

Hugel, Jubilee Riesling 2005 Alsace

22 Jul 2011 by Richard Hemming

From £22, £49.98, €31.95.

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Persuading readers of this site to drink Riesling shouldn't be a problem. Especially in [Riesling week](#), no less. We are surely all devotees of this perennial gooseberry of a grape. But Alsace Riesling? When was the last time you honestly had one of those?

Doubtless many of us drink Alsace Riesling regularly, but I expect many more do not. Having visited Alsace recently, it is certainly back on my radar as one of the dazzling stars in the Riesling firmament, across the whole range of styles from everyday drinking to super premium, and always good value – one of Riesling's key benefits.

There were many I could have chosen to feature here, but one stood out as an outstanding wine for its affordability and widespread availability: **Hugel, Jubilee Riesling 2005 Alsace**.

It's a dry style yet has a wonderful honeyed character to the palate, which adds richness and weight. There is a mature, decadent, petrol-fuelled nose as well as the lime fruit and floral hints you would expect. There is a measure of refinement and elegance to this wine which encapsulates all that is great about Riesling. I enjoyed tasting it so much because it explains everything about the variety: the esoteric complexity, vanishing-point length and masterful balance which underpin greatness in any wine, plus tremendous value for money. All in one gulp.

It is also a formidable match for Vietnamese cuisine, with which we enjoyed our bottle. To be precise, we were at La Baie d'Halong in Colmar, a great little restaurant with a BYO wine policy that I can highly commend to anyone visiting the region.

The grapes for the Jubilee Riesling come from the Schoenberg Grand Cru, but Hugel are among several top producers who eschew this classification on their labels. (See more on this phenomenon in [The Trouble With Alsace](#).) The hand-picked grapes are pressed, settled, fermented between 18 and 24 °C and then racked and clarified. No bells or whistles here, the grape and terroir are left to do all the talking.

2005 is the current release for the Jubilee Riesling, meaning it comes to you fully developed and ready to drink, though with the capacity to age comfortably for another six years or so. Hugel is well distributed around the world, to over 100 countries in fact. Even their [website](#) comes in nine languages, including Japanese, Chinese and Korean. If you can't find the Jubilee bottling, their regular Riesling from 2009 is a very good bet, though without the preening brilliance of its grander sibling.

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For a whole raft of tasting notes from Richard's trip to Alsace, see [Alsace - 10 top producers](#).