

**From:** Alexander Jones

**Sent:** Wednesday, August 25, 2010 2:52 PM

**To:** Paul Grieco

**Subject:** RE: Summer of Riesling Wine Bar Crawl: Your Final Challenge

1. If you were hanging off a cliff with nary a chance of survival, which grape would offer the best chance of rescue and why: Riesling or Chardonnay?

While I hope to never find myself hanging like Wile E. Coyote, all outcomes favor Riesling. If the rescuers are on their way, I need to maintain sanity and hang on for as long as possible. Thus, sustenance is needed that is both energizing and nourishing, but that will not weigh me down (last thing one wants when hanging from the proverbial ledge is get heavier). The crisp, light character of Riesling provides exactly the refreshing boost of energy needed to keep going, and of course the refreshingness also keeps one coming back - boosting moral and incentivizing the desire to hold on. I can only hope my CamelBack is filled with this Teutonic nectar, which brings with it memories of summer days, busty blonds, and a brautwurst or two. However, were someone to instead offer me a thick, unctuous, heavily oaked Chard, I can literally feel the energy being sapped away as my tongue is coated and my stomach leaden-ed, and my moral dissipated. What possible reason is there to hold on?

Even if death was approaching and everyone left me to fall (which is very possible), and therefore I found myself alone hanging by nary a fingernail, scratching and clawing to stave off the inevitable by a few seconds, with no hope for rescue and despair setting in, the choice is clear: Riesling. Its "bone-crushing acidity" will render the effect of the fall moot and if I'm going to go out, then it might as well be enjoying a moment of bliss on the long trip down, which will lessen the pain of no future days spent forcing Riesling on people by the pool or dealing a residual sugar induced hangover. For if that is the last thing I taste, then I was a better for it and can be buried with a smirk.

2. Germany is the home of Riesling and is considered by many to be the finest practitioner of the dark arts of the Riesling grape. Austria is relatively new to the pantheon of great Riesling expression. And Alsace rests comfortably and confidently in the middle, at least stylistically. Please differentiate the Riesling expressions between these three giants of the wine world.

Germany: versatile (dry, delicate, sweet, really sweet and perfect with pecan pie), age worthy, tastes of floral, peach and mineral with a sweet, crisp finish.

Alsace: dry, plummy with a hint of clay, and a lean, crisp finish.

Austria: better than Gruner, compelling, full, laser like citrus qualities and a lemony finish that goes on for days.

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