

# JEAN-BAPTISTE ADAM

*Reviews of 2014 Vintage and*

*Late Release 2013's*

*by Ian D'Agata of Vinous*

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## **NV Crémant d'Alsace**

**Jean-Baptiste Adam**

Pale straw with a slowly rising bead of small bubbles. Green apple, white peach and apricot on the Prosecco-like nose, but with delicate Auxerrois-derived honey and sweet spices adding complexity. Fresh and crisp in the mouth, with sneaky concentration to the ripe stone fruit and floral flavors. Finishes bright and long. Outstanding entry-level Crémant made from mainly Pinot Blanc and Auxerrois, with a small dollop of Pinot Noir. It spent 14 months on the lees, but as it's not made with Chardonnay, it's not particularly buttery or hazelnutty. Crémant production is becoming increasingly important for this producer and now accounts for 10% of its output. This one is made with purchased grapes. 2017-2022. 89.

## **NV Crémant Rosé**

**Jean-Baptiste Adam**

Salmon pink with a steadily rising mousse of small bubbles. Crisp aromas and flavors of red berries and botanical herbs are lifted by bright acidity. Finishes long, with sneaky concentration and subtle tannic bite. A real Blanc de Noirs made by bleeding off the juice from 100% Pinot Noir grapes, this is a bigger-than-usual Crémant Rosé enlivened by a saline edge on the persistent finish. 2017-2022. 88.

## **2014 Pinot Auxerrois Vieilles Vignes**

**Jean-Baptiste Adam**

Dark straw-yellow. Earthy nuances complicate the herbal, honeyed ripe stone fruits on the nose and palate. A hint of volatile acidity gives a little needed freshness to the nose--never a bad thing in wines made with Auxerrois, a low-acid variety. Finishes rich and moderately persistent but lacking in lift; the wine has just 3 g/l residual sugar and 6 g/l total acidity but tastes sweeter than those numbers indicate. It's made from estate-grown Auxerrois vines averaging 50 years of age and farmed biodynamically. J-B Adam owns some of the best old Auxerrois vines in Alsace. 2016-2019. 87.

## **2014 Pinot Blanc Les Natures**

**Jean-Baptiste Adam**

Pale straw. Fresh honey, stone fruit and chamomile on the nose and palate. Large-scaled and supple in the mouth, with fruity nuances lingering long on the bright finish. Aged in large oak barrels for three to four months. Adam told me the wine finished its malolactic fermentation but I would have liked a little more malic acidity for added lift. Despite its name, this is 70% Auxerrois and 30% Pinot Blanc, from grapes grown on the plain of Ammerschwihr. 2016-2020. 88.

## **2013 Pinot Gris Letzenberg**

**Jean-Baptiste Adam**

Pale straw. Lively aromas of stone fruits, white flowers, honey and sweet spices. Fresh and juicy in the mouth, offering excellent texture to the rich apple and white stone fruit flavors. Resonates impressively on the long, precise finish. This still-young wine has 19 g/l residual sugar, but its 7.1 g/l total acidity extends the finish and provides considerable depth. More off-dry than dry, this appealing Pinot Gris will match well with appetizers and main dishes involving mushrooms and cream sauces. The vines were planted in 1983. 2019+. 91.

## **2013 Riesling Grand Cru Wineck-Schlossberg**

**Jean-Baptiste Adam**

Pale straw. Delicate flint and diesel fuel nuances complement fresh citrus and tropical fruits on the nose and palate. Juicy and penetrating, this Riesling clocks in at 8 g/l residual sugar and an enamel-stripping 9 g/l total acidity, so the wine tastes bone-dry. Finishes with resonating lemony acidity and a slightly bitter twinge typical of very acidic soils. Beautiful to look at, this grand cru has only recently begun to be appreciated for its potential greatness. Adam farms roughly 45-year-old vines grown on very steep slopes that were much sought-after by many local winemakers when J-B Adam bought them in 2008. 2020-2035. 92.

### 2013 Riesling Grand Cru Kaefferkopf Vieilles Vignes

Jean-Baptiste Adam

Gold-tinged straw. Honey, mineral and almond paste nuances complicate ripe citrus fruit aromas on the bright nose. Fresh and vibrant on the palate, showing expansive flavors similar to the aromas. Chamomile and balsamic nuances linger on the juicy, long back end. This very forward Riesling is drinking beautifully but will easily last another ten years in a good cellar. Adam makes this wine from grapes grown in two parcels, aged 35 and 58, located entirely in the granitic section of the Kaefferkopf grand cru, which is a fairly early-ripening spot. Still, this wine sports 8.8 g/l total acidity and only 5.7 g/l residual sugar, making for yet another bone-dry wine typical of the estate. 2019-2030. 92.

### 2014 Riesling Les Natures

Jean-Baptiste Adam

Bright straw-green. Mint, flowers and a leesy note on the pungent nose. Then surprisingly tactile and rich on entry, but with lemony acidity lifting the herbal fruit flavors on the long, crisp back end. About 4 g/l residual sugar with 7.2 g/l total acidity. 2017-2022. 88.

### 2013 Riesling Letzenberg

Jean-Baptiste Adam

Pale straw-yellow. Delicate smoky and minty nuances complement fresh citrus fruits and menthol on the nose. Spicy and sweet in the mouth, with herbal peach and apricot notes lifted by juicy acidity. Finishes long and full-bodied, with bright lemony depth and a powerful tannic spine. The Letzenberg site is farmed mainly by a social co-op and therefore has not benefited from as much media attention as it might merit. It is characterized by stony, oolitic limestone soil that gives very rich wines, but the northern-exposed vines owned by Adam yield a slightly more refined and lighter style. 2018-2028. 89+.

### 2010 Riesling Vendanges Tardives

Jean-Baptiste Adam

Bright, gold-tinged yellow. An intense flinty note complements ripe citrus fruit and grilled peach aromas; I was reminded of a wine from the Schlossberg grand cru. Bright and fresh if not especially complex, showing laser-like lift to the candied tangerine peel, grilled peach and crystallized mango flavors. Finishes bright and long. This might not be an especially long-lived VT, but it is wonderful to drink now and will last at least another five or six years. Made with 100% Kaefferkopf grapes, grown on a small section of the grand cru characterized by granite soils. This wine, made from almost entirely air-dried grapes, offers a textbook example of terroir; in fact, Riesling grown on granite soils is marked by lower acidity and more tropical fruit aromas and

flavors, such as pineapple. Sports 70 g/l residual sugar, but the 10.8 g/l total acidity keeps it light and lively. 2016-2023. 91.

### 2013 Pinot Noir Les Natures

Jean-Baptiste Adam

Bright red. Superripe red and dark berry aromas are complicated by hints of game, flint and earth. Tactile and soft in the mouth, offering with gamey red cherry and herb flavors. Finishes smoothly tannic and fresh, with noteworthy juiciness and a repeating hint of game. In my experience, animal notes are fairly typical of Alsace Pinot Noir vines grown on granite soils. This is one reason why this variety is not usually grown on this type of soil; in Burgundy, for example, Gamay is usually matched to granite soil. 2018-2026. 88.