

*featured flight of the week*

germany  
\$35 per person

Germany's most famous wine goes to the luxurious Riesling. It is one of the few German wines you can reliably find outside of Germany. Yet, this varietal is often misunderstood. Crisp, refreshing, and dry, it is not always the cloyingly sweet wine that we associate with it here in the US. For reds you'll find Spätburgunder (or Pinot Noir), Gewürztraminer, Dornfelder, and Portugieser. While white wine dominates in Germany, red wine has moved up to being 1/3 of the grapes grown in Germany.

**2018 RIESLING SEKT, PETER LAUER  
SAAR, GERMANY  
\$29|\$104**



For purists, there is nothing like the Saar. The magic here is intensity without weight, grandiosity without size: rocks and acidity. Lauer is currently one of the greatest estates in this sacred place. The style here is 180 degrees removed from his famous neighbors Egon Müller and Zilliken. The focus here is on dry and dry-tasting Riesling. While the source of most of the bottlings is the famed Ayler Kupp, Florian uses the pre-1971 vineyard names – Neuenberg, Stirn, Unterstenberg. Rigorous vineyard work, indigenous yeasts and spontaneous fermentations mean the wines find their own balance. The results are undeniable: depth, texture, dimension, clarity, CUT. For Lauer, the large site of the Ayler Kupp has many different terroirs rather than a single, defining character. Soil composition, exposition, altitude, and microclimate in combination with vine age all make contributions to the individual character of each wine.

All vineyard work is done by hand due to the incline of the vineyards. Absolutely no use of insecticides/pesticides or fertilizers; the work is completely organic but not certified as such because Florian refuses to spray copper on the vines. He is alarmed and disturbed by the amount of copper buildup in many organic vineyards and the impact the copper has on the microorganisms in the soil.

Whole-cluster grapes are pressed directly in a pneumatic press, with the juice occasionally pumped back in for a short maceration. All fermentations take place with native yeasts and no fining agents or any other elements or products are ever added. Wines mature in a mixture of stainless steel, fiberglass and traditional Fuder for 1-6 months on the lees, depending on the cuvee. No fining agents are used. The wines are lightly filtered with diatomaceous earth; all wines are vegan.

**2020 RIESLING, EMRICH-SCHÖNLEBER  
NAHE, GERMANY  
\$27|\$97**



For any serious German wine buyer, the wines of Emrich-Schönleber belong in the cellar next to the greatest monumental dry wines being made in Germany, *period*. There is a balance, a center to the best Emrich-Schönleber wines that is about as perfect and meditative as Riesling ever gets: texture and glycerin matched to a chiseled, yet glossy and ultra-fine architecture.

This is the earlier picking/younger-vine selection from the Grand Cru Frühlingsplätzchen. For those of you twisted enough to understand German wine law and the VDP, this would be the estate's "Spätlese Trocken" if they were allowed to label it as such. As with the Grand Cru, the wine is delicate, finessed, very mineral and herbal – it drinks perhaps younger than the denser wines of the Halenberg. It is also not a wine to underestimate. This is a wine that one can cellar and with 5-10+ years it shows the depth of its material.

**2019 PINOT NOIR, ENDERLE & MOLL  
BADEN, GERMANY  
\$35|\$126**



'Liaison' is something like the "1er Cru" bottling for Enderle & Moll. It is sourced from 40-50 year-old vines planted both in limestone and sandstone, a 'liaison' of soil types if you will. It is always one of the most compelling Pinots out there, an absurd value that easily out-classes wines that are twice the price. The 2019 Enderle & Moll's are a return to a more classic, finessed Pinot Noir. It's fascinating, both 2018 and 2019 are warm vintages, yet the 2019 are much more finessed. These taste like cool-vintage wines, even above 14.1%. They are light, near transparent Pinots, with a chewy, feral, compact core. The 2019's have the transparency and energy of white wines; they feel refreshing. This wine is a knock-out, a taut core of funky red and dark fruits, from strawberry and raspberry all the way to dark, earthy crushed berry and cassis, superb definition, energy, and lift. 'Liaison' is fresh and transparent feeling, buoyant almost like a white wine, with a determined yet fine tannic grip. This is in a totally different realm than New World Pinot, having more in common with Alsace reds. Pair with charcuterie made with smoked salty ham and smoked rich tasting sausages, spiced foods with mild curry, cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, ginger, star of anise, cumin, or turmeric, picnic fare, shellfish and egg dishes.