

grape

WINE STORIES





Lila Boutari Lalaouni wearing jewelry from the Aurelia Collection

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GREEK SUMMER IS HERE!

Idyllic islands, long sandy beaches, a turquoise blue sea... these are the images that a vacation in Greece conjures up. In this summer issue of "Grape," we invite you to add some more: happy faces trying the many delicacies that this blessed land has to offer; glasses filled with excellent wines; wine tastings taking place under shady olive trees or by the crystal-clear water. 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 and international varieties, as you enjoy a short break from the hot summer sun and the lively beaches. We traveled to **Santorini**, the volcanic island, famous for its stunning views and spectacular sunsets, where we discovered extensive wine routes. We visited boutique wineries producing excellent wines from the island's indigenous varieties – Assyrtiko, Aidani, Athiri, Mavrotragano – and met with passionate winemakers who have dedicated their lives to protecting the island's unique vineyard, vineyards whose roots reach down deep into past centuries. Journeying from **Naoussa** in northern Greece to **Crete** in the south and passing through the historic vineyards of **Nemea** in the Peloponnese, we discov-

Thalia Kartali
&
Pinelopi Katsatou

ered the diversity of terroirs and microclimates that results in the production of quality wines. Everywhere we've been, we've seen a new generation of winemakers working passionately to put Greece on the international wine map where it belongs, leaving behind its reputation for bad-quality bulk wine. Greek grape

varieties can be confusing, but don't be intimidated by the difficult pronunciations. **Kostantinos Lazarakis**, MW, will guide you through the labyrinth, while **Gregory Michailos**, Dip WSET, will help you discover the great ageing potential of Assyrtiko produced not in Santorini but on the mainland. Three renowned chefs share their excellent recipes, which they pair perfectly with wines coming not only from Greece but from other wine regions of the world, too. George Samoilis, owner and head chef of **Ω3**, a tiny fish bar hidden away on the island of **Sifnos**, creates a delicious dish that is well worth trying, while Giorgos Lykouris of the famous **Skotadis** fish restaurant in **Aegina** prepares marinated octopus

and a crayfish kritharoto, pairing them with an Assyrtiko Chardonnay blend and an excellent example of a Greek Chardonnay respectively. So, sit back and relax, and let us guide you through the intriguing world of Greek wine and gastronomy. In the end, we're sure you'll want to take another sip... **g**



For our Greek readers only

Το τεύχος που κρατάτε στα χέρια σας είναι αγγλόφωνο. Περιέχει επιλεγμένες συνεντεύξεις και θέματα από προηγούμενα τεύχη και δημιουργήθηκε για να διαβαστεί από τους τουρίστες που επισκέπτονται το καλοκαίρι τη χώρα μας και όχι μόνο.

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IF YOU LOVE MERLOT TRY...

By Kostantinos Lazarakis, MW



Wine is an extremely complex product. You can dedicate your life to it and still be learning every day. Unlike tea, coffee or cars, it's also a product where this complexity reaches most of its end-users and, ultimately, intimidates them.

So, everything that makes wine easier is de facto a great thing.

Enter, then, the world of varietal wines, a world where the main element of a wine's commercial identity is the grape from which it is made.

Traditionally, wines have been named after their region of production but, frankly, how many regions of Puglia can you truly remember? Then, sometime around the 1980s, wine producers, mostly but not exclusively from the New World, started labeling their wines after varieties such as "Chardonnay," rather than emphasizing the region. This has been an astonishing revolution, making wine more accessible to the average purchaser.

Nevertheless, this somehow led to increasing uniformity. If a wine was not made from one of these "Premier League" varietals, selling it was problematic, to say the least. But this can be seen as a huge waste of potential, because many countries, like Greece, have a unique arsenal of autochthonous varieties that offer sublime experiences in a glass.

I can hear many people saying "Hey! Wait a minute! I have a problem talking myself into drinking Greek wine in the first place! So drinking a local variety that has a name that I cannot pronounce, let alone remember after I've had a few, is double tricky! At least get me a Greek Merlot or a Greek Chardonnay!"

Enter Grape's "Survival Guide for the International Wine Drinker in Greece."

If you love Chardonnay and white Burgundy, try Santorini and Assyrtiko, especially the oak-fermented versions: Chardonnay is all about intensity, power and big palate structures, and Assyrtiko is just like that, but usually with more acidity and a far less oily texture.

If you like dry Rieslings of the bigger style, once again try Santorini and Assyrtiko, but this time go for the unoaked bottlings: both styles are great for acid freaks. If you can find an older vintage, then prepare to be amazed.

"Hey! Wait a minute! I have a problem talking myself into drinking Greek wine in the first place! So drinking a local variety that has a name that I cannot pronounce, let alone remember after I've had a few, is double tricky! At least get me a Greek Merlot or a Greek Chardonnay!"

If you like Grüner Veltliner, then try Robola: both grapes are crisp, linear and elegant, although Robola, from Kefalonia, has a far more lemony, appetizing focus on aromas.

If you like aromatic whites, like wines from Alsace or dry Muscats, then try Moschofilero, especially from the Mantinia appellation: Moschofilero is a pink-skinned grape, but is usually used for the production of whites. It is aromatic, crisp on the palate, with light palate and great freshness. You should also try some of the stunning sparkling wines that are made from this variety.

If you like Viognier, then try Malagousia: both are soft, never too acidic and always aromatic, with intense, peachy aromas.

If you like boring Pinot Grigio, then it's highly unlikely that you've gotten this far into the article... But if you like good Pinot Grigio, then try Savatiano or Roditis: a round, juicy palate and an excellent array of fruit and floral notes are the hallmarks here.

If you love Merlot, then try Agiorgitiko from Nemea: both grapes are soft, full of red fruit aromas and the tannins are always velvety.

If you like Barolo and Barbaresco from Piedmont in Italy, then try any wine that has Xinomavro as the main grape, like Naoussa, Amyntaio, Goumenissa and Rapsani. There are quite a few varietal bottlings as well. These wines all are quite individual in style, with a real tannic and acidic framework. Not your "drink-easy", everyday sipping style, but wines of great quality, complexity and immense ageing potential. Get some bottles in your checked-in luggage to take back home and keep it for decades!

If you like Fino Sherry, then try retsina: both wines are very full flavored so they can tackle strong-tasting food served family-style in the middle of the table, the way both Spanish and Greek people enjoy eating. Do not be afraid – excellent quality retsina exists and it is delicious.

If you like sweet Muscats, like Beaume de Venise or Setubal, then in Greece you'll find some of the very best sweet Muscats in the world: try Muscats from Samos, Limnos, Patras, Rhodes or Kefalonia. Great value, too!

If you enjoy the amazing wines of Tokaji, then try Vinsanto from Santorini: both are sweet, but they also have a great backbone of acidity that keeps them away from being cloying. Not cheap, but still great value (taking into account the price you'd pay for Tokaji).

But then again, you should also try Limnio, Limnio, Kotsifali, Dafni, Mandilaria, Monemvasia, Negoska, Mavroudi, Debina, Vlahiko and the dozens of other grapes found in Greek wines! These are varieties that offer aromas, styles and characters that have nothing to do with any other grape or region around the wine-producing world.

Discover the true beauty of Greek wine, a breathtaking complexity that will encourage you to keep exploring.

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SYNTAGMA - ATHENS



Santorini

Part of the Cyclades island group, 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.

By Thalia Kartali & Pinelopi Katsatou
Photos Yiorgos Kaplanidis

<p>Ancient Sites</p> <h2>Archaeological Museum (Fira)</h2> <p>Admire sculpture from the Archaic to the Roman period, as well as vases and clay figurines dating from the Geometric to the Hellenistic periods.</p>	<p>Ancient Sites</p> <h2>Museum of Prehistoric Thera (Fira)</h2> <p>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 Thira, as well as archaeological objects.</p>	<p>Ancient Sites</p> <h2>Ancient Thera (near Kamari)</h2> <p>This is an ancient city on a ridge of the steep 360m-high mountain Mes-savouno. Visit to check out the Agora, the Basilica Stoa and the theater.</p>	<p>Ancient Sites</p> <h2>Akrotiri Archaeological Site</h2> <p>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 testifies to the dramatic termination of life at Akrotiri.</p>
<p>Outdoor Activities</p> <h2>Hiking</h2> <p>The trail that connects Fira with Oia offers hikers spectacular views.</p>	<p>Outdoor Activities</p> <h2>Swimming</h2> <p>Perissa Beach, Kamari Beach, Perivolos Beach, Vlychada Beach.</p>	<p>Wine & Food</p> <h2>Best local food Ingredients</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capers • Cherry tomatoes • White eggplants • Fava beans • Hloro Tyri (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) 	<p>Wine & Food</p> <h2>Worth visiting Santorini wineries</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domaine Sigalas • Estate Argyros • Hatzidakis Wines • Vassaltis Vineyards • Gaia Wines • Boutari Wines • Canava Chrisou - Tselepos • Santo Wines • Venetsanos Winery • Gavalas Winery • Canava Nomikos • Karamolegos Winery • Volcan Wines
<p>Outdoor Activities</p> <h2>Watersports & more</h2> <p>Waterskiing, jet-skiing, scuba-diving and snorkeling, boat tours, paragliding</p>	<p>Outdoor Activities</p> <h2>Other Visits</h2> <p>The Tomato Industrial Museum; Santorini Brewing Company; S.M.A.G Spira Marble Art Gallery</p>		

"S"–wine info

→ 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 name of the 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 world-wide 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

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 and 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.

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 derives from the Greek word "nychta," which means "night."

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. ➤



VOLCANIC BUBBLES

THE FIRST EVER SPARKLING ASSYRTIKO FROM A PRODUCER FROM SANTORINI

"S"–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 "cana-va" 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. Haridimos Hatzidakis, an oenologist himself, is 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 also had 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 and has a perfect balance between acidity and sweetness and aromas of apricot marmalade.

Kallisti, Pyrgos, 847 01 Santorini
T: (+30) 22860 32552
hatzidakiswines.gr



↑ The wine cellar, 12 meters long, in the Hatzidakis Winery

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 and, together with his father George, 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 wicker baskets used for carrying the grapes so as to get a better idea of the traditional winemaking processes of the island.

Megalochori, 847 00 Santorini
T: (+30) 22860 82552
gavalaswines.gr

↓ The old reservoir where the juice from pressed grapes ended up for fermentation



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

Megalochori, 847 00 Santorini
T. (+30) 22860 81011
boutari-santorini.gr

↓ Boutaris' state-of-the-art winery



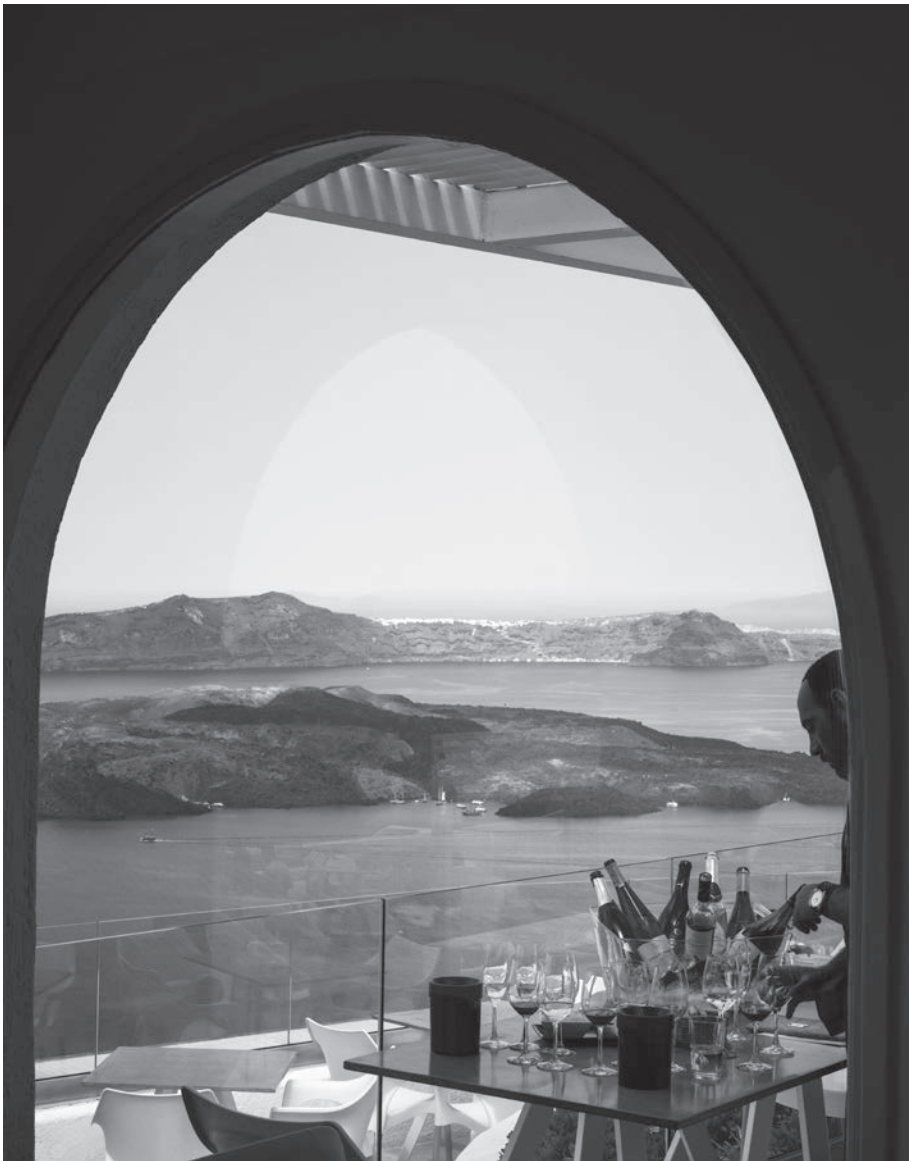
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↑ Breathtaking views from Santo Winery

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 tasted 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; **Ageri Semi Dry Rosé**, made with Assyrtiko and Mandilaria, a fresh, cherry-flavoured and very summery wine, with a sweet after-taste 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 couldn't skip the **Santorini Assyrtiko 2016** or the **Santorini Nychteri 2016**. While sitting in the winery's veranda overlooking the Aegean, we couldn't help noticing the smiles on the face of the numerous tourists, most of whom were from Asia, who were enjoying their own tastings in this unique place.

Pyrgos, 847 00 Santorini
T: (+30) 2286 028058
santowines.gr

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. 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.

Exo Gonia, 847 00 Santorini
T: (+30) 22860 34186
gaia-wines.gr



↑ Tradition meets modern winemaking technology at the Gaia winery



↑ A modern architectural feature designed to remind the visitor of a traditional canava at Estate Argyros

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 single-variety **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.

Episcopi Gonias, 847 00 Santorini

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PARIS SIGALAS

A PIONEER ON SANTORINI

In Greece, Paris Sigalas needs little introduction. He is well-known as one of the gurus of white winemaking and his name is closely associated with both Assyrtiko and its homeland of Santorini. At interviews, the first impression one gets of him is of a man who doesn't like to talk very much. Unless, of course, it's about Santorini and its wines...

By Thalia Kartali & Pinelopi Katsatou
Photos Yiorgos Kaplanidis

First a mathematics teacher by trade, Sigalas began on his adventures in winemaking in the '70s when he would take part in the annual harvest at the family vineyard. In 1991, he started his own company, together with two friends. At the time, it was more like a hobby than a business undertaking. However, in 1997, he decided to bring a greater focus to winemaking, while at the same time continuing to teach mathematics at the local school. In 2003, the company acquired a strategic investor and a whole new phase began for the winery, which now welcomes hundreds of visitors each year. The following year, Sigalas left the classroom for good.

A strong advocate of the idea that wine is made in the vineyard, Sigalas has dedicated his life to protecting the historical vineyards of Santorini and to saving indigenous varieties from extinction. Thanks to his efforts, Mavrotragano, a black grape variety unknown until recently, has not only been saved but is now becoming more and more popular on an island which has no tradition in red winemaking.

"This is a historical area for wine production, one of the oldest in the world, with a tradition stretching back 3,000 years", Sigalas says, sitting in the courtyard of the winery in Oia, surrounded by his privately owned vineyard, where he is experimenting with modern methods of training for Mavrotragano.

The vines in Santorini were planted after the cataclysmic eruption of the volcano in 1600 B.C., an event which ended all life there and reshaped the island into the form that it has today, with its spectacular caldera. The island was reinhabited three centuries later, and that is when the history of this unique vineyard begun. "Since then, the vineyards have evolved without interruption, which is what makes it really unique," Sigalas explains. "Thanks to the very special soil created



↑ Paris Sigalas in the estate's vineyard

by the eruption, the vineyards here have never been affected by phylloxera, which means that the vines sink their roots straight into the soil. This enables the renewal of the old vines by method of laying or cuttings."

Another element that makes the Santorini vineyards unique, according to Sigalas, is the vine-training system, which produces the "kouloura," a basket-like shape made by the vine, which protects it from both the strong winds and the high summer temperatures. "This system of

training proves the ability of man to deal with extreme conditions in order to survive. It has a historical value for the whole world, it belongs to the world's heritage of civilization," he says proudly, but then sadly adds that "in Greece we still haven't realized its importance and its extreme value and we don't protect it as we should."

Indeed, one of the biggest problems Santorini is now facing is manmade. The touristic development of the island has led many local farmers and vintners to sell their land to developers, resulting in less land for grape cultivation. According to Sigalas, a law that was passed in 2012 improved the situation somewhat, but there is still a lot to be done in order to protect this treasure of Greek culture.

A pioneer in many ways, Paris Sigalas decided somewhere along the way to vinify the grapes from each of the island's seven different villages separately. "This idea was the product of research into the different characteristics of each area from which we get our grapes. Vinifying them separately, we could start to detect some of these different characteristics. It's like an x-ray of the whole wine landscape," he says. "I believe that, due to the shortage of grapes, Santorini needs to concentrate its efforts on producing wines from specific vineyards."

Sigalas began this new effort with the production of Kavalieros, an Assyrtiko from a particular vineyard, one of the finest wines produced in Santorini. He then moved on to the production of seven different wines from the seven villages, each called 7. "It's a very interesting experiment for us," he says, "because it gives us the opportunity to study the differences between each village. Plus, it works as a marketing tool as well!" Asked which one of his wines is his favorite, Sigalas told us that it was difficult to choose, but admitted that he might have a soft spot for Kavalieros...

The "Koula" tower, the iconic structure that graces both the vineyard and the labels of Kir-Yiannis Estate.

Yiannakohori, 59200 Naoussa

T: (+30) 23320 51100

kiryianni.gr



NAOUSSA XINOMAVRO'S DREAM TEAM

Naoussa is a lovely little town in the hills of Western Macedonia in northern Greece, only an hour's drive from Thessaloniki. The surrounding area is full of vineyards and of orchards with peach trees and cherry trees. Naoussa is also home to the most prestigious red wine appellation: PDO Naoussa, an elegant, high-acid, age-worthy red wine based on Xinomavro, a high quality – but difficult to cultivate – grape variety.

By **Thalia Kartali & Pinelopi Katsatou**
Photos **Sakis Giombasis**

Naoussa's climate is more continental (and less Mediterranean) than that found in most Greek wine regions. Unlikely as it might seem, given Greece's reputation as a warm, sunny country, there are areas within the Naoussa viticultural zone which qualify as "cool-climate" and in which grapes struggle to ripen.

The area of Naoussa has a lot more to offer than just wine: sites such as ancient Aigai (Vergina) or the School of Aristotle; authentic local food; and exciting outdoor activities. This is an off-the-beaten-track destination for insider travelers. A glass of Xinomavro (or two) will help guide you on your new journey.

<p>Historic Sites</p> <p>School of Aristotle & The Cultural Center of Aristotle's School 2 km*</p> <p>Visit the ruins of Aristotle's School, where the great philosopher taught the Kings of Macedonia, Phillip II and his son Alexander the Great.</p> <p>* From Naoussa</p>	<p>Historic Sites</p> <p>Byzantine Museum of Veroia 21 km*</p> <p>Visit the exhibition "Veroia, Part of the Byzantine Empire," a fine collection of icons, wall-paintings, mosaic floors, pottery, wood carvings, Byzantine coins, manuscripts and early printed works.</p> <p>* From Naoussa</p>	<p>Historic Sites</p> <p>Ancient Aigai (Vergina) 33 km*</p> <p>It was here in 336 BC that Philip II was assassinated and Alexander the Great was proclaimed king. The archaeological site of Aigai is protected by UNESCO as a World Cultural Heritage Monument and a site of outstanding natural beauty. The site consists of the Polycentric Museum, the palace, the ancient city, the acropolis and the surrounding area.</p> <p>* From Naoussa</p>	<p>Outdoors – Landmarks</p> <p>Municipal Park of Naoussa</p> <p>The Municipal Park of Naoussa is a natural "terrace" with views across the valley of Naoussa. The park covers an area of 30 acres, with flower gardens, fountains, and lakes with ducks and swans. In the park, there are peacocks, squirrels and many species of birds.</p> <p>* From Naoussa</p>
<p>Outdoors – Landmarks</p> <p>Agios Nikolaos Park (Naoussa) 2 km*</p> <p>A visit to this park, an oasis of joy and tranquility with its rushing streams, ancient trees and peaceful walkways in the shadow of the hills from which the streams descend, is a real balm for the spirit.</p> <p>* From Naoussa</p>	<p>Outdoors – Landmarks</p> <p>Edessa Waterfalls 32 km*</p> <p>A magical spot with spectacular views of the valley. Via the stairs, you can access the caves that have formed behind the waterfalls.</p> <p>* From Naoussa</p>	<p>Wine & Food</p> <p>Best local food Ingredients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peaches • Pomegranates • Batzos cheese (PDO) –raw, fried or grilled • Meatballs • Tsigarides (fried lard) • Traditional pies (spinach pie with sesame oil, cheese pie with batzos cheese, leek pie, nettle pie) • Gavopsara (pickled eggplants) • Chylopites (noodles) with chicken in a tomato sauce • Baked freshwater fish with onions • Beef with quince and plum • Syrup-soaked baklava 	

A short trip to the vineyards of Naoussa in northern Greece revealed to us a new generation of winemakers, full of energy and fresh ideas. They work hand in hand with the older generation, producing both traditional and modern style wines, the best examples of which are often compared to the Nebbiolo-based reds of Italy's Piedmont. This is the land of Xinomavro, one of Greece's most promising red grape varieties and one of the most important red wine appellations in the country.

Domaine Karydas

"Never change a winning team." Konstantinos and Petros Karydas, father and son respectively, are both dedicated to their winemaking and the fine wines they produce prove how right they are to believe in this team of theirs. Constantly joking with each other, they both admit they have their differences as far as winemaking is concerned. However, "disagreeing sometimes leads to better results," says Konstantinos, one of the first Greek skiers to ever participate in the Winter Olympics (1964 and 1968). His son laughs and says: "Well, we both agree and disagree on practically everything, but in the end somehow it all works out." A man of many talents, Konstantinos Karydas got involved with the vineyard for the first time in 1979. In 1990 came the winemaking and, in 1994, the estate's winery was built. Petros, a graphics designer, had never thought he would become involved with winemaking. But "life changes", as he

says, and now he is the one responsible for the estate's production, with the help of an oenologist. Here, tradition meets modern technology with excellent results. Both father and son concentrate their efforts on preserving the high quality that characterizes their wines.

The estate produces two wines, Ktima Karyda is a typical Naoussa Xinomavro. Robust and full, with intense varietal aromas and with the obvious influence of the oak barrel, it is a wine made for the very hardcore fans of Xinomavro. They also produce Estate Karydas Collectible, an exuberant red wine made from Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Xinomavro, with rich aromas of black fruit and vanilla. The estate's wines have been very successful in markets abroad, especially in the United States, where they can be found in 28 states, from Hawaii to New York and from Florida to Washington on the Pacific coast.

6 Vironos St., 59200 Naoussa
T: (+30) 23320 28638

Domaine Dalamara

Kostis Dalamaras has only just turned 30, yet since 2011, he has been running the family estate, having taken over from his father Yiannis. Unfortunately, an unexpected trip to Athens prevented the older Dalamaras from being at the estate on the day of our visit. However, the son's answer to our question concerning the relationship between the two generations was absolutely clear: Yiannis Dalamaras has left all the responsibility of winemaking and running the estate to his son, while he tends to the vineyards. Kostis studied oenology in Beaune and is now proud to continue the family tradition of winemaking which was started by his great-grandfather in 1840. Coming back from France, Kostis decided to apply all the modern technologies he could for wine producing, giving emphasis to the vineyard and in particular to the harvesting methods. "Whoever participates in our harvest has a really hard time," he admits, laughing.

His aim is the creation of an ecosystem which will lead to the elimination of the use of any fertilizers, even organic ones. During his stays in Cataluña, Spain, and in Alsace, France, Kostis came across the production of natural wines, a discovery which has influenced his way of thinking as far as winemaking methods are concerned. The use of indigenous yeast, new oak barrels during maturation and bottling without filtering contribute to the full expression of the terroir.

The estate produces wines from Xinomavro, and the aim is to reach a maximum of 50,000 bottles a year, up from the 30,000 that are currently being produced. The estate's limited production wine, Paliokalias, is produced from one of the oldest vineyards in the area and is an excellent example of the potential of Xinomavro.

31 G. Kirtsi St., 59200 Naoussa
T: (+30) 23320 28321
dalamarawinery.gr

Domaine Chrisochou

In 1977, Kimis Chrisochou and his wife Betty established this estate in the region of Stranza, about 4 kilometers from Naoussa. Today, their three children continue the tradition: Katerina, with a degree in management, is responsible for the management of the estate; Nana, an accountant, is also an oenologist with a degree in oenology and viticulture; Giannis, the youngest of the three, takes care of the vines. The winery is in a traditional building with a beautiful tasting room and a cave where the family keeps its oldest bottles, which date back to 1960, a precious treasure which reveals the ageing capacity of the wine produced on the estate.

Nana, a beautiful young mother (she had just given birth to her first child when we visited) is a dynamic young woman who gives the immediate impression that she is totally hands-on. "My parents," she says, "never meddle in my business; they decided some time ago to withdraw from active duty and now they help by offering precious advice. Anyway, things could not have been different, since so much has changed as far as winemaking is concerned



and they didn't have the training to keep up with modern technology. However, their experience is invaluable when it comes to tasting a new wine."

Nana is a fan of the local varieties. "I believe that, so far, we've concentrated too much on international varieties. I think it's time to give more emphasis to indigenous varieties, and explore their full potential. The economic crisis hasn't left our business unaffected, but it's also true that international markets are showing great interest in Greek wine produced from indigenous varieties."

Around one-fifth of the estate's production is exported, reaching markets in Germany, the United States, China, Belgium, the United Kingdom, Poland, Cyprus and Luxemburg. The estate produces both red and white wines, with an emphasis on Xinomavro. Their best-selling label is Chrisochoou Xinomavro, while the estate also produces a white wine, a Blanc de Noir, from Xinomavro as well.

59200 Naoussa
T: +(30) 23320 45080
chrisochoou.com

Domaine Foundis

No one can really doubt the forceful presence of the younger generation in the Foundis estate. While we were talking with the proprietor, Nikos Foundis, his sons-in-law and daughters were coming in and out, all of them part of the action that goes on there. "I think my sons-in-law value my work more than my daughters," Nikos says, laughing, while he recounts the history of the estate, which began in the '90s. The winery, built in 1992, was initially more of a hobby for him; like many of the people in the Naoussa area, Nikos was primarily an apricot and apple farmer. Gradually, the estate started growing, with the planting of more vineyards which began to displace the other crops; the production went from 2,500 bottles initially to reach 80,000 bottles, making it a very profitable family business.

His daughter Georgia, with a degree in accounting, started working at the estate in 2003 and today runs the business, while her father takes care of the winemaking. "We both agree on one thing, that Xinomavro produces wines with ageing capacity," Georgia says. The philosophy of the estate is based on the traditional method of winemaking, producing a more rustic version of Xinomavro, which according to Nikos, is being well received in both the domestic and international markets. The estate's oenologist is Dimitri Ziannis,

Mr Foundis' nephew – it is truly a family business! As Georgia states, their goal is to plant more vines, but the emphasis will always remain on quality, not quantity. Nikos agrees: "If the raw material is not good, no matter how brilliant the oenologist, the result will always be mediocre." The estate wines include Naoussa Xinomavro, a red wine produced from select vineyards in the Ramnista area, in the heart of the Naoussa appellation zone, and Ktima Foundi Xinomavro, produced exclusively from a single vineyard in the area of Nea Stranza.

Strantzia, 59200 Naoussa
T: +(30) 23320 48255

Domaine Diamantakos

It was a really windy night. A huge oak tree fell, revealing an archaeological site of great importance: Aristotle's School of Philosophy in Naoussa, where Alexander the Great attended the classes of the famous philosopher for two years, between 343 and 340 B.C.

The estate on which the site stood belonged to the Diamantakos family who, with the money received from the Greek state in compensation for the land it appropriated, bought and planted their first vines, which now yield two excellent wines, a red Naoussa from Xinomavro and a white produced from a rare white variety called Preknadi. This variety produces wines of an aromatic character, of medium acidity and high alcohol.

The Diamantakos winery lies in the middle of the estate, and boasts all the equipment used in modern winemaking. George Diamantakos, an oenologist with a postgraduate degree in viticulture, speaks passionately about his work and his relationship with his father, who started the estate. "When we first started working together, there was some friction between us, because of our different approaches. He was following the more traditional ways, and I wanted to implement all the new methods that I had learned during my studies." The older generation of the area's winemakers preferred larger yields, often at the expense of quality. Nowadays, things have changed; yields are much smaller, but the quality of the fruit is much better than before. "Our emphasis is on the vineyard," says George. In the next few years, the aim is to increase production, while further developing the quality of their wines. "Our goal is the production of an iconic wine that can sell for €30 or €40."

Mantemi, 59200 Naoussa
T: +(30) 23320 28623
diamantakos.gr

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2012

ΚΥΡ·ΓΙΑΝΝΗ

STELLIOS BOUTARIS READY FOR BATTLE

The new winery, taking a leap into the global market and surviving in crisis-stricken Greece. It's not really hard to get Stellios Boutaris to speak about wine. His passion for what he does is evident as soon as he starts talking...

Interview by **Thalia Kartali**
Photos **Yiorgos Kaplanidis**

Stellios was born and raised in the family business, Ioannis Boutaris and Son Winery S.A., which was founded by his grandfather Giannis. Although he had known right from the beginning that he was going to end up getting involved with the wine business eventually, he chose to study math and economics in the United States first. A winemaker with a dream of building an extraordinary winery one day in order to satisfy his secret love for architecture, he has already started working on that in Naoussa, northern Greece, where most of his vineyards are situated.

Together with his brother Michalis, Stellios represents the fifth generation of one of the oldest winemaking families in Greece. It is a heavy legacy, which he considers a blessing, since he believes that, in the wine business: "you need a sense of continuity, you need to be able to look into the future." It was in the UK that he received his wine education when, parallel to getting his Master's Degree from the London School of Economics, he also earned a WSET Diploma. Ever since, he continues to learn something new about wine every day...

People tend to have a romantic image as far as winemakers are concerned. Where does the romanticism end and the hard reality begin?

Winemaking is a job in which you do not make money easily. It takes a while to turn a profit. It needs time, patience, resilience and a lot of personal work. It's not a coincidence that very few multinational companies get into the winemaking business. On the other hand, there's definitely an element of romanticism. I don't consider winemakers businessmen; we see ourselves as artists. Furthermore, on an international level, a lot of winemakers have become part of a star system. They promote themselves, which, in my opinion, is fine. It appeals to people who need to identify the man behind the label.

Does the fact that wine ages, that a winemaker will be able to taste something that he produced today 10 or 20 years from now, give wine a different dimension?

Definitely. Wine is about past and present. It also contains a lot of vanity; we winemakers are very vain. There's a reason why most winemakers put their names on the label – they love to see their names on the table.

Where would you place Greek wine on the global wine map?

We are still lagging behind, despite the fact that there has been tremendous progress during the last five years. In numbers, Greek wine makes up 1% of global production and just 0.2% of global wine exports. Despite the fact that wine production here can trace its origins back to ancient times, Greece does not have any tradition whatsoever in modern winemaking.

What do you mean by that?

During the '60s, there were five big wine producers in Greece. The consumer was more interested in brands and that is exactly what these companies gave them. This was followed by a second revolution that happened in the '90s with the appearance of small-scale producers and boutique wineries. I believe that, in the next five years, we will see one more revolution, one that will happen in the vineyard. It's not a coincidence that Greek white wines are better than the reds and much more successful in the global market. White wines are basically produced in the winery and depend less on the vineyard, and therefore their production is easier.

On the other hand, the production of a quality red wine depends on the quality of the grape, and in that aspect there is still a lot to be done. Furthermore, during the '70s and the '80s, many Greek restaurants in countries like Germany or the US were asking for cheap Greek wines. Despite the fact that Greece at the time was exporting a lot of wine, we weren't able to enter the main markets because our exports were based on a network of Greek wholesalers. And, to be honest, we also lacked good quality wines.

In what way do you think things have changed today?

We have become extremely extroverted. I believe that the economic crisis has helped us. Winemakers have shown a tremendous maturity. We produced better wines, our prices became more competitive and we all worked hard together. As a result, Greek wine is becoming part of the global market. Our next challenge will be to increase these exports. I am very op-

timistic that, by 2025, Greek wine exports will have doubled, reaching €140 million.

Indigenous or international varieties?

Right now, our exports depend mainly on indigenous varieties, and I think they will continue to do so. Of course, I'd never suggest that we shouldn't vinify international varieties, such as Cabernet Sauvignon. Any way that you look at it, Cabernet Sauvignon is the king. Having said that, I believe what we need is an iconic wine, a wine produced from a Greek variety that will sell for €200.

Is Greek wine overpriced as many suggest?

I wouldn't say it's overpriced. I believe that, in Greece, cheap is expensive and expensive is cheap. We still haven't been able to produce good-quality entry-level wines, although we have made some progress during the crisis. You can, for instance, now find good-quality wines that cost around €3. However, there are some Greek wines that could sell for €200. Lately, certain expensive wines have started being produced so that a wider price range can be created. **g**

FAVOURITES

White

Ktima Karanika Brut Cuvee Speciale
Ktima Gerovasilou
Santorini Sigala
Robola Gentilini
Ovilos Vivlia Hora
Malagousia Zafiraki
Samos Grand Cru

Red

Grand Cuvee Skouras
Ktima Gaias
Kava Merkouri
La Tour Melas
T-Oinos Clos Segasta
Kava Amethystos Lazaridi
Ktima Driopi



The Temple of Zeus

NEMEA

THE LAND OF AGIORGITIKO

Nemea is located in the northeastern part of the Peloponnese, only one and a half hours from Athens. The small village of Archaea Nemea is located right next to the archaeological site, while the new town of Nemea lies a little further to the west.

By Thalia Kartali & Pinelopi Katsatou
Photos Yiorgos Kaplanidis

The ancient stadium was used to host the Nemean Games, and, according to Greek mythology, this is also where Hercules killed the Nemean Lion. Nemea is the largest PDO area of Greece, specializing in wines from the local grape Agiorgitiko (nicknamed "the blood of Hercules"). Forty wineries are scattered around the 17 communes of the region and, while most of them are open

to visitors, it would be advisable to call ahead of a visit. History lovers and anyone who is keen on outdoor activities, vibrant villages and quality food and wine will certainly be happy visiting this historic and intriguing land. The best lodgings can be found at the picturesque port of Nafplion (40 km from Nemea). The suggested duration of this trip is one to four days.

Archaeological Site and Museum of Nemea

Visit the archaeological site of Ancient Nemea, including the Temple of Zeus, the ancient stadium and the site's wonderful museum.

Ancient Mycenae 25 km*

Visit the ruins of the greatest city of the Mycenaean civilization, which played a vital role in the development of classical Greek culture.

* From Nemea

Ancient Corinth /Acrocorinth 31 km*

Corinth was an important city in ancient Greece, and it also played a major role in the missionary work of the Apostle Paul; he lived and preached here for 18 months.

* From Nemea

Epidaurus Theater 68 km*

This is one of the most extensive sacred sanctuaries in ancient Greece. The temples, athletics facilities, the theatre, baths, and other structures were built in an elevated valley surrounded by mountains.

* From Nemea

Stymphalia 28 km*

Visit Lake Stymphalia and the Environment Museum of Stymphalia.

* From Nemea

Nafplio 40 km*

Discover Palamidi Castle, the fortress of Bourtzi and the National Gallery of Nafplion.

* From Nemea

Corinth Canal 42 km*

Admire this great achievement of human technology and engineering and take in some amazing views.

* From Nemea

Wine & Food

Best local food / Ingredients

- Extra virgin olive oil • Kalamata olives • Lemons and oranges
- Raisins, currants and vinegar • Eggplants (especially Tsakoniki), tomatoes, herbs • Roosters and rabbits • Orange-flavored sausages • Kagianas omelet (with tomatoes and cured pork)
- Artichokes • Avgolemono (a dense egg-and-lemon sauce)
- Cinnamon infused tomato sauces

Wine & Food

A selection of Nemea wines to try

- Aivalis, Nemea • Gaia Estate, Nemea • Skouras Grand Cuvee Nemea • Mitravelas Estate Agiorgitiko, Nemea • Tselepos 'Driopi' Classic, Nemea • Palivou Estate Terra Leone Ammos Reserve, Nemea • Semeli Reserve, Nemea • Cavino Nemea Reserve, Nemea • Nemeion Estate 'Hgemon' Sovereign Grande Reserve, Nemea • Lantides Nemea • Papaioannou Terroir, Nemea • Lafkiotis Agionymo, Nemea

Activities

- **Kayaking & Canoeing** Explore the majestic coastline of Nafplio and the area of Argolida
- **Segway Tours** A fun way to explore Nafplio old town
- **Nafplio Promenade** Walk along the water with views of the old city, the beautiful port and the mountains in the background
- **Swimming** Arvanitia Beach (plus nearby Karathona Beach and Tolo Beach)

Arriving in Nemea, one realizes why the ancient Greeks chose this spot to build one of their most important temples of Zeus. Vineyards surrounded by cypress trees and olive groves is what gave Nemea its title as "The Tuscany of Greece," while even more enthusiastic fans of the area believe that it is a place that could be turned into the "Napa Valley of the Peloponnese." This is perhaps a bit of an exaggeration, since it still lacks much of the necessary basic infrastructure, but Nemea is somewhere that could become Greece's leading wine tourism destination, with some effort and cooperation between the wine producers, the vine growers and the local people.

Its proximity to Athens – only an hour's drive – makes it a perfect destination for day trips. The archaeological sites (The Temple of Zeus and the Ancient Stadium) and the Archaeological Museum reveal the area's long history, which is closely connected to viticulture and the production of wine. This is the land of Agiorgitiko (the variety gets its name from Agios Georgios, St. George), one of the two most important PDOs for red-wine production in Greece.

The variety is considered one of Greece's oldest, with origins that date back to antiquity, and it yields wines of many different types, from light, easy-to-drink reds to more full-bodied age-wor-

thy ones. In recent years, great progress has been achieved in winemaking here, and one can find numerous new small boutique wineries, along with the larger producers.

As George Palivos, one of the most important winemakers in the area and a man full of passion for his homeland, tells us: "Our soul is in Agiorgitiko." This is Greece's most planted grape, but its origins are right here in Nemea, and the wines being made here can be quite exceptional. Our own day trip to the area revealed to us all the beauty of this very special destination and gave us the opportunity to try some of the best wines that Nemea produces. Here's what we discovered:



↑ The trunk of an old vine

Semeli Winery

Built on the hills of Koutsi at an altitude of 660 meters and surrounded by its privately owned vineyards, Semeli Winery is one of the most important wineries of this zone. On the top of the hill, we come across a modern building equipped with an elegant tasting room, as well as eight other rooms for visitors who wish to spend the night. The winery offers spectacular views of the area's vineyards, where indigenous and international varieties are being cultivated. Although the emphasis is on indigenous varieties, including Agiorgitiko, Moschofilero, Roditis and Malagousia, wines are also made from Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Gewürztraminer. However, the estate's top wine is Nemea Reserve Semeli, a wine made from 100% Agiorgitiko.

Koutsi, 205 00 Nemea
T: (+30) 27460 20360/20361
semeliwines.gr

Gaia Wines

A short way down the hill, we come across Gaia Wines. This winery, established in 1997, is surrounded by a seven-hectare vineyard which produces mainly Agiorgitiko. Giannis Paraskevopoulos is the chief oenologist and co-owner of the estate, which produces wines that cover all the different expressions of Agiorgitiko. One of its top wines is Gaia Estate (Ktima Gaia), made from 100% Agiorgitiko, a wine which is matured for at least 12 months in new French oak and which is helping to prove the ageing potential of this unique variety.

Koutsi, 205 00 Nemea
T: (+30) 27460 22057
gaia-wines.gr

Driopi Estate

This is the latest acquisition of one of the area's most dynamic wine producers, Giannis Tselepos. The 8.5 hectare estate is situated at an elevation of 380 meters on the slopes of Koutsi. A new winery is currently being built on the estate which, for the time being, is not open to visitors. Modern techniques of viticulture are being applied here, and the resultant end products are really quite amazing. The estate produces two top wines, Nemea Driopi and Driopi Reserve, both made from 100% Agiorgitiko.

14th km. Tripolis – Kastri Road,
22012 Arcadia
T: (+30) 2710 544440
tselepos.gr

Nemeion Estate

This estate, which owes its name to Ancient Nemea, is situated right in the heart of Nemea. The winery is a modern building that lacks window in order to keep out the sunlight. The vineyards, which are situated at altitudes between 400 and 600 meters, are planted with Agiorgitiko and are organic, avoiding the use of chemical pesticides completely. Here, oenologist Artemis Kokkinaki takes care of the production of two of the estate's top wines, Nemea Reserve and Hgemon Sovereign Grand Réserve.

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Harlafti Estate

Driving down the Nemea Valley in the area of Achladia, we come across on the left-hand side of the road the vineyards which belong to Harlafti Estate. Nikos Harlaftis, a warm, smiling man welcomes us, accompanied by the estate's oenologist Niki Negreonte. The vineyard is relatively young, planted for the first time in 1997 with Agiorgitiko. Later, more varieties both indigenous and international were added, with Malbec (Argentina's famous variety) being the newest addition. Under the guidance of its chief oenologist, Panos Zoumboulis, the estate produces a long list of wines with an emphasis on Agiorgitiko. The estate's strong cards, however, are two rosés, Petaloudes (which means "butterflies") and Saumon, made from Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah respectively. The latest addition to the estate's rosés is Flamingo, a blend of five varieties (Malbec, Agiorgitiko, Limniona and Cabernet Sauvignon), which spends a few months in oak.

Achladias, 205 00 Nemea
T: (+30) 27460 24197
harlaftis.gr

Palivos Estate

On our way to Archaea Nemea, we keep coming across different signs showing the way to the numerous wineries that are in the area. So many wineries, so little time.... The truth is that one day isn't enough to cover all the wineries that are worth visiting, but one that we definitely don't want to miss is the Palivos Estate. George Palivos, a pleasant man who speaks with great love of Nemea (he was born and raised here) is a true believer in the power of Agiorgitiko and the potential it has to succeed in the international market. George welcomes to his estate around 20,000 visitors a year, mostly tourists, who are impressed, he says, by the quality of Nemea's wines. His winery was built in 1995 on the 30-hectare family estate and is one of the first in the area to open its doors to visitors. Today it produces 11 wines covering all the different styles of Agiorgitiko, with Palivos Estate Nemea being the most popular one, a very good quality wine made from 100% Agiorgitiko.

Archaea Nemea, 205 00 Nemea
T: (+30) 27460 24190
palivos.gr

Papaioannou Estate

Thanasis Papaioannou is considered one of the gurus among Nemea's winemakers. He was one of the first to realize the immense potential of the variety that has been cultivated here for hundreds of years and, as early as in the '80s, when winemaking in Greece was still lagging behind in comparison to other countries, he decided to invest in new technology, incorporating new techniques into traditional wine making. So far, the results have been really amazing, and Papaioannou never seems to stop experimenting, both in the winery and in the vineyard. A true believer in the importance of the vineyard, he insists that it is there that all the work is done. Although committed to Agiorgitiko, which he has studied in depth, he isn't afraid to experiment with international varieties, even less known ones such as the French Petit Verdot or the Portuguese Touriga Nacional. Some of the best wines made from Agiorgitiko are produced right here, including the estate's best-selling Papaioannou Mikroklima and its Papaioannou Terroir, a single vineyard wine of exceptional quality.

Archaea Nemea, 205 00 Nemea
T: (+30) 27460 23138
papaioannouwines.gr

Aivalis Winery

Our trip to Nemea could not have been complete without a visit to Aivalis Winery, another legend in the area. Christos Aivalis produces one of the best examples of Nemea, but he is also known for his vibrant personality. "I might talk a lot", says Christos, "but I am always in a position to prove that I'm right. Whoever visits our vineyards remains speechless!" he says, laughing. Full of confidence, Mr Aivalis has got the wines to prove that he's not kidding around. His creations enjoy cult status, with lots of dedicated fans both in Greece and abroad. Lately, his son Sotiris, a man whose more laid-back character complements his father's outgoing charm perfectly, has taken over the responsibility of winemaking. His deep scientific knowledge, acquired during his studies in Bourgogne, is being applied to the winemaking and the results are fascinating.

4th km Nemea – Petri 20500
T: (+30) 27520 21175
semeliwines.gr

Lafazanis Winery

Last but not least, Lafazanis Winery belongs to the area's boutique wineries. Surrounded by a 10-hectare vineyard, the winery is situated in ancient Kleones, on the road that takes us back to Athens from ancient Nemea. Right on the estate's border lay the ruins of the Temple of Hercules, a monument built to commemorate Hercules' killing of the Nemean Lion. With a production capacity of 4,000 tons a year, the winery combines modern technology with traditional techniques. Its best wines include Geometria Malagousia (a white varietal wine), Geometria Moschofilero (an aromatic white wine), and Geometria Agiorgitiko.

Ancient Kleones of Nemea, 20500
T: (+30) 27460 31450
lafazanis.gr



↑ The vineyards at Palivos Estate

9 Awarded Greek Labels 1 Proud Country of Origin

The Greek wines of LIDL Hellas have once again been honored with international awards. We strive for the highest quality, so that you can enjoy wines full of flavor from the best vineyards of our country and share with your loved ones everything that is good.



Κάθε μέρα αξίζει!



1. NEMEA AGIORGITIKO BARRIQUE PDO 2014

Variety: 100% Agiorgitiko • Region: Selected vineyards in the Nemea zone • Taste: Aging in oak barrels allows the wine to develop a complex fruity bouquet, and a balanced flavour, bursting with character • Recommended serving temperature: 18 - 20 °C • Alc. 13% vol. • Price: €4.45, 1L = €5.93
750ML



2. NEMEA AGIORGITIKO PDO 2015

Variety: 100% Agiorgitiko • Taste: Suave and satisfying in the mouth, with a long, fruity finish • Recommended serving temperature: 16 - 18 °C • Alc. 12.5% vol. • Price: €2.95, 1L = €3.93
750ML



3. SYRAH PGI PELOPONNESE 2015

Variety: Syrah. The red variety characteristic of southern France is becoming increasingly popular around the world • Taste: A stylish, intensely fruity and rich wine full of character •

Recommended serving temperature: 18 °C • Alc. 13% vol. • Price: €3.49, 1L = €4.65
750ML



4. MERLOT PGI PELOPONNESE 2014

Region: Vineyards in the mountainous Aigialia district. • Taste: The local terroir gives this varietal wine the delicate tannins and solid structure that underpin its particular character • Recommended serving temperature: 16 - 18 °C • Alc. 13% vol. • Price: €3.69, 1L = €4.92
750ML



5. MALAGOUZIA PGI CENTRAL GREECE 2016

Region: The vineyard on the slopes of Mt Kitherona lies at an ideal altitude of 460m • Variety: 100% Malagouzia,

a rare Greek variety • Taste: Full and firm, with a tantalising finish • Recommended serving temperature: 10 - 12 °C • Alc. 12% vol. • Price: €4.19, 1L = €5.59
750ML



**6. SANTORINI
ASSYRTIKO PDO 2016**
Variety: 100% Assyrtiko • Taste: Pleasantly crisp, with the minerally flavours characteristic of the island's dry volcanic soil • Recommended serving temperature: 9 - 11 °C • Alc. 13% vol. • Price: €5.99, 1L = €7.99
750ML



**7. OINOCHORA SAVATIANO -
RODITIS - CHARDONNAY PGI
SLOPES OF KITHERONA 2016**
Region: From vineyards cultivated

for thousands of years on the slopes of Mount Kitherona • Taste: A robust, intensely fruity wine • Recommended serving temperature: 9 - 10 °C • Alc. 12% vol. • Price: €2.79, 1L = €3.72
750ML



8. SAMOS DESSERT WINE PDO

Variety: Samos Moschato • Region: Samos produces one of the world's legendary dessert wines • Taste: Sumptuous and elegant, beautifully balanced, with a fruity finish • Recommended serving temperature: 8 - 10 °C • Alc. 15% vol. • Price: €5.99, 1L = €7.99
750ML



9. CHARDONNAY PGI CENTRAL GREECE 2015

Variety: Chardonnay, probably the best-known white variety in the world • Taste: A lovely, lively wine of complex character, with a graceful, full-bodied flavour • Recommended serving temperature: 10 - 11 °C • Alc. 12% vol. • Price: €3.49, 1L = €4.65
750ML



TWO OF A KIND

Anyone who doesn't know them well might wonder what these two people are doing working together. As I listen to them talking, I can't help wondering how it's even possible for them to be partners in the same company. They seem to agree only about disagreeing. In the end, however, after you've spent time with them, you're left with the impression that they were actually made for each other.

By **Thalia Kartali**
Photos **Yiorgos Kaplanidis**

Speaking to Leon Karatsalos and Giannis Paraskevopoulos can be quite a challenge. Leon is an austere figure, a matter-of-fact man, with a deep knowledge of the wine market and a clear vision of his company's future. With the sincerity of a man who truly understands business, he explains the way things work in the wine market, both here and abroad.

Giannis Paraskevopoulos, the man behind the wine, a professor of oenology who received his PhD from the University of Bordeaux, speaks passionately about the challenges of winemaking, his new projects and his revolutionary new ideas, concepts which sometimes leave his partner speechless. These are two very different people, with contradictory personalities, who share the same passion: GAIA WINES, the company they created 23 years ago, which today is one of the leading wine companies in Greece, with an important presence both here and abroad.

Giannis Paraskevopoulos explains how things work: "Leon deals with the money, I deal with the wine." Leon adds: "We're two very complicated people who've shared some very intense moments but who have become much better people by working together all those years." It all started 23 years ago, when the two, who had known each other since their university days, decided to quit their jobs and make a new beginning by creating GAIA WINES. Their first wine was Thalassitis, a wine made in Santorini from Assyrtiko, (the indigenous white variety of the island) which, they tell me, they sold "door to door."

Today, Thalassitis has grown to become one of the most iconic wines of Santorini. Recently, they uncorked Thalassitis Submerged, a wine which had been aged underwater off the shore in Santorini for five years, an experiment based on a similar practice followed by Veuve Clicquot in order to see how this wine behaves under different maturation conditions. "It was one of Giannis' crazy ideas," Leon says, smiling. "I told him, that's really on you, I don't agree, but if you want to go ahead, I can't stop you." The result was the production of an excellent wine which retained all of its aromas, having aged on the seafloor at a depth of 30 meters in zero-oxygen conditions.

Speaking about the presence of Greek wines abroad, Leon and Giannis say that they are part of a team of top Greek winemakers who, 20 years ago, decided to start promoting their wines abroad and who had a common goal of introducing Greek wine to the global market. What the team realized very quickly was that they had to work together in order to achieve this goal, and that they had to become part of an organized distribution system in order to get their products to the right markets. As far as prices are concerned, both men seem to agree that Greek entry level wines can be quite expensive, and since it is very difficult to fight the competition at this level, Greek winemakers should concentrate their efforts on making good-quality wines, something they say "that is actually already happening."

Although neither Leon nor Giannis believes that Greece should concentrate its winemaking ef-

forts on indigenous varieties only, as an oenologist, Giannis is a strong supporter of the idea that there should be one variety that Greece will put on the wine map: Assyrtiko. But he realizes that there is still a lot to be done: "Growing up and becoming more mature, we realized that Greece has two big disadvantages. One has to do with the vine, the other is a tremendous lack of marketing skills. Let me give you an example: the vineyards of Santorini are the oldest on the planet. Everybody would know that if those vineyards happened to be in France or in Italy. But we Greeks cannot sell our story. You read in the Wine Spectator that the oldest vineyard is in Australia. It's not the Wine Spectator's fault. It's our fault that people don't know that. But I'm optimistic that things are slowly beginning to change."

For Leon Karatsalos, one of his proudest moments was when GAIA Estate, a red wine made from Agiorgitiko (the red variety that grows in the Peloponnese), won the International Trophy at the Decanter World Wine Awards in 2001. "Nobody knew us. Everybody was trying to find out about this unknown wine that had just won the highest prize at this world-famous contest," he remembers.

For Giannis, the moment he will never forget is when Jancis Robinson, the famous wine critic, was asked to pick just one favorite variety out of the 1368 she included in her book 'Wine Grapes'. She answered: "It's difficult to choose, but if you insist, I would have to say Assyrtiko."

When I ask Giannis Paraskevopoulos what his next project will be, his answer comes with no hesitation: "Creating a vineyard on Mars..." **g**

Timeline

1994

Gaia Wines is established. First wine produced: Thalassitis.



1999

Release of barrel-fermented Thalassitis in limited bottles, and Ktima Gaia.



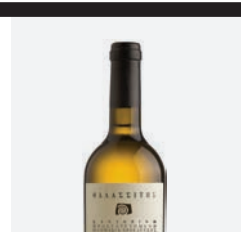
2007

Release of Gaia S, a blend of Syrah and Agiorgitiko, marking a new era in wine production in Nemea.



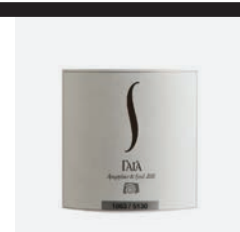
1996

Christina Legaki joins the company, which acquires its first vineyard in Koutsi Nemea. A new winery is built on the estate.



2001

Ktima Gaia is rewarded by the Decanter World Awards with the International Trophy.



2008

The Gaia Winery on Santorini releases Assyrtiko Wild Ferment.



Grape

CRETE THE NEXT BIG THING

Crete is the largest and most populous of the Greek islands. It retains its own local cultural traits that differentiate it from the rest of Greece. It was once the center of the Minoan civilization (c. 2700–1420 BC), currently regarded as the earliest recorded civilization in Europe. Cretan wine – with a similarly long history – has undergone a tremendous quality improvement over the last years, offering some of the most amazing wine styles one can find, made from indigenous grape varieties only found in Crete.

By Thalia Kartali & Pinelopi Katsatou
Photos Yiorgos Kaplanidis

If you want to tour the whole island, you'll need to stay in a number of different places, as driving back to one spot would take many hours. Alternatively, you can focus on either Western or Eastern Crete. Either way, a fascinating journey lies ahead of you. Drive down scenic roads, trek through Europe's longest gorge, hike to the cave where Zeus was born or cycle through the orchards on the Lasithi Plateau. Leave time to enjoy the endless beaches where you can boat, kayak or snorkel in the crystalline waters before enjoying authentic Cretan cuisine, with a glass or two of wine or the local raki.

<p>Eastern Crete Heraklion</p> <h2>The City</h2> <p>Heraklion, Crete's biggest city, boasts a multicultural past as Byzantine churches stand next to Venetian mansions and Turkish fountains; it also has a thriving present, with many restaurants, coffee shops and bars.</p>	<p>Eastern Crete Heraklion</p> <h2>Archaeological Museum</h2> <p>It's one of the greatest museums in Greece and the best in the world for Minoan art, home to the most notable and complete collection of artifacts of the Minoan civilization of Crete.</p>	<p>Eastern Crete Heraklion</p> <h2>Historical Museum of Crete</h2> <p>This museum covers the art and history of Crete from the 4th century AD up to and including the Second World War. The collections include two paintings by Doménikos Theotokópoulos (El Greco), born in Crete.</p>	<p>Eastern Crete Heraklion</p> <h2>The Natural History Museum of Crete</h2> <p>This great museum highlights the diverse flora and fauna of the Eastern Mediterranean.</p>
<p>Eastern Crete Heraklion</p> <h2>The Palace of Knossos</h2> <p>The largest Bronze Age archaeological site on Crete, Knossos is considered Europe's oldest city. The Minoan palace is the main site of interest.</p>	<p>Eastern Crete Agios Nikolaos</p> <h2>The Town</h2> <p>Agios Nikolaos is a lovely town with three waterfronts: the lake and its port; Kitroplatia Beach; and the Marina. The lake, surrounded and overlooked by cafes and restaurants, is connected to the sea by a narrow inlet.</p>	<p>Wine & Food</p> <h2>Best local food / Ingredients</h2> <p>Olive oil • Tomatoes • Artichokes • Wild onion bulbs • Herbs (wild sage, oregano, thyme, parsley, marjoram and more) • Snails • Wild hare • Goat meat • Pork meat • Local cheeses: Graviera, anthotiros (mild and soft), kefalotiri, mizithra (fresh cheese made from sheep's milk) • Dolmas: Stuffed vine leaves with rice • Dakos: Rusks topped with grated tomato, olive oil, cheese and oregano • Candied fruit • Kaltsounia (local sweet cheese pies) • Loukoumades (fried donuts topped with honey, cinnamon and dry nuts)</p>	
<p>Western Crete Chania</p> <h2>The Town</h2> <p>Visit the Old Venetian Harbor, the old port, the narrow lanes full of shops and the waterfront restaurants.</p>	<p>Western Crete Chania</p> <h2>Archaeological Museum</h2> <p>The museum contains a substantial collection of Minoan and Roman artifacts excavated from around the city of Chania.</p>	<p>Wine & Food</p> <h2>A selection of Cretan wines to try</h2> <p>Domaine Economou Oikonomoy Liatiko • Boutari Skalani • Douloufakis Dafnios Liatiko • Lyrarakis 'Ipodromos Vineyard' Vidiano, Crete, Greece • Manousakis Winery Nostos Syrah • Alexakis Winery Kotsifali – Syrah • Idaia Winery 'Ocean' Thrapsathiri • Diamantakis Winery 'Diamantopetra' Syrah – Mandilari • Lyrarakis Dafni • Douloufakis Femina White, Crete, Greece • Douloufakis Dafnios Vidiano • Manousakis Winery Nostos Roussanne • Lyrarakis Thrapsathiri, Crete, Greece</p>	
<p>Western Crete Chania</p> <h2>Archaeological Museum</h2> <p>A collection of model ships, nautical instruments, paintings, historical photographs and war relics covering the period from the Bronze Age to the present.</p>	<p>Western Crete Rethymnon</p> <h2>The town</h2> <p>Rethymnon combines the charm and history of the old town with the natural beauty of a long sandy coast.</p>	<p>Activities</p> <h2>Swimming</h2> <p>Enjoy world-class beaches: Falassarna Beach, Balos Beach and Lagoon, Elafonissi Beach, Seitan Limania Beach, Agii Apostoli Beach.</p> <h2>Samaria Gorge National Park</h2> <p>A World Biosphere Reserve, this gorge in southwest Crete is 16 km long and is a major tourist attraction of the island.</p>	

BOUTARI WINERY

Fantaxometecho, or "Metochi of the Ghosts", owes its name to a previous owner. In Greek, "Metochi" is a small piece of land which belongs to a monastery, usually containing a small church. Giannis Kostantakis, who has been taking care of the estate's vines for the last 40 years, explains further: "In order to keep thieves away from his property (cattle thefts used to be very common in Crete those days), the man who owned the land leaked a story about the estate being haunted, so that's how it got its name."

When the Boutaris family bought the estate in 1990, it produced wines from Kotsifali and Mandilaria, two indigenous red varieties, and from Vilana, an indigenous white variety. The 7.5 hectare estate has now been replanted with international varieties, including Syrah and Chardonnay, as well as other indigenous varieties, including, Malvasia Moschato of Spina (an aromatic white variety) and Liatiko (another red). Oenologist Giannis Vogiatzis is responsible for the winemaking and the estate produces today four wines: Scalani, a dry red blend of Syrah and Kotsifali; Fantaxometecho, a dry white blend of Vilana, Chardonnay and Malvasia; and two sweet wines, Iouliatiko and Moschato Spinas.

Arriving in the evening at Scalani Hills after a hard day's work, nothing could have been better than a nice dinner in the beautiful courtyard of the estate's old guest house, which has now been turned into a small luxury hotel operated by the Aria Hotels Group. Trying all the Cretan specialties prepared by Popi, a local lady who takes care of the cooking, and sipping Scalani, we learned all about the history of this wonderful place and the recent changes it had undergone. Christina Boutari, Managing Director Exports for Boutaris S.A., was responsible for the renovation of the guest house, which now consists of three suites, all beautifully decorated with modern works of art by young up-and-coming Greek artists.

Sipping coffee in the courtyard the next morning, we enjoyed a perfect view of the vineyards that made us want to spend the whole day there, just daydreaming. There was something really magical about this lovely winery, with its ghost stories and its excellent wines.

Scalani, 701 00 Heraklion
T: (+30) 2810 731617
boutari.gr

↑ Nikos Douloufakis tending to his vines



DOULOUFAKIS WINERY

Going down a steep dirt road in the back of a pickup truck can be quite an experience, but it's also the best way to take in all the wild beauty of the Cretan land. Vineyards and olive groves are all you'll see going down the hill from the village where Nikos Douloufakis keeps his winery. "These are all very small parcels of land, since according to Cretan tradition, each piece of land had to be divided equally among the family's children," he explains. "So you get a small vineyard here, an olive grove there, and then another vineyard." Unfortunately, this dispersal doesn't help with costs, but it does give our wines complexity," he tells us as we walk under the burning Cretan sun.

All the vineyards are located on slopes. "All the work is done in the vineyard," he says. Truly proud of his Cretan heritage, he insists that one of the greatest advantages of Greek wine is its long history. "Crete is a very strong brand of its own, and lately Cretan wines have been doing really well in markets abroad. We export to France, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, the United States and Canada." Although a supporter of indigenous varieties, Douloufakis doesn't believe in excluding international ones. His best-selling wine is Aspros Lagos, a Cabernet Sauvignon. But he also believes in Vidiano, the new rising star of Crete. A white variety which gives wines that can age well, Vidiano is really worth trying.

Dafnes, 700 11 Heraklion
T: (+30) 2810 792017

↑ George Lyrarakis in his winery's cellar



↑ Christina Boutari, Managing Director Exports for Boutaris S.A.



LYRARAKIS WINERY

If you're in the area of Heraklion, this is one winery that you shouldn't really miss. Contrary to the local tradition of having small parcels of land, this winery is surrounded by 14.5 hectares of vineyards which Sotiris Lyrarakis obtained in the '60s. For the next few decades, the land yielded barreled wine, until that winemaking experience was finally "bottled" for the first time in 1996. This is truly a family business: brothers, cousins and nephews are all involved, as the older generation is now giving way to the younger one. "Back in the '90s, the trend was to plant international varieties, mainly Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc. We decided to replant a big part of our vineyards, giving more emphasis to two local unique varieties, Plyto, a white and Dafni, a red," explains George Lyrarakis.

"From a commercial point of view, this was suicide. But we were committed to saving these varieties from extinction. The truth is that most people prefer something more common like a Chardonnay, but we also get a lot of tourists who are looking to try something different." Lyrarakis is also the first winery which worked on blending the indigenous red variety, Kotsifali, with Syrah, with great success. Since 2005, they have been experimenting with a Mandilari, another indigenous red variety, which was traditionally used in a blend with Kotsifali. According to George, Crete's climate is ideal for producing great wines. In 2007, the winery opened its doors to the public; since then, it has been receiving thousands of visitors every year, mostly tourists. Their wines have won prizes in international contests, and are being exported to other European countries as well as to the United States, Canada, Australia and China.

Alagni, Arkalochori, 703 00 Heraklion

T: (+30) 2810 284614

lyrarakis.com

PATERIANAKIS WINERY

George Paterianakis is a very lucky man. Surrounded by four beautiful women – his wife and three daughters – he welcomed us at his winery in Arhanes in the true tradition of Cretan hospitality. Walking in, we found ourselves in front of a table covered with Cretan delicacies, cheese, olives, homemade bread, and of course, there was wine as well, all in a room with enormous windows offering a breathtaking view of the vineyards. The winery, established by his father, is now being run by his two daughters, Emmanuela and Niki. The estate produces organic wines, following the practices of biodynamic viticulture, which forms part of the tradition of winemaking in Crete. The wines are divided into three groups, according to varieties and vineyards.

The Local Treasures are made strictly from local varieties, the Premium Wines are a blend of a local and an international variety, and the Vintage Spirits are wines made from indigenous varieties that come from the older vineyards. In the vineyard, they follow all the traditional practices of their grandfather, harvesting by hand and taking good care of the grape at all stages. One of their goals is to spread the philosophy of biodynamic cultivation, the tradition of the older generations on Crete. The estate produces 120,000 bottles, many of which end up in Switzerland, Cyprus and the United States.

Melesses, 703 00 Heraklion

T: (+30) 2810 226674

paterianakis.gr



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info@ampulla.gr | 2310 309 916

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SILVA DASKALAKI WINERY

A few kilometers away, we came across the Silva Daskalaki Winery. Its owner, Irini Daskalaki, is an embodiment of Crete. Full of relentless energy, she wakes up every morning at five o'clock to tend to the vines and goes to bed only after having inspected all the work in the winery. A strong believer in biodynamic viticulture, she tells us with a smile that: "I was born on a full moon, it must have had something to do with that." She follows a special calendar based on the moon phases according to which she plans all the work that has to be done in the vineyard. "These are practices known to us from our grandmothers," she says, "and we see the result in the quality of our wines. I believe there's something magical behind all this, and it is priceless." Her daughter Haroula is responsible for bottling and marketing. She has two more children, a daughter who is studying oenology and a son who is a veterinarian. "You can't be a real winemaker if you're not willing to put your hands in the dirt," she says. "You've to be very careful during all the stages of winemaking, because what good is it to have a good grape and then mess up with the winemaking?"

Her hard work has been recognized; the estate's wines have won numerous prizes, which helps them to keep going on despite the problems caused by the economic crisis. The estate's emphasis is on indigenous varieties, although their best wine is considered to be a blend of Kotsifali and Syrah. They also produce a series of sweet wines from local varieties.

Siva Municipality of Palani, Heraklion
T: (+30) 2810 792021
silvawines.gr



↑ Dimitris Mansolas of Rhous Tamiolaki Winery



↑ Irini Daskalaki with her daughter Haroula

DIAMANTAKIS WINERY

Wine tasting under an olive tree can be one of the best treats in Crete. "If you've got this, you don't need to have a wine-tasting room," says oenologist Zacharias Diamantakis, who, together with his father and siblings, decided to invest gradually in the equipment for their new winery. They started their investment right in the middle of the economic crisis, just 10 days before the government decided to impose capital controls. "We were lucky, 10 days later and this equipment would have never have been bought," he says.

One of the many young aspiring wine producers in Crete, Zacharias has acquired more land in addition to the 12.5 hectares which are scattered over different parts of the steep slopes surrounding the winery. We're at the eastern foothills of Crete's highest mountain, Psiloritis. The vineyards here are at an elevation of 400m with a southeastern aspect. They have been planted on terraces because of the steepness of the slope, making manual harvest quite a challenge. The varieties planted there are the indigenous Mandilari and Malvasia, as well as Chardonnay. A little higher up, at 600m, is a vineyard planted with Assyrtiko. "Crete can produce an excellent Assyrtiko," says Zacharias. He believes that one of the biggest challenges for Cretan wines in the near future will be an increase of exports, a goal, he says, that has been set collectively, through Wines Of Crete, a network created by the producers for the promotion of their wines.

After two hours of wine tasting under the olive tree at the Diamantakis Winery, we reluctantly leave the table, agreeing that Zacharias was right not to rush into investing in a tasting room.

Kato Asites, 700 13 Heraklion
T: (+30) 694 919 8350
diamantakiswines.gr

ROUS TAMIOLAKI WINERY

For anyone seeking something unique and well off the beaten track, this is the place to visit. The winery is built on a hill with a breathtaking view. The building, made of local stone the color of sand, is beautifully incorporated into its surroundings. A terrace full of flowers provides the perfect finishing touch. Dimitris Mansolas and Maria Tamiolaki took over from Maria's father, who had established the winery in 1996. It is a small family-run business which produces wines based on indigenous varieties, with an average production of 55,000 bottles a year. "Our goal is to reach a production run of 150,000 bottles in the next few years without compromising our quality," says Dimitris, an experienced oenologist who has worked with some of the leading wine producers in Greece. "There's a real demand for indigenous varieties in the United States and Canada," he says. "People are tired of drinking California Chardonnay. I believe that, after Santorini and Assyrtiko, Crete is going to be the next big thing." Thanks to the quality of the soil, Crete can produce varieties which give wines with excellent complexity that can age beautifully. "I think Vidiano is one very good example of this," he says, and adds that Mandilaria, an indigenous red variety, seems to be like Nebbiolo as far as mouth aromas are concerned and like Syrah as far as the nose and color.

Houdetsi Peliados, 701 00 Heraklion
T: (+30) 281074083
rhouswinery.gr



↑ Zacharias Diamantakis



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www.kiryianni.gr

Grape

THE TALENTED... MR. SKOURAS

The first wine to be launched by Giorgos Skouras, in 1988, was Megas Oenos, an outstanding wine. This fact alone reveals certain aspects of his character. The "talented Mr. Skouras" resembles his wines; he is dynamic, straight-forward, complicated, full of Nemea, with some notes of France.

Interview by Pinelopi Katsatou
Photos: Giorgos Kaplanidis



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Born in: Argos • **Marital status:** Married to Ourania Potamianos They have two children, Dimitris and Stella • **Studied:** Enology at the University of Dijon, France • **Lives:** In Argos • **Hobbies:** Has a passion for sea; trips on the inflatable, sailing, fishing, sports • **Motto:** "Be whoever you want and wherever you want"

Giorgos Skouras likes to be one step ahead of the others in his industry, and he's proven this by bringing new "players" into the field – see Stelvin and Solera – while surprising people also seems to run in his blood. When we first met, I pointed out how comfortable he seemed in front of the camera, and he replied with disarming honesty: "It's a well-known fact that we who are involved with wine are a little full of ourselves..." The rest of our talk, as you might imagine, proved to be most interesting.

Giorgos Skouras and his family had nothing to do with wine. At age 18, he went to France to study chemistry. "There, I discovered wine, saw the whole picture – vineyards, châteaux, wine people, bottles, glasses – and I decided I wanted to be a part of this world. I had no idea what I was getting myself into. Imagine someone who doesn't know how to swim just jumping into the water. To me, wine was terra incognita, but my determination was immense and, looking back, I can now say I made the right decision. When someone enters the global wine family, he's bitten by the wine bug and can no longer escape." Along from Nemea, he carries a lot of France in him, in the way that he talks and in the way that he thinks. Italians say wine is made in the winery, whereas the French say it's made in the vineyard – and Giorgos Skouras belongs to the French school. He has faith in the grapevine and states that this is what will determine the future of Greek wine.

"Over the next years, truly great wines will come from families that possess about 12 to 25 acres of land and produce 100 thousand bottles of wine by working hard and applying themselves to winemaking. This has already begun to happen. As the saying goes, necessity is the mother of invention. What's happening is the result of current circumstances and, most importantly, of people going back to their roots and trying to take control of their own lives. And this is why we have this boom. You must realize that in 2007, there were five hundred wine businesses in Greece and that in 2016 there were one thousand! And if we want to call ourselves a wine-producing country, we ought to have three thousand winemaking businesses. In Burgundy, for example, in a given village, there are 700 houses, which translates to 700 wineries."

People who know you say that you help young people a great deal.

"We are always happy to see new 'players' entering the market. We who have been around longer are crazy about seeing people raising the bar, because it means that the challenge for us becomes even greater. So I'm very happy for young winemakers. But at the same time, I feel for them, because I know that they're bound to face difficulties. The ones that will surmount these problems, however, will become the country's new driving force. Greece's very core, farm products, is an inexhaustible treasure; and it is in need of sharp minds, of people capable of overcoming the crisis. I'll keep saying it; we can't perpetually allude to the crisis. When I first started my business, I took a loan with an interest rate of 33%. I know what it means to come up against a brick wall. Each period in time has its own challenges, but I firmly believe that, despite them, man can accomplish whatever he wants to achieve."

Would you consider getting into politics, like Yiannis Boutaris did?

"I would never consider getting into politics. My politics will always be wine politics. The sole reason I entered the spotlight – as president of the Greek Wine Federation – was the pressing need for the withdrawal of this onerous measure called excise tax on wine. I won't stop until it goes away. It has distorted the market completely."

Giorgos is currently working on something new, a grape variety called Mavrostyfo of Argos, a very old variety from the Argolida region, with which, as he says with his characteristic optimism, they're getting ready to work miracles. Everyone knows that, each time his team sets out to try something new, they are bound to cause a sensation. "When I decide to do something, I always work out a strategy. I started making Cabernet, because I needed a 'passport' to the international markets. How can I expect people abroad to know what Agiorgitiko means? So when they were asked to taste a Greek Cabernet, they were rather hesitant about it. But in the end, they always said: 'Well done!' Don't forget that all the major winemaking regions in Europe needed one thing or another to become truly great. But when you produce a Syrah that comes first at an international competition, then you've proven that it is possible to make

excellent wine using a foreign grape variety here in Greece, and to occupy a high position in the world rankings. As far as the foreign market is concerned, there's no doubt that our arsenal consists of our Greek varieties. 'Expensive' Greek wine, that is to say wine that costs somewhere between €15 to €20, is the best wine in the world. If this wine bore the marks of a different country of origin, it would cost between €40 and €100. But cheap Greek wine is rather deficient."

Could Nemea become the Tuscany of Greece?

"Nemea could become a major attraction for oenotourists. But it simply rests on its laurels, because nearby Athens is a large city with many things to offer. On the other hand, we have a history and a product which sells very well. In a way, winemakers are gentlemen as well as businessmen who build wineries instead of factories. I have dedicated many years of my life in the evolution of oenotourism and I know very well that aesthetics must blend harmoniously with the practicalities. One travels and sees what goes on abroad. This structure, this rhythm, this architecture that reflects beauty can apply to all wineries, large and small."

How are things going abroad? Have you invested time and effort in the extroversion of Greek wine?

"Working really hard, we are striving to establish ourselves abroad. In the USA, the work we have been doing for years now has started to show, in a market that is huge and ever-expanding. There's room for everyone there and, united, we should all apply pressure to conquer it and set up our own category."

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

"Yes. For example, Sigalas made a wine named Epta (Seven). He produced this wine from the grapes (100% Assyrtiko) of seven different villages in Santorini, revealing the unique characteristics of each village as well as that of Santorini's terroir in a broader sense. I had thought of doing the same thing with Nemea's vineyards – I had in fact started working on it – but he was faster than me. I was happy for him, however, and this is all that matters. There are many Greek wines that I like very much, and many fellow winemakers that I respect enormously." **g**

Timeline

1980

Giorgos Skouras enters the wine business and decides that this is going to be his life.



1991

Collaboration with Ted Diamantis regarding exportations to the USA.



1998

Collaboration with Aiolos Wines.



1986

Domaine Skouras is established. First vintage of Megas Oenos.



1996

First winery, at Gymno.



2004

New winery, receiving 10,000 visitors a year.

Assyrtiko is the champion of ageability as regards Greek white wines and, believe me, it isn't only the wines from Santorini that can age so beautifully, slowly and gracefully. At least, this is what our vertical tasting, covering wines back to their 2005 vintages, revealed to us. Nearly all of the eight vintages of the Idisma Drios Assyrtiko from Wine Art Estate that we tried performed excellently, confirming the ageing capability of Greece's star grape variety.

As a generalization, young Assyrtiko sourced from mainland Greece is more expressive and less austere than Santorini, with aromas ranging from lemon to ripe stone fruits around a dense core of minerality and striking acidity levels. Bottle age brings a deeper gold hue and an expressive multi-layered bouquet of honey, toast, roasted nuts, vanilla and some petrol aromas reminiscent of Riesling. Oaked versions of Assyrtiko need more careful handling; in general, there's a widespread

belief that oak and Assyrtiko are not always a happy couple.

However, in the case of Idisma Drios there is a wonderful balance between the minerality of Assyrtiko and the oaky flavors derived from barrel fermentation and ageing. Even in the recently released 2016, you barely detect any oak, and this is what makes Idisma Drios a top white wine.

The process of ageing is full of mysteries and certainly has a magic element. It is very difficult to evaluate and determine the ideal time to drink a bottle of wine and of course at the end of the day it's all about personal preferences. But Assyrtiko grape has all those inherent characteristics – striking acidity, fruit extract and phenolics – that make the variety a wonderful candidate for bottle-ageing. In that sense, it's possible to argue this is a white grape variety in color only... So, with this in mind, sit back and enjoy eight vintages of an outstanding Greek wine!



By Grigoris Michailos, Dip WSET

Assyrtiko 2016

Expressive nose, with peach, tropical fruits and a nice touch of oaky vanilla flavors. Mediterranean herbs add to the overall complexity, while the palate is creamy with great depth and refreshing acidity. Long mineral finish with the characteristic phenolic bite of Assyrtiko. Polished and seductive, even at present.

Assyrtiko 2015

More mineral than fruity on the nose, with hints of petrol and definite oaky aromas. Tighter on the palate, oak quite present again but razor-sharp, lemony acidity to balance and add extra freshness. Nuttiness on the finish. Overall, the more austere style needs extra time in the bottle.

Assyrtiko 2014

Golden hue, quite evolved and complex nose with smokiness, petrol-like aromas and hints of dried stone fruits. Oaky palate,

yet quite fresh due to high acidity levels. Finish is a bit short compared to 2015 and 2016.

Assyrtiko 2013

Liquid gold, with sweet dried fruits, vanilla, toast and minerality on the nose. Full-bodied with very well integrated acidity, creamy with very good structure and length. It will definitely seduce all oak-lovers out there.

Assyrtiko 2012

Oxidative style, nutty, earthy, mineral with hints of dried herbs, white pepper and honey. Leaner on the palate, more elegant than concentrated, this one is not very weighty but it's still quite stylish. Medium finish with a phenolic bite.

Assyrtiko 2011

A more evolved bottle, with hints of oxidation. After a while, the wine opens up in the glass, revealing aromas such as dried apricots, orange peel, honey

and sweet biscuit. Medium to full-bodied on the palate, mineral yet with faded fruit. I would prefer more freshness, but as I imagine this was simply a lesser bottle, I'd like to try it again.

Idisma Drios Assyrtiko 2010

An excellent example of gracefully aged Assyrtiko from outside Santorini. Very complex and nutty, with spices and crushed seashells on the nose. Smooth entry on the palate, creamy and full-bodied, yet with a fine balance between this creaminess and the vibrant acidity. Evolving and persistent nutty finish.

Assyrtiko 2005

Significantly darker color, with signs of oxidation, maderized aromas, caramel, sweet corn and dried citrus peels. There's earthiness reminiscent of mushrooms, and a lack of fruit on the nose. Slightly bitter and dry on the palate with dominant oaky flavors. Past its best but, come on, guys... It's already 12 years old!

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By Grigoris Kontos, Dip WSET

Grape

W H I T E W I N E V A R I E T I E S

Grape Variety	Mostly Cultivated	Wine Style	Main Features	Ageing Potential
ASSYRTIKO (A-seer'-tee-ko) Originating from Santorini	Throughout Greece	Dry wines: austere, mineral. Sweet wines: sun-dried, luscious.	High acidity, citrus fruit, minerals, saltiness, structure, high alcohol content, full body	2-10 years
MOSCHOFILERO Mos-ko-fee'-le-ro Mantinia, Central Peloponnese	Central Peloponnese	Floral and elegant dry white wines	High acidity, light body, low alcohol content, aromatic, rose petals, lemon flowers	1-3 years
MUSCAT BLANC (à Petits Grains) Moo - ska - Blann Greece (most probably)	Samos, Patras, Northern Peloponnese, Cephalonia, Rhodes	Dry and dessert white wines with strong aromatic profiles	Medium acidity, citrus fruits, peach, honey, rose, luscious	Dry wines: 1-2 years, sweet wines: 2-15+ years
VIDIANO Vee-dia-no Western Crete (Rethymno)	Crete	Dry white wines of medium to heavy weight	Medium acidity, full body, oiliness, peach, apricot, mineral character	2-4 years
SAVATIANO Sha-va-tee-ah-no Attiki (Metropolitan Athens area)	Central Greece & Evia	Dry white wines of medium weight	Medium acidity, medium body and sweet aromas of banana, peach and herbs	1-6 years
ROBOLA Row-bo-lah Cephalonia	Cephalonia	Dry white wines of medium to light weight	Citrus fruit, mineral aromas, elegance and structure	2-4 years

R E D W I N E V A R I E T I E S

XINOMAVRO Ksee-no'-mav-ro Naoussa	Naoussa, Amynteo and most of northern Greece	Naoussa: dry red wines with ethereal aromatic profile. Amynteo: dry red wines (lighter) and traditional method white and rose sparkling wines	High acidity, dry tannins, medium body, red currant, tomato sauce, smoke	3-20 years
AGIORGITIKO Ah-your-yee-ti-ko Nemea	Nemea, rest of the Peloponnese, parts of northern Greece	Versatile; from elegant young red wines and youthful rosé wines to robust long-ageing wines	Medium to high acidity, mild tannins, sour cherry, cinnamon, clove	2-8 years
MAVRODAPHNE Mav-row-daff-nee Patras, Peloponnese	Western Greece, mainly Ahaia and Cephalonia	Full-bodied dry reds and also fortified, oxidative-style dessert wines	Near-black color, dense aromas of dried prunes and currants, high alcohol, medium acidity	Dry wines: 5-15 years, sweet wines: 15+ years
MAVROTRAGANO Mav-row-tra-gha-no Santorini	Santorini and northern Greece	Full-bodied red wines, suitable for ageing	Enhanced acidity, tannins and alcohol, full body, black fruit, eucalyptus, smoke, coffee, leather	5-15 years

Grape

Ideally Paired With	Suggested Producers	Details
Dry wines: shellfish, sea-urchin, clams, sushi, truffle risotto, schnitzel, white meat. Sweet wines: crème brûlée, lemon pie, walnut pie, chocolate fudge with nuts	Domaine Sigalas, Hatzidakis Winery, Estate Argyros, Gaia Wines, Boutari, Vassaltis Vineyards	Assyrtiko is a rare world-class white variety from Santorini. It mainly gives 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 (the famous Vinsanto wines) are rich, complex and intense dessert wines. Assyrtiko has proven its immense potential, as – apart from Santorini – it is grown throughout continental Greece, with impressive results.
Green salads, cold appetizers, aperitifs, spicy cuisine, finger food	Semeli Wines, Bosinakis Winery, Domaine Tselepos, Domaine Skouras, Troupis Winery	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.
Dry wines: aromatic dishes, fruits, salads. sweet wines: light and darker desserts (depending on the ageing)	UWC Samos, Parparoussis Wines, Sklavos Wines, Avantis Estate	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 feminine, 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 and expression to the final result.
Cheese cream escalopes, blue cheese stuffed portobello mushrooms, poultry	Douloufakis Winery, Domaine Lyrarakis, Silva Daskalaki Wines, Diamantakis Winery	Vidiano is a white grape variety from Crete. It gives wines with a yellow-green colour and complex aromas which bring to mind ripe peach and apricot, aromatic herbs and a mineral character. 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.
Green salads, Greek pies, stuffed vegetables, whitebait, green pesto	Papagiannakos Winery, Mylonas Winery, Domaine Vassiliou, Fragou Wines	The most widely cultivated grape variety of Greece, Savvatiano gained a bad reputation when used to make cheap Retsina. Over the years technology and modern winemaking allowed producers to bring out the best of the grape. In a nutshell, it gives wines without edges; medium acidity, medium body and moderate alcohol make up a very flexible wine that pairs easily with many different dishes and circumstances. Old vines in Attiki are responsible for wines with concentrated fruit and a phenomenal ability to age up to at least 5 years.
Oven-baked or grilled fish and seafood, cheese pies, cold appetizers, cheese plates	Gentilini Wines, Sklavos Wines, Robola Cooperative of Cephalonia	A very straightforward white wine with lemony character, ideal to accompany fish and other seafood. Its mineral character and refreshing acidity is obtained by cultivation in 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.

Grilled lamb, grilled steak, mushroom risotto	Thymiopoulos Vineyards, Dalamaras Winery, Markovitis Winery, Diamantakos Winery, Ktima Kir-Yianni, Boutari, Domaine Karanika	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 so as to fully unfold its potential. Xinomavro's colour is ruby to garnet and its aroma profile reminds of violets, olive pate, tomato paste, smoke and forest fruits. Moderate alcohol, high acidity and high tannins complete the picture and explain why some refer to it as the 'Greek Nebbiolo'. Lower yields and extra ageing can tame its character and provide roundness, structure and concentration.
Beef, burgers, spaghetti Bolognese, minced meat cannelloni, goat casserole with pasta	Domaine Karanika Aivalis Vineyards, Domaine Skouras, Domaine Tselepos, Gaia Wines, Mitavelas Estate	Agiorgitiko is a captivating variety characterized by freshness, intense red fruit and sweet spice aromas, both on the nose and the palate. 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 from Agiorgitiko are two: young, un-oaked dry red wines and red wines aged in barrels for at least 6 months. The latter are rich, with top-quality, silky tannins. Young wines from Agiorgitiko have a moderately deep red colour, intense aromas of fresh red fruit, moderate acidity and soft tannins.
Dry wines: mushroom dishes, veal, lamb with red wine sauce. Sweet wines: chocolate soufflé, bitter chocolate, fudgy stout brownies	Gentilini Wines, Domaine Mega Spileo, Achaia Clauss, Parparousis Wines	In recent years, more and more dry wines are being made from Mavrodaphne, a variety largely known for its legendary fortified dessert wines. It gives aromas of dried prunes and currants, laurel (hence its name), bitterness and a great texture due to its high alcohol and moderate acidity. Mavrodaphne 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.
Veal escalopes with wine and mushroom sauce, lamb with spicy red sauce, osso bucco	Domaine Sigalas, Estate Argyros, Domaine Gerovassileiou, T-Oinos	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 discreet variety that is able to age for many years, especially the most concentrated, low-yield examples.

FOOD & WINE PAIRING

Photos Yiorgos Kaplanidis



↑ Fish-head terrine



↑ Owner and chef Giorgos Samoilis with his team

Ω3 Sifnos

A tiny spot hidden away on the beach of Platys Gialos on Sifnos, Ω3 (Omega3) is a real must for anyone who's looking for a unique gastronomic experience. Having obtained his degree in molecular biology from Imperial College in London, Giorgos Samoilis decided to follow his passion for haut cuisine instead and, together with his friend Vasilis Vlachogeorgakis, created this very original fish bar in the Cyclades. Sunset by the water is the perfect setting to try the amazing dishes prepared by George, accompanied by a great selection of wines.

FISH-HEAD TERRINE

Description:

A refreshing summer cold appetizer, ideal for making full use of the tastiest (for us fish-lovers!) part of the fish, i.e., the head.

Ingredients:

2kg fish heads and bones
100g celery
200g carrots
400g onions
2 pink grapefruit
Some chives
6-8 thyme sprigs
1 bay leaf
A few mixed peppercorns
Some wild fennel branches
Dried and fresh seaweed
1 tablespoon black sesame seeds
1 tablespoon ground cumin
2 sheets of gelatine (optional)
Sea salt
~ 3lt water

Recipe:

Peel/clean the celery, carrots, onions and cut into small pieces. Place them in a deep pot with 2 liters of water, bring to boil and simmer for 30 minutes on a low fire with the lid on. At the end of the 30 minutes, add the fish heads (gills and scales removed) and bones plus 1 more liter of water. Continue simmering for 10 more minutes, removing with a slotted spoon the brown foam accumulating on the surface. Add the bay leaf, thyme, half of the fennel, peppercorns and simmer for another 15 minutes. Strain the broth through a thin sieve and put it in a new pot

with cumin, several pieces of dried algae and salt and simmer for 15 minutes. In the meanwhile, remove from all the pieces of flesh you can (cheeks, etc.) from the fish heads and save. Discard the gelatinous parts (lips, mucus around the eyes, etc.).

In separate individual bowls, lay the sides with sprigs of chives and fennel, followed by fresh and/or dried seaweed. Add meat bites from the fish heads, cubes from the flesh of pink grapefruits and sprinkle with black sesame seeds. Repeat layering with chives, fennel and seaweed and then fish and grapefruit. Finally, slowly add the warm broth (to which you can add two sheets of gelatine; however, the broth will usually set in the refrigerator without the need for gelatine due to the natural collagen found in fish heads and bones) to cover all solid materials in the bowl. Store in the refrigerator overnight.

Serving:

Remove the bowls from the refrigerator and keep each one individually in your palm to warm them up slightly. Pass a knife around the interior edges of the bowl. Turn the bowl upside down on the serving plate. Keep the bowl in contact with the plate and jerk downward; the terrine will come out of the bowl and onto the plate. Decorate the plate with seaweed and fennel and serve directly with half a lime on the side.



↑ Domaine Glinavos Debina semi sparkling, Domaine Glinavos Zitsa Poème and Domaine Glinavos Primus-Zitsa

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↑ The Sigalas Winery team



↑ The famous Nyxteri



↑ Eggplant tower

Sigalas Winery

Open to the public year-round, the Sigalas Winery offers organized tours of its winemaking facilities and vineyards. Visitors can become acquainted with the wines of Santorini while sampling culinary delights from the Cyclades as well, all in the winery's renovated wine tasting room, which can hold as many as 60 guests.

The scenic location of the winery and the west-facing positioning of the wine tasting room gives guests the chance to enjoy the colors of the setting sun as it descends over the vineyard. We had the pleasure of tasting some amazing dishes, paired with excellent wines.

1.

DOMAINE SIGALAS AIDANI AND STUFFED WINE LEAVES WITH RICE

This is a wine made from 100% Aidani, one of the rarest white grape varieties on the island. In the past, this variety was used exclusively in the blend for the dessert wine Vinsanto, but over the past seven years, some winemakers have been experimenting with Aidani's capacity to produce dry wines. The wine undergoes stainless steel tank fermentation only, three months on the lees, and then it is released to the market. It's an aromatic variety, very fruity and very floral, easy drinking and buttery, with aromas of roses, honeysuckle and white flowers.

Food pairing:

With stuffed vine leaves (Dolmadaki) – the leaves, collected from the Aidani vines, are stuffed with rice and fresh herbs gathered from the winery's garden and served with yoghurt sauce and lemon confi, perfectly paired with the wine.

2.

SIGALAS – SANTORINI BARREL 2016 AND EGGPLANT TOWER

This is the winery's main wine, one of the first wines that was produced back in 1991. It is made from 100% Assyrtiko. Minerality is evident, resulting from Santorini's unique terroir. It is quite "austere," with its acidity being the back-bone of the wine, allowing it to age. Petrol notes and honeysuckle appear in aged Assyrtikos, similar to what is found in the German and Alsatian Rieslings. The wine is made following typical white wine vinification techniques, in stainless steel tanks, under temperature-controlled conditions. These wines have an excellent structure, good acidity and a long, full-flavored finish.

Food pairing:

With an eggplant tower made from local Santorini eggplant, which is white. The eggplant slices are drizzled with scented basil oil and baked in the oven with cherry tomatoes, sun-dried tomato paste, sautéed pine nuts and kopanisti, a cheese from the island of Tinos.



↑ Sigalas winery at Baxes, Oia

3.

KAVALIEROS 2015 AND MARINATED EUROPEAN ANCHOVIES

A dry, still, white Assyrtiko, that keeps for 2-3 years, this wine is a potent 14% alcohol. With its distinct minerality, crystal-clear aromas, complex structure and superior fruit sourced from a single vineyard of premier cru quality, Kavalieros expresses its volcanic origin beautifully. This wine is a limited edition selection from a single vineyard located in Imerovigli. In Spanish, Cavalieros means "the man who rides a horse," and it's a fitting name because the vineyard where grapes are sourced is situated at a higher altitude than the rest of the surrounding ones, suggesting the difference in height between a rider and a man on foot. This particular vineyard is over 50 years old, which makes it a unique terroir. As for the wine, it spends 18 months on its lees before it's ready to drink. It displays a bright, straw blond color with golden highlights and has a complex, aromatic nose, with notes of citrus fruit (ripe lemon), flowers and herbs. It is full-bodied, with refreshing acidity and a long finish, with a minerality that dominates.

Food pairing:

With salted European anchovies marinated with lemon zest, capers, caper leaves, pink peppers, lemon fillets, herbs and extra virgin olive oil.

4.

NYCHTERI AND AGED CHEESE

This dry white PDO wine is made from Assyrtiko 100%. For a long time, Nychteri was the traditional white wine of Santorini, produced from overripe Assyrtiko grapes. The fermentation and ageing processes took place for long periods in old oak barrels, which were rarely topped up. Because of this, an oxidative ageing phenomenon took place which gave Nychteri a particular character, similar to sherry wine. It is produced using typical white vinification techniques, with fermentation and ageing taking place in old oak barrels. The wine remains on the lees for 30 months. It displays a yellow color with golden highlights. It has a complex nose, with aromas of ripe citrus, honeysuckle, nuts and pronounced minerality. This is a full-bodied wine, with complex flavors and balance, along with some residual sugar, which gives it special character. Ageing potential: Over 10 years.

Food pairing:

With aged cheese such as Volaki from Tinos, Graviera from Ithaki or Komos from Naxos, served with apple-ginger marmalade and dried fruit.

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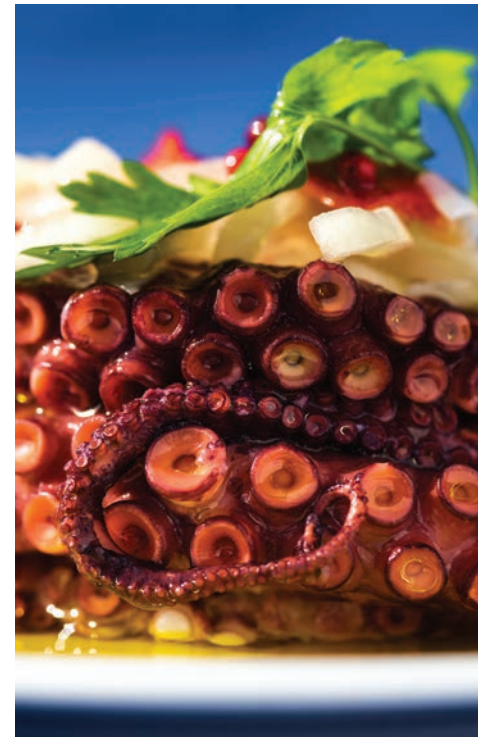


↑ Giorgos Likouris and his team

↑ Crayfish Kritharoto



↑ Marinated octopus



Skotadis Aegina

In 1945, Ioannis Alifantis opens a kafeneio (traditional café) in Aegina. Each day, he starts work long before dawn, serving coffee and revitalizing, nutritious fish soup to the island's fishermen and workers. This early start to the day is why the locals give him the nickname "Skotadis" ("the man of the darkness"). In 1980, his son-in-law turns the kafeneio into an ouzeri (restaurant serving ouzo and mezedes). In 2002, Giorgos Lykouris, grandson of the original Skotadis, takes over. Excellent ingredients, imagination and good hard work in the kitchen are the trademarks of Skotadis, and you can find all of this (and a view to Nektaria's grocery boat) at the restaurant in Aegina's enchanting harbour.



↑ Katsaros Estate, Chardonnay / Afoura Avantis / Le Vigneron Grec, Domaine Papargyriou

MARINATED OCTOPUS

Ingredients:

1kg octopus
2 onions
3 Florina peppers
20 grains of fresh red pepper
Olive oil
0.3ml vinegar

Preparation:

Place the octopus in a large pot and cover with 0.5L water. Bring to a boil, then simmer for 40 min over low heat. Grill the peppers for 10 min, then peel off their skin. In a large bowl, mix the olive oil and vinegar. Slice the onions into rings, then place them in the bowl. Add the peppers and grains of red pepper and let them sit with the octopus in the marinade for 24 h.

CRAYFISH KRITHAROTO

Serves 4

Ingredients:

For the broth you will need:
2 carrots
1 onion
½ fennel
3 pieces of star anise
2.5L water
2 tomatoes
4 crayfish, whole

Preparation:

Sauté 130g thinly sliced onions with 12 grape tomatoes cut in half and 28 crayfish tails, peeled. Remove the sautéed ingredients and pour 1.5L broth in the same pan. Add 500g orzo (medium-sized) and let boil until fluids are absorbed. Add the sautéed ingredients and season with salt and pepper until the orzo becomes mushy. Once mushy, remove from heat, add 90g butter and 100g grated parmesan cheese and stir.

Wine pairing:

For the crayfish kritharoto, we chose **Katsaros Estate Chardonnay**, an exemplary oaked white wine by one of the most significant Greek winemakers. Rich, thick and complex, it makes an impression on the nose and is a winner in the mouth, giving an enduring and rich result, which balances this strong-flavored dish.

For the octopus, nothing beats Assyrtiko, so we went with an **Avantis Afoura**. Afoura was the name of the large wooden barrels traditionally used on Santorini. This excellent version of Santorini's premier variety by Avantis Estate has also aged in large barrels, acquiring a mature and complex character, which accurately expresses Assyrtiko's unique features.

Another ideal match is **Le Vigneron Grec** by Domaine Papargyriou, an Assyrtiko from the region of Corinthia, with strong aromas, vivid tannins and acidity.

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↓ Grilled salmon with mango and soy sauce, vegetable tabbouleh, mushrooms and wasabi cream



↑ Chef Alexandros Kossivakis

Chefi Athens

Chefi is a boutique fine dining restaurant housed in a beautifully renovated property with an exquisite garden. At Chefi, you can enjoy a fun, relaxed and unique dining experience; in the summer, you may wine and dine or sip on a cocktail sitting under the stars. Their cuisine is scandalously delicious and offers a variety of Greek and other Mediterranean dishes with elements inspired by international cuisines.

GRILLED SALMON WITH MANGO AND SOY SAUCE, VEGETABLE TABBOULEH, MUSHROOMS AND WASABI CREAM:

Ingredients (for 2 persons):

2x200g salmon fillets
Sunflower oil
Olive oil
3 dried shiitake mushrooms

Mango and soy sauce:

100ml soy sauce
50ml mango puree
20ml sweet chili
1/6 ginger root
1/2 garlic clove
Wasabi cream
50g mayonnaise
2g wasabi
Garnish
20g bulgur wheat
1/2 cucumber
2 parsley twigs
5 mint leaves
1/2 tomato
1/4 of one green, yellow or red pepper
1 carrot
Salt, pepper
Lemon juice
Spring onion

Directions:

To prepare the mango and soy sauce, boil all the ingredients together for 10 minutes. Soak the shiitake mushrooms for about 2 hours. Then cut them into thin strips and sauté them in a hot pan with sunflower oil. Add mango and soy sauce. Soak the bulgur wheat in hot water for 15 minutes and drain. Chop up all the vegetables in small pieces with the herbs and mix them up

with the bulgur wheat. Add a bit of olive oil and lemon, and salt and pepper to taste. Sauté the salmon for 3 minutes on each side. Bon Appetit!

Wine pairing recommended by the sommelier at Chefi, Stefanos Pelekanos: Chardonnay – Gewürztraminer, Tesseris Limnes, Kir-Yianni, 2016

An intense and complex wine with crisp acidity. Delightful peach, pineapple and vanilla aromas combine harmoniously with the fruity, sweet and sour mango and soy sauce of the salmon, offering an exquisite balance. The full-bodied flavors of the wine beautifully suit the smooth texture of the grilled salmon.

Malbec Doña Silvana, Mendoza, Argentina 2015

A rosé wine with crisp acidity and subtle strawberry, cherry and white flower aromas. With fine intensity, a medium body and a tremendous freshness, it pairs very well with oily full flavored foods such as salmon. What's more, due to its spicy finish, it creates a harmonious contrast to the sweetness of the mango and soy sauce.

Gaia Estate Agiorgitiko, Nemea, 2015

A typical wine from Nemea, with balanced aromas of berries and a subtle oak essence. When combined with the mango and soy sauce, the result is a sweet and soft aftertaste. The soft tannins and balanced body of the wine pair exquisitely with the rich taste of the salmon, providing a perfectly harmonious match.



↑ Malbec Doña Silvana, Mendoza, Argentina 2015

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Chef: Alexandros Kossivakis

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7

International Wine Competitions 2017 for

9

Labels

*Semeli Aetberia 2016
Semeli Thea Mantinia 2015
Semeli Mantinia Nassiakos 2016
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SANTORINI ASSYRTIKO UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

By Grigoris Kontos, Dip WSET

ASSYRTIKO STYLES	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 Chrysos-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. Prefer white meats (chicken, pork, 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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YANNIS KAIMENAKIS

Yannis Kaimenakis is a sommelier. It seems rather strange to say this, though, since he doesn't swirl his wine beneath his nose, or talk about yellow-green highlights, aromas, bouquets or long aftertastes.

Interview by **Pinelopi Katsatou**
Photos **Yiorgos Kaplanidis**

His own kind of wine is made up of places, travels, nice evenings with friends and other experiences. He knows each and every one of the hundreds of bottles in his cellar inside out and introduces them humbly and lovingly to the people who, as he says, "do him the honor of coming all the way to Piraeus" to his wine bar Paleo Wine Store.

"I don't want to be endlessly describing or mechanically repeating things, I don't want to include wines that are popular according to Parker's Guide on my wine list. I want to have a substantial relationship with each place of origin. Behind the bottles that blanket the restaurant and under the place-names printed on my chairs, I guard secret moments. I've kept the bottle of the wine I drank with a dear friend on the day that we met, spicy moments, good and bad ones, friendships that have withered away; they're my own personal bits and pieces that show me the way. On some evenings, when I'm in a bad mood, tired, or I've had to deal with a rude customer, I take refuge there, in my bottles and in my moments. I see the Côte-Rôtie '85 and I think of the friends I have shared it with. The 'juice' contained in the bottle is of lesser importance. Above all else, I want to see people and share moments with them."

Paleo takes your breath away. It's a huge warehouse – situated between machine-shops and auto body repair places – with a wooden ceiling and skylights, concrete walls and wine bottles that put you in a... "kleptomaniac" kind of mood, as Yannis himself puts it; and in the background, on both sides, like in the sanctum of a church, two tall wine cabinets, behind which Yannis and his companion and co-worker, Alexandra, move almost like dancers. Chairs have the wines' place-names printed on their back and multifunctional barrels are ready to be turned into tables.

"I was no stranger to the neighbourhood. Under capital controls and generally difficult circumstances, I had closed down my old business and was searching for a new place; rents were going through the roof. I thought of finding a warehouse to storage my wines and then later on going to work in Italy. As soon as I pulled up the rolling shutters, and despite the fact that there was no door, no floor, no nothing, I could see everything in my head. What it would look like, the people who would come here, the tables, the wines, and I decided I had found my bar. I wanted people to be driving and already thinking: "Which wine should I have when I get there, Latour or Santorini?"; to be able to lead them 'by the nostrils' so to speak. A bar that was merely OK was not an option."

You have a gift for selecting the right wine for each person. Which is it after all, wine or people, that you are so good with?



↑ Yannis Kaimenakis at Paleo Wine Store

I'm a wine drinker myself, and this is important because it allows me to put myself in the customers' shoes. So I'm always thinking that I shouldn't do my job hastily or inadequately. I will attend to Pinelopi and try to think of what she wants to drink, regardless of my own preferences. The wines I have drunk and consider my personal favorites form a different story altogether, and I have learnt to draw a line between the two in order to be a good professional. I want to satisfy your appetite for acidity or for a fruity taste. I want people to know, when leaving my bar, that I have put time into trying to satisfy them. And this is the main reason why I never make business deals. If someone tells me: "Put this wine on your list and I'll give you money for it", I'll never do it. That doesn't concern me. I rack my brains to find the right wine for each person, to please them. This is my job; I suggest to people who trust me wines they will never forget. It doesn't matter if they cost €5 or €1,000; I've put the same time into selecting them. I will make sure that you get a very good wine, but I'm not the protagonist of this story, you are.

So how does Yannis Kaimenakis stock his famous wine cellar?

An incidental experience I had on my first business trip was decisive for the way I later came to choose my wines. So I decided to change course. I now travel once a year. I have visited the south of France, the Rhône

river, Tuscany, Apulia, Sicily, Campania (which I love), Spain and Portugal. I choose a region and then I "profile" its producers based on wine quality and price. This is the way I buy wines; it's a method that provides me with a true sense of the region, instead of a more academic, rigid approach.

What place do Greek wines hold in your cellar?

I work on two different lists: Museum List has roughly 300 wines on it and I scold myself over it, thinking that this is way too much; but at the same time, I keep adding more of them. The second list is Bodega Sacristía – in Spain, this is the name of the part of the cellar to which only the boss has the keys – containing 100 wines, where a "single wine per origin" principle is applied; that is to say, there can't be 5 different Santorini wines. There are 50 whites and 50 reds on that list. I also make sure that the vintages I choose have something about them that makes people enjoy them. Throughout my career, terroir has been the decisive factor when it came to choosing my wines. I never believed in Greek Chardonnay, nor in Greek Sauvignon blanc or Merlot. On the other hand, I have Assyrtiko and Naoussa, Nemea, Zakynthos and Crete on my list – and I am very happy with them. I have a weakness for Santorini in all its forms; when it comes to the reds, Naoussa is what does it for me. I despise an overly strong oak flavour and this is something that shows on my wine list. In Santorini, grapes grow in a volcanic soil under the Greek sun and covered by the sea's salty spray. Why add oak to it? It's simply too much. On the other hand, I adore Slovenian oak, which is more subtle and provides each wine with such a distinctive character. Another thing is that I no longer have any New World wines at my bar.

The most beautiful moment at Paleo?

When I first opened my bar, I would see the door open and people coming in, and I would feel like bursting into tears. I was very moved by the fact that someone would come all the way from Mets or Kolonaki just to be here. Even if Paleo were to close down right then and there, I'd still be very happy; having experienced this would suffice me.

Yannis Kaimenakis could not think of the worst moment at Paleo.

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MARIA NAFPLIOTOU

AN EXPLOSIVE BLEND

As Oscar Wilde once said: “No woman should ever be quite accurate about her age. It looks so calculating.” Maria Nafpliotou, however, has no reason to hide her age, since wit, beauty and origin have, to put it in wine terms, created an explosive blend. Sitting in the beautiful courtyard of Villa Grigio 46, a bar owned by her friends Dimitri and Irini, we talk about wine, Crete and the obsessions of Greek society.

Interview by Pinelopi Katsatou

Photos Yiorgos Kaplanidis

A part of you comes from Crete. How Cretan do you feel?

Crete has a lot of strength and I carry a lot of that in me, even though my father came from the Cyclades. My mother was from a village close to the foothills of Psiloritis, the most famous mountain on Crete. I remember my grandfather Nikos coming home from the fields at lunchtime and accompanying his meal with Marouvas – this is what he called it, I think – a wine at times cloudy, at other times clearer, but very tasty indeed. That wine was homemade. It was not considered a luxury, but rather a part of everyday life, a basic necessity, just like olive oil. It was also closely linked to nutrition. My grandfather used to drink a small glass of it with his food to gather the strength to carry on. It was essential to their lives. But it was a good accompaniment, too, when they all came together to sing their songs and enjoy themselves.

What is your relationship with wine?

I adore wine. However, I remain an amateur. But I'm crazy about those nights when I become a wine connoisseur helping my friends Dimitris and Irini who opened this bar, Villa Grigio 46, select the best Merlots. I like to taste pretty much everything, even though I've made up my mind by now about which wines I like the best. As far as white wine goes, I really like Sauvignon Blanc, Santorini Assyrtiko or Vidiano from Crete. As for the reds, I mainly prefer Merlot. Lately, I have begun to discover rosé wine. A couple of years ago, I traveled to Avignon to go to the famous theater festival that's held there. I was with a good friend of mine, a French director; it's amazing how all French people know how to drink wine. So he introduced me to the French rosé, a very delicate wine, and since then, I've been hooked.

Expensive or cheap wine? Is there a difference?

Let's be honest. The more you drink good wine, the more you acquire a taste for it. You can tell the difference right away, from the way it lands on your palate. But it is equally true that in Crete, in those simple wines that people make at home, tastes are in full harmony with the local products and with nature's aromas. When I'm there, sometimes opening an



↑ Maria Nafpliotou and Annivas

expensive bottle of wine feels just plain wrong. It's not a good match with mizithra cheese, or with the olives.

Your favourite summer destination?

I adore the Aegean Sea. I love the arid islands, the sea's serenity and its turbulence. Those squalls that come up out of nowhere and then abate just as suddenly, leaving behind them only the most profound tranquility. I also love France and Italy.

Tassos Boulmetis (a famous Greek movie director) talked about the voraciousness of Greek society, how it devours everything. As a very good dancer and actress, you had what it took to live and work abroad. Why didn't you?

I could never imagine myself living away from Greece. Of course, things are hard right now due to the crisis, but I believe that in the '90s they were even worse. This was a time when – as Tassos Boulmetis says – everybody devoured everything, thoughtlessly and insatiably. To me, that was the low point of Greek society when, lacking in infrastructure, educa-

tion and cultivation, we fooled ourselves into thinking we were something different than what we really are. Naturally, I'm not saying that the current crisis-stricken period, when Greek society is being debased and degraded, not solely economically but on all kinds of levels, is easy. I was reading that teaching positions for drama at schools are being abolished, and that the next ones to go will be the PE instructors – we will end up being a country of poor and ignorant people. However, despite the immense pain that people find themselves in, having reached not only the verge of poverty, but poverty itself, there lies a chance. If we realize this, we could carve a new path for ourselves. I'm not too confident that we will, I'm just saying that there is a chance.

What about your own field? Do you see any hope there?

There is something that seems very hopeful to me: due to the crisis, all those huge places with live Greek music (called the bouzoukia in Greek) have closed down, and people are coming to the theatre. Hard as it may be to believe, theatres are full; this is a fact. Don't get me wrong, I have nothing against bouzoukia or popular Greek music, but it's not normal for a whole nation to channel all of its energy in a single direction; it marks an obsession, a compulsion... It seems absurd to me to do one thing and one thing only, to expect that going to bouzoukia will satisfy the whole spectrum of one's needs for entertainment. Not to mention that the old bouzoukia buildings themselves are now being turned into theatres.

What does it feel like to be characterised as “the most beautiful Greek woman”?

In the past, it used to bother me a lot. I used to think to myself that since I had made all this effort, why didn't they say something about my acting instead? Later on, however, I started to realize that beauty is not a single-faceted thing, and that people might see something else, not just a pair of pretty eyes. And if you think about it, this is not a bad thing at all. Also, as I grow older, I have begun to say “thank you” when someone tells me I'm beautiful. At 47, I have finally learnt to say “thank you very much” – after all, who knows for how long I'll still be able to receive such a compliment... g



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Papagiannakos Winery, Markopoulo Attica

The winery of the Papagiannakos Estate is situated in Markopoulo, an area northeast of Athens in relatively close proximity to Athens' international airport; it has been designed in accordance with the latest bioclimatic principles.

Architects **Elena Stavropoulou, Dimitris Gliatis, Giorgos Skourtis**
Photographer **Kostas Thomopoulos**

The most important goal during the design stage was the harmonious integration of the winery into the surrounding environment, to be achieved thanks to the extension of the building at ground level and the consequent avoidance of high elevations. The winery consists of two principal longitudinal volumes separated by a lower centrally situated volume and a south-facing courtyard. The single-pitched roof form of the building is a reference to the typology of the area's vernacular architecture. Indeed, the plot itself dictates such an approach, dominated as it is by the east-west axis. Furthermore, the respect for the local vernacular architecture led to the choice of a building typology common to the Mesogeia area, marked by the introversion of the courtyards, the dominant presence of sloping roofs, and the linear arrangement of rooms and ancillary spaces that together create the characteristic "makry-naria" (long houses). ▶



↑ Papagiannakos Winery in Markopoulo, Attica



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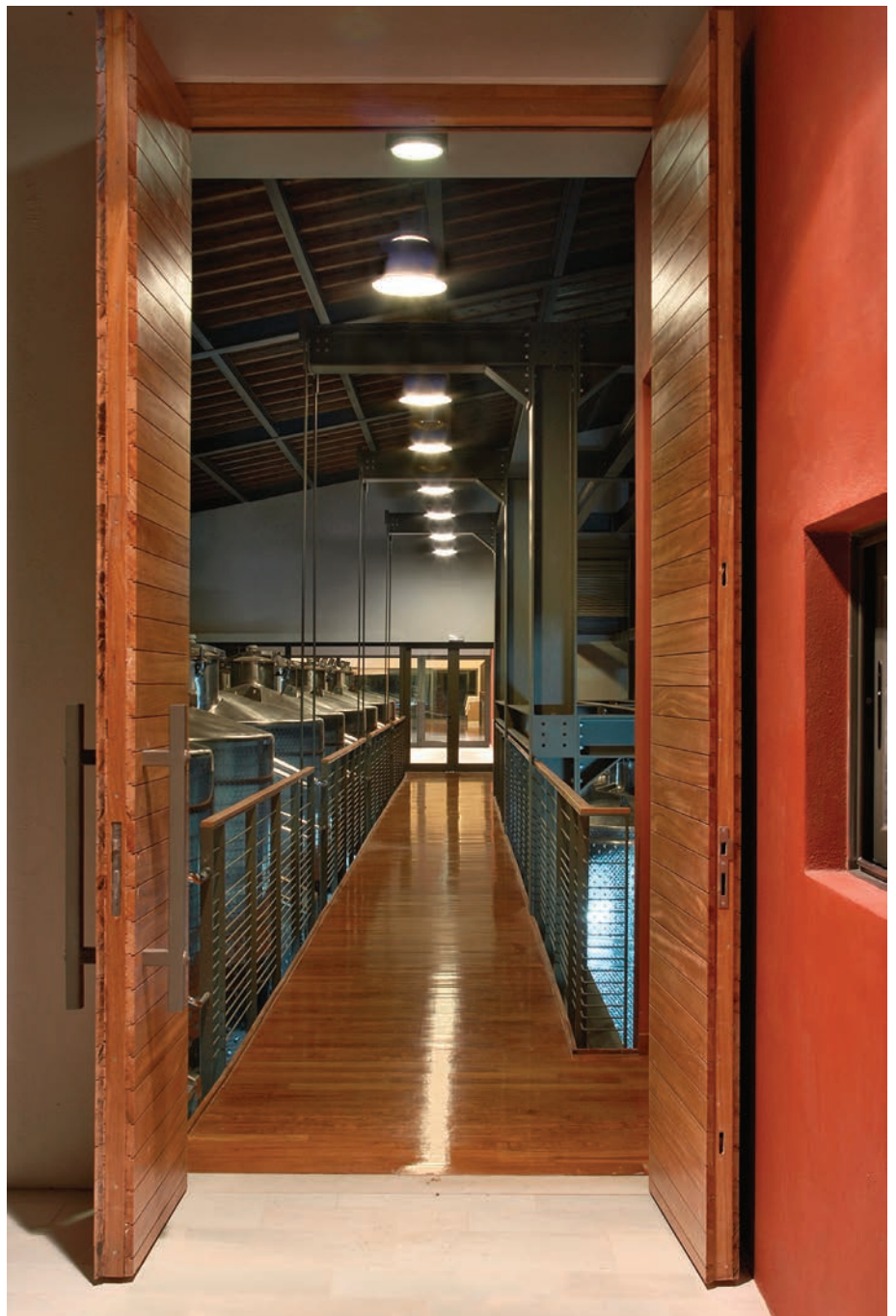
The building complex was designed bearing in mind both the winemaking process and the need to make the spaces accessible for tours and private functions. The objectives, when defining the building's zones, were to ensure the smooth production flow and to enable the visitors to circulate within the winery space.

The visitors' reception area, the product exhibition room, the offices and the meeting or function rooms are situated on the ground floor level. The vinification, bottling, ageing and storage areas are located in the basement. On an intermediary level, one finds the tasting room – in visual contact with both the cellar and the vineyards.

The environmental design aimed mainly for the minimization of energy consumption as related to the building fabric itself, rather than the consumption related to the production process. The energy saving is based exclusively on passive systems, and consequently on design principles that are well adapted to the climatological context, the topography and the orientation of the plot. **g**

Pousi – Kalogeri, 19 003
Markopoulo, Mesogaia, Attica
papagiannakos.gr

↓ The visitor's bridge overlooking the production



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The historic restaurant of Piraeus, once visited by Winston Churchill himself, has moved to Athens. Situated close to the landmark Hilton Hotel, in a modern space with a very contemporary feel created by Maria Kokkinou and Andreas Kourkoulas, two very talented architects, the fish restaurant Vassilenas has become one of the “musts” for anyone looking for fine dining in the center of Athens. A culinary favorite of discerning diners year-round, it’s particularly popular in the summertime, when guests can enjoy dining al fresco, on the lovely veranda at the front of the building.

Fresh fish and other seafood form the heart of the menu, prepared and executed by chef Manos Garnelis. A Greek dip made from fish egg, the renowned “taramosalata,” has to be tried, as does the lentil salad with smoked eel, beetroots and herbs. The sea bass, served as a carpaccio with lime, and the fresh shrimp, cooked with smoked tomato and chervil in a traditional small clay pot, are two of the menu’s signature dishes. The restaurant offers a seven-course “menu degustation,” as well as a food and wine pairing menu. The long wine list makes this restaurant a perfect choice for wine lovers. The establishment’s wine cellar, on display on the second floor, offers 150 different selections, 70% from Greece, the rest from wine regions around the world. It’s a sure thing that anyone looking to enjoy a perfect meal in a place with great atmosphere will not be disappointed.

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SUMMER BEST BUYS

Eight wines not to be missed this summer



CAVA IOSIF – PAROS

- 1. Aspros Lagos 2016**
KTIMA DOULOFAKIS
Variety: Vidiano
Area: Crete
€13.00

A unique dry white wine made from the Cretan variety Vidiano, a grape which came close to disappearing. This wine is gold with lemon-green highlights, and with nose aromas of white flowers and citrus fruit. It has a long finish and pairs wonderfully with pasta, grilled fish or other seafood and should be served at 10° C.

- 2. Aetheria White 2016**
KTIMA SEMELI
Varieties: Malagousia, Chardonnay
Area: Nemea
€10.50

Bright straw color with greenish highlights. Intense on the nose, with aromas of ripe pear, green apple, bell pepper and fresh herbs, it's full and balanced in the mouth, thanks to its crisp acidity, with Chardonnay's distinctive sense of oiliness. It is rich on the palate, with hints of green fruit and lemongrass, and delivers a spicy

finish. Enjoy it with sushi and sashimi, seafood carpaccio, grilled fish and poultry, curried pork, rabbit, seafood pasta, asparagus risotto, grilled peppers and green salads with aromatic herbs. Serve at 8-10°C.

- 3. Nebbiolo 2010**
KTIMA KARIPIDIS
Variety: Nebbiolo
Area: Larissa, Central Greece
€15.10

Ruby color with concentrated aromas of red fruit (black current and cherry), black pepper and sweet notes of oak aromas (vanilla and coconut). On the palate, it is a concentrated wine, with lively acidity and a full body, overall a well structured wine.

- 4. Deka Red 2008**
KTIMA OENOGENESIS
Varieties: Merlot, Xinomavro
Area: Drama, Northern Greece
€23.20

A very concentrated red wine, with great aromatic intensity on the nose and complexity in the mouth. On the nose, aromas of black cur-

rent, red current and black pepper. This wine has a balanced acidity and ages well. It pairs very well with meat and mature creamy cheeses.

- 5. Rose 2016**
KTIMA ALPHA
Variety: Xinomavro
Area: Florina, northern Greece
€14.20

With high-intensity aromas on the nose, fresh red fruit on the nose and on the palate, a very good balance of fruit and acidity, this wine is really enjoyable.

- 6. Rully 2014**
DOMAINE JOSEPH DROUHIN
Variety: Pinot Noir
Area: Burgundy
€23.40

Beautiful light red in color, with aromas of berries, cherries, red current and black current that, with ageing, evolve into mature smoky and earthy aromas. Very delicate on the nose, it is reminiscent of the great Burgundies. It has soft, elegant tannins and a long finish with notes of cooked fruit. Best served at 15° C.

(Ageing 2-5 years.)

- 7. Chablis Champs Royaux 2015**
DOMAINE WILLIAM FEVRE
Variety: Chardonnay
Area: Chablis
€19.40

One of the best ordinary Chablis that you can find, regardless of how much money you're willing to spend, this wine comes from William Fevre's privately owned vineyards and spends a few months in oak. This is the perfect wine to help initiate novices into the magical world of Chablis.

- 8. Pinot Grigio 2016**
DOMAINE SANTA MARGARITA
Variety: Pinot Grigio
Area: Alto Adige, Italy
€13.50

The variety that conquered the world, thanks to the Italians' unique ability to market their products. Coming from the area of Alto Adige in Northern Italy, Santa Margherita Pinot Grigio is a crisp, light, elegant wine, and one of the most well-known Italian brands.

Rapsani

GRANDE RESERVE 2010

A divine show of power and grace



Between the earth and the sky, reaching an altitude of almost 800 meters, small vine parcels -often in difficult mountainous terrain- are nestled in the southeastern slopes of Mount Olympus.

Old bush vines of Xinomavro, Krassato and Stavroto are cultivated together, carrying on the long-standing Rapsani tradition of field blending.

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CAVA CELLIER

1. Vassaltis Santorini VASSALTIS VINEYARDS €22.01

The island of Santorini is one of the most unusual terroirs in the world, with volcanic-only soils, arid conditions and a great deal of wind. In this rather hostile climate for viticulture, the famous indigenous Assyrtiko grape gives world-class white wines, full of minerality and character. The boutique winery Vassaltis, run by ambitious young winemakers, gives us a contemporary expression of this variety with refreshing acidity and a dense palate!

2. Aspros Lagos DOULOFAKIS WINERY €15.20

"Aspros Lagos" means "White Hare," in honor of the name of the vineyard that is planted exclusively with Vidiano, the most promising variety of the island of Crete. When planted at selected high altitude sites, this variety can give amazing ripe aromas of yellow fruit, balanced palate, and has an affinity for oak treatment. This is one of the most characterful Vidiano wines, peachy and rich with subtle oak notes.

3. Iereia Rosé BOSINAKIS WINERY €12.00

The Moschofilero variety is the pride of Mantinea region in central Peloponnese. It gives highly aromatic, flowery whites that pair excellently with many Greek cousin dishes. What is rather unusual is to implement a small maceration; thanks to its pale pink skins, this produces a light rosé version. Rose petals, citrus fruit and the trademark acidity will dance together in your glass to Greek (wine) rhythms! Absolutely outstanding pairing with all "ladera" (olive oil and tomato) dishes.

4. Montofoli ESTATE MONTOFOLI €19.29

Complete your meal with this complex world-class sweet wine, made from sun-dried grapes, at this "Tuscan"-like estate in Karystos on Evia. Made from the white Aegean varieties of Assyrtiko, Athiri, Aidani and Liatiko, it has a long oak ageing giving it a thick and rich texture with a strong raisin taste, and notes of vanilla, chocolate and coffee. It is perhaps your best alternative to a good Santorini Vinsanto.

5. Sauvignon Blanc COOPERS CREEK €16.19

New Zealand and, more particularly, its Marlborough region are

known worldwide for the most fragrant, forward and intense versions of Sauvignon Blanc. Coopers Creek, with its wide selection of top quality growers, is crafting a value wine with crisp and refreshing character, echoing aromas and flavors of citrus, gooseberry and passion fruit, along with a touch of herb in its lively finish. The "tropical" note in your Greek vacation!

6. Riesling Classic HUGEL & FILS €19.20

Alsace in northwestern France produces one of the best examples of this amazing variety. In this uniquely gifted, sunny and rather dry climate, the Hugel family crafts its signature wine (with the most complex minerality) from grapes that express themselves best on the steepest slopes around the town of Riquewihr. This dry Riesling stands out for its finesse and openness and is the ideal partner to fish and other seafood, thanks to its wonderful balance and elegance.

7. Scalabrone Rosé ANTINORI €15.00

No one is arguing that Antinori family isn't the greatest ambassador of Italian wines worldwide, or that this

wine isn't one of the best rosés of the country. Made from the classic Bordeaux blend varieties of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, (with a touch of Syrah) at the famous "Super Tuscan" estate of Guado Al Tasso in Maremma, it gives us a light pink color, with "sweet" and richly fruity aromas and notes of cherries, all well integrated with some herbaceous sensations. Fresh and balanced with a fruity and persistent aftertaste. A classy rosé!

8. Valpolicella Superiore Ripasso ZONIN €13.90

Recently awarded the platinum Decanter medal, this northern Italian red is an extremely good value-for-money wine from an iconic Veneto producer. It starts as a classic red wine, coming from the celebrated steep "classico" slopes north of Verona, and just before fermentation is finished, some Amarone dried grape pomace is added to promote intensity, glycerin and complexity. This "repassed" wine offers scents of cherries against a tenuous background of chocolate. Fine and harmonious balance, great strength and sturdy body... pure Italian finesse!

g

NEW ARRIVALS AT LYKOS WINERY

Three new wines have just been unveiled by Lykos Winery
in Evia, Central Greece.



All three are single varietals: two whites, one from Assyrtiko and one from Viognier, and a rosé from Grenache Rouge. The new range bears new-look labels that are already attracting considerable interest.

Lykos Winery is a family-owned business with a long tradition in winemaking. In 1991, Apostolos Lykos decided to build a new winery next to the family-owned restaurant, which had already been serving wine produced by the family for decades. The new winery was built to meet the needs of modern winemaking techniques, and when it opened, so did a whole new chapter in the family's winemaking story. Cutting-edge technology, combined with time-honored methods, have yielded excellent results, supporting the family's continuing aim of improving their Evia vineyard, which happens to enjoy a unique terroir.

The knowledge and experience of years of winemaking, which has been passed from grandparents to grandchildren with love and passion, has resulted in the production of wines that have received numerous international awards and that are being successfully exported to markets in the EU, China and the United States.

Visit the Winery

For an unforgettable experience, tour the underground cellars, where the wines are aged in oak barrels, and enjoy tastings which pair the wines with dishes prepared by the family restaurant. The winery is open to visitors all year round and welcomes private wine tourists as well as organized groups. All wines are available for purchase on the premises, where visitors can also find other traditional local products. The winery offers wine seminars and hosts business presentations and other private functions.

Malakontas Eretrias, 340 08 Evia

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[f](#) [t](#) [l](#) [Lykos Winery](#)

lykoswines.com

A – Z

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. In winemaking, 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. Vin-santo 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. Trikoupi & Valtetsiou, Athens / 75 Hatzikiriakou Ave., Piraeus ● **Cava House Of Wine** 40 Ethnikis Antistaseos St., Chalandri ● **Cava Drosia** 3 Stamatas Drosias Ave., Drosia ● **Cava Krasopoulia** 11 Dimokratias Ave., Melissia ● **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. & Philellinon, Syntagma ● **Kiki De Grece Wine Bar** 38 Voulis & 11pitou, 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., Ilioupoli ● **Monk Grapes And Spirits Wine Bar** 4 Karori St., Athens ● **Cafe Tazza D'oro Wine Bar** 9 Pentelis Ave., Syntagma ● **Jona's Wine Bar** 31C. 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 Winebar** 17 Ag. Eirinis St., Athens ● **Mono Wine Rest** 4Γ Venizelou Palaologou St., Athens ● **Ratka Wine Rest** 32 Charitos 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 Veroias St., Athens ● **48 Restaurant** 48 Armatolos & Klefton St., Ambelokipi ● **Paleo Restaurant** 39 Polidefous 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 ● **Coocoovagia Restaurant** 2 Hatz. Mexi, Athens ● **Gaspar Bar Rest** Dim. Vasileioy Ave. & Lukoyrgou, 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 ● **Kir Yianni Winery** Yiannakohori, Naoussa ● **Lafazanis** 89 Af. Kypreon Elefsina ● **Cava Iosif** Naoussa-Thesi Limni, Naoussa, Paros ● **Blue Palace Resort And Spa** Elounda, Crete ● **Vedema** Megalohori, Santorini ● **Hatzidakis Winery** Kallisti, Pyrgos, Santorini ● **Gavalas Winery** Megalochori, Santorini ● **Gaia Santorini Winery** Exo Gonia, Santorini ● **Boutari Santorini Winery** Megalochori Santorini ● **Domaine Sigalas Winery** Baxes, Oia, Santorini ● **Santo Wines Winery** Pyrgos, Santorini ● **Boutari Winery** Skalani, Heraklion ● **Lyrarakis Winery** Alagni, Arkalochori, Heraklion ● **Domaine Skouras** Malandreni, Argos ● **Semeli Koutsi**, Nemea

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A PLATEAU IN PELOPONNESUS, IS CHANGING THE MAP OF GREEK WHITE WINEMAKING



***Oropedio Boutari.** "OROPEDIO" is the greek word for plateau. Boutari wineries have been working with the Moschofilero grape variety for several decades resulting in the creation of an excellent wine.*

Originating from carefully selected vineyards on the Arcadia plateau, it retains all the fine aromas of this classic Greek variety for which Mantinia, in the Peloponnese region, is famous for.

Years of accumulated experience and experimentation from a selection of handpicked vines, result in a wine of exquisite character.

Its short stay in oak barrels, reveal a complex, well structured, full bodied wine.

However, it is the passion, knowledge and tradition of Boutari wineries that give "Oropedio" its distinct and unique character - an offering from those who love creating wine to those who know how to enjoy it.