

# Cava Spiliadis

## GREEK WINE


There are many indigenous grape varieties presently cultivated in Greece. Greece is one of the oldest wine-producing regions in the world. The earliest evidence of Greek wine has been dated to 6,500 years ago where wine was produced on a household or communal basis. In ancient times, as trade in wine became extensive, it was transported from end to end of the Mediterranean; Greek wine had especially high prestige in Italy under the Roman Empire. In the medieval period, wines exported from Crete, Monemvasia and other Greek ports fetched high prices in northern Europe.

## TYPES OF GREEK WINE

Wines are categorized by the legislation into various types. The first criterion of differentiation is the color, thus distinguishing wines into whites, rosés and reds. This feature depends on the kind of grape used for the production of the wine, as well as on the wine making method used.

Depending on their sweetness, in other words, their sugar content, wines are divided into dry, semi-dry, semi-sweet and sweet. Their sweetness derives from the sugars that remain unfermented when the alcoholic fermentation is somehow stopped. It can be a natural stop, as is the case of Naturally Sweet Wines (Vins Naturellement Doux). There is also the case of an artificial stop in the alcoholic fermentation that occurs in Vins de Liqueur by adding alcohol. Finally, depending on their diluted carbon dioxide content, wines are divided into still, semi-sparkling and sparkling.

If a Greek wine has an Appellation of Superior Quality, the wine is usually a dry table wine. These wines must also follow strict specifications and use very specific grapes from certain areas. Greek wines with appellation of both kinds might also be described by certain characteristics of the wine such as dry or semi-dry, sweet or semi-sweet, as well as by their color.



## RED GRAPE VARIETIES

### *Agiorghitiko*


One of the most noble of the Greek red grapes, Agiorghitiko (meaning St. George's) is grown mainly in the AOC region Nemea in the Peloponnese. It produces wines that stand out for their deep red color and remarkable aromatic complexity. Agiorghitiko's soft tannins, in combination with its balanced acidity lead to the production of many different styles of wine, ranging from fresh aromatic reds to extraordinary aged reds. It also produces pleasant aromatic rosé wines

### *Xinomavro*

The predominant grape variety in Macedonia is a native red called Xinomavro, (meaning "acid-black"). The wines made from Xinomavro are known for their superb aging potential and their rich tannic character. Their complex aromas combine such red fruits as gooseberry with hints of olives, spices and dried tomatoes.

### *Mavrodaphne*

Mavrodaphne, meaning black laurel, is mainly found in the Peloponnesean regions of Achaia and Iliia as well as the Ionian Islands. It is blended with the Korinthiaki grape to produce a delicious fortified dessert wine known as Mavrodaphne. It also yields very good results when blended with Refosco, Agiorghitiko and Cabernet Sauvignon grapes.



## WHITE GRAPE VARIETIES

### *Assyrtiko*

Assyrtiko is one of Greece's finest multi-purpose white grape varieties. It was first cultivated on the island of Santorini, where it has developed a unique character producing excellent AOC wines. Assyrtiko has the ability to maintain its acidity as it ripens. It yields a bone-dry wine that has citrus aromas mixed with an earthy, mineral aftertaste due to the volcanic soil of Santorini. In the last 25 years Assyrtiko has been planted throughout Greece including Macedonia and Attica where it expresses a milder and more fruity character. Assyrtiko can also be used together with the aromatic Aidani and Athiri grapes for the production of the unique, naturally sweet wines called VINSANTO (wine from SANTORini), well known since Byzantine times.

### *Malagousia*

Malagousia originated in the region of Nafpaktos in western Greece. The winemaker Gerovassiliou, was the first to begin experimenting with the nearly extinct Malagousia grape, realizing its vast potential for producing high quality wines. It is found mainly in Macedonia and is now cultivated in some vineyards in Attica and the Peloponnese. It is an especially aromatic grape leading to elegant full bodied wines, with medium acidity and exciting aromas of exotic fruits, citrus, jasmine and mint.

### *Moschofilero*

A distinct aromatic grape from within the AOC region of Mantinia, in the Peloponnese, Moschofilero grapes have a gray colored skin and therefore produce a wine that is a blanc de gris. Its crisp character and beautiful floral aroma of roses and violets with hints of spices can be drunk as an aperitif or with food.

### *Roditis*

As the name implies, Roditis is a rosé colored grape that is very popular in Attica, Macedonia, Thessaly and Peloponnese where it is cultivated for the production of AOC Patra wines. It produces the best results when cultivated with low yields on mountainous slopes. Roditis produces elegant, light white wines with citrus flavors and a pleasant aftertaste.



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