

vinous**90** pts**Domaine Rieflé NV Crémant d'Alsace Bonheur Festif****Pfaffenheim, Alsace****Sparkling White wine from France****Drinking window: 2017 - 2022**

Bright yellow. Aromas of honey and spices, with a minty edge. Rich and round but fresh, showing a delicate herbal touch to the ripe citrus and stone fruit flavors. This lovely wine, a blend of 50% Auxerrois and 50% Pinot Blanc, closes with a zingy, lemony touch. Though the estate does not currently label it with a vintage, Paul Rieflé told me he may start doing so soon; this bottling is actually from the 2013 vintage. This Crémant is very popular in Alsace and I can see why. Besides making a Crémant Rosé, the estate will soon be releasing a new Crémant made from recently planted Chardonnay vines.

Ian D'Agata. Tasting date: December 2015

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From Alsace: The 2014s and Late-Release 2013s (Feb 2016)

Domaine Rieflé**Grape/Blend**

Pinot Blanc, Auxerrois

Release price

\$26.00

The logo for Vinous, featuring the word "vinous" in a lowercase, sans-serif font. The letter "o" is stylized with a red outline.

89 pts

Domaine Rieflé 2013 Riesling Bihl**Pfaffenheim, Alsace****White wine from France****Drinking window: 2018 - 2025**

Bright straw-green. Ripe chamomile and sweet herb nuances complement yellow peach and pear on the ripe nose. Then rich and round on the palate, with ripe acidity framing the yellow fruit and sweet herb flavors. The persistent finish shows good lemony zing. The Bihl is characterized by *calcaire oolithique* and is one of only three islands of this type of soil in the area around Pfaffenheim and Rouffach (the others are the grand cru Steinert and Rouffach's Rot-Murlé). These areas suffer water stress in hot, dry vintages due to the poor nutrient status of the soils and excellent drainage that clearly doesn't allow the build-up of any water reserves. "It's a demanding site," notes Rieflé with a smile. The technical data says that this wine has zero (!) residual sugar and a whopping (given the total absence of sugar) 8.7 g/l total acidity, and yet it doesn't taste shrill or tart.

Ian D'Agata. Tasting date: December 2015

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From Alsace: The 2014s and Late-Release 2013s (Feb 2016)

Domaine Rieflé**Grape/Blend**

Riesling

Release price

Not Available

vinous**89** pts**Domaine Rieflé 2013 Alsace Côte de Rouffach****Pfaffenheim, Alsace****White wine from France****Drinking window: 2017 - 2024**

Bright straw-green. Strong balsamic notes dominate stone fruits on the nose. Fresh and juicy in the mouth, with ripe pear and baked apple flavors that are sweet and creamy but also very lively. Finishes very clean and long. This is 100% Pinot Gris.

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From Alsace: The 2014s and Late-Release 2013s (Feb 2016)

Domaine Rieflé**Grape/Blend**

Pinot Gris

Release price

Not Available

vinous

90_{pts}**Domaine Rieflé 2013 Riesling Grand Cru Steinert****Pfaffenheim, Alsace****White wine from France****Drinking window: 2018 - 2026**

Bright, gold-tinged straw. A slightly pungent note of volatile acidity adds lift to the deep caramel, chamomile and peach aromas. Dense, juicy and suave, with a little residual sweetness giving a caressing mouthfeel to the ripe but lively stone fruit and sweet spice flavors. Finishes long, with decent grip. The soil here is all *calcaire oolithique* (in which the calcareous crystals are small and egg-shaped, making the rocks and stones look like they have goosebumps), which gives citrus-accented wines enlivened by lemony acidity. At 7 g/l residual sugar and 7 g/l total acidity, you can taste a little sweetness, but it's barely noticeable.

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From Alsace: The 2014s and Late-Release 2013s (Feb 2016)

Domaine Rieflé**Grape/Blend**

Riesling

Release price

\$29.00

vinous**88** pts**Domaine Rieflé 2014 Alsace Blanc****Pfaffenheim, Alsace****White wine from France****Drinking window: 2016 - 2018**

Bright straw. Candied orange peel, tangerine and sweet herbs on the perfumed nose. Very grapey and ripe in the mouth, with hints of quince jam and sweet spices. The finish is persistent and almost creamy. The complex blend of local grapes (50% Riesling, 25% Muscat Ottonel and d'Alsace, 13% Pinot Gris and 12% Pinot Blanc) essentially amounts to an Edelzwicker, but Paul Rieflé pointed out that Edelzwicker's lowly reputation would not do justice to their efforts to make a quality wine that speaks of Alsace and its *terroirs*. "Furthermore, it's a great way to continue growing and using varieties like Sylvaner and Pinot Blanc that are not so popular right now and that many other *vignerons* are uprooting, which I think is a shame. This assemblage also allows us to reduce the number of wines we make," added Rieflé.

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From Alsace: The 2014s and Late-Release 2013s (Feb 2016)

Domaine Rieflé**Grape/Blend**

50% Riesling, 25% Muscat Ottonel, d'Alsace, 13% Pinot Gris, 12% Pinot Blanc

Release price

Not Available

The logo for Vinous, featuring the word "vinous" in a lowercase, sans-serif font. The letter "o" is stylized with a red outline.90_{pts}**Domaine Rieflé 2014 Steinert****Pfaffenheim, Alsace****White wine from France****Drinking window: 2018 - 2024**

Vivid straw-green. Fresh lemon, stone fruits and white flowers on the nose, plus a slightly pungent note from a hint of volatile acidity. Then very bright and crisp on the palate, with enamel-shattering acidity framing crunchy stone fruit and honey flavors. The bright, juicy aftertaste hints at caramel apple and lemon verbena. This is a 60% Riesling and 40% Pinot Gris blend: the ripe, honeyed Pinot Gris presence really comes through in the mouth, while the lemony nose is dominated by the Riesling. Another classically dry wine from Rieflé (this has only 2.5 g/l residual sugar and 7.5g/l total acidity), who says it is "the prototypical wine I wish to make from the Steinert. In the future, I hope to make all my wines from this site as blends, but for now I'll continue making a Steinert Pinot Gris and a Steinert Riesling as well." Interestingly, this was aged for roughly ten months in used 112-liter oak *feuillettes*, but the oak is so well integrated that you hardly notice its presence.

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From Alsace: The 2014s and Late-Release 2013s (Feb 2016)

Domaine Rieflé**Grape/Blend**

60% Riesling, 40% Pinot Gris

Release price

Not Available

vinous**92** pts**Domaine Rieflé 2014 Pinot Gris Grand Cru Steinert****Pfaffenheim, Alsace****White wine from France****Drinking window: 2018 - 2024**

Vivid straw-green. Intense banana, sweet butter, hazelnut and vanillin oak notes are more reminiscent of high-quality white Burgundy than Alsace. Rich, round and lively on the palate, with delicately smoky flavors of sweet orchard and tropical fruits resonating on the suave, buttery finish. An atypical but remarkably rich, multilayered example of Pinot Gris aged in 100% new oak. I normally think Pinot Gris must be oaked very judiciously in order not to camouflage its aromas, but Rieflé has done a superlative job of applying just the right amount of oaky veneer for added complexity without losing the variety's personality or fruit.

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Domaine Rieflé**Grape/Blend**

Pinot Gris

Release price

\$29.00

