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Wine Stories

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Discover this summer's best buys.

A FREE PRESS MAGAZINE

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Greek summer is back!

THALIA KARTALI and PENELOPE KATSATOU

Idyllic islands, long sandy beaches, turquoise blue sea... these are the images that the phrase "a vacation in Greece" conjures up. In this summer issue of "Grape", we invite you to add some more snapshots to the picture gallery: happy faces trying the many delicacies that this blessed land has to offer; glasses filled with excellent wines; wine tastings taking place under the shade of olive trees or by the crystal-clear sea. This is a perfect time to discover the country's rich tradition of winemaking, pairing the country's wines with delicious dishes prepared by true masters of Greek gastronomy. Take a moment to enjoy a glass of chilled white or rosé, made from indigenous or international varieties, as you treat yourself to a short break from the hot summer sun and the lively beaches.

We traveled to **Cephalonia**, where we discovered **Robola**, the queen of the **Ionian islands**, an indigenous variety with many different expressions. We talked to producers who are dedicated to the production of natural wines, using biodynamic methods and organic farming, and with others who take a more modern approach to their winemaking. All together, they form a dynamic group, committed to promoting their island's indigenous varieties.

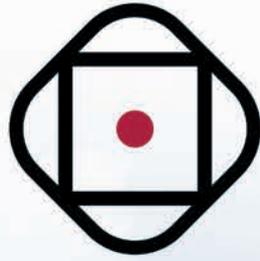
We journeyed to **Santorini**, the volcanic island, famous for its stunning views and spectacular sunsets, where we discovered a network of wine routes. We visited boutique wineries producing excellent wines from that island's indigenous varieties - **Assyrtiko**, **Aidani**, **Athiri** and **Mavrotragano** - and met with passionate winemakers who have dedicated their lives to protecting the island's unique wine culture, based on vineyards whose roots reach down deep into past centuries.

Sailing in the Aegean, we discovered the jewels of the **Cyclades**, small wineries producing wines really worth trying. Back in Athens and in **Attica**, the region surrounding it, we had the opportunity to find out more about **Savatio**, the area's most famous indigenous grape variety, and about those Attic winemakers striving to combine their grandfathers' traditions with modern winemaking techniques in order to improve the quality of the wines produced there. We shared a glass of wine with **Constantinos Tseklenis**, an inspiring cinematographer who recently completed a documentary feature comprised of six one-hour episodes, which takes its audience on a journey through time, following the path of winemaking in Greece from 5000 B.C to present.

Konstaninos Lazarakis offered us his thoughts on the terroirs of the Greek islands. **Yiannis Kaimenakis**, wine sommelier and owner of the wine restaurant Paleo in Piraeus, is the latest addition to the magazine's dream team list of contributing writers. He sneaked into the cellar and evaluated Greek wine for us. **Gregoris Michailos**, Dip WSET, tasted seven vintages of one of the best retsinas produced in the country, "**Tear of the Pine**," made by the pioneering producer Stelios Kechris, who has inaugurated a brand new era for this much-abused yet so authentically Greek wine.

Renowned chef **Lefteris Lazarou** shared with us some delicious recipes which pair perfectly with wines from Greece, while **Nikos Loukakis**, a senior lecturer at WSPC, offered us a complete guide of the best of Greek cuisine and the wines to accompany each dish. This is an issue which aims to please all the senses. Enjoy!



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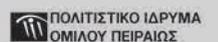


CULTURE

Παδάς

Θέατρο Αδων

Λυκοσ Παδάς



Island and terroir

Text by KONSTANTINOS LAZARAKIS, MW

Talk to zoologists about islands and they'll tell you that these parts of the world are special places with special species. Animals that are found in large numbers in a number of locations often share characteristics. However, in isolated spots such as islands, you'll find specimens that are very different from members of the same species elsewhere. There are, for instance, islands with tiny elephants or with huge lizards. Even birds, the least secluded subjects of the animal kingdom, can evolve along unusual lines on an island. This is even more evident in plants. The pathways these forms of life follow in isolation cause them to deviate from the overall norm in wholly unexpected directions.

For people that study wine, this is no surprise. They call it "terroir". It's a French word, now universally used, to denote the infinite number of factors, usually associated with the environment, that make the wine made from grapes grown in Spot A different from wine made from grapes grown in Spot B. It's the weather, the climate, the soil, the position relative to the sun, the slope of the land, the way the vine is trained and, indeed, any other factor you might want to include. By definition, terroir is so complex, chaotic and, to a certain degree, incomprehensible, that it will never be fully understood; two terroirs will never be identical. This is true for wines; now imagine it happening for millennia, and to large populations of animals or plants.

In fact, it's true for humans as well. Homo Sapiens is subject to terroir as well. Anthropologists will confirm that inhabitants of islands can be very, very interesting, perhaps more so than mainlanders. There are reasons for this; a relatively isolated community will allow singularities of character, of religion and of customs to circulate, become standard and endure. Unusual behavior (or ideas) that would have been eradicated in a matter of years in other landscapes becomes part of the dominant culture.

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Nevertheless, this isolation is not complete, even if you are in the remote Solomon Islands. The environment, the terroir, promotes specific human characteristics that are of prime importance to survival. Acute observance, attention to detail, informed risk-taking all provide enormous competitive advantages. There is a need to see what is beyond the sea – but there are dangers as well, potential or actual, related to what might go out and what might come in.

Experts agree that the Greek islands are outstanding in a number of ways. The islands in the Aegean and the Ionian islands in the Adriatic share common characteristics found only in a few parts of our world, one of which is the Sea of Japan. As in Greece, the Japanese islands are isolated and yet near to one other. With their Greek counterparts, they share rough seas and a rich history, but it is the breathtaking natural beauty of the islands that is their greatest common trait.

Then we have the vines – and the wines – of the amazing Greek islands. For centuries, people have been trying to cope with too much sun, too much wind, volcanoes and arid soil, all while trying to grow vines and make tasty wines. Only the toughest, most interesting varieties would be fit for purpose.

The Greek islands are the apogee of viticultural natural selection, with numerous autochthonous grapes that can be found nowhere else. The character of these unique wines is amazing. The aggressiveness of the terroir shows through in the wines, but in a truly positive way. The island wines reflect the island culture; the food, the approach to enjoying life, and the love that the islanders have for the mesmerising splendor of their homeland. The wines of Greek islands are the amazing result of the symbiotic relationship between a demanding yet beautiful landscape, an amazing plant and some islanders struggling to understand and enjoy life. But then in a way, we're really all islanders, aren't we? ●

The Greek islands are the apogee of viticultural natural selection, with numerous autochthonous grapes that can be found nowhere else. The character of these unique wines is amazing.

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Cephalonia

According to Greek mythology, the island of Cephalonia (Kefalonia in Greek) owes its name to Kefalos, who defeated the Televoes and became the island's first inhabitant. It is said that Kefalos planted a grapevine from mainland Greece, from where he originally came, and this is how the island's long history in winemaking began.

Text by THALIA KARTALI and PENELOPE KATSATOU

Photography by GIORGOS KAPLANIDIS

During Venetian rule, the wine produced on Cephalonia was exported on a regular basis to Europe. A series of earthquakes which hit the island in 1953 caused major destruction and many deaths; many of its inhabitants were forced to leave the island and start a new life elsewhere. Many emigrated to the United States and Australia. Today, Cephalonia has 3 PDO level appellations and is considered one of the most promising winemaking areas in Greece, producing some very interesting wines from indigenous varieties, the most famous of which is Robola, a white variety which produces a dry white wine with high acidity and a mineral character. Most of the island's vineyards are in the mountainous areas of the central and southern part of the island.

Thanks to the efforts of a dynamic group of winemakers, Cephalonia has the potential to become a great wine tourism destination (it is, in any case, already well-known as a vacation spot for general tourism), granting its visitors the opportunity to taste wines from indigenous varieties found only here. Grape visited five of the six main producers on the island and discovered – apart from beautiful landscapes – different approaches to winemaking, ranging from biodynamic winemaking following a more traditional approach to more technologically innovative modern methods; all of the wineries, however, revealed the amazing potential of these unique indigenous varieties.

Sites

THE VILLAGE OF ASSOS

A very picturesque village, thanks to both its traditional architecture and its colorful, narrow alleyways. It's located on the neck of a small peninsula with a winding road that leads to a castle with magnificent 360° views.

THE VILLAGE OF FISCARDO

A former fishing village that has been transformed into a popular cosmopolitan resort without losing its quintessential island charm.

HISTORICAL AND FOLKLORE MUSEUM OF THE CORGIALENIOS LIBRARY

A lovely museum nearly hidden under a public library, this establishment houses exhibits of island life, including costumes and old photos of life dating from before the earthquake in 1953. It offers a real sense of everyday life and the living standards of the people of Cephalonia over the past few hundred years.

MELISSANI AND DROGARATI CAVES

Melissani Lake, a hauntingly beautiful sort of "cenote," or sink-hole within a cave, is a unique phenomenon created by the erosion of calcareous rocks. The Drogarati Cave, discovered 300 years ago, is filled with stalactites and stalagmites.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF ARGOSTOLI

The museum displays artifacts from prehistory up to Roman times in an interesting and informative format.

MONASTERY OF AGHIOS GERASIMOS

Passing through the vineyards of Mount Ainos (and very close to the Orealios Gaea Winery), you'll find a monastery dedicated to the patron saint of the island. The interior is tranquil and beautifully decorated, while the monastery's church houses the holy relics of the saint himself.

Activities

SWIMMING

Enjoy the crystal-clear beaches of the island: Kimilia, Emblisi and Myrtos beaches in the north, Petani Beach in the west and Makris Gialos Beach in the south.

BOAT TRIPS AND CRUISES

Choose one of the local boat tours for a fun day out on the water. Boats usually stop in three different locations for sightseeing and swimming opportunities.

Wine and Food

BEST LOCAL FOOD INGREDIENTS

Fava bean spread • Octopus in wine sauce • Marinated anchovies • Fresh grilled fish • Feta from Cephalonia • Thyme and spruce honey • Strapatsada (eggs with tomatoes) • Bourboureli, a soup made with mixed beans • Kreatopita, a meat pie • Bakaliaropita, a cod pie • Rabbit stew • Rigana-da: bread slices with oregano and

local feta cheese • Mandola: a sweet delicacy made of almonds and sugar • Pastokidono (or Komfeto): quince bars, enriched with roasted almonds and honey

A SELECTION OF CEPHALONIA WINES TO TRY

WHITE: Orealios Gaea; San Gerasimo, Robola of Cephalonia • Gentilini; Robola of Cephalonia • Sklavos Estate; Vino di Sasso • Melissinos-Petrakopoulos; Robola of Kefalonia • Orealios Gaea; Robola of Kefalonia Barrel • Gentilini; Wild Paths, Robola of Cephalonia • Foivos Wines; Pandrosos (Tsaousi, Vostilidi, Muscatel, Muscat) • Haritatos Vineyard; Moscato • **RED:** Gentilini; Notes Red • Haritatos Vineyard; Mademoiselle Haritatos Mavrodafni • Gentilini; Eclipse Mavrodafni • Orgion; Mavrodafni 2016 • Gentilini; Syrah 2011 • Haritatos Vineyard; Mavrodafni • **SWEET:** Foivos Wines; Methyse PDO Mavrodafni of Cephalonia

Cephalonia wine route



Sclavos Winery

Arriving in Lixouri by sea, we made Sclavos Winery, located just a few kilometers from the port, our first stop. Having already tasted some wines from here in a series of tastings in Athens, we were intrigued by the personality they projected and were very eager to meet the man behind the bottles. Evriviadis Sclavos has become something of a local legend. A soft-spoken man, dedicated to the biodynamic approach of vine-growing and winemaking, Sclavos doesn't like to speak about himself but loves to talk about his vines. Being one of the most passionate producers of natural wines in Greece, he is dedicated to continuing the win-

emaking tradition of his family, but he's also not shy about introducing new methods and carrying out whatever experimentation is required to enable him to produce high-quality wines.

The family's first vineyard in Cephalonia was planted in 1919, by Sclavos' grandfather, who had left Odessa to return to the country, and the island, of his own grandfather's birth. Ironically, that man, Sclavos' great-great grandfather had emigrated to czarist Russia in the 1860s to establish a winery there. Today, the vineyard around the winery in Cephalonia, a 6-hectare parcel of land, is itself surrounded by olive groves and cypress trees; it is a truly beautiful spot, imbuing its visitors with a sense of calm and serenity.

"All of the natural surroundings contribute to the evolution of the vines," explained Sclavos, stressing the fact that there is absolutely no human intervention with the natural environment. The vines are natural bush vines trained via the "gobelet" pruning method. The winery owns a total of 32 hectares, including a parcel of the original vineyard planted by his grandfather, which is cultivated following the practices of biodynamic farming. The average yield figures for all of the wines here rarely rise above 30 hl/ha, with some going as low as 16 hl/ha. The vines, which are not irrigated, benefit from the unique limestone terroir of the Robola Zone in eastern Cephalonia under the slopes of Mt. Ainos, and from the limestone, clay, and sandstone

soils of the Paliki peninsula. The main variety cultivated here is Mavrodafni, a red variety which has been used in Greece, mainly in the area of Patras, to produce sweet wines. It was Sclavos who proved the immense potential of Mavrodafni, being the first producer in Greece to make a dry wine, one with a dense color and mature red fruit aromas, from this variety. Other indigenous varieties are cultivated as well, including Vostilidi, Zakynthino and Tsaousi.

Inside the winery, the biodynamic calendar hanging on the wall indicates whether it is a good day for wine tasting or not. For us, it turned out that the day was perfect to taste the wines. The winery's young and very talented oenologist Evaggelia Moraiti told us that the calendar provides vital information during the different winemaking processes that produce all their wines, a total of 10. She also pointed out that, because the winery believes in intervening as little as possible in the natural process of winemaking, they use sulfites only when it is absolutely necessary, employ only natural yeasts for the fermentation process, and do not filter the majority of their wines.

The winery produces about 70,000 to 10,000 bottles per year, 50% of which are currently exported to markets abroad, including the United States, Canada, Japan, France and the U.K. "For us, the production of natural wines is not a marketing tool. It is a philosophy we truly believe in," Sclavos told us. As we strolled between the fermentation tanks, we stopped to try two different versions of Robola, one from the higher altitude vineyards

and one from lower down. The versatility of this variety, which Sclavos compares to Assyrtiko and even Riesling, was immediately evident. As we proceeded to the wine-tasting area, Sclavos showed us a map of Cephalonia; pointing to the peninsula of Paliki, he told us that Odysseus, Homer's home-sick hero, came from this part of Cephalonia instead of the present-day island of Ithaca. "This area used to be an island," he said. "This is the original Ithaca." It was a theory we would hear several times during our stay on the island.

WINE TASTING

At the tasting, we tried a **Zakynthino 2016**, a dry white wine from the slopes of Aenos, vinified according to the principles of natural winemaking, unfiltered and without the use of sulfites; and a **Vino di Sasso 2017**, the winery's Robola and one of the most interesting vinifications of Cephalonia's most famous variety. This Robola is a deep and complex wine, with apricot aromas and some hints of petrol.

We also sampled an **Orgion 2015**, the winery's signature wine, a red made from 100% organically farmed Mavrodafni grapes; this was a wine with excellent fruit concentration and aromas of mature red fruit as well as some meaty notes. We ended with a **Synodos 2016**, the winery's second red wine, an organic, unfiltered wine resulting from the co-vinification of red Mavrodafni and the white grape Vostilidi (sourced from 40-year-old bush vines). A terroir-driven wine, this selection features black cherry and plum aromas. →

1
Evriviadis Sclavos in his cellar.

2
Some of the wines produced by Sclavos winery.

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Ktima Haritatos

The road which was to lead us to our next destination was closed; a victim of the last big earthquake which rocked the island in 2014, it is still under repairs. Instead, our helpful GPS took us down a series of picturesque back roads which eventually brought us to a small well-hidden paradise in the area of Monopolata.

A white-haired man with a broad smile greeted us as we pulled up, introducing himself as Costas Haritatos. Moments later, he was joined by an elegant white haired lady; this was his sister, Ioanna Haritatos. When Haritos Haritatos, a pharmacist who went on to study oenology in order to help out the new family business, arrived as well, we were in the presence of the members of the Haritatos family who decided five years ago to turn the family-owned property into a wine-producing unit.

The family's roots can be traced back to AD 1400, when the island was ruled by the Venetians. "The family property has never changed hands; it's always been owned by our family" explained Ioanna. The old farmhouse is an important part of the family's long history. For 200 years it has stood here, despite earthquakes which have, unfortunately, not left it unscarred. A beautiful, well-tended garden surrounds the house, hosting all kinds of Mediterranean plants.

The 120-acre holding is a fully-functioning farm, with the vineyard playing a central role. Olive groves, walnut trees, fig trees, mulberry trees, cherry trees and a small forest of cypresses cover much of the land. We saw chickens, ducks and geese, as well as a number of dogs, all moving about happily in typical farmyard fashion. It was easy to imagine all the happy moments the Haritos family and their guests had shared in these marvelous surrounding.

"Five years ago, we decided to start producing our own wine from our grapes," Ioanna said. "Until then, we'd been selling them to other wine producers in the area." It was a decision that really changed their lives. They'd had very different careers; Ioanna had served as a press attaché in Greek embassies around the



1
The Haritatos' family Haritos (left), Ioanna (center) and Costas, with their four-footed friends.

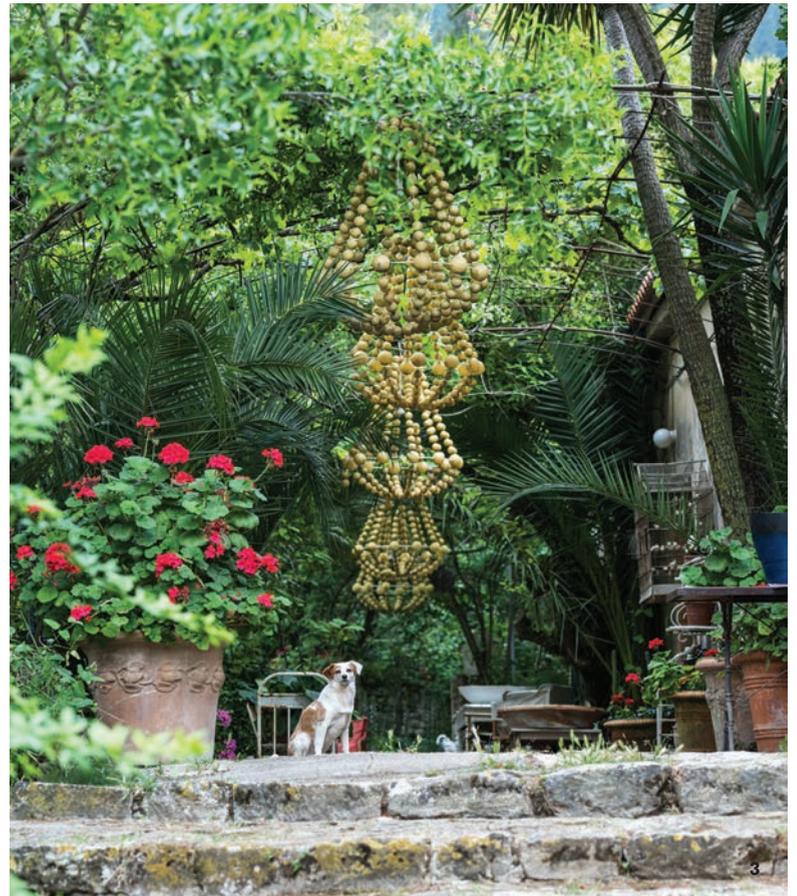
2
The wines of the estate.

3
On the grounds of the family home.

world, spending many years living abroad; Costas had just returned from Rome, where he had spent the previous 20 years; and Haritos, who lived on Cephalonia, had been a pharmacist. Today, they are dedicated to reviving this historic farm.

The vineyards have been planted with two of the island's three main indigenous varieties, Mavrodafni and Moscato, and the family follows the principles of organic farming. A small amount of the lesser-known white variety of Vostilidi has been planted as well; it's used to produce the winery's newest addition, Hariton, which was bottled for the first time this year. They work closely with oenologist Christos Peppas on the production of the winery's four wines. This is a boutique winery, producing around 40,000 bottles annually. It is currently open to visitors by appointment; in the near future, the winery will also have a selling point for its wines and will host organized tours and wine tastings.

Sitting in the estate's lovely garden, we tasted all four wines; a **Ktima Haritatos 2014**, a red made from 100% Mavrodafni; a **Mademoiselle Haritatos 2016**, a fresh red also made from Mavrodafni; a **Hariton 2017**, 100% Vostilidi; and a **Ktima Haritatos White 2017**, an aromatic wine made from 100% Moscato. →



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Π.Γ.Ε. 2017

ΑΧΑΪΑ

750 ml

3.49€

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ΟΙΝΟΧΩΡΑ

2017

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Reserve

Π.Ο.Π. 2013

ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΙΑ

750 ml

4.49€

(1 L = 5.99€)



ΟΙΝΟΧΩΡΑ

2016

Reserve

Π.Ο.Π.

750 ml

4.49€

(1 L = 5.99€)



ΟΙΝΟΧΩΡΑ

2016

Reserve

Π.Ο.Π.

750 ml

4.49€

(1 L = 5.99€)



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winery.



Gentilini Winery

Established in the 1980s by Spiros Kosmetatos, Gentilini Winery is responsible for making Robola famous both in Greece and abroad. The winery owes its name to Kosmetatos' paternal grandmother Mariana Gentilini, the last noblewoman in her line. (Her ancestor Marino Gentilini, an Italian army engineer, was commissioned by the Venetian Senate in 1593 to build the extensive Assos fortifications on Cephalonia. He eventually married and settled here, and his name was inscribed in the Libro d'Oro of noble families.)

In 1929, Gerassimo Cambitzi opened one of England's first wineries, Isleworth Wineries, a little outside London. Thirty-five years later, his grandson, Spiros Kosmetatos, planted his first vineyard of local and classic white grape varieties on Cephalonia. Having studied the latest techniques to identify the oenological processes best suited to the climate, soil and varieties of the area, Kosmetatos released the first commercial vintage of Gentilini in 1984, simultaneously in Athens and London. At the time, he was a pioneer in fine winemaking in Greece, paving the way for those boutique wineries that followed.

Today, the winery has passed to the next generation. Spiros' daughter, Mariana, and her husband, Petros Markandonatos, took over the estate in 2002. A highly energetic man, with a strong vision of how to make Robola the next signature Greek white wine variety (after Assyrtiko), Markandonatos divides his time between Cephalonia and abroad, mainly Australia, where he is co-operating with Pulmora Estates, a winery that is planning to produce Robola wines in the Barossa Valley.

Markandonatos came straight from the airport to welcome us to the estate. He'd arrived a day ahead of schedule just to meet us, and he was pleased to take us around the 10-hectare vineyard, planted mainly with Mavrodafni, which is organically farmed. "With the latest additions, this is becoming a very significant Mavrodafni vineyard," he explained proudly as we walked up towards the family house, which stands a top a hill and enjoys breathtaking views of the seashore. Back in the open-air tasting area, we noticed a couple of American visitors enjoying their wine, engaged in a lively conversation with Markandonatos' niece, Nora, who's responsible for organizing the visits. "We welcome about 4,000 visitors per year," Markandonatos explained, "all either by appointment or as walk-ins – no tour groups – and give them a short tour of the estate and production area, as well as tasting flights of Robola and the winery's other selections.

"This is a small, boutique winery and we'd like to keep it that way. We don't want to add any more buildings; that would spoil the really beautiful natural sur-

roundings. "Mariana, his wife, is in charge of the winery's management, while he's responsible for the production, sales and exports. The team is completed by oenologist Alexandros Doukas, head winemaker, and young oenologist Theodoris Theodoridis. The winery produces nine wines for a total of 120,000 bottles, a large percentage of which is for export, mainly to the United States and Australia. We tried **Notes 2017**, an easy-drinking white wine. It's a blend of Tsaoussi and Sauvignon Blanc, a modern version of the first wine that was vinified by the company in 1984.

We then moved on to a **Robola of Cephalonia 2017**, a fresh, crisp white wine, with all the minerality of a typical Robola, before sampling a **Wild Paths 2016**, made from Robola grapes sourced from the oldest vineyard in the Robola Zone. This is a complex white wine which expresses the minerality and acidity of the variety. We finished up with a **Gentilini Rosé 2017**, a rosé wine from Moschofilero, and an **Eclipse 2016**, a red wine made from Mavrodafni, with aromas of red fruit and licorice, which matures for at least 12 months in French barriques and American barrels. →

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Oreallios Gaea (Robola Cooperative of Cephalonia)

Located in the heart of the Robola Zone, the Cooperative of Cephalonia is the largest production unit on the island, with a total annual production of 500,000 bottles. It was established in 1982 with the participation of 60 grape growers. Vinification took place outdoors until 2006, when the new winery was built and new equipment was brought in. Today, the cooperative has 300 members, all growers in the Robola Zone (which covers the Valley of Omala). The vineyards begin at an elevation of 450 meters and reach 800 meters.

The climate of the area is characterized by long rainfalls during the winter months – this phenomenon can extend into spring and early summer, sometimes disrupting maturation – and there are occasional heat waves. The greatest asset of the area is the wide diurnal range, with warm temperatures during the day and really cool nights. The wines produced are characterized by the natural acidity of the Robola grape and by minerality coming from the limestone and gravel soils. A small part of the production goes through barrel

ageing; the majority is bottled fresh. The winery is open to visitors, and approximately 70,000 to 80,000 people come to the site each year to enjoy a short tour and wine-tasting sessions. A new area for wine tasting is currently being built and is expected to begin operating by the end of July. The company is also preparing a new brand, Oreallios Gaea, under which it will market all its wines. The vinification process is supervised by the cooperative's chief oenologist, Kostas Nodaras, while the cooperative's general manager is Costas Bazikos, a chemist by training, who was kind enough to offer us the tour and organize the wine tasting. The winery's most popular selection is its **Robola of Cephalonia** with a characteristic bottle. This is a typically light easy-drinking expression of Robola and a best-seller with those who wish to take a souvenir from the island home with them. We also tasted the barrel-aged version of the same wine, **Robola of Cephalonia 2015**, a wine with notes of vanilla and honey, with good acidity. Another Robola, **San Gerasimo** is much more aromatic, coming from the higher altitude vineyards, with good acidity, more fruit concentration and a longer aftertaste. This is a food-friendly wine, and a perfect match with seafood and with the local cuisine. The winery also produces Truth, a Robola from organical-

ly farmed vineyards, a wine with stronger notes of botanic aromas (chamomile) and **Nouvelle Epoque**, a wine produced from the lesser-known white variety Vostilidi, which had nearly become extinct before it was rediscovered and vinified, producing wines with a more tannic taste. This wine comes from newly planted vineyards. The winery's other options include **Linos White**, a dry white blend of Moscato and the island's lesser-known varieties of Zakynthino and Tsaousi, and **Linos Red**, a dry red made from 100% Mavrodafni. →

1
View of Oreallios Gaea winery.

2
A small selection of the Cooperative's wines.



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1
Two of the Robolas
produced at Melissinos
winery.

2
Melissinos' Oenologist,
Kiki Siameli.



Melissinos Winery

Hidden away in the southern part of the island, Melissinos is the third winery open to visitors in the area of Argostoli. Today, a stone building that was once the summer house of the Solomos family – it was rebuilt after the 1953 earthquake that flattened the area – hosts this small winery, established in 2002.

The winery is run by Kiki Siameli, a young oenologist responsible for the production of the winery's 12 wines. Her approach to vinification is based on a philosophy of intervening as little as possible in the natural winemaking process, and a large portion of the grapes used are sourced from organically farmed vineyards.

The small yard at the back of the building, surrounded by olive trees, lemon trees and colorful rose bushes, provided the perfect spot for the wine tasting. Although it was early in the morning, we were more than willing to sample 10 of the winery's 12 wines, all under the guidance of Kiki, who offered us details regarding the sourcing of the grapes and the vinification techniques used for each selection.

We had the opportunity to compare three different versions of Robola: a **Robola 2017**, a typical Robola with high acidity and strong minerality, made from grapes sourced from two high-elevation vineyards (700m); a **Bio Robola 2017**, coming from the best Robola vineyards in the area of Fagias, which yielded a more aromatic version with less minerality; and **Natural 2017**, a naturally fermented wine made according to a traditional wine-making process.

We also tasted a **Zakynthino Gold 2017**, a dry white made from the indigenous variety Zakynthino, a grape which offers good natural acidity and which, thanks to its high phenolic character, has a great ageing potential.

The winery's two red wines are made from Mavrodafni; the **Mavro 2015**, a blend from two different vineyards, and the **Mavrodafni 2015**, a wine produced from grapes sourced from a pre-phylloxera vineyard, with strong botanic character and very good concentration of the fruit, were both barrel-aged for a year (the latter has a longer ageing potential).

Foivos Winery

Located in the area of Vouni near Lixouri, Foivos Winery is considered to be the continuation of the Matzavinos Winery, one of the two historic wineries of Cephalonia. In 1999, a new effort began, aiming at developing indigenous varieties of Cephalonia according to the principles of natural winemaking, with the least possible human intervention.

The winery produces 25 different wines, both varietals and blends from the island's indigenous varieties. The grapes are sourced from organically farmed, privately owned vineyards and from other growers working in cooperation with the winery. The winery is open to visitors. Unfortunately, we didn't have the chance to visit the winery or taste any of its wines. ●

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Main Grape Varieties

ROBOLA: the island's main white variety. It is a citrus-scented grape that grows in the limestone and gravel soils responsible for its characteristic minerality. It is found in the designated Robola Zone, in the central part of Cephalonia, in vineyards whose elevations range from 350m to 750m.

MAVRODAFNI: A red grape variety which used to be vinified exclusively for the production of sweet wines. Today, dry wines that are made from it are full bodied, with aromas of red fruit and licorice.

TSAOUSI: A white variety which produces wines with sweet citrus aromas.

OTHER VARIETIES: Moscato, Zakynthino and Vostilidi.

Climate and Soils

Conditions are generally mild, but heavy rainfalls and high humidity may result in fungal diseases such as mildew and botrytis. Most vineyards are bush trained. The soils are limestone and gravel in the mountainous areas (mainly in the Robola Zone), while in the area around Lixouri, where Mavrodafni grows, soils are mainly clay.



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Santorini

One of the Cycladic islands, Santorini (official name Thira) sits in the Aegean Sea. It was known as Strongili (the Round One) until, thousands of years ago, a colossal volcanic eruption caused the center of the island to sink, leaving a caldera (or crater) with towering cliffs along its east side – now Santorini’s trademark landscape. The breathtaking views from the caldera and the famous sunsets as seen from the island have made Santorini one of the most recognizable destinations in the world. The island is also the leading producer of Greek white wines, in terms of quality and true character. The soil of Santorini is a mix of volcanic lava, pumice and ash deposits, resulting in vineyards completely free of phylloxera. The number of quality restaurants and top wineries is impressive, which makes it the perfect destination for travelers who are seeking authentic, memorable culinary experiences.

Text by THALIA KARTALI and PENELOPE KATSATOU

Photography by GIORGOS KAPLANIDIS

Ancient Sites

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM (Fira)

Admire sculpture from the Archaic to the Roman period, as well as vases and clay figurines dating from the Geometric to the Hellenistic periods.

MUSEUM OF PREHISTORIC THERA (Fira)

Take a look at the urban planning and architecture of the ancient city of Akrotiri. One can also find fossils of plants here that flourished before the human habitation of the island, as well as archaeological objects.

ANCIENT THERA (Near Kamari)

This is an ancient city on a ridge of the steep 360m-high mountain Messavouno. Visit to check out the Agora, the Basilica Stoa and the theater.

AKROTIRI ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

The archaeological site of Akrotiri is one of the most important ones in the eastern Mediterranean. You’ll have the opportunity to walk along the ancient streets and squares of the city, visit dwellings and religious ritual areas and see workshops, cookhouses, facilities for storage and more. Details preserved from the moment the volcanic eruption doomed the city testify to the dramatic termination of life at Akrotiri.

Activities

HIKING

The trail that connects Fira with Oia offers hikers spectacular views.

SWIMMING

Perissa Beach, Kamari Beach, Perivolos Beach and Vlychada Beach.

WATERSPORTS AND MORE

Waterskiing, jet-skiing, scuba-diving and snorkeling, boat tours and paragliding.

OTHER VISITS

The Tomato Industrial Museum; Santorini Brewing Company; S.M.A.G (Spira Marble Art Gallery).

Wine and Food

BEST LOCAL FOOD INGREDIENTS

Capers • Cherry tomatoes • White eggplants • Fava beans • Hlorotyri (goat cheese) • Dhomato keftedes (tomato fritters) • Meatballs • Kardamides (green herbs) • Peanuts • Honey • Fresh fish and other seafood • Fried cheese in filo pastry covered in honey • Santorini salad (capers and cucumbers • Tomatoes and local cheese)

WORTH VISITING SANTORINI WINERIES

Domaine Sigalas • Estate Argiros • Hatzidakis Wines • Vassaltis Vineyards • Gaia Wines • Boutari Wines • Canava Chrisou – Tselepos • Santo Wines • Venetsanos Winery • Gavalas Winery • Canava Nomikos • Karamolegos Winery and Volcan Wines



↑
Kouloura, the traditional way
of training Santorini's vines
into a basket-like shape.

KOULOURA

The traditional way of training Santorini's vines into a basket-like shape in order to protect them from the strong winds and the high summer temperatures.

CANAVA

The term of a traditional winery in the local dialect. Usually rock-hewn underground or protected by nearby buildings.

ASSYRTIKO

Santorini's signature white grape variety, it's rapidly gaining worldwide recognition. It produces wines of medium aromatic intensity but with strong minerality that is characteristic of the island's wines and has a great ageing potential.

AIDANI

A white grape variety used in a blend with Assyrtiko to produce Santorini wines such as Nychteri and Vinsanto. Vinified as a varietal, it produces wines of a floral character with aromas of tropical fruit.

Santorini wine info

ATHIRI

A white grape variety that is also used in the blends of Santorini wines; when vinified as a varietal, it can give wines of a fruity character with medium to low acidity.

MAVROTRAGANO

A very rare red variety from Santorini that was, until recently, at risk of extinction. The variety combines dense red fruit with roasted coffee and smoke, robust tannins and a rich and mineral mouth.

VINSANTO

Santorini's sweet wine, made predominantly of Assyrtiko, with Aidani and Athiri also participating in the blend. It's made from late-harvest grapes which dry in the sun for 12-14 days. It ferments and then ages for at least 24 months in oak barrels.

NYCHTERI

Santorini's traditional wine, made from a blend of Assyrtiko, Athiri and Aidani. Grapes destined for Nychteri were pressed during the night after the harvest, to protect the juice from the heat of the day. Its name is derived from the Greek word "nychta," which means "night."

Our Rosé Your éRos



Santorini wine route

Hatzidakis Winery

Arriving at the Hatzidakis Winery in the area of Pyrgos, we immediately agree with one another that this is what a winery in Santorini should look like. Carved into the soft but solid volcanic rock that forms the island's soil, this winery, or "canava" as it is called in the local dialect, consists of a cellar, 12 meters long, where all the winery's barrels are kept.

The rest of the winery was built in 2004 as an addition to the old canava, which was not big enough for the 130,000 bottles that are currently produced and of which 50% are exported to markets around the world. Xaridimos Xatzidakis, who passed away last year, was a passionate man dedicated to getting the best out of what Santorini's unique grapes have to offer.

In a dark corner, a long wooden table is set up for the tastings; the atmosphere is perfect for the excellent wines we are about to taste. The winery's signature wine is Assyrtiko de Louros, a wine made from late-harvested grapes from selected vineyards, some of which are 150 years old. Dense and mineral on the palate, with typical acidity and a long aftertaste, this wine pairs perfectly with shellfish, and with white and red meat and mature cheeses. It can age for more than 10 years in the bottle. During our visit, we had also the pleasure of tasting the winery's main selection, **Santorini 2016**, a wine (made from 100% Assyrtiko) that undergoes stainless steel fermentation and remains unfiltered, a typical, easy-drinking Assyrtiko.

We also sampled the **Nychteri**, the traditional wine of Santorini, also 100% Assyrtiko from late harvest over-matured grapes, vinified using more modern techniques and less oak. We could not have left the winery without tasting the **Vinsanto**, Santorini's traditional sweet wine, which, at this winery, is made from Assyrtiko and Aidani, spends 14 years in the barrel, has a perfect balance between acidity and sweetness and boasts aromas of apricot marmalade.

Boutari Winery

A pioneer in many ways, Boutaris landed on the island of Santorini in the '80s, when the now-famous Assyrtiko variety was practically unknown. The state of the art winery has been distinguished as one of the 10 architectural wonders of the wine world and was the first to open its doors to visitors in 1989. Upon his arrival, Boutaris changed the practice of late harvesting and begun vinifying less ripe grapes, causing an uproar among the traditional winemakers.

Since then, the Boutari Winery has been consistently producing good-quality Santorini wines, including Assyrtiko, Nychteri and the traditional Vinsanto; the Vinsanto is aged for 12 years in the barrel. During our visit to the winery we had the pleasure of tasting a Santorini 2016, made from 100% Assyrtiko, a fresh and crisp dry white wine, with aromas of orange peel and grapefruit, and the winery's Nychteri 2015, 100% Assyrtiko which has spend seven months ageing in oak, endowing it with its characteristic aroma of honey.

Gavalas Winery

This is a small family-owned winery, one of the oldest on the island. Vagelis Gavalas represents the fifth generation of family winemakers. Together with his father George, he continues the family tradition of winemaking, using the traditional method of stomping the grapes for the production of their signature wine, Vinsanto. This wine ferments and ages for six years in 100-year-old barrels, made from oak imported from Russia back when the wine export trade to that country was flourishing. The charming courtyard where the wine tastings take place is next to the cellar and the old "patitiri", where the stomping used to take place. Here, the visitor can also take a look at an antique press and at wicker baskets used for carrying the grapes so as to get a better idea of the traditional winemaking processes of the island.

Gaia Winery

It's difficult to describe what we're feeling as we approach this winery, right by the water on the beach of Kamari. There is, certainly, a little jealousy of those who get to work here. The industrial stone building dating from the beginning of the 20th century, which today houses the winery and is equipped with all the high-tech equipment for modern winemaking, used to be a tomato canning factory. A charming area in front of the structure serves as the tasting area, so the tastings

take place outdoors by the water's edge. It is truly a marvelous setting for wine tasting!

Here, we have the opportunity to try three different versions of Assyrtiko: Thalassitis, Thalassitis Oak Fermented and Assyrtiko by Gaia Wild Ferment, a wine whose production combines traditional and modern winemaking techniques, with the use of both Inox tanks and new French and American oak barrels in which the wine ferments with the use of wild yeast. →

- 1** The wine cellar, 12 meters long, in the Hatzidakis Winery.
- 2** Boutaris' state-of-the-art winery.
- 3** The old reservoir where the juice from pressed grapes ended up for fermentation.
- 4** Tradition meets modern winemaking technology at the Gaia winery.

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boutari-santorini.gr
gaia-wines.gr
gavalaswines.gr





Santo Winery

A young man with a warm smile welcomes a group of tourists as we walk through the entrance of Santo Wines. A few steps down and we find ourselves in an impressive modern building, crowded with tourists who have come here to taste some of Santorini's best wines and get to know – and shop for – the island's delicacies, all displayed in the winery's large deli shop. The winery was built in 1992 to house the Union of Santorini Cooperatives, whose wines came to be produced under the name "Santo."

The building itself resembles the island's traditional stone benches. Surrounded by breathtaking views of the deep blue sea and the volcano, we taste some of the cooperative's wines, including **Santo Sparkling 2014**, the first sparkling wine to be made from 100% Assyrtiko grapes from the vineyards of Pyrgos; **Santo Rose Sparkling Demi Sec**, made with Assyrtiko and Mandilaria, a fresh, cherry-flavored and very summery wine, with a sweet aftertaste which makes an excellent aperitif (it can also accompany meals); and **Santorini Assyrtiko Grande Reserve 2014**, a wine made from Akrotiri vines that are up to 100 years old; it's aged for 12 months in oak and another 12 in the bottle.

Naturally, we didn't skip the **Santorini Assyrtiko 2016** or the **Santorini Nychteri 2016**. While sitting in the winery's veranda overlooking the Aegean, we can't help noticing the smiles on the face of the numerous tourists, most of who are from Asia, who were enjoying their own tastings in this unique place.

1
At Estate Argyros, a modern architectural feature designed to remind the visitor of a traditional canava.

2
Breathtaking views from Santo Winery.

Estate Argyros

Arriving at Estate Argyros, we are treated to a totally different side of Santorini. Here on the other side of the island, there are no dramatic views, only vineyards, symbols of the triumph of life over the widespread death caused by the volcano. Surrounded by the privately owned vineyard, the estate's winery is a modern building designed to remind the visitor of a traditional "canava. The estate, established by George Argyros in 1903, was passed on through the generations. Today, it is run by Matthew Argyros, the fourth generation of winemakers in his family.

The Estate produces wines (from indigenous varieties) which they create by combining traditional and modern winemaking techniques. The grapes come from ungrafted, phylloxera-free vines, some of which are 150 years old. The winery produces 350,000 bottles a year, 60% of which are exported. Here, Assyrtiko finds its different expressions; unoaked in **Santorini Argyros** and barrel-fermented in **Estate Argyros**. The estate also produces a varietal **Aidani**, an elegant fresh fruity wine, and a red wine made from Mavrotragano, the island's rare red grape variety. The **Vinsanto** spends 12 years in oak and is made from Assyrtiko, Aidani and Athiri.



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Santorini Assyrtiko: Under the microscope

Style	Production			Description	Food Pairing	Suggested Wines
	Oak	Ageing	Late Harvest			
STAINLESS STEEL TANK FERMENTED	✗	✗	✗	A very clean and neutral wine style that emphasizes the authentic, austere and mineral qualities of Assyrtiko. The duration of lees maturation after fermentation determines the volume of the wine.	This is the ideal wine to pair with any dish you would naturally squeeze lemon on, including sea bream, grouper and perch. Its mineral character will also pair perfectly with the iodine flavors of raw shellfish and sea urchin.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vassaltis Santorini • Sigalas Santorini • Santorini Chrissos-Tselepos • Santorini Hatzidakis • Santorini Argyros • Thalassitis Santorini Gaia Wines • Kallisti Boutari • Sigalas Kavalieros
OAK FERMENTED	✓	✗	✗	Similarly clean, lemony and austere as the above wine style, with one difference: it has been fermented in oak for a few months (usually six). Minerality overtones blend with subtle aromas of nuts and vanilla that round up the wine and make it easier to drink. Purists, however, are more likely to go for the un-oaked style.	More complexity in our wine glasses justify additional complexity on our plates: Tuna, salmon, mustard-cured clams and sushi are ideal foods to accompany this intriguing wine style.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Santorini Argyros oak fermented • Assyrtiko Wild Ferment Gaia Wines • Sigalas Santorini oak fermented • Assyrtiko de Louros Hatzidakis • Thalassitis Santorini oak fermented Gaia Wines • Kallisti Reserve Boutari • Vassaltis Santorini oak fermented
NYCHTERI	✓	✓	✓	Nychteri is a traditional wine style of Santorini. It is a dry wine made from fully ripe, late-harvest grapes with a higher alcohol potential, fermentation in barrels and ageing. These techniques result into a full-bodied wine with roundness and a sweet sensation due to its high alcohol and oak notes.	A heavyweight wine style, it is better to avoid pairing with fish or other seafood. Prefers white meats (chicken, pork and duck), white cream dishes, mushrooms, truffles and creamy risottos.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nychteri Sigalas • Nychteri Hatzidakis • Nychteri Boutari • Nychteri Gavalas
VINSANTO	✓	✓	✓	Vinsanto is the legendary sweet wine of Santorini, made from late-harvest grapes that have been dried in the sun for 12–14 days, before being fermented and aged for at least 2 years in oak barrels. Assyrtiko should be at least 51% of the blend.	This is a very complex and concentrated dessert wine with high acidity that balances its sweetness and makes it perfectly irresistible. Crème brûlée, panna cotta with lemon, and chocolate desserts are ideal pairings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vinsanto Hatzidakis • Vinsanto Sigalas • Vinsanto Argyros 20 y.o. • Vinsanto by Gaia • Vinsanto Boutari

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Domaine Hatzimichalis

A unique viticultural mosaic

Domaine Hatzimichalis is a family-owned winery located in Atalanti, in central Greece. Here, we have created a unique viticultural mosaic on 220 hectares of privately owned land, where we cultivate different international and indigenous varieties.

Our strict application of the most suitable vine-growing methods ensures excellent crops of grapes. Following the harvest, we employ our years of experience to make quality use of the produce, which is vinified in small individual batches per terroir and carefully shaped by combining modern technology with time-tested traditional methods. With respect for both nature and the outstanding skills of our winemaking professionals, we

create distinctive varietal and blended wines that reflect the terroirs and the grape varieties which spawned them.

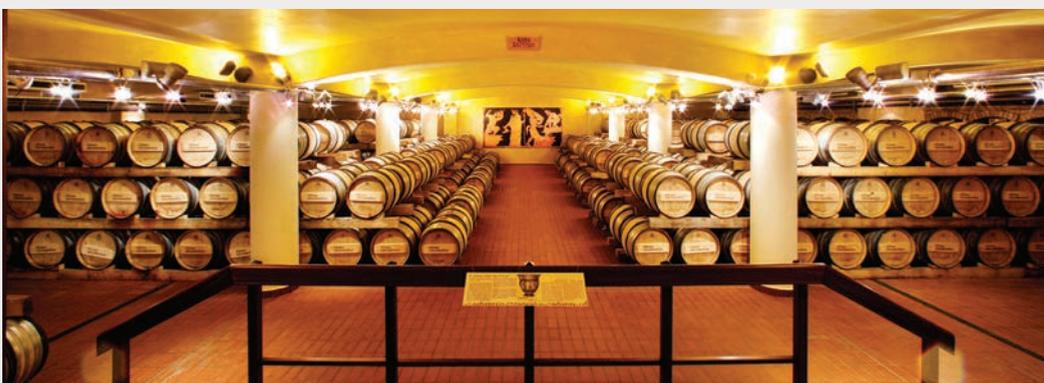
The love that Dimitris Hatzimichalis holds for vine and wine culture inspired him to buy his first 9 hectares in the Atalanti Valley in 1973. His selection of this land was based on the unique microclimate that exists in the area. The cool winds from Mount Parnassus and the sea breezes from the Gulf of Evia meet here as a sort of natural system of air-conditioning, forming an ideal ecosystem for growing wine grapes. These characteristics, along with the long viticultural tradition of Atalanti, convinced Dimitris to invest in this land and fulfill his dreams.

THE STORY BEHIND THE TURKEY

The first years weren't easy, and to help him cover the expenses of the vineyard, Dimitris maintained a turkey farm. The turkeys, imported from Canada, found their way onto the tables of many Greek homes over the Christmas period. Knowing that vineyards require a great deal of care to be fruitful, Dimitris invested all the money he earned from the turkeys into the vines, and ever since then, the turkey has been the symbol of the winery, proudly displayed on all our wine labels.

From the very beginning, Dimitris worked to lay a solid foundation for the business. Only after carrying out numerous studies did he decide on which varieties to cultivate in his vineyards. What's more, he invested in the best machinery and infrastructure for his wine production, and staffed the winery with passionate professionals from the wine industry. Since the very first harvest of 1974, the same ladies have been picking the grapes (along with a few new faces each year). This continuity was a deliberate choice; we all know how caring, patient and tender Greek women are in everything that they do. For this reason, they are the only ones that Domaine Hatzimichalis trusts to reap the rewards of the hard work everyone has put in over the growing season, certain in the knowledge that these women will care for the vineyards with the same maternal affection they show to their children.

Today, Dimitris' two sons Leonidas and Panagiotis have begun to assume, with passion and devotion, the leadership of this truly family-owned business. These two young men are eager to maintain the time-honored traditions of the winery while expanding into markets across the world.





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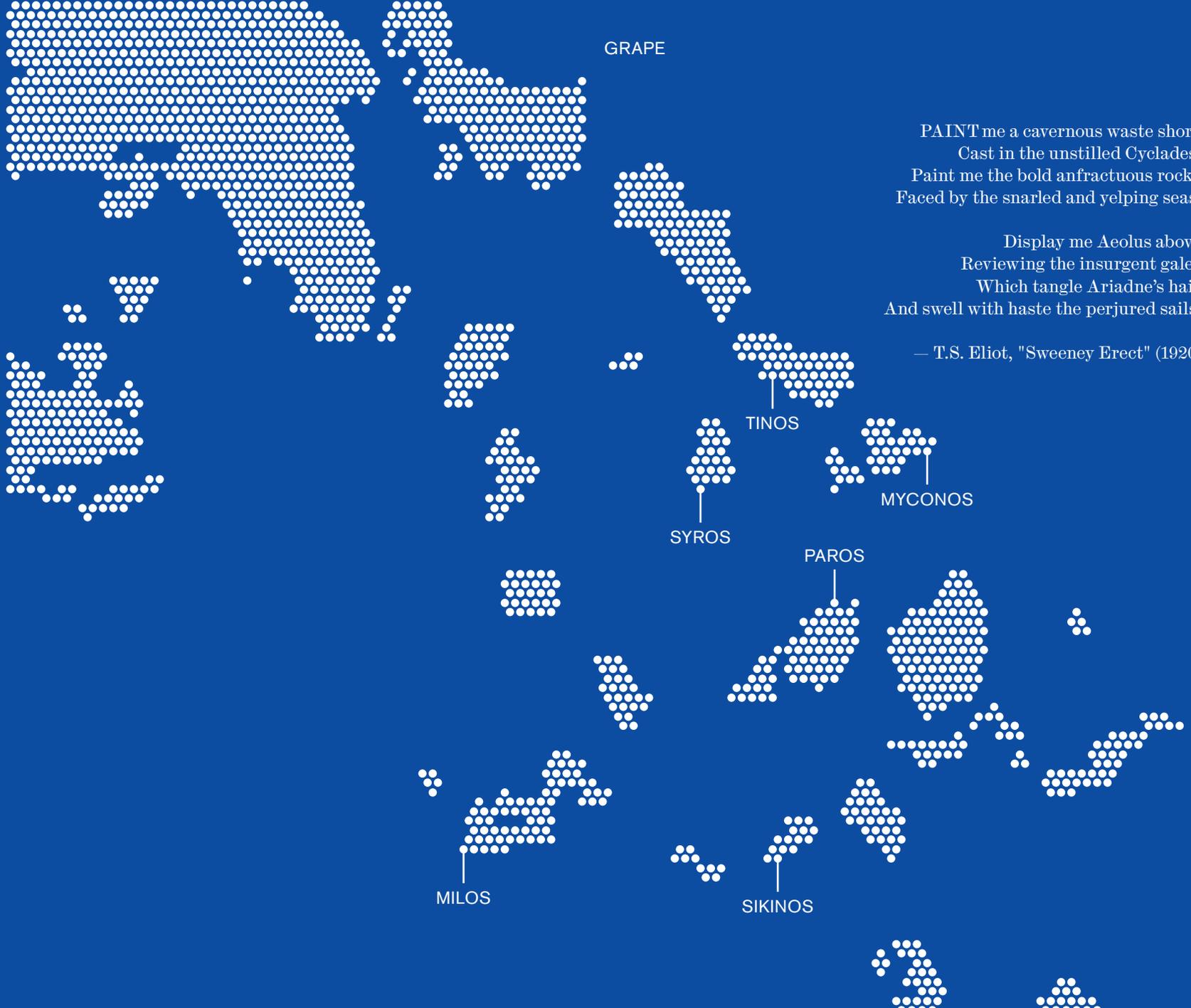


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 Faced by the snarled and yelping seas.

Display me Aeolus above
 Reviewing the insurgent gales
 Which tangle Ariadne's hair
 And swell with haste the perjured sails.

— T.S. Eliot, "Sweeney Erect" (1920)

Cycladic Jewels

The small wineries of the Cyclades

How many times, after sailing in the Cyclades, have you thought about a wine you'd had there that you think is really worth trying again only to realize, as you try to find out where it came from, that you have no recollection of the name of either the wine or the vineyard it came from? It's easy to lose track of the many treasures hidden on these islands. Grape's contributor Gregory Kontos, Dip WSET, takes us on a trip around the Cyclades' small wineries. In addition to Santorini and its famous Assyrtiko, many other Cycladic islands (despite their arid and, in many cases, volcanic soils) grow indigenous varieties, with vines trained in a traditional system called *aplotaries* that forces the vines to spread horizontally along the ground to protect them from the strong Aegean winds. These vines produce unique wines, making the Cyclades a wine-producing area that's really worth exploring.

SYROS

Located 78 nautical miles southeast of Athens in the Aegean archipelago, Syros is at the center of the Cycladic islands. Its beautiful main town, Ermoupoli, is the administrative capital of the Cyclades. The island hosts two wineries.

Syros Winery

Established in 2011 by oenologist Nikos Hatzakis, this small winery is located in the area of Langada in Talanta on the road which leads to Galissas and Delagracia. They produce three wines: **San ta Maratha**, a white made from Assyrtiko; **Fabrica White**, made from the indigenous varieties Monemvasia and Kountoura, and **Fabrica Red**, from the red variety Mandilaria. The wines can be found in shops in Syros and Tinos, and are

also distributed to some of the central wine shops in Athens. — Talanta Syrou, T: (+30) 22810 61617, (+30) 694 630 2920

OuSyra

This winery is the creation of Scotsman Edward Maitland Makgill Crichton and his Greek wife, whom he met and married in Syros. *Ou-syra* was the name given to the island of Syros by its first inhabitants, the Phoenicians; it means "happiness". The winery produces two wines, **OuSyra Serifiotiko** and **OuSyra Assyrtiko**. — Chroussa Ano Syros, T: (+30) 697 747 3967

TINOS

Having initially gained its tourism reputation thanks to religious pilgrimages, the island of Tinos is fast becoming one of the most im-

portant centers of Greek gastronomy, and is producing some excellent wines as well. Tinos Food Paths is a food festival organized there every year; it enjoys the participation of famous Greek chefs and places an emphasis on local products. As far as wine production is concerned, the initial efforts of Christos Fonsos and Alexandros Avatangelos are being augmented by the work a number of new small producers on the island.

Christos Fonsos Winery

The first winery on the island of Tinos was established in 1997 by Christos Fonsos, in the area of Komi. He vinified a number of indigenous varieties, among them Mandilaria and Monemvasia, producing two white wines, **Mpeloni** and **Mathioulis White**, and one red, **Mathioulis Red**. — Komi Exombourgou, T: (+30) 22830 51048, (+30) 697 766 8060

T-Oinos Vineyards

This is the most famous winery on the island of Tinos. It was established in 2002 by Alexandre Avatagelos, a man with considerable experience in the winemaking business in Greece. Today, this winery is considered one of the most important winemaking investments in the Cyclades, and the wines it produces are exported to many international markets, France in particular. Four varieties are planted in the granite soils of the 40-hectare vineyard, two white (Assyrtiko and Malagousia) and two red (Avgoustiatis and Mavrotragano), all indigenous varieties of the Cyclades. The first grapes were harvested in 2008, and annual production recently reached 15,000 to 17,000 bottles. Avatagelos is supported by a dynamic team, including chief oenologist Thanos Facorelis, special consultant enologist Nadine Gublin, oenologist Eleni Alevra and the "general in the field", Michalis Tzanoulinos. The winery produces six wines: the whites **T-Oinos Malagousia** and **Clos Stegasta Assyrtiko**, the **Mavrosé** (a rosé produced from 50% Mavrotragano-50% Avgoustiatis), and the reds **T-Oinos**, (65% Avgoustiatis-35% Mavrotragano) and **Clos Stegasta Mavrotragano**. All of the wines are worth trying and can be found in all the major wine shops in Athens. — Falatados Exomvourgou, T: (+30) 22830 41120, (+30) 693 747 1043, toinos.com

Volacus Wine

Volacus Wine, established in 2010, vinifies grapes from its vineyards, which are surrounded by large granite rocks boulders known as volakes (large cannonballs). Different legends and myths surround this moon-like landscape and the famous round rocks scattered across it. One legend has it that they are the remnants of a mythical battle between gods and giants; other versions are that the volakes took their shape from the sea that at some point surrounded the area; a third posits that they came from a meteor shower. According to geologists, they are granite rocks that were formed 15-25 million years ago; changes in

temperature and in humidity, as well as rainfall and wind, caused them to develop spherical shapes. The vineyards are at an elevation of 400 meters and have granite soils. Three varieties are planted here; Malagousia, Assyrtiko and Mavrotragano. At present, the winery produces one wine, the varietal **Volacus Malagousia**. — Gardari, Falatados, T: (+30) 697 848 5671

MYKONOS

Mykonos Vioma

This farm was established in 1994 by Nikos Asimomitis. In addition to the family-owned vineyard in Marathi and Koumiri, Mykonos Vioma also grows grapes in the vineyard belonging to the Monastery of Panaghia Tourliani in Ano Mera, which Asimomiti rents. The vines are organically farmed and are very well looked after, even enjoying classical music, which Asymomitis believes has a very positive effect on their growth. Three wines are produced here: the **White Paraportiano** wine, a blend of Assyrtiko and Athiri; the **Red Paraportiano**, a blend of Mandilaria and Ayiannitis; and the **Heliofilos**, a sweet wine made from combining sun-dried Mandilaria and Malagousia. The farm doesn't have a winery, so vinification takes place elsewhere, but visitors are welcome to watch the harvest activities and to sit under the pergola right next to the vines, sipping wine and tasting fresh produce from the farm. — Maou, Ano Mera, T: (+30) 22890 71883, (+30) 697 412 0069

Mykonos Vineyards

This is a joint venture between Nikos Asimomitis and Chateau Nico Lazaridi, from the region of Drama in northern Greece. They produce three wines: **Anemon Nisos**, **Egea Ampelos** and **Paraportiano**. The grapes come from Mykonos vineyards and are bottled at the Nico Lazaridi Winery in Drama.

PAROS

On the way from Parikia to Naoussa, you'll come across some of the oldest vines on the island, literally crawling on the ground, trained in the traditional way called "aplotaria," as protection from the strong winds. Paros's historical tradition in winemaking is underlined by the fact that it produces three different Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) wines: the **White Paros** (100% Monemvasia); the **Red Paros**, the only Greek red PDO which also permits a percentage of white grapes; and the sweet dessert wine **Malvasia Paros**. This makes Paros one of the four appellations in Greece which produce this historical wine, whose origins can be traced back to medieval times.

Moraitis Winery

This winery, located in Naoussa, is currently under the leadership of the fourth generation of Moraitis winemakers. This family has been producing wine for over a century; recently, the winery's old machinery was replaced by

modern equipment. The 10-hectare private vineyard is planted with Mandilaria, Assyrtiko, Malagousia, Aidani, Malvasia, Sauvignon Blanc, Cabernet, Merlot, Syrah, Aidani Black, Athiri Black and Karabramis. The winery produces 5 PDO wines: **Paros White**, **Paros Oak Wild Fermented** and **Moraitis Estate Paros** (all of which are 100% Monemvasia); **Paros Red** and **Paros Reserve** (75% Mandilaria-25% Monemvasia); and **PDO Malvasia Paros** (100% Monemvasia), aged for 4 years. These wines are distributed both in Greece and abroad. — Naoussa, T: (+30) 2840 51350

Moraitico – George Moraitis Winery

With a long tradition in winemaking, George Moraitis grows organically indigenous varieties, from which he produces three wines: **Epochi White**, a blend of Monemvasia and Malagousia, **Epochi Red**, Monemvasia co-fermented with Aidani and Mavrotragano and **Rodi tou Nisiou**, a rosé which combines Mavrotragano with Malagousia. Recently a sparkling rosé was added to the list. The wines are sold both in wine shops on the island and in wine shops in Athens.

MILOS

This beautiful volcanic island, rich in minerals and famous both for its unique beaches and for the Venus de Milo, is also one of the most important gastronomic centers in the Cyclades.

Konstantakis Winery

Located near the charming fishing village of Pollonia, Konstantakis Winery belongs to Kostas Mallis. Using grapes from Mallis' privately owned vineyards, the winery produces three wines: the white **Selection**, a blend of Assyrtiko and Savatiano; **Spilia White**, a blend of Savatiano and Roditis; and **Spilia Rosé**, a blend of Mandilaria, Roditis and Moscato. The winery produces about 5,000 bottles annually, all of which are sold exclusively on the island. — Pollonia, T: (+30) 22870 41125, (+30) 693 664 4481

SIKINOS

Manalis Winery

On the road that goes southwest from Hora, the main town of Sikinos, towards Episkopi lie the organic vineyards owned by Manalis Winery. Since 2008, the winery has been producing four wines, all from indigenous varieties: **Manalis En Lefko** (Assyrtiko, Aidani and Monemvasia), **Manalis Rosé** (Aidani and Mavrotragano), **Manalis En Thermo** (Mavrotragano, Mantilaria and Fokiano) and the sweet dessert wine **Manalis Liosato** (Assyrtiko, Aidani, Mavrotragano, Monemvasia, Fokiano and Limniona). The spectacular view from the winery's veranda makes it the perfect spot for wine tasting, and that's good because these wines can only be found on the island of Sikinos. — Between Hora and Episkopi, T: (+30) 693 227 2854 ●

Greek wine today



Text by YIANNIS KAIMENAKIS, Wine Sommelier

These days, we're able to enjoy some very fine Greek wines, something that would have seemed like a pipe dream in the not-so-distant decade of the 1980s. In the recent past to which I'm referring, choices were particularly limited and the quality of wines was rather poor. Today, however, Nemea, Naoussa, Mantinia, Santorini, Crete and all the other place names associated with Greek wine generously offer us the fine fruit of their soil. We drink them gladly for various reasons, but the million-dollar question remains: how well can Greek wine do internationally, or, put another way, how appealing does our wine look on the racks of a wine shop abroad, nestled in among a variety of choices from France, Italy, Spain and the New World countries?

We Greeks may drink Greek wine intuitively, just as we listen to Greek music or watch Greek films, perhaps either for reasons of localisation or out of sheer habit. I think that the greatest challenge we face is rendering our products competitive on an international level. Outside the borders of Greece, the drums of chauvinism don't beat. Words like *meraki* (the love, care and often personal touch one puts into his work or to a given activity) or *filotimo* (one's responsibility to oneself to act in accordance with righteousness, honor and dignity), and all other such nonsense we use as alibis are no longer valid; things are stripped down to their essence.

Looking back on our country's wine history, I will admit that the purely oenological sector, the segment in charge of production, did its job with consistency and professionalism. Certain early slips, such as the overproduction of wines from foreign varieties, like Sauvignon Blanc, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon, at the beginning of the period of rebirth that Greek wineries underwent, were inevitable mistakes: back in the 1980s, we ourselves weren't thoroughly acquainted with our indigenous varieties,

C E L L A R R A T

let alone our potential foreign buyers. In the "era of the terroir" in which we are living today, this "indigenous" issue has been resolved, and grapes such as Agiorgitiko, Xinomavro, Assyrtiko and Moschofilero now play a key role in the industry.

I have to say that I disagree to a certain extent with the commercial orientation of our wines, something for which, of course, the winemakers themselves aren't responsible. Instead of focusing on place names, we've currently made brand names pivotal. This choice creates trends and boosts easy sales inside the borders of Greece but, at the same time, it makes it harder for winemaking regions to acquire more universal recognition.

Despite the progress made in recent years, our wine identity is still not entirely clear. In my opinion, the first obstacle we face is our multiformity. New Zealand, for example, planted Sauvignon Blanc vines for the first time in 1972. Very quickly, it managed to establish itself on the international market because it had a single grape, a single style and a single wine color to promote. In our case, it's anything but easy to create an identity encompassing such a wide range of varieties, including Malagousia, Vidiano, Mandilaria and Robola.

Another, more fundamental, aspect is that of the price range. For some reason, despite the fact that all wine-growing zones generally provide different wines corresponding to everyday life on the one hand and to Sunday meals and special occasions on the other – with corresponding price ranges – we still insist on producing truly great wines that are destined exclusively for the "upper shelf". Luckily, the financial crisis has had a significant impact on wine-making, pointing it in a more budget-friendly direction.

In a country with a strong culinary tradition like Greece, it would be a mistake not to coordinate wine and food growth rates. Both here in Greece and abroad, we have some great restaurants that promote their Greek origins and identity in a laudable manner. Greek food is, beyond a doubt, the ideal "vehicle" to assist Greek wine on its journey to greater recognition. A few years ago, we had every reason to complain, as the quality, the aesthetics and the general standards of Greek restaurants abroad were an insult to us all. Today, things have improved dramatically and you can find modern and creatively competitive representatives of Greek gastronomy in all of the large cities around the world.

It's my belief that Greek wine has already reintroduced itself to consumers outside the borders of Greece. Of paramount importance is the fact that we've managed to shake off the bad reputation that had, not without reason, dogged our wines in the past. Establishing oneself is something that takes time, devotion and hard work. I would suggest we put aside the obsessive love for our country that blinds our judgment, and let consistency and patience guide us instead. ●

We Greeks may drink Greek wine intuitively, just as we listen to Greek music or watch Greek films, perhaps either for reasons of localisation or out of sheer habit. I think that the greatest challenge we face is rendering our products competitive on an international level.

Three grape varieties. Three high elevation parcels. Agiorghitiko in acacia barrel, Syrah in stainless steel, Mavrofilero macerated in amphora.
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Attica

With a tradition in oenology whose origins can be traced back to antiquity, the wine areas of Attica (the region of Greece that includes Athens) hold a number of secrets just waiting to be discovered. The plain of Mesogeia, for instance, with the Athens International Airport at its center, hosts a number of wineries featuring dynamic teams of winemakers who are dedicated to combining their grandfathers' traditions with modern winemaking techniques and to improving the quality of wine produced in the area.

Text by THALIA KARTALI and PENELOPE KATSATOU

1
A traditional harvest on the Attic Plain. (Photograph from the personal archive of Giorgos Hatzisotiriou).

2
Photograph from the personal archive of Giorgos Hatzisotiriou.





2

Two world wars and an epidemic of phylloxera contributed to the destruction of the vineyards, which had been under cultivation since ancient times, and an attempt at reviving them during the 1960s failed miserably, resulting instead in the production of cheap, bad-quality bulk wine, mainly retsina. During the 1990s, a renaissance in Greek wine, headed by dynamic winemakers and oenologists working hard to revive the indigenous variety Savatiano, led to the production of high-quality wines. Their efforts centered on the preservation of the traditional winemaking techniques (in order to retain the variety's unique characteristics) combined with research and experimentation in order to capitalize on Savatiano's ability to produce high-quality wines which can age gracefully. The vineyards were planted with other white varieties, too, including Malagousia in particular, whose own revival owes a lot to these wine regions, and Assyrtiko, the well-known Santorini variety, which seems to have found a new expression here in Attica, the largest wine-producing area of Greece.

Just a half hour's drive from the center of Athens, the plain of Mesogeia is home to many wineries that welcome visitors and are happy to offer, in addition to tasting sessions with excellent wines, a glimpse into Attica's long tradition in winemaking. The wider area also hosts a number of archeological sites which are well worth visiting.

Papagianakos Winery

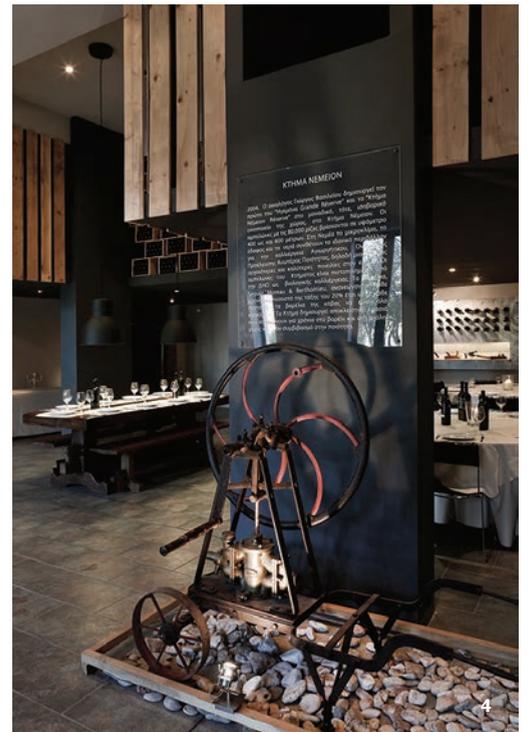
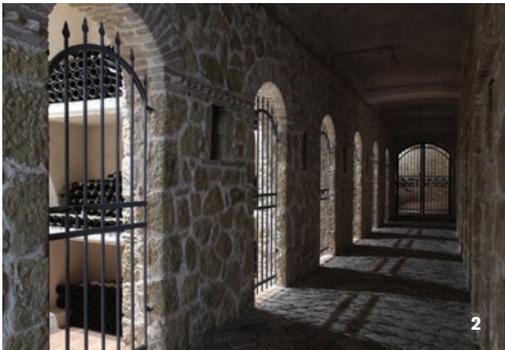
Situated at the heart of Mesogeia, the Papagianakos Winery is the first Greek winery built according to bio-climatic design principles. Surrounded by its vineyards, the winery is built on the site of an old monastery. The building complex was designed bearing in mind both the winemaking process and the need to create open and welcoming spaces for open tours and private functions. The aim, when defining the building's zones, was to ensure smooth production flow while also enabling visitors to circulate within the winery.

Its owner, winemaker Vasilis Papagianakos, never tires of speaking about Attica vineyards and the great potential they possess. A polite, soft-spoken man, he becomes passionate when he talks of this land, the soil of his ancestors, to which he has dedicated so much of his life. Having studied the local variety of Savatiano for many years, he has a deep knowledge of its overall strengths and of its ability to produce excellent wines with ageing potential. Papagiannakos belongs to the generation of winemakers whose resilience and continued efforts led to the discovery of this variety's great potential. Since the '90s, he has been busy using modern techniques both in the winemaking process and in the vineyard,

to improve the many qualities of this unique variety, particularly its ageability. The best-seller of this winery is its Savatiano Papagianakos Palaia Klimata, a Savatiano varietal produced from vines that are more than 50 years old.

Roxani Matsa Estate

If we were asked to describe this domaine, which lies in the middle of a well-populated area, the word we'd use would be "paradise". The estate, which today belongs to Roxani Matsa, used to be part of a much larger one – the historical estate of Andreas Cambas, who established the family winery in 1882 and whose name over the following decades became synonymous with Greek winemaking. Today, 12.1 hectares of the original property remain in the hands of Matsa, an amazing woman who in 2001 was named Wine Personality of the Year by the Greek Wine Writers Association. Matsa has been cultivating her land according to the principles of organic farming for the last 40 years, producing wines mainly from Savatiano and Malagousia varieties. Since the '80s, this true viticulturist has been collaborating with the Boutari Corporation, one of the largest wine companies in Greece, for the production of her wines. →



1
Vasilis Papagiannakos, wine producer.

3
Roxani Matsa, wine producer.

2
The wine cellar at Estate Oenotria Land.

4
An old pump from George Vassiliou's personal collection displayed in the winery.

She has contributed to the spread of Malagousia, the indigenous variety that was discovered in northern Greece but whose origins can be traced to Attica, by distributing clones from her vineyards to other producers all over Greece. Thanks to her vast knowledge of viticultural practices, based on years of hard work in the vineyards – "a way of life," as she likes to describe it – and to her unique personality, Matsa is considered one of the most prominent figures in Greek winemaking today. The estate that bears her name includes the old family house in which she still resides, the winery and a beautiful Mediterranean garden.

Domaine Vassiliou

A tall white-haired man welcomes us at the entrance to the winery of this domaine, situated in Koropi. George Vassiliou belongs to the generation of oenologists who led the revolution in Greek winemaking during the 1990s. He belongs, he says, to a family with a long tradition in winemaking. "I was born in a barrel, under a vine, and my mother used to give me wine instead of milk," he tells us, laughing. Vassiliou was one of the first winemakers in the Mesogeia area who decided to invest in producing good-quality wine.

Working together with his friend and partner Dimitri Fakoreli, also an oenologist, he has contributed greatly to the transformation of the quality of the wines being produced in the area. The domain owns a 15-hectare vineyard planted with Savatiano, Roditis and Assyrtiko. The winery is a modern production

unit, with state-of-the-art equipment, including horizontal presses and stainless-steel temperature-controlled tanks. The bestselling wine of the domaine, Vassiliou Fumé, is made from 100% Savatiano. An avid collector of antique equipment used in winemaking, Vassiliou has placed a number of such items on display at the entrance of the winery, which is open to visitors.

Aoton Winery

Hidden away in the alleys of the old village of Paiania, Aoton Winery isn't easy to find. "Don't expect to see anything more; that's it and unfortunately, it's not open visitors," says Sotiris Ginis as he greets us on a rainy spring day. A soft-spoken young man who is both oenologist and viticulturist, Ginis is carrying on his grandfathers' tradition; his dream, he says, is to produce wines "which will age gracefully." His small production – about 15,000 to 20,000 bottles, with a potential capacity of 60,000 bottles per year – is based on experimentation and on the knowledge he has acquired by working in the vineyard.

According to him, all the important work is done in the vineyard." Thanks to our long tradition in winemaking, Attica winemakers have a lot of experience," he says, showing us the diaries kept by his grandfather. "Everything is written in here; you can find information about the epidemic of phylloxera, which destroyed a large part of the Attica vineyards, and the hard fight for survival during the German occupation in 1941-1944."

About 80% of the vineyard consists of Savatiano planted during the '90s, while the rest comprises old vines planted by his grandfather in the '50s. We tasted one of his new wines, a Savatiano and Roditis blend vinified on the lees, one of his latest experiments.

Estate Oenotria Land

Leaving behind the plain of Mesogeia, we head north towards Kapandriti, about 30 km outside Athens. The estate we're visiting here was created by Costas Lazaridis, a well-known producer from northern Greece; it consists of a modern winery, ageing cellars, tasting rooms, indoor and outdoor areas for social and professional events, and a museum displaying tools, agricultural equipment and other objects used in winemaking and distilling, some dating back to the 17th century.

The exhibition presents the process of wine production in great detail, and there is a section dedicated to the production of vinegar as well. The vineyard here, planted in 2000 with organically grown Greek and international varieties, consists of 20 privately owned hectares of land on the shores of Lake Marathonas. Two of the estate's wines come from this vineyard: Oinotria Gi Cabernet Sauvignon-Agiorgitiko and Oinotria Gi Syrah-Agiorgitiko.

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Tear of the Pine

Text by GRIGORIS MICHAÏLOS, Dip WSET

Have you ever tasted Greek retsina? This ancient traditional Greek wine is made by adding a special type of resin during the alcoholic fermentation. The resin alters the wine's final taste, delivering strong pine-scented, herbal notes, reminiscent of sage, mastic, pine and thyme.

If you've ever visited Greece, I'm sure that you can recall the taste of retsina. It's the taste of that Greek summer when, in your early twenties, you decided to visit one of those magnificent Aegean islands for the first time. Back then, everything was nearly perfect. It was all about you, your boyfriend or girlfriend, the sun, the sea and an uncomplicated way of living. So what if you didn't have enough money to afford luxury? The family-owned taverna right next to the Aegean waves served delicious Greek food and even their bulk retsina was pretty decent. Actually it wasn't, but who really cared back then? Had anyone claimed that Greece was capable of producing quality wines?

Fast-forward to the present, and if you still have this old-school perception of Greece and its wines, why not take a minute and look at yourself in the mirror? Are *you* the same person as you were 20 or 30 years ago? If not, then please allow for the possibility that today's Greek wine isn't the Greek wine of your early youth. During the last twenty years, the wines of Greece have experienced a great revolution, and retsina has definitely changed. Stelios Kechris and his pioneering "Tear of the Pine" retsina marked a brand new era for this much-abused (yet so authentic) style of Greek wine. Words such as innovation, quality and individuality describe this new-age style, one which aims towards a more sophisticated and delicate expression of an old classic.

The unique and heretical character of the "Tear of the Pine" is clear from the outset, shown in the selection of the grape variety used. Mr. Kechris' love for Assyrtiko led to the first-ever retsina made from selected grapes of the noblest Greek variety grown in the Goumenissa region. The wine doesn't just ferment in oak barrels, it is aged in them as well, as if it were a white Burgundy. The result is phenomenal, showing an impeccable balance between the pine-scented aromas and the varietal fruit expression, with added layers of complexity and solid structure. This is a wine made to match wonderfully with Mediterranean cuisine. Even more heretical is the fact that the wine displays an impressive ageing potential. This fact was clearly highlighted in a vertical tasting of seven vintages that took place at the Kechris Winery, a tasting in which I was lucky enough to participate. I believe that few wines show a more authentic Greek character than retsina, and I think that "Tear of the Pine" is a game-changer, a wine that redefines this classic style and breaks all stereotypes and long-established perceptions. I hope you'll discover it, too; reach for the good stuff this summer...

V E R T I C A L

Tear of the Pine 2016

Quite tight and youthful, this wine combines an intense toasty character with ripe fruit aromas and resin notes of sage, thyme and mastic. Expressive and rich on the palate, it displays a lovely balance between Assyrtiko's razor-sharp acidity and its exuberant body. The finish is lingering, with a nice toasty complexity.

Tear of the Pine 2015

This one is quite expressive, with mineral notes, herbal notes expressed as rosemary and sage, and a taste of brioche. Barrel notes are very well integrated, highlighting the fruit and the elegant resinous aromas. It's precise and fresh on the palate, with an appetizing phenolic bite somewhere towards the spicy finish.

Tear of the Pine 2014

The color was golden and more developed than that of the 2015. With smoke, minerality expressed as petrol aromas and hints of deliberate oxidation, this was closer to a complex, gracefully aged oaky wine than to a retsina. Oak was also quite dominant on the palate, leaving the pine-scented notes in the background. This is a vintage for oak-lovers.

Tear of the Pine 2013

In a more traditional approach, this vintage displayed distinct aromas of pine, resin, mastic and dried fruit on the nose. Some hints of peppermint brought freshness and greater balance. The palate was strong flavored, with balancing acidity leading towards a nutty finish.

Tear of the Pine 2012

This hot and dry vintage resulted in a wine with deep golden color and ripe, almost baked fruits, as well as hints of honey and caramel. On the palate, the resin character was quite intense, displaying flavors of thyme, mastic, and pine tree, with balancing acidity. The wine's development in the glass was quite noticeable, adding to its overall lovely complexity.

Tear of the Pine 2009

On the nose, this vintage was quite developed, with signs of oxidation and lack of freshness. Yet on the palate, it was better, still alive with barrel notes, honey, caramel and nuts intermingled with mastic, thyme and spices. It had an oxidative and nutty finish.

Tear of the Pine 2008

Undoubtedly, 2008 was unique, with its initially intense smoky character breathing to beautiful notes of cereals, mastic and Mediterranean herbs such as oregano. Freshness and great balance on the palate, along with lovely barrel integration, all told a beautiful story of how complex, delicious and authentic the "Tear of the Pine" can be after a full decade in the bottle. ●

During the last twenty years, the wines of Greece have experienced a great revolution, and retsina has definitely changed. Stelios Kechris and his pioneering "Tear of the Pine" retsina marked a brand new era for this much-abused style of Greek wine.

ΚΥΡ·ΓΙΑΝΝΗ

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In Vino Veritas

In wine, there is truth... This is the title of a six-part documentary series featuring one-hour episodes dedicated to the history of Greek wine. The series is an international co-production, created and directed by cinematographer Constantinos Tseklenis.

Text by THALIA KARTALI

Archaeologists, historians, grape growers, oenologists, winemakers, sommeliers, wine critics and Masters of Wine take the viewer on a journey through time, following the evolution of the craft of winemaking in Greece from 5000 B.C. to the present.

"The idea came to me three years ago," explains Tseklenis as he sips from his glass at one of Athens' most prominent wine bars, "when I overheard some foreign visitors wondering whether Greece could produce high-quality wine. Being a wine lover myself, and knowing a great deal about both Greece's long history of winemaking and the immense potential of its vineyards to produce top-quality wines, I decided to take on the challenge of showing the world the true story of Greek viticulture."

Greece is not the birthplace of wine. "Let me be absolutely clear: wine production didn't originate in Greece," Tseklenis says. "It has been historically documented that it came from the Caucasus, but Greece is the first country which created a whole culture around wine. The first appellations (Designations of Origin) were created here in order to protect the terroir. Laws were introduced against tampering with the quality of a wine. The ancient Greek 'sommelier' – who in Greece was known as the 'oinochoos' – had already discovered the importance of using differently shaped goblets depending on the wine variety. In addition to that, all kinds of religious ceremonies, both in antiquity and later on, during the Byzantine times, were related to wine."

The documentary, the filmmaker explains, was quite a challenge for him: "We covered 17,000 kilometers in nine months and filmed in more than 40 vineyards around the country. Our criteria for filming were based on both the beauty of the landscape and the high quality of the wines produced. Greece today has such a diversity of grape varieties. We have around 80 documented varieties, a number

of which are gradually becoming rather well known abroad. We documented the evolution of Greek winemaking in modern times, with the establishment of the large historic Greek wineries, including Achaia Clauss, Kambas and Boutaris, before going on to those pioneers like Evangelos Averoff in Metsovo, the first to plant international varieties in Greece, and Yiannis Carras, who created a unique vineyard in Porto Carras and then to the producers who revolutionized Greek wine production in the '80s and '90s."

The future for Greek wine is bright. "The problem we face in Greece," Tseklenis notes, "is that we are now trying to catch up with the rest of the wine-producing countries, having been left behind for a number of reasons that also had to do with Greek history. But we have a very good foundation on which to build; we have excellent vineyards and winemakers who have made Greek wine competitive in markets abroad."

The documentary-maker strongly believes that Greek wine goes hand in hand with Greek gastronomy, which is as varied as the soils that produce its excellent products, a fact that led him to dedicate the last episode of the six to food and wine pairing, enlisting the participation of famous Greek chefs. "The Italians knew how to do it long before us, but I believe that Greece has its own brand, perhaps a little quieter but a very appealing one," he says. "Greece isn't just the islands of Mykonos, Santorini, Rhodes or Crete; mainland Greece is full of stunning landscapes, lakes, rivers and vineyards waiting to be discovered. Our aim with "In Vino Veritas" was to show how much more this country has to offer."

The series, now completed, will be shown in English in 20 countries, including New Zealand, Australia, France, Spain and Russia, and Tseklenis has no doubt who really stars in it: "The true protagonists are the wines and the people of Greece." ●

1
Documentary maker
Constantinos Tseklenis.

2
Old barrels at Merkouri
Estate.

3
Strofilia, a traditional wine
press.

4
The series' guest presenter,
Konstantinos Lazarakis MW.

5
Harvest in Dafnes, Crete.

6
An overview of Monemvasia,
home to one of Greece's
oldest varieties.

7
Vineyards in Aigialeia, in the
Peloponnese.

8
Harvest at Gerovasiliou
Estate, near Thessaloniki.

GRAPE



Manousakis Winery

As Europe's southernmost point, the island of Crete is known for its high temperatures and very dry climate. However, as has been proven numerous times, it's human passion, rather than climate, that is the real catalyst in the production of great wines.

Text by GREGORY KONTOS, Dip. WSET

Whoever has any doubts about Crete's ability to produce great wines – in view of the island's extreme weather – should visit Manousakis Winery and try their excellent creations. The winery is situated 15 km from the city of Hania, and as we approach, we spot the recently renovated but still beautifully traditional house of the Manousakis family. Here, we're greeted by Alexandra Manousakis, who takes us on a tour of the modern winery, which is surrounded by olive and orange trees.

THE GREEK DREAM

Everything here started with Theodoros Manousakis; born in 1943 in Crete, he emigrated with his family at the age of eleven to America to escape the dire economic situation in the region at the time. As a young immigrant, Manousakis built a new life and a successful career, but the flame of nostalgia continued to burn inside him, never letting him forget his homeland. Almost 30 years after he had left, he returned to Crete, determined to create a vineyard where he could produce high-quality wines.

He named his wines Nostos (which means nostalgia), marking each bottle with his great motivation for returning to Crete. Drawing on what he'd learned in the business world overseas, Manousakis used all his experience and expertise in his new venture which, from the beginning, was founded on a clear vision: to produce great wines. Keeping in mind the maxim that great wines are born in the vineyard, the Manousakis family started by planting an 2-hectare plot of land at an elevation of 350 meters.

With the help of expert viticulturists, the family decided to plant four Rhone Valley varieties: Syrah, Grenache Rouge, Mourvèdre and Roussanne. The first results were successful, and soon the vineyard began to expand to include plots at higher elevations, eventually covering 12 hectares in total. In addition to the four French varieties, four Greek varieties were planted; three indigenous Cretan varieties (Moschato Spinias, Vidiano and Romeiko) and Assyrtiko, originally native to Santorini. Today, the Manousakis Winery is run by Alexandra Manousakis, Theodoros'



American-born daughter, and her husband Afsin Molavi, who was born in Sweden and came to Greece to work as a sommelier. The team is completed by oenologist Kostis Galanis and viticulturist Giannis Galanis.

THE WINES

Manousakis Winery produces five white varieties; Nostos Roussanne, Nostos Vidiano, Nostos Muscat of Spina, Nostos Assyrtiko and Nostos Romeiko. The reds include two varieties, Nostos Syrah and Nostos Mourvèdre, and two blends, Nostos Alexandra's (Syrah, Mourvèdre and Grenache Rouge) and Nostos Blend (Syrah, Mourvèdre and Grenache Rouge). At first, the whole production of 5,000 to 10,000 bottles was exported to the United States; more recently, with an increase in production, Nostos wines have been gaining steady recognition in Greece, as well as in other international markets.

↑
A traditional Cretan
celebration at Manousakis
Winery.

manousakiswinery.com

GEOMETRIA

ASSYRTIKO



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BORN IN: Paphos, Cyprus. ● MARITAL STATUS: Married to Amalia Vosnos. They have two children, Ares and Andriani. ● STUDIED: Oenology at the University of Dijon, France. ● LIVES: Divides his time between Arcadia, Nemea, Melissia and Santorini. ● HOBBIES: Has a passion for the sea; for traveling, for going to the cinema and for collecting wines. ● MOTTO: "Value authenticity".



Giannis Tselepos

Giannis Tselepos is a man who speaks his mind. Early on in our conversation, I realize that we aren't going to talk about him, but rather about the future of Greek wine: "The world of Greek wine is split in half: those who work to make the next step possible for us all and the 'entourage', as I call them, who only care about making a profit; a pseudo-elite of some sort. You must choose to which side you belong."

Text by PENELOPE KATSATOU

Photography by GIORGOS KAPLANIDIS

Mantinia-Nemea-Santorini: this is the itinerary of one of the best-known wine producers in Greece. My own itinerary, one made by car, leads me to a truly beautiful landscape in Mantinia, Arcadia. There, at an elevation of 750 meters, on the eastern slopes of Mount Parnon, characterised by rocky clay soils and ideal drainage, lies the "headquarters" of Giannis Tselepos. He pours me a cup of coffee and gets straight to the point.

"We must determine where we stand and what we should do. Right now, the greatest obstacle for Greek wine is none other than the Greek state. After thirty years on an upward track, we find ourselves at a crucial crossroads... Changes will be made on all levels, and the question is whether the Greek state will support these changes. No, it most certainly will not. We're forced to do everything by ourselves. The only thing that we ask is that the state not stand in the way. But it does just that, through bureaucracy, which causes sky-high over-taxation and prevents us from making good use of European funds. The only viable solution is for our sector to make brave decisions that will allow us to move forward on our own."

How will this be achieved?

"We must establish an identity for Greek wine. There's a strategic plan that needs to be followed. Right now, there are very few companies in Greece that can play an important role in the international market. So, instead of focusing on Greek wine's fine aromas, let's focus on its via-

bility; let's focus on whether or not such a notion really exists. This is the crucial question that needs to be answered. In the past, the investments that were made in Greece were driven by vanity. It is an absolute necessity that this does not continue. Wine is not a matter to be taken lightly. It is a sector that can become a key factor in economic growth and help provide a way out of the crisis."

Giannis Tselepos is anxious about the future of Greek wine. He explains that his head office used to be in Mantinia, but after taking into consideration the overall strategic plan for Greek wine, he realized that, to ensure his company's success, he had to focus on products that would boost export numbers.

"Greek wine is defined by the uniqueness and the authenticity of its varieties. Wine-makers cannot divide the regions between them – there isn't enough room for that. This is why we decided to go to different regions; many people turned against us for making that choice. We can't export Cabernet or Merlot. Those who defend Greek varieties today used to be against them. Now they share our opinion. We saw that early on, and so we built a second winery, at Nemea.

We could have simply bought grapes from Nemea. But we bought a winery instead, and invested in the region. We tripled land values in Koutsi. Agiorgitiko by Ktima Driopi and Moschofilero produced at Mantinia became two key factors in an increase in exports. And then came Assyrtiko, made on Santorini, the biggest brand-name in Greek wine, the variety

that has made such an impression in America. We were convinced right from the start (we came under fierce criticism for this) that Santorini is similar to Burgundy and that it needs a different growth model. There's no need for large winemaking facilities; instead, there should be small canaves, in line with the island's tradition. The problem with the region is that there just aren't enough grapes. We collaborated initially with the Chrissou family and later on with the Pelekanos family, and as a result we now have 50 acres of vines. We changed the growth model by producing vertically and by making expensive wines.

Following this logic, you'll go to Naoussa next, won't you?

If we find the right conditions, why not? This is not, however, an end in itself; we have certain business plans. Regarding the investment that we are now making in Nemea, we joined forces with a foreign investor, a very serious company from China, Amphora of Hellas Group, which also invests in collaborations with other high-quality Greek companies. The promotion of the products is being linked to the promotion of Greek culture; they're genuinely interested in promoting Greek culture and Greek products in China. This is the right way to infiltrate the Chinese market, rather than by trying to make some easy money quickly. It is significant that we are one of the few wineries that are doing better during the crisis than we did before it. Between 2010 and 2015, the company thrived. →

Greek wine is defined by the uniqueness and the authenticity of its varieties. Winemakers cannot divide the regions between them – there isn't enough room for that. This is why we decided to go to different regions; many people turned against us for making that choice.

Where do you see your company five years from now?

Our company is aiming to reach a turnover of €5m over the next five years. Despite being one of the smallest companies in our field, we are among the most successful. Our goal from now on is to make expensive, brand-name wines that will be promoted to the right markets. I know very well that I won't stand a chance if I make a €2 wine and try to compete against Australia.

And what about Greece?

Few of us care about promoting Greek wine. In doing so, it's true that we're wasting valuable time, but it's only under the name "Greece" that we can move forward, not each of us individually, under our own names. The world of Greek wine is split down the middle: those who have understood this and are working to make the next step possible for us all and the 'entourage' as I call them, those who only care about making a profit. They're the ones who have financial interests, they want to have an opinion and they promote a lifestyle around wine that has nothing to do with the true traditions of the Greek people. It's absurd that, in a country going through a crisis, you see people wondering on social media which wine they should import. How can you talk to someone who can't afford to buy food and go on and on to them about a wine glass made by Riedel, and how it brings out the right aromas of a given wine from the Loire? These people have nothing to do with wine. I'd estimate that 30% of wine in Greece is imported, and that 20% of that is bad wine.

Do you consider yourself an oenologist or a businessman?

I wasn't born a businessman, and I'm not descended from an affluent family. I was seduced by wine and went to France to study oenology. I couldn't put into practice in Cyprus what I had learnt in France, so I decided to come to Greece. Ever since the mid '80s, when quality wine took the place of the industrial products, a group of us, among which I number Gerovassiliou, Skouras and Rouvalis, were compelled to become businessmen, having come to the realization that Greek businessmen in our field were virtually non-existent. I want the fight that we have been carrying on since the mid '80s to be seen; I don't care about advertising myself. For me, my fight on behalf of Greek wine, through legislation, the institutions at the Greek Wine Federation (SEO) and the National Inter-Professional Organisation for Vines and Wine (EDOAO), and alongside the Wine Producers' Association of the Peloponnesian Vineyard (ENOAP), of which I am president, that's what comes first. The estate, and me, we come second.

How come you didn't do anything in Cyprus?

It just didn't work out. At first we didn't find it interesting, and later on, when we did attempt to do something, we couldn't. Vineyards there are under 3,000 acres, which renders Cyprus non-viable as far as winemaking is concerned, since it doesn't fall within the European licensing regime for the wine industry. Land's very expensive as well, and all the good spots are taken. A strategic plan is needed, which would include two local varieties and two foreign ones. I've already suggested this.

Have you ever been jealous – in a good way – of a fellow winemaker?

There have been certain wines I was jealous of, and this is why I went to Santorini. I believe Sigalas is an artist in winemaking; Nychteri and Kavalieros are truly great wines. I like Skouras' extroverted nature and Gerovassiliou's planning abilities. ●

TIMELINE



1980:
Giannis Tselepos produces the first Moschofilero.



1989:
Ktima Tselepos is established and the first vineyards are planted in Arcadia.



1992:
Mantinia Tselepos is produced.



1994:
The winery at Tegea is established.



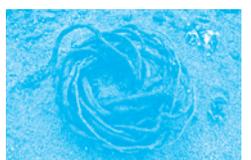
1996:
The first sparkling Amalia Brut is produced, following the traditional method of the Campania region.



1998:
Tselepos' first single-vineyard wine, Kokkinomylos, is produced.



2003:
A vineyard and winemaking facilities are established at Koutsi, Nemea, under the brand name Ktima Driopi.



2014:
Canava Chrissou Tselepos is established on Santorini, in collaboration with the Chrissou family.

antama
means together



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Varoulko Seaside

In 1987, the verse of a song inspired the name of a new restaurant which, 30 years later, has become synonymous with seafood gastronomy. Lefteris Lazarou's Varoulko opened its doors for the first time that year; after more than three decades, it continues to convey the very essence of culinary creativity.

Photography by GIORGOS KAPLANIDIS

With its view out to the beautiful Aegean Sea that Lazarou so loves, Varoulko Seaside has been the perfect spot for its owner/chef to work on innovative versions of his favorite dishes and to create the new gastronomic experiences that have established the restaurant as an exciting and versatile seafood destination. It's also a venue for events and the location for very special cooking classes held in the chef's open kitchen. Last year, on the occasion of Varoulko's 30th anniversary, Lazarou, alongside his new collaborator, Giannis Parikos, and their experienced team, created two special menus to mark the occasion. The "Anniversary Menu" told the story of the restaurant by recreating some of its landmark dishes, such as the cabbage rolls stuffed with minced shrimp and turmeric sauce, as well as the steamed monkfish served with celeriac purée, celery leaves and lemon cream.

The "2017 Tasting Menu" celebrated Varoulko's more recent approach and pointed towards the future. It featured such dishes as shrimp tartar with cauliflower mousse, carrot gelée and ginger and lemongrass consommé; grilled squid fished in Greece and served with smoked herring cream, cauliflower and vine leaves stuffed with cuttlefish risotto; and red mullet with green pea cream, scented with Aegina pistachio, smoked tea and rice chips with cuttlefish ink. Keeping its passion for original creations alive and offering its guests the warmest possible hospitality, Varoulko is ready to sail across a sea of tastes through the decades that lie ahead.

Shrimp Kritharoto

Serves 4

Ingredients

100ml demi-glace • 100ml bisque • 500g orzo • 10ml olive oil • 12 shrimp (approx. 400g), peeled • 1/2 tsp finely chopped garlic • 1/3 tsp spicy red pepper flakes • 350ml sweet white wine • 1 rounded tsp finely chopped parsley • 20g butter • 20g grated Parmesan • Salt • Pepper

Preparation

Place the olive oil in a pan and sauté the garlic and red pepper flakes. Douse with sweet wine and let the alcohol evaporate. Then add the demi-glace, bisque and orzo. Oil the shrimp and season them with salt and pepper. Place the shrimp in the pan with the orzo to cook. Shortly before all fluids are absorbed, remove from heat and add the chopped parsley, butter and grated Parmesan. Season with salt and pepper.

Wine Pairing

We chose Lapotrypi, from the vineyards on the slopes of Mount Kithairon, a rather original combination of 60% Chardonnay and 40% Assyrtiko. Its crisp acidity starts with freshness and vividness. Then it fills the mouth with its rich and round body, which finds an ideal partner in this solidly built pasta. The subtle taste of Parmesan, diffused through the dish, rests ideally on the wine's greasiness, which is primarily expressed through the Chardonnay.



↑
The team at Varoulko
Seaside.

Shrimp cooked in wine

Serves 4

Ingredients

8 shrimp (approx. 165g), peeled – leave the head and the tail on • 35ml dry white wine • 40ml roasted tomato sauce • 2g salt • 0.5g white pepper • 1g lemon zest • 30g olive oil • 40ml vegetable stock • 30g cherry tomatoes, cut in half • 5g frozen butter, cut in cubes • 1 level tsp dried estragon • 1 level tsp parsley, finely chopped

Preparation

In a pan, heat the wine and cherry tomatoes, parsley and lemon zest and add the shrimp right away. Stir gently, add the salt, pepper, vegetable stock and olive oil. Carefully turn the shrimp over and add the roasted tomato sauce. Cook for about 30 seconds, add the butter to thicken the sauce and then add the estragon.

Wine Pairing

The warm reception from the wine world for the wine "Tear of the Pine" is proof that resinated wine can be of high quality as well. What's more, its distinctive but utterly food-friendly profile blends harmoniously with Mediterranean flavours. On the one hand, the Assyrtiko variety, aged for six months in a combination of barrels to add vividness and notes of lime and citrus fruit, is a perfect match for the shrimp that were doused in wine. On the other hand, the soft touch of the resin brings out aromas of sweet spices, coriander and rosemary and, unexpectedly, pairs very well with the rich tomato sauce cooked with thyme and aromatic herbs.

— Alexandros Aggelopoulos, *Sommelier*

Two colours
One wine
30 years



Black for the earth, the ashes, the volcano, Santorini itself. **White** for purity, the grape variety, the island, Greece itself. Santorini Boutari is the Assyrtiko that launched Wines with Protected Designation of Origin in Santorini. Back in 1987, the winemaker's vision was focused on evolving this distinctive variety. A true Assyrtiko that has been fascinating us for more than 30 years, with its unique minerality and its particular character. This is our **Santorini Boutari**.

Avithos Preview Taverna

Overlooking the beautiful Avithos Beach, the Avithos Preview Taverna offers you a little more than your average Greek taverna. Since 2004, Panos and his mother Angela have been producing delightfully authentic Cephalonian and Greek dishes, using select local products, fresh fish straight from the fishermen at Argostoli Harbor, and vegetables from their own organic garden.

Photography by GIORGOS KAPLANIDIS

Cephalonian meat pie, eggplant in tomato sauce, fried cod served with *aliada* (garlicky mash potatoes) and *bourgeto* (whitebait in tomato sauce) are just some of Angela's specialties, while Panos is a certified sommelier, serving the very best local wines from an extensive wine list.

Bourgeto (Whitebait in tomato sauce)

4-6 serves

Ingredients

1/2kg whitebait (cleaned, gutted and heads removed) • 100ml olive oil • 3 cloves of garlic, chopped • 3-4 grated tomatoes or 300ml tomato juice • 1/2 teaspoon dry oregano • 1 dry bay leaf • Pinch of rock salt • Juice of half a lemon

Preparation

In a frying pan, place the olive oil and garlic, and sauté for 2 minutes. Add the tomatoes and stir for 5 minutes. Add the oregano, bay leaf and whitebait. Add salt. Cook for 15 minutes. Add the lemon juice and plate up.

Wine Pairing

Gentilini, Wild Paths, 2017: A limited-production single-vineyard Robola, passed through French and American oak barrels. Aromatic, with rich body, refreshing acidity and long aftertaste.





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→
The team at Avithos Preview
Taverna.



Fried cod with aliada (garlicky mashed potatoes)

Serves 4

Ingredients

1 large piece of salted cod (soaked in water overnight, with a change of water 3 or 4 times to remove salt) • Vegetable oil for frying • **For the batter:** 230ml water • 170g flour • **For the aliada:** 1kg potatoes • 6 cloves of garlic • Juice from a whole lemon • 1 tablespoon salt

Preparation

Without peeling, wash the potatoes and boil well. Cut a piece from the end of the cod (about 1/3 of the filet) and simmer for 15 minutes. Reserve the water. Peel the potatoes while still warm and put in a mixer with garlic, lemon juice and one glass of the water used to boil the cod. Mix until creamy. In a deep plate, mix the water and flour to make the batter. Cut the remaining cod into pieces and dip them in the batter. Fry in a non-stick frying pan with plenty of oil. Serve the cod with the aliada and boiled beetroots.

Wine Pairing

Robola is a wine intended to accompany fish, seafood, and "oily" summer dishes with light sauces. Of course, if you'd like to be faithful to the customs of Cephalonia, you'll drink your Robola with the traditional dish of the island, fried cod with aliada.

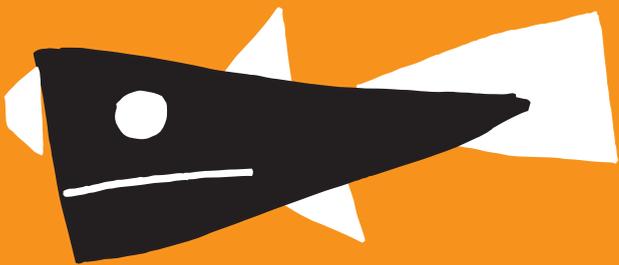
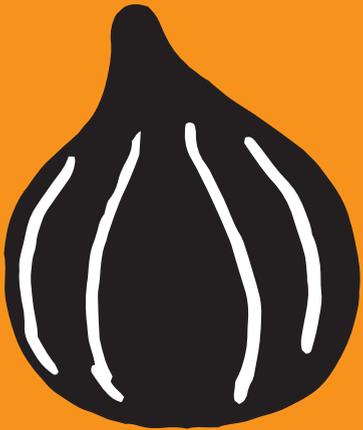
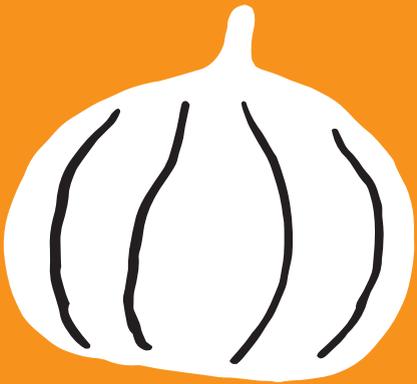
Sarris, Robola of Kefalonia, 2017: From the "Megali Petra Domaine" of Panos Sarris comes this Robola, made with grapes from three privately owned vineyards on the southern slopes of Ainos. Stony and limestone soils on steep slopes that enjoy the sea breeze create the ideal conditions for the best expression of the variety. This wine has concentrated aromas of white flesh fruits, flowers and herbs, and a rich body, crisp acidity and a long aftertaste with notes of minerality.

— Panos Sarris, *Sommelier*



VOLCANIC BUBBLES

THE FIRST EVER SPARKLING ASSYRTIKO FROM A PRODUCER FROM SANTORINI



Greek Food and Wine

Greece is a country of great geographic diversity, with numerous islands, a mountainous mainland, and very few plains.

Text by NIKOS LOUKAKIS, Senior Lecturer WSPC

Illustration by MENELAOS KOUROUDIS

The poor mountainous soils are suitable for the cultivation of few crops or fruit-bearing trees. Notable exceptions include olive trees, fig trees and grape vines; the fruits of all of these have become leading protagonists in Greek gastronomy.

For the same reasons of geography, Greek farmers have always owned more goats and sheep than they have cows. Yogurts and cheeses are an important part of Greek culinary traditions. In fact, rich and tasty Greek yogurt became our biggest edible ambassador, along with feta cheese.

The mountainous terrains, coupled with the dry summer conditions, provide exceptional herbs, which add flavors to many traditional dishes. The most important of these are oregano and thyme, which can be used either fresh or dry.

FISH & SEAFOOD

Seafood is a major part of Greek cuisine. Sea urchin, bottarga and small fish such as **atherina** (smelts), **marida** (whitebait) and **gavros** (anchovies) are unique delicacies. **Sardines** and red mullets are also important, along with larger fish. **Calamari** and **octopus** are both considered "must-have" delicacies.

Sea urchin eggs, a unique delicacy with an intense taste, are usually served plain with just lemon and olive oil, and accompanied by grilled bread. Thanks to a long aftertaste – characterized by a briny sea flavor – they are considered a rare delicacy, but they need to be balanced by the right wine. Sparkling wines made from **Moschofilero** or a **Robola** from Kefalonia will manage the aftertaste, and the savory flavor, with fresh acidity. Chilled Greek tsipouro (pomace brandy) would also be an excellent choice.

Atherina, **marida** and **gavros** (usually dredged in flour and deep fried) are common dishes at island tavernas. A squeeze of lemon is used, but if this is overdone, the crispy crust on the fish suffers. The best choice for these dishes would be a wine with crispy acidity and a light body, such as a **Moschofilero** from Mantinia, a **Roditis** from Patra or a **Robola** from Cephalonia.

Grilled sardines with good quality sea salt are a fantastic dish, full of flavor and taste. Newly fashionable whites like **Vidiano** from Crete or **Malagousia** with a touch of oak are a perfect match. If you want a different,

but equally amazing experience, try a new-style **retsina** instead.

Fried red mullet is unique in taste and a great delicacy. It has more flavor than sardines do, but a softer texture. Dry rosés from **Xinomavro** and **Assyrtiko** – the latter not necessarily from Santorini – are excellent choices to go with this fine fish.

When it's fresh, **calamari** is better grilled than fried, and then served with a dressing of olive oil, lemon and oregano (or parsley). An unoaked **Assyrtiko** from Santorini matches perfectly with the rich flesh and the flavors from the grill

Octopus tentacles, tenderized and grilled before being dressed with a drizzle of olive oil, a touch of vinegar and thyme, offer the definitive taste of summer. Traditional Greek rosé wines from **Agiorgitiko**, ones with a light red color and cherry flavors, are the best match.

Larger fish like **groupers** and **sea bass** are a perfect match with the best wines from Santorini's **Assyrtiko**. Look for special editions from single vineyards that best express the variety's minerality.

MEAT

Meat also plays an important role in Greek cuisine; local production includes mainly **lamb**, **chicken**, **rabbit** and **pork**. Beef was not commonly consumed until recently and is usually imported. A large portion of the Greek meat eaten in the countryside comes from animals raised domestically; they often provide milk, eggs and the main course for celebrations, special occasions and the Sunday family table.

Grilled lamb chops and lamb slow-cooked in the oven with rosemary and garlic appear with regularity on the menus of Greek tavernas in the mountainous areas of the country. The taste of this mountain-raised meat is more intense and persistent than that from animals raised in the plains. **Xinomavro** from Amyntaio or Naoussa is the best choice; it is a good match for the intense and persistent flavor of the meat.

Roast chicken served with okra in a tomato sauce is another traditional dish. Rosé wines like **Xinomavro** from Amyntaio, with their red fruit aromatic character and light tannins, are a perfect pairing with the dish's main ingredients, marrying particularly well with the proteins in the chicken.

Rabbit stew with baby onions and aromatic spices is called *kouneli stifado* and is a popular rustic dish. **Limniona**, another newly discovered red grape variety, with great finesse, fruit, spices and smooth tannins, is the perfect partner for this hearty fare.

TRADITIONAL DISHES

The most common dish prepared with Greek yogurt is **tzatziki**, an appetizer made with yogurt, shredded cucumber, dill, garlic and olive oil. A refreshing **Roditis** from Patras, with its medium body, and crispy acidity, would pair well with this classic appetizer.

The famous **Greek salad** is another traditional summer dish, with tomatoes, cucumber, olives, feta cheese, dry oregano and olive oil. It matches well with lesser-known white Greek grape varieties such as **Savatiano** from Attica, **Athiri** from Rhodes and **Aidani** from Santorini. All of these wines have a medium body and medium acidity, which means they pair well with the tomatoes and with the saltiness of feta cheese.

Moussaka is a dish made with eggplant, potatoes and chopped meat, with many aromatic spices and with a béchamel sauce on top. It's a bold dish which requires an intense wine, like a **Xinomavro** from Naoussa, as the acidity and tannins will work well with the richness of the dish.

Dolmades are vine leaves stuffed with a mixture of rice and herbs, and sometimes with meat as well, served with an egg and lemon sauce known as avgolemono. The vegetal, lemony taste requires a white wine with acidity to balance the flavors; such as an **Assyrtiko** from Santorini or a medium-bodied unoaked **Malagousia**.

Fava is a purée of split peas with caramelized onions, olive oil and lemon; it's often served with grilled octopus. The deliciously earthy taste of the fava pairs perfectly with rosé wines made from **Agiorgitiko** or from **Kotsifali** from Crete.

Gemista, stuffed tomatoes and peppers, is a traditional dish cooked in the oven; it can be made with tomatoes, bell peppers (traditionally, green peppers are preferred), eggplant or zucchini. These vegetables are stuffed with rice, herbs and sometimes chopped meat before being cooked in the oven. Rosé wine from a **Nemea Agiorgitiko** is the best choice for this dish.

Museum of Samos Wine

A trip through the winemaking history of the island.

The Museum of Samos Wine is housed in a magnificent 19th-century stone building, which first operated as a private winery and then as a warehouse and barrel-making facility. Transformed into a museum in 2005, it displays artifacts that help define the history of Samos wine, a story that includes mountainous terraces, reliance on manual labor and unique methods of aging and vinification. The museum exhibit includes old photographs, production records from vineyards, collectible bottles, barrel-making tools, old wine-making machinery and many of the awards and distinctions that the wines of Samos have won over the years, as well as a collection of enormous wine barrels.

The layout of the museum is in accordance with modern museum science and takes the visitor through the entire process of traditional vineyard cultivation on Samos. The exhibits explain the historical, social and cultural significance of Samian wine. The Museum of Samos Wine is open to the public, and there are opportunities for wine-tasting. There is also a fully equipped conference room.

Samos Muscat Wine is produced from the famous variety "White Muscat of Samos," cultivated on traditional dry-stone terraces that can be found at medium to high elevations, some as high as 860 meters above sea-level, and with controlled low yields per hectare. The aroma of Samos Muscat is both rich and balanced. It is expressed in a specific, complex aromatic profile. Fruit and flowers dominate; more specifically, there are fresh grapes, orange blossoms and rose petals. Above all, the primary aromas of the grape are center stage.

The wines produced by the United Winemaking Agricultural Cooperative of Samos are dry, semi-dry and sweet. Some of the most well known and award-winning wines are: Samos Anthemis, Samos Nectar and Samos Vin Doux, which all belong to the sweet wine category and, of course, dry wines such as Psiles Korfes (High Peaks).

SAMOS ANTHEMIS

Aged 5 years in oak barrels with a highly complex and profound bouquet that has been built layer by layer boasting a strong sweet taste and aromatic complexity, it is perfectly matched with haute confiserie creations. It also goes well with traditional oven sweets, with tarts and sweets with dried nuts, with fruit tarts and artisanal ice cream, as well as with aged yellow cheeses or foie gras with sweet quince or fig. On its own, after the end of a dinner, it is a delightful accompaniment to a light cigar.

SAMOS NECTAR

One of the finest wines in the world made from overripe, sun-dried grapes, this wine is aged for six years in oak barrels. Its color is deep amber, with beautiful orange hints, with a nose of raisins, dried fruits, honey and dried nuts. A harmonious and powerful ensemble of flavors, it can accompany roasted nuts, exotic sweet and sour dishes and rich treats such as baklava, walnut pie, and chocolate and caramel desserts. It also pairs with strong cheeses such as Stilton (blue and white), matured goat's cheeses and various smoked ones.

SAMOS VIN DOUX

This wine, the most popular of the Samos wines, belongs to the Vins de Liqueurs category. It is the number one sweet wine in sales in Greece and is exported worldwide. It is light golden in color and is dominated by aromas of apricot jam and mature melon. It is a perfect accompaniment to sweets that are light in texture and color, such as apple pie, lemon pie and fruit tarts, as well as creamy desserts. Its rich body can serve as a great base for an incredibly wide variety of special cocktails.

PSILES KORFES (HIGH PEAKS)

A wine with finesse, where the bouquet of fruity and floral aromas is expressed in a truly sophisticated manner. It has a bright, light greenish-yellow color. Intense floral fragrances of the Muscat with impressive fruity references (melon and peach) and aromas of rose, apricot and lemon. It is a pleasant wine, to be enjoyed at all times. An ideal match with elegant dishes, sophisticated and aromatic recipes from Greek and other cuisines as well as with seafood dishes and sweet and sour delicacies. It can also be served on its own, or as an aperitif with fruit or cheese. ●



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清水康弘*

A great wine lover, Japan's ambassador to Greece has already visited many wineries in the Peloponnesse and Crete.

Text by THALIA KARTALI

Photography by GIORGOS KAPLANIDIS

A soft-spoken man, with a reserve that is perhaps characteristic of his nation's people, Japan's new ambassador to Greece is also a great wine lover. His Excellency Yasuhiro Shimizu, dressed in a traditional kimono, welcomed us to his home and guided us through a wine tasting that gave us the opportunity to taste some of the wines produced in his country. Although he's been in Greece for less than a year, the ambassador has already discovered the Greek varieties and is a big fan of Agiorgitiko and Assyrtiko.

"I've visited many wineries in the Peloponnesse", Shimizu said. "Agiorgitiko is one of my favorite red grape varieties. I also like Moschofilero, the red grape that produces light white wines. Recently, I visited Crete and I discovered some more interesting varieties, like Vilana and Vidiano. I haven't been to northern Greece yet, but I'm not a great fan of Xinomavro. I've been told that it ages well, but I haven't yet tried something that I truly like." →

* Yasuhiro Shimizu

VIDIANO

The “Landmark” of Crete

For the past decade, Vidiano is one of the most distinguished indigenous white varieties of the island.

Cretan Terroir is characterized by a diversity of soil types, ideal climate conditions and a history of millenniums in wine making.

Vidiano has a very rich “grape identity” which suits ideally its homeland, Crete. Showcasing 17 different expressions of Vidiano, recognize the varieties' common fruity characteristics of peach, apricot, wet pebbles and herbal hints.

Are you ready to indulge yourselves in Vidiano's WineWorld?



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that produce “Vidiano”

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IDAIA WINERY
DIAMANTAKIS WINERY
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EFROSINI WINERY
MINOS - MILIARAKIS WINERY
ALEXAKIS WINERY
DIGENAKIS WINES
KARAVITAKIS WINERY
TITAKIS WINES
DOURAKIS WINERY
RHOUS TAMIOLAKIS WINERY
DOMAINE ZACHARIOUDAKIS
DOMAINE PATERIANAKIS
STILIANOU WINERY
GAVALAS CRETE WINES

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Wines of Crete
A sense of place

→
His Excellency Yasuhiro Shimizu displaying a bottle of the wine he produced with his team at Japan's Sommelier Association.

We asked his Excellency if Greek wine was present in the Japanese market, as the latest data on exports seemed to indicate that its availability there had increased over the last few years.

"Indeed, Greek wine exports to Japan have risen and look very promising for the future," the ambassador replied. "However, while visiting an event organized for the promotion of Greek wine in Tokyo, I was surprised by the prices. Getting to know Santorini and its unique terroir better, I now understand why Assyrtiko commands such high prices, but I still think that €50 or €60 for a bottle of Assyrtiko is much more than what Japanese consumers would be willing to pay for a wine from Greece. In my opinion, lower prices would help promote exports."

Ambassador Shimizu has followed classes at Japan's Sommelier Association, earning the title of Wine Expert, which is given to non-professionals who pass a series of exams on winemaking, viticulture and tasting. He participates in a team which vinifies its own wine. "Wine is becoming more and more popular in Japan," he explains. "The quality of wine produced has improved, and today Japan is home to 210 wineries. Until recently, it was legal to import base wine from other countries, bottle it in Japan and label it as Japanese wine. New laws prohibiting this practice are now being passed, so only wine produced in Japan will be labeled as Japanese wine."

Japan's vineyards are mainly located on Hokkaido and on the island of Honshu in the area of Yamanashi. Two indigenous varieties are cultivated: Koshu, a white aromatic variety which originated from Europe – according to the legend, it was discovered by a European monk in 1718; and Muscat Bailey A, a red variety which was created by a Japanese expert in 1927 and is considered the most popular red variety in Japan. Thanks to the wine tasting organized by the ambassador, we had the opportunity to try two of the most popular wines produced in Japan, **Grace Koshu Barrel 2016**, an aromatic white wine with flowery notes, and **Muscat Bailey A Cuvée Ikegawa 2014**, a fresh red wine that reminded us of a Beaujolais Nouveau. ●



"The quality of wine produced has improved, and today Japan is home to 210 wineries. Until recently, it was legal to import base wine from other countries, bottle it in Japan and label it as Japanese wine. New laws prohibiting this practice are now being passed, so only wine produced in Japan will be labeled as Japanese wine."

SEMELI SUMMER INSPIRATIONS



Greek grape varieties

	ASSYRTIKO	MOSCHOFILERO	MUSCAT BLANC	VIDIANO	SAVATIANO
Grape Variety	<i>A-seer'-tee-ko</i> Originating from Santorini	<i>Mos-ko-fee'-le-ro</i> Mantinia, Central Peloponnese	(à Petits Grains) <i>Moo-ska-Blann</i> Greece (most probably)	<i>Vee-dia-no</i> Western Crete (Rethymno)	<i>Sa-va-tee-ah-no</i> Attika (Metropolitan Athens area)
Major Region	Throughout Greece	Central Peloponnese	Samos, Patras, Northern Peloponnese, Cephalonia and Rhodes	Crete	Central Greece and Evia
Wine Style	• <i>Dry wines</i> : austere, mineral • <i>Sweet wines</i> : sun-dried, luscious	Floral and elegant dry white wines	Dry and dessert white wines with strong aromatic profiles	Dry white wines of medium to heavy weight	Dry white wines of medium weight
Main Features	High acidity, citrus fruit, minerals, saltiness, structure, high alcohol content, full body	High acidity, light body, low alcohol content, aromatic, rose petals, lemon flowers	Medium acidity, citrus fruits, peach, honey, rose, luscious	Medium acidity, full body, oiliness, peach, apricot, mineral character	Medium acidity, medium body and sweet aromas of banana, peach and herbs
Ageing	2–10 years	1–3 years	• <i>Dry wines</i> : 1–2 years • <i>Sweet wines</i> : 2–15+ years	2–4 years	1–6 years
Food Pairing	• <i>Dry wines</i> : Shellfish, sea-urchin, clams, sushi, risotto, white meat • <i>Sweet wines</i> : Crème brûlée, lemon pie, walnut pie, chocolate fudge	Green salads, cold appetizers, spicy cuisine, finger food	• <i>Dry wines</i> : Aromatic dishes, fruits, salads • <i>Sweet wines</i> : light and darker desserts (depending on the ageing)	Veal escalopes with cream cheese, portobello stuffed with blue cheese, poultry	Green salads, savory pies, stuffed vegetables, whitebait, green pesto
Suggested Producers	Domaine Sigalas, Hatzidakis Winery, Estate Argyros, Gaia Wines, Boutari, Vassaltis Vineyards	Semeli Wines, Bosinakis Winery, Domaine Tselepos, Domaine Skouras, Troupis Winery	UWC Samos, Parparoussis Wines, Sklavos Wines, Avantis Estate	Douloufakis Winery, Domaine Lyrarakis, Silva Daskalaki Wines, Diamantakis Winery	Papagiannakos Winery, Mylonas Winery, Domaine Vassiliou, Fragou Wines
Details	Assyrtiko is a rare world-class white variety from Santorini. It mainly yields dry white wines, some of which mature in barrels, as well as sweet sun-dried wines. It is a variety focusing more on structure and full flavor and less on aromatic character. Assyrtiko is the dominant variety in the PDO Santorini wines, producing highly condensed subtle dry wines with a mineral character. Sweet Assyrtiko wines (Vinsanto) are rich, complex and intense dessert wines. Is grown throughout continental Greece, too.	Although Moschofilero grapes have a reddish or greyish skin, the variety is almost exclusively used to make dry white wines. Moschofilero generously provides fine and exotic aromas with notes of lychee, rose petals and lemon blossom. It has a light body, low to medium alcohol, pleasant acidity and a spicy finish. What is more, Moschofilero does not lose these features during maceration in the case of rosé wines, not even when oak-aged.	Muscat blanc is the most widely cultivated Greek grape variety on a global scale. Muscat blanc à Petits Grains (small-berried) is the finest and most complex of all Muscat varieties and thrives on Samos and other islands of the Aegean, as well as on the Greek mainland. Dry wines are fragrant and elegant, ideal for summer sipping with fruits and light appetizers. Sweet wines on the other hand can be from light and floral to honeyed and concentrated. Barrel-ageing and sun-drying can add additional layers of complexity.	Vidiano is a white grape variety from Crete. It gives wines with a yellow-green color, a mineral character and complex aromas which bring to mind ripe peach and apricot, aromatic herbs. On the palate, they are full-bodied and have a high alcohol content, which is balanced by their moderately high acidity. Some producers make an oak-fermented version of Vidiano that is usually rich, creamy and powerful, with full body.	The most widely cultivated grape variety of Greece, Savatiano gained a bad reputation when used to make cheap retsina. Over the years, technology and modern winemaking allowed producers to bring out the best in grape. In a nutshell, it gives wines without edges; medium acidity, medium body and moderate alcohol make for a very flexible wine that pairs easily with many different dishes. Old vines in Attiki are responsible for wines with concentrated fruit and an ability to age up to at least 5 years.

ROBOLA	XINOMAVRO	AGIORGITIKO	MAVRODAFNI	MAVROTRAGANO
<i>Row-bo-lah</i> Cephalonia	<i>Ksee-no'-mav-ro</i> Naoussa	<i>Ah-your-ye-ti-ko</i> Nemea	<i>Mav-row-daff-nee</i> Patras, Peloponnese	<i>Mav-row-tra-gha-no</i> Santorini
Cephalonia	Naoussa, Amynteo and most of northern Greece	Nemea, rest of the Peloponnese, parts of northern Greece	Western Greece, mainly Ahaia and Cephalonia	Santorini and northern Greece
Dry white wines of medium to light weight	• <i>Naoussa</i> : Dry red wines with ethereal aromatic profile • <i>Amynteo</i> : Dry red wines, white and rose sparkling wines	Versatile; from elegant young red wines and youthful rosé wines to robust long-ageing wines	Full-bodied dry reds and also fortified, oxidative-style dessert wines	Full-bodied red wines, suitable for ageing
Citrus fruit, mineral aromas, elegance and structure	High acidity, dry tannins, medium body, red currant, tomato sauce, smoke	Medium to high acidity, mild tannins, sour cherry, cinnamon, clove	Near-black color, dense aromas of dried prunes and currants, high alcohol, medium acidity	Enhanced acidity, tannins and alcohol, full body, black fruit, eucalyptus, smoke, coffee, leather
2-4 years	3-20 years	2-8 years	• <i>Dry wines</i> : 5-15 years • <i>Sweet wines</i> : 15+ years	5-15 years
Oven-baked or grilled fish and other seafood, cheese pies, cold appetizers, cheese plates	Grilled lamb, grilled steak, mushroom risotto	Beef, including burgers, spaghetti Bolognese and cannelloni; goat dishes	<i>Dry wines</i> : mushroom dishes, veal, lamb with red wine sauce • <i>Sweet wines</i> : chocolate soufflé, bitter chocolate, fudge stout brownies	Veal escalopes with wine and mushroom sauce, lamb with spicy red sauce, osso bucco
Gentilini Wines, Sclavos Wines, Robola Cooperative of Cephalonia	Thymiopoulos Vineyards, Dalamaras Winery, Markovitis Winery, Diamantakos Winery, Ktima Kir-Yianni, Boutari, Domaine Karanika	Domaine Karanika Aivalis Vineyards, Domaine Skouras, Domaine Tselepos, Gaia Wines, Mitravelas Estate	Gentilini Wines, Domaine Mega Spileo, Achaia Clauss, Parparoussis Wines	Domaine Sigalas, Estate Argyros, Domaine Gerovassiliou, T-Oinos
A very straightforward white wine with a lemony character, ideal with fish and other seafood. Its mineral character and refreshing acidity is obtained by cultivation on the high-altitude slopes of Ainos Mountain on Cephalonia. It has a similar taste mission with Assyrtiko, but it is lighter in both alcohol and body. Different winemaking techniques (wild yeast, oak-fermentation) can give a wider variety of styles to match different food dishes and cuisines.	Xinomavro is a truly European, 'Old-World' variety for experienced wine drinkers and connoisseurs. Tasty and demanding, Xinomavro requires an appropriate terroir, extra care, low yields and suitable weather conditions in order to reach its potential. Xinomavro's colour is ruby to garnet and its aroma profile includes violets, olive pate, tomato paste, smoke and forest fruits. Moderate alcohol, high acidity and high tannins complete the picture explain why some refer to it as the 'Greek Nebbiolo'.	Agiorgitiko is a captivating variety characterized by freshness, intense red fruit and sweet spice aromas. It is a complex variety which can produce a wide range of wine styles, from refreshing rosé to reserve reds and luscious sweet wines. However, the most widely known wine styles are two: young, un-oaked dry red wines and red wines aged in barrels. The latter are rich, with top-quality, silky tannins. Young wines from Agiorgitiko have a moderately deep red color, intense aromas of fresh red fruit, moderate acidity and soft tannins.	In recent years, more and more dry wines are being made from Mavrodafni, a variety largely known for its legendary fortified dessert wines. It gives aromas of dried prunes, currants and laurel (hence its name), and a great texture due to its high alcohol and moderate acidity. Mavrodafni has already earned its rightful place for both its "Port" style dessert wines as well as its dry version, which has proven its ability to age and develop further.	Mavrotragano is a very rare red variety from Santorini and was until recently at risk of extinction. The variety combines dense red fruit with roasted coffee and smoke, robust tannins and a rich and mineral mouth. It is a variety that is able to age for many years, especially the most concentrated, low-yield examples.

The challenges of Greek wine in the international market

Greece represents a small percentage of world wine production (2%) but has a long history and tradition in viticulture and winemaking that dates back to antiquity. Our country is endowed with native varieties and many different terroirs from which distinctly different wines are produced.

Text by GIANNIS VOGIATZIS, Oenologist and Vice President of the Greek Wine Interprofessional Committee

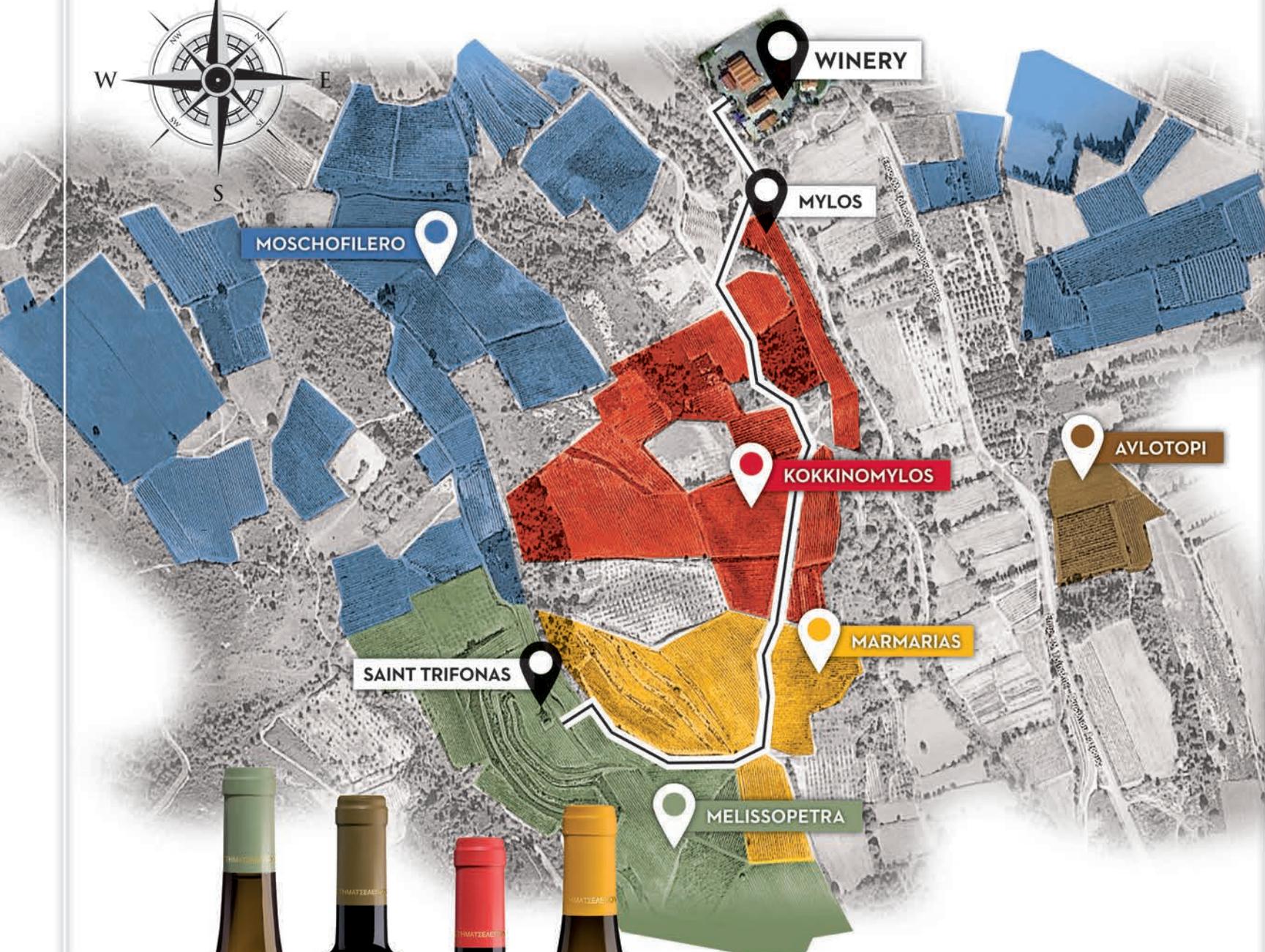
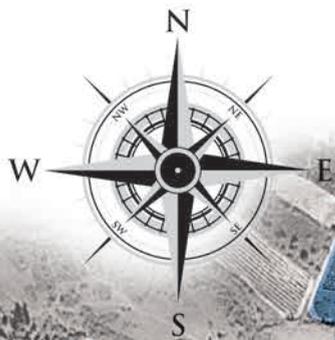
By following our strategic plan since 2010, we've significantly improved our collective efforts to create a clear new image of contemporary Greek wines. We've also succeeded in boosting the perceived value of our wines and in increasing the average sales price of our product. At the same time, the production of Greek wine has been adapted to the current needs of the markets and to the marketing plan that is being implemented. Greek wine producers, with flexibility and creativity, are producing more and more wines from indigenous varieties. The growing number of winemakers, the newly restructured vineyards and the new wines being produced are all contributing to an overall improvement in the quality of Greek wines.

Our main varieties and PDO wines are already becoming more and more widely known to the wine world, thanks to the production of high-quality wines. New products such as sparkling, rosé, organic and even natural wines are being introduced, drawing on the strengths of our indigenous varieties. We are ensuring a wide and diversified portfolio that strengthens the potential of Greek wine to stand out from the competition and to penetrate niche markets. I believe that we need to continue the actions we've already undertaken to make our wines even

better, and to share this improvement with wine consumers globally. We must present our wines in tastings and educate influencers as well as wine consumers.

We ought to attempt to reach those wine drinkers adventurous enough to try something new. Above all, we should make sure that people who visit Greece are given the opportunity to enjoy some outstanding bottled wine and to visit a winery or two. In recent years, wine tourism has grown in all of the wine-producing areas across Greece, thanks mainly to the establishment of a network of wine trails. As tourism grows in Greece, visits to wineries represent great opportunities to create positive impressions, to help foster an awareness of Greek wine and, ultimately, to increase exports. Greek winemakers need to continue supporting collective efforts and to take advantage of promotional subsidies. Programs in support of the wine industry must go hand in hand with the collective plan and marketing program, so as to avoid duplication of efforts and create strength through cooperation.

I believe in a bright future for Greek vine growers and winemakers based on respect for our traditions, our varieties and our terroirs, as well as on the creativity and diligence of my fellow oenologists. ●



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1. KARIPIDIS ESTATE Chardonnay Special Edition 2014

A beautiful white wine with a bright golden color, with aromas of honey, vanilla, ripe citrus, background smoke and nuts. It has a wonderfully full, rich and mellow flavor and a long aftertaste. Can be aged up to 10 years. — €25.00

2. KARAMOLEGOS ESTATE Pyritis 2015

Nose, full of minerality and flint, which is typical of Santorini's Assyrtiko. Notes of matured stone fruits and tartness of citrus fruits. The palate shows considerable depth and genuine concentration, rich and dense with finesse and well balanced acidity. Long aftertaste with saltiness and minerality. Can be aged up to 15 years. — €37.00

3. KARAMOLEGOS ESTATE Assyrtiko Santorini 2016

Characteristic stony minerality (salty and flinty notes) in the nose, followed by fruity (peach and pear) and herbal (tea and chamomile) hints. Rich mouthfeel and elegant at the same time. Its creamy texture makes an excellent balance with the bone-dry crispness and the high acidity of the Assyrtiko. Full-bodied, concentrated wine with finesse, complexity and a long salty aftertaste. Can be aged up to 8-10 years. — €21.00

4. SEMELI ESTATE Aetheria 2017

Bright straw color with greenish highlights. Intense on the nose, with aromas of green apple, ripe pear, bell pepper and fresh herbs. Full and balanced in the mouth, thanks to its crisp acidity, with Chardonnay's distinctive sense of oiliness. Rich on the palate, with hints of green fruit and lemongrass, and with a spicy finish. — €12.50

5. ALPHA ESTATE Rosé 2017

Bright rose color, with a hint of salmon. Fruity nose with rich expression. Rose petals and strawberries. Well-balanced mouth, quite full, with a long aftertaste. — €16.80

6. PAVLIDIS ESTATE Emphasis Tempranillo 2013

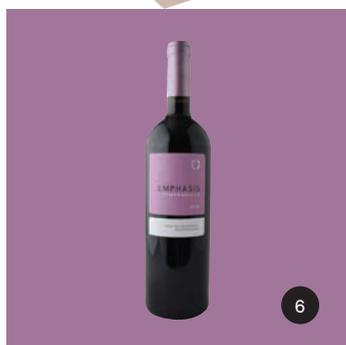
Red-ruby in color with violet sheens. Concentrated aromas of berries and stone fruit (black plums and prunes), combined with the sweet characters of the oak. A well-balanced wine with lively acidity, rich but rounded tannins, velvety texture and a persistent fruity and spicy licorice aftertaste. Can be aged up to 15 years. — €21.00

7. ALPHA ESTATE Xinomavro Reserve 2013

Bright dark ruby color. Complex nose with a bouquet of sundried tomatoes, smoky black fruits, strawberries, dark cherries, licorice and spices. Full body, with rich fruit depth, blackberries, plums, herbaceous hints and oak on the back. Solid, velvety tannins and long aftertaste with persistent aromas. Can be aged up to 15-20 years. — €17.50

8. COMTES DE DAMPIERRE Champagne Grand Cru Blanc de Blancs

Finesse, lightness and elegance characterize this subtle blend of white grapes from the finest vineyards of Avize and Mesnil-sur-Oger, two villages located in the Côte des Blancs area. This crisp and fragrant Blanc de Blancs is 100% Chardonnay and is a Grand Cru. — €53.00



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1. DIAMANTAKIS WINERY
Diamantopetra White

Vidiano 50% and Asyrtiko 50%. A unique white wine, with golden yellow color and glowing aromas of fresh and dried fruit. It is extremely rich in mouth with refreshing acidity and a long aftertaste finishing that will imprints in memory. — **12.50€**

2. SILVA DASKALAKI WINERY
Psithiros white

Moschato Spinas, this blend exhibits a distinctive richness of aromas such as pineapple, mango and citrus peels. In the mouth it is dry and balanced with refreshing acidity. The finish is fruity and slightly bitter. It is vinified with pre-fermentation cold maceration followed by low temperature fermentation. The wine is served at 10-12°C and pairs exceptionally well with Greek cuisine, roasts and poultry. — **12€**

3. WINERY STILIANOU
Theon Dora – Dry Rose Wine (BIO)

Kotsifali, Mandilari from traditional Cretan varieties with impressive color and fresh fruit flavor. — **11€**

4. DOMAINE OIKONOMOU WINERY
Oikonomou Sitia Red

Liatiko, it is a red wine produced in the geographical region of Crete called Sitia. It has clear ruby color with brown highlights. Its nose aromas of tobacco and dried tomato, its mouth with good structure and balance, its filled with 'mashed' tannins and leaves delicious aftertaste where the barrel prevails that triggers someone to taste it. — **34.50€**

5. IDAIA WINERY
Vidiano

Vidiano is a special white wine with Crystal-yellowish-green color and a delicate aromatic character of fruit. In this wine, the pear dominates including banana and melon scents. It has a special acidity, full of mouth and rich aromatic aftertaste. — **10€**

6. KTIMA KARIPIDIS
Karipidis Fume (BIO)

Sauvignon Blanc. The varietal aromas of ripe fruit (melon, peach, quince) coexist with sweet (vanilla) and spicy characters from the maturing in barrels. Rich and oily in the mouth, with refreshing acidity and a long aftertaste. — **15€**

7. DOMAIN MIGAS DIMITRIS
Chardonnay – Oak Fermented

Chardonnay. The color of shiny, golden yellow with green highlights. Aroma elegant and complex with notes of wood and flowers. Taste full, fresh and fleshy. Aftertaste long. — **18€**

8. TSILILIS WINERY
Edenia Rose (BIO)

Lymiona. Shiny rose color, strong aromas of strawberry and raspberry and botanical cucumbers. In the mouth, expressive with velvety bubbles, taste of red fruits and butter biscuit aftertaste. — **21.50€**





GEORGE VASSILIOU



K T H M A
Vassiliou
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NEMEION
ESTATE

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A

Altitude

In a warm country like Greece, high-altitude vineyards are essential in order to make fine and crisp wines with elegance, lower alcohol and fine aromas. This is the reason why most quality Greek wine producers, both on the mainland and on the islands, seek grapes from higher-altitude vineyards (usually 300–1100m). Producers can also cultivate lower-altitude vineyards to produce different wine styles such as sweet wines or exuberant dry red wines.

K

Ktima

Ktima (Κτήμα in Greek) is the Greek equivalent of 'Estate' or 'Domaine'. Many producers still prefer to use the terms Estate, Domaine or even Chateau on their export labels. However, more and more are now using the Greek term 'Ktima'.

O

Oenologist

Oenologist is the individual who holds an academic degree in the science of oenology. Not all wine makers are oenologists. The word is derived from the word 'Oenos,' meaning wine, and the suffix -logia, meaning 'the study of.'

R

Retsina

Retsina is a white or rosé resinated Greek wine, made by adding pine resin into the fermentation vessel; the duration of the process is decided by the winemaker and determines the intensity of the resin aroma and flavor in the wine. This method was used in the past to mask the oxidative aromas of wines at a time when technology did not allow better wine preservation. However, the flavor itself became so popular that retsina is still being made today in traditional and in modern versions that create a great summer wine, ideal for accompanying fried appetizers and other meze.

S

Symposium

A gathering of men from the upper social class in ancient Greece to debate and discuss topics over food and wine, all while reclining on pillowed couches. In most cases, philosophical and political topics were being discussed. The 'sommelier' of the time (called the 'symposiarch') would be responsible for the event, selecting the topics of discussion, the list

of participants and how strong the wine for the evening would be. The wine was always mixed with water, as the drinking of pure wine was then considered uncivilized. Diluted wine, on the other hand, 'lubricated' the conversation, but also ensured that people would not get drunk.

Sun-drying

Sun-drying (grapes in our case) is a traditional drying method for reducing the moisture content of a fruit and for concentrating its flavors. The method is used almost exclusively to make sweet wines. After harvest, the producer spreads the grapes out under the sun on terraces, or simply onto the soil -sometimes between vine rows. The final wine develops aromas of dried fruit, raisins and roasted nuts that add to its complexity. Vinsanto sweet wine from Santorini is made using this technique. Sun-drying is also popular in Samos, Lemnos, Rio of Patras, Crete and elsewhere.

X

Xinomavro

Many claim it is the finest red grape of Greece; it certainly is one of the most memorable ones. Xinomavro is more suited for experienced palates due to its higher acidity and elegant, forest fruit aroma profile. To make great Xinomavro, one needs to limit the crop to low yields; otherwise, the wine can become diluted and overcome with dry tannins. But if the yields are kept in check, Xinomavro can offer some of the most concentrated, intriguing red wines of Europe. Commercial-focused producers blend it with varieties like Merlot to make a more easy-drinking result.

YOU CAN FIND GRAPE AT:

CAVA ANTHIDIS 76 Kifissias Ave., Marousi / 45 Pat. Ioakeim St., Kolonaki / 77 Gr. Lambraki Ave., Glyfada ● CAVA OAK 282 Kifissias Ave., Chalandri ● CAVA KYLIX 20 Karneadou St., Kolonaki ● CAVA CELLIER 1D Kriezotou St., Athens / 369 Kifissias Ave., Kifissia / 320 Syngrou Ave., Kallithea ● CAVA VINIFERA 317B Kifissias Ave., Kifissia ● CAVA OENOKOSMOS 5 Orlof St., Koukaki ● CAVA VEGERA 61 Vas. Pavlou & Poseidonos St., Voula ● CAVA FAIDON 28 Agiou Ioannou St., Voula / 4 Skippi St., Kallithea ● CAVA HALARI Cordis 9A El. Venizelou, Glyfada Cava Halari 74 Akti Moutsopoulou, Piraeus / 54 Har. Trikoupis & Valtetsiou, Athens / 75 Hatzikiriakou Ave. Piraeus ● CAVA HOUSE OF WINE 40 Ethnikis Antistaseos St., Chalandri ● CAVA DROSIA 3 Stamatias Drosias Ave., Drosia ● CAVA KRASOPOULIO 11 Dimokratias Ave., Melissa ● CAVA VINOTERRA 74 Marinou Antypa St., N. Herakleion ● CAVA MR VERTIGO 15 Filikis Eterias Sq., Kolonaki ● BY THE GLASS WINE BAR 3 G. Souris St. & Philhellinon, Syntagma ● Kiki De Grece Wine Bar 38 Voulis & 1 Ipitou, Syntagma ● HETEROKLITO WINE BAR 30 Petraki St., Syntagma ● FABRICA DE VINO WINE BAR 3 Em. Benaki, Exarchia ● CITY BISTROT Wine Bar Rest 1 Voukourestiou St., Syntagma ● OINOSCENT WINE BAR 45 Voulis St., Syntagma ● BAR DE THEATRE WINE BAR Rest 9 Voukourestiou St., Syntagma ● WINE UP WINE BAR 86 El. Venizelou St., Petroupoli ● 8 LE BISTRO WINE BAR 8 Frinis St., Ilipioli ● MONK GRAPES AND SPIRITS WINE BAR 4 Karori St., Athens ● CAFE TAZZA D'ORO WINE BAR 9 Pentelis Ave., Syntagma ● JONA'S WINE BAR 31 C. Vournazou St., Athens ● SCENARIO WINE BAR 1 Maronias St., Komotini ● VINTAGE WINE BAR 66 Mitropoleos St., Syntagma ● WAREHOUSE WINE BAR 41 Mavromichali St., Exarchia ● POEM'S AND CRIMES WINE BAR 17 Ag. Eirinis St., Athens ● MONO WINE REST 4F Venizelou Palaiologou St., Athens ● RATKA WINE REST 32 Charitis St., Kolonaki ● SPONDI RESTAURANT 5 Pirronos, Pagrati ● Chefi Restaurant 31 Perikleous St., Chalandri ● VASILAINAS RESTAURANT 13 Vrasida St., Athens ● THA SE KANO VASILISSA RESTAURANT 13 Verioas St., Athens ● 48 RESTAURANT 48 Armatolos & Kleffton St., Ambelokipi ● PALEO RESTAURANT 39 Polidefkous St., Piraeus ● IT RESTAURANT 29 Skoufa St., Kolonaki ● KOLIAS RESTAURANT 363 Syngrou Ave., Faliro ● CODICE BLUE RESTAURANT Haritos & Loukianou, Kolonaki ● GEONA'S RESTAURANT 1 Davaki Square, Psihiko ● COCCOVAGIA RESTAURANT 2 Hatz. Mexi, Athens ● GASPARD BAR REST Dim. Vasileioy Ave. & Lukoygrou, Pharos Psychikou ● NEW HOTEL 16 Filellinon, Athens ● ATHENS WAS HOTEL 5 Dionysiou Areopagitou St., Athens ● MELIA HOTEL 14 Halkokondili St., Athens ● ACROPOLIS HILL HOTEL 7 Mousson St., Athens ● ARION HOTEL 18 Ag. Dimitriou St., Psiri ● ARIA HOTEL 235A Karamanli Ave., Voula ● NORA'S DELI 11 Anagnostopoulou St., Kolonaki ● CULPA DELI 1 Solomou St., N. Psychiko ● PANDAISIA DELI 41 Ag. Ioannou St., Ag. Paraskevi ● MUSEUM OF CYCLADIC ART 4 N. Douka St., Kolonaki ● BENAKI MUSEUM 1 Koumbari St., Kolonaki / 138 Piraios St., Athens ● YOLENI'S CAFE / SHOP 9 Solonos St., Athens ● BOTILIA 235 C2 Lykourgou St., Kallithea ● WSPC ACADEMY 70 Amfithreas Ave., P. Faliro ● ZOUMBOULAKIS GALLERIES 20 Kolonaki Square, Athens ● DOMAINE PAPAGIANNAKOS WINERY Pousi - Kalogeri, Markopoulo ● SEMELI WINES 3 Mitropoleos St., Syntagma ● KOKOTOS ESTATE WINERY, Stamata Attiki ● KEDROS BOOKSTORE 3 G. Genadiou St., Athens ● K2 DESIGN 34 Veranzerou St., Athens ● DRY BISTRO 5 Koumbari St., Kolonaki ● MAITAI BAR 16-18 Ploutarhou St., Kolonaki ● CANAL CAFE SNFCC 6 Evripidou str. Kallithea ● CORKS AND FORKS Akti Themistokleous & 1 Pargas str Piraeus ● GREECE AND GRAPES 20 Lykourgou str. Kallithea ● KIKI DE GRECE Ipitou & 38 Voulis str. Syntagma ● KRASOPOULIO 11 Dimokratias str. Melissa ● CHATEAU LAZARIDIS Kapandriti Attiki ● KYLIX 20 Karneadou str Kolonaki ● LITHOINON PRIVATE 16 Saronidas Av. ● VAROULKO SEASIDE 52 Akti Koumoundourou, Piraeus ● VILLA GRIZIO 46 Agiou Alexandrou Palaio Faliro ● SCALA VINOTECA 50 Sina str. Kolonaki ● VINS 20 Ithakis Pallini Attiki

Grape is being included as a supplement with The New York Times, KATHIMERINI SUNDAY EDITION (subscribers only) and the KATHIMERINI Financial Newspaper Cyprus. You'll also find Grape, in wine bars, restaurants, hotels and wineries in Cephalonia, Mykonos, Santorini, Paros, Kos, Aegina, Messinia and Cyprus.



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National Bank of Greece in partnership with IdeasLab, supports and promotes Greek producers of distinctive agri-food products, aspiring to business innovation and export potential growth, by staging a series of events held throughout Greece.



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