



TASTING ROOM

5 Ways to Celebrate the Summer of Riesling

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Yes: The Summer of Riesling has officially started. So what does that mean for you?

In case you missed the first six iterations of this restaurant-centric lovefest for all things Riesling, what happens is that, beginning June 21, a plethora of restaurants around the country agree to feature several Rieslings by the glass throughout the entire summer. There are also tastings, dinners, hootenannies (well, one hopes) and so on. The list of participants can be found [here](#).

The purpose, of course, is to build awareness for Riesling, a great white grape that suffers from several misconceptions: First, that all of it is sweet (it isn't), second, that it all comes from Germany (it doesn't, though Germany is undoubtedly Riesling's homeland), and third, that it's weird and you'd be better off buying Chardonnay (definitely not). The truth is that Riesling can be anywhere from bone-dry to dessert-style sweet. No matter what, though, it tends to have brilliant acidity—a tartness that wakes up your tongue, and in the case of sweeter Rieslings, keeps the wine from becoming cloying or sugary (acidity actually lowers your tongue's perception of sweetness; think of how boring a Key lime pie would be if it weren't tart).

It's a wildly adaptable food wine—good Riesling can go with anything from roast pork to oysters on the half shell—and if fact if you thumped any random sommelier on the side of the head and said, “Hey, buddy, what's your go-to white when you've got a bunch of people ordering different things on the menu?”, then he or she would undoubtedly cry out, “Riesling!” In fact, I suggest you try this with the next sommelier you see.

So to help out the Riesling cause, here are five good (and affordable) bottles to check out, from five of the world's wine regions best known for this delightful white.

Germany: The Mosel Valley

2012 Urban Riesling (\$12) This intro-level wine from winemaker Nik Weis has apple-spicy flavors and a light touch of sweetness on the finish. It's a good introduction to the Rieslings of Germany's Mosel Valley, inarguably one of the greatest Riesling regions in the world.