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GREEK WINES: HOT, HOTTER, HOTTEST! SANTORINI

Posted by Christian Callec on maandag, april 14th, 2014

It was great to visit the Greek area during **ProWein 2014**. Unfortunately, I had not enough time to taste all I wanted to (especially Gaia and Ktima Biblia Chora were too busy – which is a very good sign – when I tried to taste their fabulous wines). However, what I did taste before and after the big **#winelover #rapsanilover** vertical tasting at the **Tsantali** stand, was all incredibly fascinating. I was selling Greek wines in 1984-85, the quality was not bad, some wines were already very good, but what has been achieved in the past decade is absolutely incredible! The all-round quality has been explosively increasing, especially regarding the freshness and purity of the wines, but also the genuineness of terroir-driven wines revisited with modern technology. I was a big fan of Greek wines, now I am definitely a fully convinced **#Greekwinelover**...

#Santoriniwinelover

I have always been in love with **assyrtiko** wines from **Santorini**. Of course every real **#winelover** will now about Sigalas wines, a very well-known wine producer on Santorini Island. Once, very spectacular, but the last wines I tasted in the past years gave me the impression that the quality of the wines was getting inversely proportional with the increasing media coverage. I was delighted to taste wines from a – for me – unknown smaller winery: **ARTEMIS KARAMOLEGOS**. Together with my highly appreciated fellow **#winelover Ted Lelekas** (*may be the very best ambassador ever of the Greek wines & gastronomy*) I had the opportunity and

pleasure to taste 9 wines, presented and commented by Export Manager **Dimitris Kekas**.



Picture courtesy of Harmonia By Foodrinco

Assyrtico 2013, Santorini PDO/DOP: 100% assyrtico; quite aromatic (citrus!) and fresh (cryomaceration!) with a good balance, a nice complexity and mineral saltiness (great work on the lees!). Ideal for gastronomic use (all kind of delicacies from the sea). *** **Good wine with character and some complexity**

Santorini PDO/DOP 2013: 90% assyrtico, 5% athiri, 5% aidani. The same as above but with a bit more complexity and minerality. Ideal for gastronomic use (all kinds of delicacies from the sea, included grilled fish).

*** **Good wine with character and complexity**

Terranera Assyrtico PGI/IGP 2013: 100% assyrtico; wow, what a nose (volcanic, smoky, fruity)! Crispy fresh, definitely volcanic terroir driven with a unique metallic/volcanic stone after-taste. Great for gastronomic use (grilled squid or fish will do it perfectly!). *** **Good wine with character and complexity**

Santorini Barrel Aged PDO/DOP 2012: 100% assyrtico; enticingly elegant, fruity with subtle oak hints and some smoky notes. Perfect balance between crispy freshness, ripe fruit, alcohol and well integrated oak. Great for gastronomic use (not only grilled fish or sea food, but also suitable for roasted or grilled white meat and savoury pasta or rice dishes). ***(*) **Good wine with character and complexity**

Nykteri PDO/DOP 2012: Assyrtico, completed with athiri and aidani, late harvested at night. Gorgeous wine, with a great aromatic diversity (sun ripe fresh figs, blond raisins, hazelnuts...), a surprising crispy freshness, a rich body and a long, sensual, fresh and mineral finish. High gastronomic potential (dishes with grilled fish or scampi, pasta or rice with a rich and savoury creamy sauce).

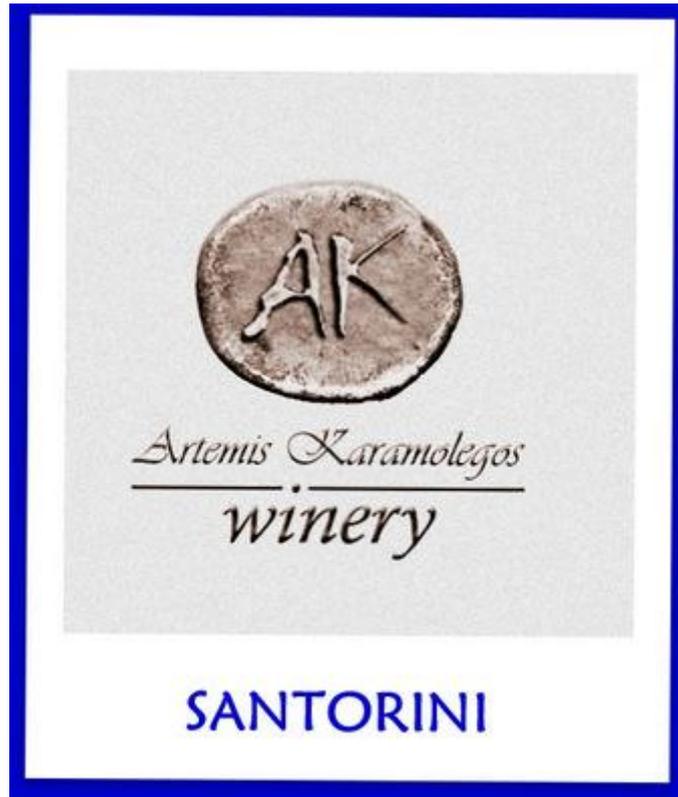
**** **Very good wine with character and complexity**

Terranera Rosé PGI/IGP 2013: a blend of equal parts of mandilaria (red) and assyrtico (white) grapes, vinified together. A rosé wine with a peculiar, own identity. Lovely nose like a big bowl full of wild red berries! On the palate, pretty well balanced, fresh until the last sip, but also round and rich, with a nice mellow and mineral after-taste. Great for gastronomic use (grilled scampi, squid, calamari, fish and more, even white meat; also suitable for pasta or rice dishes with red sauces. Decadently tasty for the best seafood pizza!). *** **Good wine with character and some complexity**

Terranera red PGI/IGP 2012: 100% mandilaria; big and crazy nose, like a bowl of ripe figs, red fruits and dried currants with a dark chocolate topping! Can you imagine? On the palate, the wine is dry, quite tannic and full-bodied. This is a wine you need to drink more often to get used to, and surely always with rich food (Meat stew in fatty tomato sauce or grilled red meat). *** **Good wine with character and some complexity**

Mavrotragano PGI/IGP 2007: 100% mavrotragano. Well, this grape does wear an adequate name: mavro means 'black' and tragano 'crunchy', and indeed it is a crunchy black wine as well! Plenty of wild berries and spices in the nose; high acidity and firm tannins in the mouth, leaving a crunchy aftertaste begging for food! Not really a wine for dummies, you need get used too. I would love to taste it again with some game birds, wild boar or other gamy animals, and surely – as Dimitri suggested – with a classic duck in orange sauce (canard à l'orange). *** **Good wine with character and some complexity**

Vinsanto PDO/DOP 2006: assyrtico (always at least 51%) and aidani grapes; vinsanto (read 'wine from Santo-rini' – Vini di Santorini in Venetian – not to be mixed up with the Tuscan VinSanto = holy wine) is always sweet and aged for at least 5 years. Loads of citrus and honey scents, completed by walnut, spices and vanilla on the background. Rich, voluptuous, lusciously sweet but not too sticky thanks to a wonderful freshness. Never ending, orgasmic finish. Very good wine, highly suitable for gastronomy (walnut pie with vanilla ice cream, toffee brownies, crème brûlée etc.) but also for chill-out and romantic intimate moments. **** **Very good wine**



Conclusion: This is a typical “grab you ass and run to find those wines” issue... No idea if it is imported yet in your country, but it should be! Highly recommended! Thanks Ted Lelekas and Dimitris Kekas for this nice opportunity!

(No: wimpy wine, * nice wine, recommended, ** good wine with character, *** good wine with character and complexity, **** very good wine, ***** outstanding wine)*

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