



ProWein 2012 – Specialist Article Series:

The Wine Business in...Germany – December 2011

## Germany Still Exciting

*On the global wine scene Germany is still a key market. Despite a very small harvest in 2010 (7.1 m hl) Germany is amongst the ten largest wine producing and exporting nations in the world. Wine consumption in Germany is stable despite a slight decline in 2010 and here the country ranks fourth worldwide; experts anticipate a slight rise in the coming years. The Germans hold pole position for sparkling wine consumption.*

Scarcely no other market in a wine-producing country is as international as the German market. However, the wines from the country's own wine-growing areas are by far the market leaders here; in 2010 these accounted for a share in volume and turnover of 46% and 52% respectively. Italy (15% and 13% resp.), France (12% each) and Spain (8% each) are key import nations while wines from the New World accounted for a smaller share at 5% in terms of quantity and 6% in terms of turnover.

With exports it was largely possible to maintain turnover at the same level in the first half of 2011. Despite the low harvest in the 2010 vintage resulting in a 15% drop in volume in this period, turnover only fell slightly by 2% to Euro 174 m. Strong growth was posted by export markets like the USA (+21% for both volume and turnover in 2010), Scandinavia and China (+69% for volume and 64% for turnover). In the first half of 2011 exporters also achieved some considerable value increases (China +87%, Canada +12%, Norway +10%, the USA +5%, and the Netherlands +3%).

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The 2011 vintage has at last brought larger quantities (some 9 m hl) also boasting very good quality. Acidity levels are lower than in 2010; harmonious, balanced wines are expected. The pleasant autumn produced a large quantity of “Prädikatswein”. “This great 2011 vintage will not only cause a stir in Germany but also on our foreign markets,” DWI Head Monika Reule assured.

### **Trends in Germany: White Wines Expanding**

After years of booming sales in red wine German white wines are now experiencing a comeback. White varieties are not only seeing greater sales (the market share of white wines amongst German consumers rose from 46% to 48% in 2010) they are also being cultivated to a greater extent. This meant the proportion accounted for by white wines over the past two years rose from 63.6% to 64.1% thanks to new cultivation, especially of the Riesling and Burgundy varieties. German Riesling is established internationally as a leading variety. In the past year Weißburgunder (Pinot Blanc) varieties were at the focus the German Wine Institute’s communication initiatives. Germany boasts the largest area of Riesling cultivation (22,600 ha = 62.5%); with Weißburgunder Germany it ranks second (4,100 ha) and with Grauburgunder (Pinot Gris) it comes in (4,700 ha) third.

### **Trends in Germany: Red Wines – Successful Spätburgunder**

Germany’s Spätburgunder (Pinot Noir) varieties display considerable potential and are achieving very good results internationally. After France and the US Germany is the third-largest producer of Pinot Noir (11,300 ha). In February 2012 an international Spätburgunder Symposium will be held on the Ahr where top German producers will be able to exchange ideas with colleagues from other countries. The other red varieties are not so much in the international limelight; here discoveries are to be made.

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## Trends in Germany: Organically Produced Wines

Acquiring ever greater repute are organically produced wines. The area under cultivation for these wines has virtually doubled in the past four years (some 5000 ha). The 5% share in total area under vine accounted for by organic wines stands is one of the highest worldwide.

## ProWein 2012

At ProWein 2012 visitors can once again look forward to a comprehensive range of German producers. For the first time the organic wine section in its new location in Hall 7.1 will offer a concentrated platform featuring German and international sectoral associations and exhibitors with a focus on organic wines.

*The author Dr. Rolf Klein is a freelance wine journalist and writer.*

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