

## Chapter 17

### Alsace

<p>CLIMATE AND GRAPE GROWING</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Climate: <b>Cool-moderate continental</b></li> <li>● <b>Vosges Mountains</b> - shelter vineyards from western winds. Lack of clouds. Sunny summers/dry autumns.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ More sunlight = higher level of sugar ripeness</li> </ul> </li> <li>● North = lesser vineyards (plain between Vosges Mountains + Rhine)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Grapes here used for Cremant d'Alsace</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Further south = best vines on S/SE-facing slopes</li> <li>● Soils: variety (lots of geological complexity)</li> <li>● Grapegrowing practices:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Sloped vines = trained low</b> - benefit from radiated heat/rows oriented to maximise sunlight.</li> <li>○ <b>Plains = vines trained high</b> - minimise spring frost risk</li> <li>○ Organic/biodynamic widely practised - low disease</li> <li>○ Logistic issue = harvest. Small plots/different varieties.</li> <li>○ Ripen at different times - vintage spread over long time                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Mid Sept - begin of Dec (VT/SGN)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>WINE MAKING AND WINE STYLE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Noble grapes = <b>Riesling, Gewurztraminer, Pinot Gris, Muscat</b></li> <li>➤ Majority of wines single varietal</li> <li>➤ Blends - inexpensive/juice not selected for varietal wines - labelled as "Edelswicker" or "Gentil"             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Not for premium brands</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ Aromatic grapes - focus on retaining fruit. WM;             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fermentation in 100-year-old large barrels - tartrate deposit prevents any oak influence.</li> <li>○ Unlikely ut some WM allow MLF</li> <li>○ Bottling = spring following vintage (young/fresh)</li> <li>○ Issue: wine normally dry, but producers making more sweet                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No official labelling determining sweetness</li> <li>■ VT - dry - med-sweet = no indication</li> <li>■ SGN - always sweet (Botrytis influence varies)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ <b>Riesling</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Most planted noble grape</li> <li>➤ Best = medium-full-body/dry/medium alcohol/high acid/citrus/stone fruit/stoney-steeley character</li> <li>➤ Some being made with more residual sugar</li> <li>➤ Less floral than Germany</li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ <b>Gewurztraminer</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Light pink skin grape - golden coloured wines</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Full-body/oily texture/low-med acidity/high alcohol/spicey nose/lychee/rose/sweet baking spices</li> <li>❖ <b>Pinot Gris</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Rich/full-body/high alcohol/rich texture/pronounced flavour intensity/fresh + dried fruits/honey</li> <li>➤ Same colour as Gewurztraminer - less aromatic</li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ <b>Muscat</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 2 Muscat varieties           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Muscat Blanc a Petit Grains = very aromatic/orange blossom/rose/grape/light-med body/low-med acid               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Prone to rot/poor fruit set - less aromatic</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Muscat Ottonel = more reliable, most planted</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Other grape varieties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Pinot Blanc</b> - widely planted. Grown in fertile, plain soils (not slopes). Used for sparkling wines. Non-sparkling = light/simple/refreshing.</li> <li>❖ Auxerrois - Similar to PB, spicier + more full bodied.</li> <li>❖ Sylvaner - Less widely planted - delicately perfumed/some richness (best drunk young)</li> <li>❖ Pinot Noir - only black grape permitted. Lacks weight of Burgundy - light/fruity. Some WM use new oak.</li> </ul>
<p>ALSATIAN APPELLATIONS AND CLASSIFICATIONS</p>	<p>Two appellations; <i>Alsace</i> + <i>Alsace Grand Cru</i>          Vendages Tardives + Selection de Grains Nobles (SGN)          Difficult to distinguish quality - producers add 'Reserve personelle' or 'Cuvee speciale' to label (no legal status)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <b>Alsace</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Majority of the region's production</li> <li>◆ Varietally labelled - 100% of wines must be from grape</li> <li>◆ Small number of blends made (not variety labelled)</li> <li>◆ Some villages allowed to add name to label (rare)</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ <b>Alsace Grand Cru</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Over 50 vineyards have their own grand cru appellation</li> <li>◆ Must be from single noble variety (some exceptions)</li> <li>◆ Labels must have: vineyard/vintage/grape variety (where appropriate)</li> <li>◆ Controversy = some Grand Cru appellations in large area - some not Grand Cru worthy - some producers like GC off label.</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ <b>Vendages Tardives (VT)</b> 'Late Harvest'           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Must be noble variety</li> <li>◆ Min level of sugar ripeness</li> <li>◆ Passerillage (or noble rot)</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ <b>Selection de Grains Nobles (SGN)</b></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Must be noble variety</li><li>◆ Min sugar ripeness (depend on variety)</li><li>◆ Usually noble rot</li><li>◆ Not produced every year or only in small quantities</li></ul>
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