

to make just one red. So this \$18 wine is a bargain, filled with fruit that normally goes to their more expensive bottlings. A blend of xinomavro with 30 percent merlot and 20 percent syrah, it's spicy and herbal, with light lilac notes and soft, rich tannins supporting the raspberry-plum fruit. While it's not profound, it's complex and charming. *Diamond Importers, Chicago, IL*

NAOUSSA

95 | Argatia \$24
2012 Naoussa Xinomavro Naoussa is a complex winegrowing region, its varied terroirs producing a range of styles of wine. So it's impossible to say that this is *echt* Naoussa. But if you want a vivid picture of the area's forested hillsides and its ferrous, limestone-pocked soils; of the cherry trees that scent the air in the spring and the porcini that pop up in the damp fall, try this. It's made by Haroula Spinthropoulou, a viticulturist revered for her research work in the region's vineyards. And it comes from her own small parcels of xinomavro, planted in 2000 in the light, sandy soils of Krasna with a portion of fruit from younger vines planted in heavier soils. Spinthropoulou reports that 2012 was a hot year, but without any heat spikes to stress the vines. Her wine shows that ripeness in the sweet, meaty chew of the texture, but it's otherwise as light as air, a cloud of fragrance that ranges from truffles and roses to tomato jam and roasted lamb—a spectacular snapshot of time and place. *Verity Wine Partners, NY*

93 | Kir-Yianni \$27
2013 Naoussa Ravnista Xinomavro This displays xinomavro's magical ability to be both mouth-crushingly tannic and seductively delicate at once. It works because those tannins are filled with flavors, powering the wine through a forest's worth of truffle and dried cherry scents, while hints of leather and roses make the sides of your mouth juice up. Decant this if you open it now, and serve with something rich and fatty, like pork shanks; otherwise cellar it for ten years. *Diamond Importers, Chicago, IL*

92 | Dalamaras \$25
2013 Naoussa Paliokalias Xinomavro Kostis Dalamara makes this from a patch of dry-farmed vines planted on their own roots nearly 100 years ago. They weathered the warmth of the vintage well, turning out a ripe red dense with chewy, drying tannins. Spicy, smoky and cedar-scented, it's built for the long haul, wanting another five to

ten years to show more detail. *Distinctive Imports, Antioch, IL*

90 | Domaine Karydas \$30
2013 Naoussa This is an earthy, umami-laden Naoussa, with soft, dense black-cherry fruit and tangy, orange-spiked acidity. It feels ripe and spicy, the tannins carrying a ferrous, mouthwatering tang. Decant it to drink now, or age another five to seven years. *Diamond Importers, Chicago, IL*

88 | Kokkinos \$20
2013 Naoussa Xinomavro (Best Buy) This is a rustic, lighter style of Naoussa, with sour cherry and herbal flavors, some caramel and fig deepening the back end. With its firm but gentle tannins, it's ready to drink now. *Verity Wine Partners, NY*

PELOPONNESE

94 | Gaia \$37
2015 Nemea Agiorgitiko by Gaia Despite the challenging vintage, this was the best Nemea we tasted this year, free of excessive ripeness and oak influence, filled instead with a complex, heady array of fruit, spice, herb and forest aromas—a sort of Greek garrigue. The grapes, grown in the cool, sunny heights of Koutsí, ripened ten days earlier than those in the valley, coming in well before September's rain; twelve months in oak, only ten percent new, smoothed and lengthened the tannins without adding any noticeable flavor. The end result is firm and savory, a wealth of stony minerality underpinning the cherry flavors. Approachable now, this will continue to age well over the next decade. *Athenae Importers & Distributors, Hempstead, NY*

94 | Ktima Tselepos \$44
2012 Arcadia Kokkinomilos Merlot Yiannis Tselepos has grown merlot on the flanks of Mount Parnon in the eastern Peloponnese since he established his winery in 1989. Grown in rocky red clay at 2,460 feet in altitude, the vines enjoy plenty of sun, as well as cooling breezes—a distinct advantage in the warm, dry summer of 2012. The wine feels rich and sunny, all-enveloping in its plummy fruit and cocoa-fine tannins, with the complex earthiness of a forest floor. It's not at all heavy, presenting itself with an ease and lightness, a lack of pretention that quietly signals the degree of mastery Tselepos has acquired with merlot in this vineyard. This is elegant enough to drink now, and it should age well for another decade. *Cava Spiliadis, Astoria, NY*

90 | Tselepos \$23
2014 Tegea Dilofos Cabernet Sauvignon-Merlot Cabernet's lean, pencil-lead flavors give shape and firmness to merlot's plummy juiciness in this blend from the foothills of Mount Parnon. The vines, planted in 1989 at 2,460 feet, give a wine that feels both Mediterranean in its open, giving character and Bordelais in its restraint and finely knit texture, a complex weave of spice, herb, fruit and earth notes that's drinking well now and will develop over the next five to eight years. *Cava Spiliadis, Astoria, NY*

88 | Mitravelas Estate \$19
2015 Nemea Agiorgitiko (Best Buy) Agiorgitiko in the style of an Argentine malbec, this is rich in superripe plum flavors, with violet scents and vanilla richness. *Verity Wine Partners, NY*

86 | Mitravelas Estate \$11
2016 Nemea Red on Black Agiorgitiko (Best Buy) Cherry red and tangy, this is a fresh, juicy wine to chill for sausages off the grill. *Verity Wine Partners, NY*

DESSERT

94 | Santo Wines \$35/500ml
2010 Santorini Vinsanto The warm 2010 vintage made for an intense Vinsanto at Santorini's cooperative winery. From grapes picked in late August and sun-dried for eight to ten days, the wine took 40 days to ferment, then went into old oak barrels to age for two years. After five years in bottle, it's turned toward golden caramel in hue and flavor, the sweet, nutty richness wrapping around notes of spice, red berries and burnt orange peel. While it clocks in at 285.6 grams per liter of residual sugar, it doesn't feel heavy; a pleasant bitterness gives it shape. One sommelier on the panel suggested serving it instead of Madeira, with the cheese course. *Diamond Importers, Chicago, IL*

86 | Achia Clauss \$15
2015 Muscat of Patras 722 (Best Buy) Honeyed in taste and texture, this is a satiny dessert wine with mellow lemon flavor. Pour it with almond biscotti. *Stellar Importing Co., Astoria, NY*

86 | D. Kourtakis \$14
Samos (Best Buy) Here's a glass of sunshine, as bright and sweet as the yellow color predicts. Pour it with a sponge cake moistened with sugar syrup—and use some of the wine in the mix. *Nestor Imports, NY*



90 | Monemvasia \$16
2016 Laconia NA Made from the local monemvasia, one of the grapes thought to have made up the original blend for the wine called Monemvasia (or Malmsey), this fills in its broad, waxy texture with succulent flavors of white peach and quince. Herbal notes flirt with the acidity, adding delicacy as well as an edge that will help this stand up to halibut or other rich, meaty fish. *Flying Olive Farms, Raleigh, NC*

90 | Domaine Spiropoulos \$23
2016 Mantinia Moschofilero Made entirely from the estate's organically farmed vineyards, this is a rich, concentrated moschofilero. It reflects the variety's pale purple skins in its slight pink tinge, and draws out a host of floral and spice notes without extracting any phenolic bitterness. The result is fragrant and elegant, with a slightly oily intensity. The orange-citrus notes would be especially good next to grilled mackerel. *Athenae Importers & Distributors, Hempstead, NY*

88 | Antonopoulos \$20
2016 Achaia Malagouzia (Best Buy) Grown in the cool heights of Achaia, on the northern edge of the Peloponnese, this is soft and peachy, with a breezy florality that lifts the wine and keeps it refreshing. *Verity Wine Partners, NY*

88 | Domain Mega Spileo \$13
2016 Achaia Moschato (Best Buy) A soft, herbal muscat, this combines green-olive fruitiness with light floral notes. It's earthy and round, for goat cheese rolled in pine nuts and herbs. *Greek Boys Choice Foods, Tarpon Springs, FL*

88 | Skouras \$18
2016 Peloponnese Moschofilero (Best Buy) Light and delicate, this flits through the mouth with notes of Meyer lemon and lime leaves, a little chalky minerality giving it some weight. For aperitifs. *Diamond Importers, Chicago, IL*

87 | Antonopoulos \$15
2016 Achaia Adoli Ghis (Best Buy) A blend of the rare lagorthi with a little asproudes, this is a delicate white focused on lime pith and chalk. There's not quite enough flavor to balance the alcohol, which comes through as heat, so give it a chill and serve it with food. It would match mussels in vinaigrette. *Verity Wine Partners, NY*

85 | Domain Mega Spileo \$13
2016 Achaia Malagousia (Best Buy) This is ripe and a little hot, with the spice of alcohol heating the peachy fruit. Give it a chill to bring out its leaner citrus notes and rein in the spice. *Greek Boys Choice Foods, Tarpon Springs, FL*

ROSÉ

90 | Kir-Yianni \$17
2016 Amyndeon Akakies Rosé (Best Buy) With its dark hue and tangy, spicy flavors, this offers a clear view of xinomavro in a juicy, friendly rosé. It tastes of strawberries along with a little of their leaves; it feels full and firm, the fine grape-skin tannins building body into the wine without any astringency. Give it a light chill for grilled lamb this summer. *Diamond Importers, Chicago, IL*

ISLAND REDS

CRETE

87 | Alexakis \$15
2013 Crete Kotsifali-Syrah (Best Buy) Syrah sends a wave of sweet red fruit over kotsifali's herbal tones and wilder flavors, this blend tamed by the chocolate richness of barrel age. It's juicy and fresh, a modern wine for burgers. *Diamond Importers, Chicago, IL*

SANTORINI

90 | Santo Wines \$49
2015 Santorini Mavrotragano Mavrotragano translates as "black-crunchy," two characteristics of this red. It tastes of wild cherries, the flavors concentrated and intense, with a smoky, earthy mineral sense that darkens the flavors without adding extra weight. As only about three percent of the island is planted to this grape, there's very little of this wine; if you find one of the 3,300 bottles, check it out. *Diamond Importers, Chicago, IL*

MAINLAND REDS

CENTRAL GREECE

92 | Domaine Katsaros \$46
2010 Krania Cabernet Sauvignon Evripidis Katsaros studied in Bordeaux before returning to his family's winery in northern Greece. Although the environment is very different—he's working at 2,460 feet in altitude, in the forested hills beneath Mount Olympus—this wine has a Bordelais restraint and elegance despite its rich fruit. Cofermented with a little merlot in stainless-steel tanks before aging in barriques for 16 to 22 months, this cabernet feels firm and earthy, with a black-olive note deepening cabernet's cassis tones. The tannins still hold significant power, suggesting that this will age well for another five to eight years. *Cava Spiliadis, Astoria, NY*

MACEDONIA

91 | Karanika \$35
2013 Amyndeon Xinomavro Based in the cool heights of Amyndeon, Laurens Hartman farms biodynamically and makes a delicate xinomavro even in warm years like 2013. This smells and tastes of roses and tobacco, cedar fronds and ripe red cherries, with a crispness underlined by the metallic twang of the tannins. It's an elegant match for lean meats like venison. *Verity Wine Partners, NY*

91 | Ktima Voyatzis \$27
2013 Velvento Xinomavro Yannis Voyatzis, oenologist for Boutari, makes this wine from his family estate in Velvento, an area south of Naoussa along Lake Polifitou. It's warmer here than in Naoussa, a detail apparent in the steaky richness of this wine. It feels dense and burlled, with grilled meat flavors and chocolate tannins; with time, the acidity sends xinomavro's herbal notes to the fore, tomato-leaf and sage scents bringing a savory freshness to the wine. *Nestor Imports, NY*

90 | Ktima Voyatzis \$27
2014 Velvento Tsapournakos Tsapournakos is genetically identical to cabernet franc, yet it has its own distinct personality in Velvento. This vintage is ripe and rich, an earthy, spicy red with coffee and bay-leaf notes wrapped in velvet-soft tannins. The acidity is quiet but brisk; give the wine a light chill and serve it with lamb chops. *Nestor Imports, NY*

90 | Kir-Yianni \$18
2014 Imathia Yianakohori Hills (Best Buy) Hail destroyed so many of the vines at Yianakohori in 2014 that the winery chose

bringing you back for another sip. *Athenee Importers & Distributors, Hempstead, NY*

94 | Venetsanos \$45
2015 Santorini Nykteri Ioanna Vamvakouri has made wine on Santorini since 2000, first at Santo Wines, then Boutari. She started her own project in 2014, renovating the island's oldest commercial winery, Venetsanos, in time for the 2015 harvest. Working with assyrtiko from the Venetsanos family's vineyards, she moved it, mid-fermentation, into French oak barriques, where she left it to rest for four months. That was just enough time for the wine to pick up a touch of toasty, wheaty character without hiding the chalky savor. The sense of stone is what drives this wine, even as it fills the mouth with umami richness. It's quiet and restrained, an elegant Santorini that you could pour in place of a Chablis. *Cava Spiliadis, Astoria, NY*

93 | Venetsanos \$33
2015 Santorini Like Vamvakouri's 2015 Nykteri (reviewed above), this is as restrained as the pale hue predicts, with a leesy richness that builds power and volume into the stony, saline flavors. The acidity is insistent and energizing, making this a mouthwatering Santorini to pour with scallops. *Cava Spiliadis, Astoria, NY*

92 | Gavalas \$18
2016 Santorini Assyrtiko (Best Buy) George Gavalas is the fourth generation of his family to run this winery in Megalochori. He vinifies this assyrtiko entirely in stainless steel, producing an austere style, focused on lemon, salt and stone, almost searing in its intensity. *Distinctive Imports, Antioch, IL*

92 | Domaine Sigalas \$20
2016 Santorini Assyrtiko-Athiri (Best Buy) Athiri's floral, fruity scents play off of assyrtiko's salty mineral character in an addictive way, adding a host of herb and citrus notes that gentle the wine's stony base. It's firm and lasting, with an oceanic scent that brings to mind a pairing with grilled octopus. *Diamond Importers, Chicago, IL*

91 | Tselepos \$26
2016 Santorini Canava Chrissou Assyrtiko Yiannis Tselepos, who's run a winery in Mantinia in the Peloponnese since 1989, started working with the Chrissou family on Santorini in 2014. This vintage, his third, is ripe and spicy, a stylish wine with a core of sweet lemon flavors that seems to sparkle with minerality. Firm and showy, it's a white wine for red meat, like roast lamb with *avgolemeno*,

a creamy sauce of olive oil and lemon. *Cava Spiliadis, Astoria, NY*

90 | Hatzidakis \$45
2015 Santorini Cuvée No. 15 Assyrtiko Haridimos Hatzidakis selects this wine from certified organic vineyards. He leaves the juice on the skins for 12 hours, allows it to spontaneously ferment in stainless-steel tanks, then lets it rest on the lees for eight months. It's as rich as its golden color would predict and tastes of salted caramels, nutty and leesy, with a soft, broad texture that wraps the acidity completely. The minerality is there in its saline savor, but should become more prominent with another few years of age. *Dionysi Grevenitis Selections/Frederick Wildman and Sons, NY*

90 | Spyros Hatziyiannis \$19
2016 Santorini Assyrtiko Lean and salty, this assyrtiko has a cool, fresh feel, with herbal notes and fresh cedar scents skating across its mineral base. It feels young and vibrant, a refreshing, unpretentious take on Santorini. *Fantis Imports, Carlstadt, NJ*

90 | Santo Wines \$39
2014 Santorini Grande Reserve Assyrtiko This is a rich, opulent Santorini, the product of fruit off 100-year-old vines that's been fermented and aged in barrels. It's golden in tone, with notes of toast and caramel that burnish the baked apple fruit; the alcohol, nearing 15 percent, adds a little warming spice. It would be too much were it not for the wine's insistent minerality, a saltiness that keeps it vivid and savory. Age it for another four or five years, or pour now with Comté. *Diamond Importers, Chicago, IL*

MAINLAND WHITES

CENTRAL GREECE

90 | Mylonas \$16
2015 Attica Savatiano (Best Buy) Stamatias Mylonas makes this from old-vine, unirrigated savatiano grown in Laureotiki, far down the peninsula southeast of Athens. Maybe it's the wild sage, thyme, chamomile and other scrub that grows in these dry hills that gives this wine such a vivid herbal edge, or maybe it's the portion of the wine that fermented with ambient yeasts. Either way, this isn't your usual savory, bland savatiano: it tastes like sunshine on hot rocks, with so many herbal components it could sub in for vermouth. Chill for *mezes*. *Diamond Importers, Chicago, IL*

NORTHERN GREECE

95 | Ktima Gerovassiliou \$36
2016 Epanomi Viognier Evangelos Gerovassiliou has grown viognier on the cool, sunny slopes of Epanomi since 1993. His 2016, from a warm, early vintage, is exceptional, with all the satiny texture, floral scents and succulent stone-fruit flavors the variety is known for, and an energy that sends the wine soaring. Taste it and you might be able to smell the sage, thyme and lavender growing on the hillsides surrounding these vines; you might also catch the glint of the sun off the water in the bay below. Fermented in barrel and aged on its lees, the wine is full bodied yet lithe. Show off its elegant line with something simple, like grilled red snapper. *Cava Spiliadis, Astoria, NY*

90 | Alpha Estate \$19
2016 Florina Sauvignon Blanc (Best Buy) Angelos Iatridis worked with the late Bordeaux sauvignon-blanc master Denis Dubourdieu, whose influence shows in this satiny, ripe sauvignon with more lees character than green notes. It's a sleek, creamy white offering stone fruit and citrus richness checked by notes of sage and stone. *Diamond Importers, Chicago, IL*

90 | Argatia \$20
2015 Macedonia Viticulturist Haroula Spinthropoulou makes this wine from her own vineyards in Naoussa, blending the floral malagousia with 35 percent assyrtiko and 5 percent athiri. The result is a satin-textured wine with lift and energy, assyrtiko's saline, stony coolness and lemon-pith flavors balancing malagousia's apricot richness. Athiri seems to add beguiling herbal notes, like the floral, resinous scent of thyme in full bloom. *Verity Wine Partners, NY*

90 | Ktima Gerovassiliou \$20
2016 Epanomi Assyrtiko provides a balance to malagousia's lush textures and peachy fruit, adding tangy lemon, herb and saline notes. It feels firm and restrained, an elegant white for vegetable tians or roasted fish dishes. *Cava Spiliadis, Astoria, NY*

PELOPONNESE

90 | Mercuri Estate \$18
2016 Iliia Foloi Ten percent viognier adds violet scents and satin texture to this blend with roditis. It's clean and fresh, with a taut minerality that keeps it lean and lithe. *Athenee Importers & Distributors, Hempstead, NY*