a wine of this class. A long and subtle finish. Drink or hold. Screw cap.
Region Mosel	93	
Vintage 2017		

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL ALTENBERG SPÄTLESE 2016

Country Germany	Score	This has some of the grapefruit and smoke character, but it also has some beautiful floral notes and an elegant harmony. Very classic and rather elegant spätlese that you could drink now (with spicy food) or age for a decade plus.
Region Mosel	92	
Vintage 2016		

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL KUPP KABINETT 2017

Country Germany	Score	Ripe and expressive but it is also very pure and graceful. A long and very clean finish with serious mineral intensity. Drink or hold.
Region Mosel	92	
Vintage 2017		

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL HERRENBERGER KABINETT 2016

Country Germany	Score	91	Still very young, but also very succulent. This is a beautiful kabinettt with a great balance of sweetness and acidity. Drink now or any time during the next five years.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2016			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL KABINETT FEINHERB 2017

Country Germany	Score	91	Some funk from the wild ferment, but it also shows plenty of floral notes. Medium-bodied and seriously juicy for a Kabinett. The whiplash acidity neatly mops up the touch of sweetness at the very crisp finish. Drink or hold. Screw cap.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2017			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL MAX TROCKEN 2016

Country Germany	Score	91	On the nose this is still a bit closed, but on the palate there's a lot of depth and earthy character for this category. There's a long substantial finish too. This is going to blossom after a little more aging. Best in 2018 and 2019.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2016			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL MAX TROCKEN 2017

Country Germany	Score	91	Still a bit yeasty but it shows great tension and lemony freshness. Plenty of mineral character at the long crisp finish for a "regular" estate riesling. Better from 2019. Screw cap.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2017			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL VO FEINHERB 2017

Country Germany	Score	89	Quite robust and juicy with a lively acidity and an attractive spritz of carbon dioxide. Almost dry at the refreshing finish. A non-estate bottling. Drink now or in 2019. Screw cap.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2017			

VON OTHEGRAVEN (GÜNTHER JAUCH) RIESLING MOSEL KUPP KABINETT 2016

Country Germany	Score	88	A bit tart and slightly sweet-sour. Some herbal and floral character. Drink now.
Region Mosel			
Vintage 2016			
