

What to look for in a Riesling

by Graeme Lofts

Colour (5 points)

Pale Straw to deep or golden yellow. Some German Riesling have no colour at all. Riesling develops more colour with age, but it should not be brown. Nor should it be cloudy or contain bubbles.

Aroma (15 points)

Look for lime, lemon, nectarine, pear, peach, apricot, pear, apple, honeycomb and floral aromas. There should be no unpleasant aromas such as vinegar or petrol.

Flavours (20 points)

Look for citrus, peach, apricot, pear, tropical fruit, honey, toast, minerality, earthiness. There should be no unpleasant taste sensations.

Balance (20 points)

This is a highly regarded characteristic. A balance between fruit intensity, acidity, sweetness (if any), bitterness (if any) and oak (if present). The characteristics of the Riesling should combine to provide a harmonious and pleasing taste sensation with no single attribute dominating the wine.

Complexity (20 points)

A desirable total of aroma and taste sensations. Look for other qualities such as freshness, minerality and earthiness. There should be several aromas and taste sensations. Very young Rieslings may lack complexity.

Mouthfeel (10 points)

Look for qualities such as smooth, dryness, viscosity, and velvety.

Length (10 points)

Persistence of the finish is an important positive characteristic. Look for flavours that linger in the mouth.