

# Decanter

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## ALSACE TODAY

# LOOKING FOR LOVE

It's a biodynamic stronghold, it produces clear, pure wines, and its appellation is arguably the easiest to understand in all of France. So why isn't Alsace more popular? **JAMES LAWTHER MW** attempts to solve the mystery, and suggests four growers best placed to lead the charge



### Domaine Paul Blanck

The 38ha domaine in Kientzheim is run by tall, affable Philippe Blanck and his introspective winemaking cousin Frédéric. Since taking the reins in 1985, an additional 14ha have been added and more attention paid to the soil and vines, with an organic approach gradually installed and the land either ploughed or put to grass cover. The precision and character of the wines have grown accordingly. These are divided into three groups. Les Classiques are good-value, fruit-driven, 'varietal-style' wines vinified dry in stainless steel and, from 2001, bottled under screwcap. Les Vins de Terroir include a number of lieux-dits and five grands crus including Schlossberg. The character of each is enhanced by ageing on lees in traditional foudres and by a year in bottle before release. A little residual sugar adds richness and depth but the wines are generally balanced and dry on the finish. Les Nectares are the Vendanges Tardives and Sélections de Grains Nobles from the Grand Cru Furstentum.

#### Riesling Rosenbourg 2004 ★★★★★

Floral, lime tree aroma with a mineral edge. Ripe and pure but with a tight, firm structure. Up to 2014. **£12.50; Adn**

#### Riesling Schlossberg Grand Cru 2002 ★★★★★

Pure, crystalline, lime-scented nose. Palate rich and full but with refreshing, balancing acidity. Great length. Up to 2020. **£17.99; Adn**

#### Sylvaner Vieilles Vignes 2004 ★★★★★

Bright, fruit-driven aroma with a hint of peach. Palate round and soft but with crisp acidity. Drink now. **N/A UK; +33 3 89 78 23 56**

Cousins Frédéric and Philippe Blanck are gradually going organic.