



## KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT

### MEYER-FONNÉ

Country: France

Region: Alsace

Appellation(s): Alsace, Crémant d'Alsace,  
Alsace Grand Cru

Producer: François & Félix Meyer

Founded: Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century

Annual Production: 7,000-7,500 cases

Farming: Lutte raisonnée

Website: [www.meyer-fonne.com](http://www.meyer-fonne.com)



Strangely enough, Kermit came upon the Meyer-Fonné wines for the first time at his home down in Provence. He was tasting with Daniel Ravier, the winemaker at Domaine Tempier, and the two were blown away at the first, dazzling sip; now that we've all gotten to know the domaine, we understand why. Félix Meyer is a rising star in Alsace and has an evident instinct for his craft. He is the third generation in his family to be making wine since his grandfather founded the domaine in the late 19th century. Since taking over in 1992, Félix has already left his own mark, modernizing equipment in the winery, developing export sales, and now expanding the family's holdings in many of Alsace's great vineyard sites, including several *grand crus*.

It's all about the details at Meyer-Fonné, with an emphasis on tradition and respect for *terroir*. The winery and family home is in the village of Katzenthal, known for its distinctive granite soils. Meyer is a master at the art of blending and astutely applies this skill in mixing the wine from various parcels into complex, balanced cuvées. He also believes in raising his wines on fine lees in large, older *foudres*, as was the tradition in Alsace. All of Meyer's bottlings are characterized by stunning aromatics and a signature backbone of minerality and nerve. Racy and elegant, his wines are difficult to resist young but have all the right qualities for the cellar. For aromatic and textural seductiveness, no one in Alsace can top Meyer-Fonné.



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## MEYER-FONNÉ (continued)

<u>“Classic” Wines</u>	<u>Blend</u>	<u>Vine Age</u>	<u>Soil Type</u>	<u>Vineyard Area*</u>
<b>Crémant d’Alsace “Brut Extra”</b>	60% Pinot Auxerrois 20% Chardonnay 15% Pinot Blanc 5% Pinot Noir	Planted in 1972 and 2009	Granitic Colluvium, Alluvium	1 ha
<b>Edelzwicker</b>	60% Pinot Blanc 15% Muscat 15% Chasselas 10% Riesling	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Gentil</b>	50% Riesling 25% Muscat 20% Pinot Blanc 5% Sylvaner and Pinot Gris	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Gewurztraminer “Réserve”</b>	Gewurztraminer	Planted in 1969 and 1999	N/A	.8 ha (plus declassified Grand Cru and <i>Lieux-dits</i> fruit)
<b>Muscat Vignoble de Katzenthal</b>	33.3% Muscat d’Alsace 66.6% Muscat Ottonel	Planted in 1969, 1975, 1990, and 2005	Granite with Mica, Calcareous Marl	.69 ha
<b>Pinot Blanc “Vieilles Vignes”</b>	65% Pinot Auxerrois 20% Pinot Blanc 15% Pinot Gris and Pinot Noir	Planted in 1965 and 1978	N/A	2.5 ha
<b>Pinot Gris “Réserve”</b>	Pinot Gris	Planted in 1988 and 2008	Marly Limestone	.55 ha (plus declassified Grand Cru and <i>Lieux-dits</i> fruit)
<b>Pinot Noir “Réserve”</b>	Pinot Noir	Planted in 1975	N/A	.3 ha
<b>Pinot Noir <i>Gallus</i></b>	Pinot Noir	27 years old	Sandstone, marl	.15 ha
<b>Pinot Noir <i>Altenbourg</i></b>	Pinot Noir	Planted in 1996	Marly Limestone	.7 ha
<b>Riesling “Réserve”</b>	Riesling	Planted in 1969 and 2006	N/A	.8 ha (plus declassified Grand Cru and <i>Lieux-dits</i> fruit)
<b>Riesling Vignoble de Katzenthal</b>	Riesling	Planted in 1985 and 2009	Granite with Mica, Calcareous Marl	.8 ha (plus declassified Grand Cru and <i>Lieux-dits</i> fruit)

\* “ha”=hectares; one hectare equals roughly two and a half acres

<u>Grand Cru and <i>Lieux-Dit</i> Wines</u>	<u>Blend</u>	<u>Vine Age</u>	<u>Soil Type</u>	<u>Vineyard Area*</u>
<b>Gewurztraminer <i>Dorfburg</i> VV</b>	Gewurztraminer	Planted in 1965	Oolitic Calcareous Marl	.4 ha
<b>Gewurztraminer Kaefferkopf Grand Cru</b>	Gewurztraminer	Planted in 1965	Clay, Limestone	.4 ha
<b>Gewurztraminer Sporen Grand Cru</b>	Gewurztraminer	Planted in 1975 and 1979	Marly Limestone	.31 ha
<b>Gewurztraminer Wineck-Schlossberg Grand Cru</b>	Gewurztraminer	Planted in 1959 and 1999	Granite with Mica	.48 ha
<b>Pinot Gris <i>Dorfburg</i></b>	Pinot Gris	Planted in 1994	Oolitic Calcareous Marl	.35 ha
<b>Pinot Gris <i>Hinterburg de Katzenthal</i></b>	Pinot Gris	Planted in 1982 and 1997	Granite with Mica, Calcareous Marl	.75 ha



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## MEYER-FONNÉ (continued)

<b>Pinot Gris Kaefferkopf Grand Cru</b>	Pinot Gris	Planted in 1997	Clay, Limestone, Sandstone	NA
<b>Pinot Noir “Elevé en Pièces”</b>	Pinot Noir	Planted in 1990	N/A	.15 ha
<b>Riesling Kaefferkopf Grand Cru</b>	Riesling	Planted in 1978	Clay, Limestone, Sandstone	.32 ha
<b>Riesling Pfoeller</b>	Riesling	Planted in 1982	Limestone rich in fossils “muschelkalk”	.5 ha
<b>Riesling Schoenenbourg Grand Cru</b>	Riesling	Planted in 1995	Marl “marne verte de keuper”	.14 ha
<b>Riesling Wineck-Schlossberg Grand Cru</b>	Riesling	Planted in 1958 and 2010	Granite with Mica	1 ha

\* “ha”=hectares; one hectare equals roughly two and a half acres

<i>Vendanges Tardives &amp; Sélection de Grains Nobles</i>	<b>Blend</b>	<b>Vine Age</b>	<b>Soil Type</b>	<b>Vineyard Area*</b>
<b>Gewurztraminer Dorfburg VV SGN</b>	Gewurztraminer	Planted in 1965	Oolitic Calcareous Marl	.4 ha
<b>Gewurztraminer Furstentum Grand Cru VT</b>	Gewurztraminer	Planted in 1969 and 2008	N/A	.45 ha
<b>Gewurztraminer Sporen Grand Cru SGN</b>	Gewurztraminer	Planted in 1975 and 1979	Marly Limestone	.31 ha
<b>Gewurztraminer Wineck-Schlossberg VV Grand Cru VT</b>	Gewurztraminer	Planted in 1959 and 1999	Granite with Mica	.48 ha
<b>Pinot Gris Hinterburg de Katzenthal SGN</b>	Pinot Gris	Planted in 1982 and 1997	Granite with Mica, Calcareous Marl	.75 ha
<b>Pinot Gris Hinterburg de Katzenthal VT</b>	Pinot Gris			
<b>Riesling Pfoeller o VT</b>	Riesling	Planted in 1982	Limestone rich in fossils “muschelkalk”	.5 ha

\* “ha”=hectares; one hectare equals roughly two and a half acres

## VITICULTURE / VINIFICATION

Félix is increasingly interested in organic farming and uses no synthetic fertilizers, herbicides, or pesticides to treat the vines. Cover crops are planted in every other row in the vineyards. Some vineyards are plowed, but certain parcels can be plowed only once a year because any more would erode the soils. He treats the grapes with the same individualized care, harvesting by hand and gently loading them into the press. The use of native yeasts during fermentation makes the process longer and slower, creating a more lush texture.



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### MEYER-FONNÉ (continued)

#### **Vineyard Work:**

Vineyards are planted at densities of 4500-5000 vines per hectare and can reach up to 8000 vines per hectare in the steepest vineyard sites. Guyot training is used but may be double or simple depending on each individual vine. Meticulous de-budding helps control yields, so green harvesting is rarely necessary. Sulfur, copper, and other organic products are used to treat the vineyards, and homemade compost from byproducts of organic agriculture is used to fertilize the poorest soils.

#### **“Classic” White Wines:**

The grapes are gently pressed in a pneumatic press for 4-10 hours, and then the must is left for 24-36 hours to allow the heavy lees to settle. Fermentation takes place in temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks or oak barrels over a period of 1-3 months. The wines are racked two weeks after the fermentation has completed, and the wines are kept on the fine lees until the mid-May bottling.

#### **Grand Cru & *Lieux-Dits* Wines:**

The whole grapes are gently pressed in a pneumatic press for 4-10 hours, and then the must is left for 24-36 hours to allow the heavy lees to settle. Fermentation takes place in temperature-controlled stainless steel tanks or oak barrels over a period of 1-3 months. The wines are racked two weeks after the fermentation has completed, and the wines are kept on the fine lees until the September bottling.

#### **Crémant d’Alsace “Brut Extra”:**

The grapes are harvested at a potential alcohol of around 11% and vinified in the *méthode champenoise*. Around mid-March, the first fermentation is finished and the wine is bottled for the second fermentation, which lasts two to three months. It is left in bottle for at least twelve months before disgorging, when a minimum of *dosage* is added.

#### **Pinot Noir *Gallus & Altenbourg*:**

Grapes are hand-harvested and fermentation takes place in stainless steel tanks with native yeasts. Wine ages in neutral oak barrels for 15 months and then 3 months in tank before bottling. Wine is bottled unfiltered. “Gallus” is the name of the vineyard, which is named for the first Meyer who arrived in Katzenthal in 1640.

### MISCELLANEA

*Then, one day at my place in the south of France, in the company of Domaine Tempier’s Daniel Ravier, I was tasting through an assortment of samples from all over the country. We lowered our noses into glasses of a Pinot Blanc. Hmm, old vines, who’s that? Meyer-Fon . . . We looked up at each other, eyes widening. HEY, that smells great. Wow, the stuff wine dreams are made of. We continued through the domaine’s samples with huge smiles and oohs and aahs, enjoying that rare thrill of recognition that you experience when you discover something crucial in your glass.— Kermit Lynch on his first tasting of Meyer-Fonné’s wines*



## KERMIT LYNCH *WINE MERCHANT*

### MEYER-FONNÉ (continued)

#### **AOC Alsace Explained**

AOC Alsace wines are generally varietal wines. The wines in which the grape variety appears on the label are 100% the stated variety.

The permitted grapes are the four noble grapes: Gewurztraminer, Muscat, Riesling, and Pinot Gris, completed with Auxerrois (also known as Klevner), Chasselas, Pinot Blanc, Savagnin rosé, Sylvaner, and Pinot Noir.

When no grape variety indicated on the label, the wine is typically a blend.

Depending on which varieties are used in the blend, the producer can label the wine as AOC Alsace, AOC Alsace “Edelzwicker,” or AOC Alsace “Gentil d’Alsace.”

AOC Alsace blends and “Edelzwicker” can be a blend of any grapes allowed within the AOC. There is no grape minimum; the different varieties may be vinified together or separately. The mention of vintage is optional. There is no technical difference between the composition of AOC Alsace blends and “Edelzwicker”—it is at the producer’s discretion as to how they would like to label their wine.

The denomination “Gentil d’Alsace” is reserved for AOC Alsace wines that fit within the standards of a superior quality blend. This blend must consist of a minimum of 50% of noble grapes: Riesling, Muscat, Pinot Gris, and/or Gewurztraminer, the rest made up of Sylvaner, Chasselas, Pinot Blanc, and/or Auxerrois. Before blending, each grape variety must be vinified separately and must officially qualify as an AOC Alsace wine.