At the latest annual VDP wine auctions in Germany, held on September 14, 20 and 22, 2013, a bottle of 2011 Schloss Johannisberg Trockenbeerenauslese (TBA) set new highs for a current release, with a record hammer price of 1,040 € (U.S.$1,405.00).

The 750ml bottle comes from a single cask, specifically “No. 173.” That cask is unique, as Schloss Johannisberg is one of very few estates in the world to make its own barrels from oak trees grown on the estate. With the 200-year-old wood and grapes originating in the same soil, the two enjoy a seamless affinity. Grapes were picked at a ripeness level of 180° Oechsle* and fermented in the 330-liter barrel.

*Oechsle: a hydrometer scale measuring density of grape must, which is an indication of grape ripeness and sugar content used in winemaking. Named for Ferdinand Oechsle (1774-1852), it is widely used in the German, Swiss and Luxembourg winemaking industries.

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