

Nahe

10 Sep 2008 by Jancis Robinson

In a nutshell: Superb Riesling at all sweetness levels.

Main grapes: Riesling, Müller-Thurgau (white); Dornfelder (red).

The river Nahe flows into the giant Rhine at the western end of the Rheingau, and the vineyards which flank it are therefore well south of their counterparts in the Mosel, but the best wines often manage to combine the raciness of the best Mosel with the substance of the best Rheingau - although they can be easier to appreciate in youth than either. Schloss Böckelheim, Bad Kreuznach, Burg Layen and Niederhausen are all important wine centres of the Nahe, their surrounding vineyards specialising in zesty Rieslings (although Riesling represents only about a quarter of all the region's vines, and will ripen only in the very best sites). Dornfelder is quite widely planted but most of the Nahe's red wine is sold within Germany.

Some favourite producers: Diel, Dönnhoff, Emrich-Schönleber and Schäfer-Fröhlich.