

born of earth, wind & fire



basket, bottle + vine

a newsletter dedicated to the santorini vineyard: april 2011

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IN FOCUS

Santorini sails into Manhattan

Wines from one island to another proved to be crowd-pleasers

LAST MONTH THE SUN DESCENDED briefly on wintery New York City when Santorini winemakers arrived for a seminar and tasting of their sun-drenched wines. Not even competition from another large importer portfolio tasting could keep away those who wanted to sample Santorini wines and meet the winemakers, and some 125 wine professionals tasted their way through 10 producers, six of whom traveled to Manhattan for the event.



Paraskevopoulos (L) introduced by Steve Olson

The invitation-only walk-around tasting, held in the dining loft at BLT Fish, was introduced by a seminar lead by Yiannis Paraskevopoulos of Gaia wines, who, in turn was introduced by Greek wine ambassador, Steve Olson.

Describing Paraskevopoulos as "cerebral and passionate," Olson could also have been describing the wines themselves.



Steve Olson, Michael Weiss and Ray Isle compare notes.

"These wines are so terroir-driven, it's crazy. When you smell them, you know where you are, and that place is nowhere but Santorini," he said.

"Ten years ago if you were having a Greek wine, you were probably in a Greek restaurant. Now, if you're in a restaurant without a Greek wine on the list, you'll know that they just don't get it," he said in his opening remarks.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

What were the pros tasting? [Click here](#) for the full flight list of wines.

ON POINT

4 questions for Yiannis Paraskevopoulos

Greece's unofficial ambassador-at-large for Greek wines says putting Santorini on the radar requires educating the public about the versatility of the wines. Learning to pronounce "assyrtiko" will come in time.

HOT VIEW



Tara Thomas of Wine & Spirits magazine puts Assyrtiko to the test. Hear what she has to say about Santorini—from Santorini.

[Watch Video](#)

HOT FACTS

Santorini at a glance:

Elegant aromas of a rather low intensity, slightly citrus but also earthy. Sometimes even reductive when wines are young.

Surprising vibrant acidity that offers freshness & longevity, surely not expected at this latitude (pH 2,85 - 2,98).

Impressive structure & minerality with a phenolic background and a distinct slight salinity at the after-taste.

Overall they are absolutely food-driven wines with a serious and "Wine Lover's Only" profile.

HOT BUTTONS

[New Jersey Star Ledger](#)
John Foy

[Vinotasting.com](#)
Rob Rudko

[NY Wine Salon](#)
Cynthia Sin Yi Cheng

Q. What's your impression of guests' engagement with the wines--do people seem more knowledgeable or comfortable?

A. It goes without saying, some years ago these wines seemed alien to most non-Greeks. Most people that attended the New York Santorini wines event knew most of the wines and producers and the particulars.

Q Compared to this time last year when you were in NYC, how far along have people come in their appreciation or interest in the wines?

A. Hard to say, but I think that Greek wines have been "promoted" from oddities to reliable wines with a specific style of their own (mineral, food-friendly etc).

Q. What's the message that they understand about Santorini wines?

A. They are massive whites with big character and worth having on their table.



Christo Chronopoulos of Antenna TV USA interviews Yiannis Paraskevopoulos for a segment promoting Greek wines

Q What further education do we need to undertake to get people on board?

A. Expose more and more key wine people to the Santorini reality and particularity. This last event seems to be on the exact right track.

Food Republic
Lisa McLaughlin

The Daily Meal
Roger Morris

THE CALL OUT

Assyrtiko's vibrant citrus character and distinctive minerality make in an incredibly versatile food wine; plus, it has a remarkable capacity to take on complexity and richness as it ages, something few people (in the U.S. at least) have caught on to.

— Ray Isle, Executive Wine Editor, Food & Wine magazine



"If we can teach Americans to say Gruner Vetliner, we can teach them to say Xinomavro and Assyrtiko."

—Steve Olson Greek Wine Ambassador



Assyrtiko's high acidity makes it a perfect foil for many dishes because it cleanses the palate from rich foods. Acidity also lowers the impression of foods that are salty, tart, or sweet which makes it a great partner for salads with citrus dressings, goat cheese, or tandoori chicken.

In general, Santorini wines are lower in alcohol than most popular dry white wines which allows for some exciting pairings with spicy dishes and the opportunity to have a second or third glass and still be able to dance under the stars.
— Michael Weiss, Professor in Wine Studies, Culinary Institute of America

ON LINE

Facebook voters show the love for Assyrtiko



WHEN GARY VAYNERCHUK polled Facebook friends for the next wine to receive coverage in his new show, The Daily Grape, Wines of Santorini friends sprung into action. They crushed the competition—California Pinot Noirs, a vertical tasting of a TBD variety or Riesling.



Garnering 188 votes, more than 50 percent of those cast, Assyrtiko took its rightful place in Episode #28. "Gary Vee" said the wine has tremendous potential to be a world player, with great pedigrees and the scores to match.

What he tasted: 2010 Gaia Estate Assyrtiko Wild Ferment and 2009 Argyros Assyrtiko

[WATCH VIDEO](#)

ON TOP

Santorini rocks the house at Thessaloniki

Santorini wines had their own Olympics, taking home a record number of silver and gold medals in the prestigious Thessaloniki International Wine Competition. Congratulations to these winners:

- White Vinsanto 2004, Domaine Sigalas, Gold Medal and a great distinction for "Naturally Sweet Wines" (Class VI-A-42)
- White Vinsanto 2004, SantoWines, Gold Medal
- Red Mavrotragano 2008, Domaine Sigalas, Gold Medal
- White Vinsanto 2004, Gavalas Winery, Gold Medal
- White Katsano 2010, Gavalas Winery, Silver Medal
- White Vinsanto 2008, Volcan Wines, Silver Medal



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MISSION

Wines from Santorini is a campaign to increase awareness of the unique PDO wines and vineyard of Santorini through cutting-edge education and promotion.

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