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2003 Domaine Marc Tempé Gewurztraminer Grand Cru Mambourg S Selection de Grains Nobles

Exclusively from the very old vines in the Steinigerweg parcel (which was planted in the 1930s), picked with more botrytis than 2009 (which had more passerillage), and fermented and aged for three years in new 228 l pièces from Burgundy, the intense-golden 2003 Gewurztraminer Grand Cru Mambourg S Selection de Grains Nobles is a real vin liquoreux and, according to Marc Tempé, it is -- or did he tell me this off the records? -- "better than any Sauternes." The Mambourg SGN from the terribly hot and dry 2003 vintage is super intense and ripe in its aromatics, which intertwine honey and toasty, as well as ripe apricot and tropical fruit aromas, along with herbal (minty) and spicy flavors, as well as tobacco. Very rich, succulent, sweet, round, intense and concentrated on the highly elegant, incredibly soft and oily textured palate, this exceptional SGN becomes more and more salty and precise the closer it comes to the finish. There is tension and finesse in this marvelous wine, which is structured by a very delicate acidity and tannin structure, and displays intense peach and apricot aromas in the endless aftertaste. A gorgeous, simply perfect SGN for the next 25 or 50 years. 9.5% alcohol.

**- Stephan Reinhardt (October, 2015)**

*Marc Tempé, who installed his domaine in Zellenberg in 1993, is one of the most fascinating wine personalities in Alsace, and his wines -- most of all the Gewurztraminers and Rieslings -- are as unique as the man himself. From old to very old, biodynamic farmed and late harvested vines, fermented in old barrels of different sizes and aged therein on the full lees and without any addition of sulfur for at least two, sometimes three years -- and another few years in the bottle -- these are complex, expressive and powerful low-tech wines; they are rich and concentrated with a firm, almost tannic structure and an intense perfume of ripe fruits but also flowers, herbs and minerals. Depending on the vintage and the terroir, they can be dry, medium-dry or medium-sweet, but they always reflect both their particular origin and the vintage. The 2012s are slightly sweeter than usual, because Marc picked very late when the grapes were very ripe and partly botrytized so that the musts did not ferment fully dry. In case there is botrytis and enough sweetness in the wine, Tempé produces some of Alsace's most finest sweet wines too, Vendanges Tardives and Selections de Grains Nobles. The 2003 Gewurztraminer Mambourg S SGN from the 70+ years old Steinigerweg parcel is a mind-blowing example.*