

Wine Roads of Northern Greece

A short guide



WINE ROADS
OF NORTHERN
GREECE

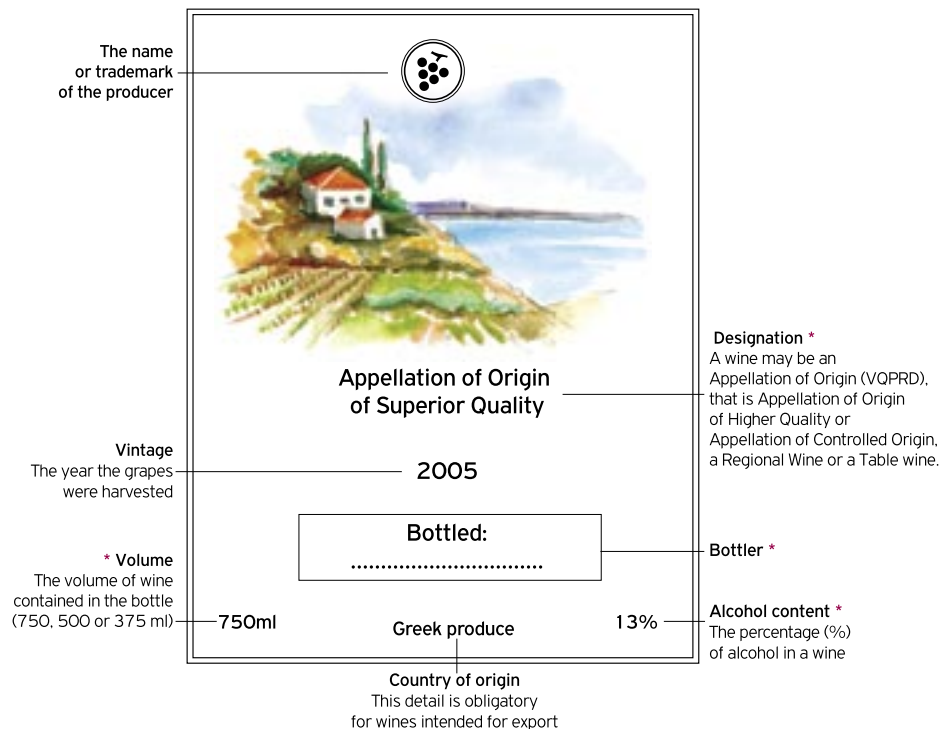
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The label A wine's identity

Just as the ancient Greeks applied the seal of origin on amphorae carrying wine, in the modern world we affix labels to the glass bottles. We have learnt to depend on the label for information regarding the variety of wine protected in the bottle, and possibly its origin, producer and bottler, its flavour qualities and much more.

Let us then see what we can read on the label of the wine we have chosen to taste:



We can also read:

- > The **grape variety** used to produce the wine. This indication is not permitted for table wines
- > **The type of wine**
White, rosé or red – dry, semi-dry, semi-sweet or sweet – sparkling or semi-sparkling
- > Information on **winemaking** and possibly on **ageing** of the wine
- > **Suggestions** on the proper serving temperature and the dishes the wine accompanies ideally.

(* Obligatory features)

Ten Tips for enjoying wine

Ten “smart” ideas that will help uncode the fascinating world of wine.

01.

A “proper” cellar should be:

- > cool, with the temperature constantly at 10 to 14°C
- > dark and tranquil
- > relatively humid (70 - 80%)
- > well ventilated, in order to prevent foul odours.

02.

In the cellar, bottles rest in a horizontal position, otherwise the cork dries out and loses its sealing properties, allowing air to enter the bottle and spoil the wine. Nevertheless, wines with high alcohol content should be stored in a vertical position.

03.

If the bottle has been transported just before being opened, it is recommended to let the wine rest for a while; this is important especially for aged red wines, in order for the sediment to settle at the bottom of the bottle.

04.

Serving temperatures for different wines:

- > sparkling wines at 6-8°C
- > sweet and dry white at 8-10°C
- > rosé wines at 10-12°C
- > light and fruity red wines at 14-16°C
- > rich red aged wines and sweet red at 16-18°C.

05.

Keep in mind that the temperature of wine served in a glass rises by 2-3°C within 5-10 minutes.

06.

The wine glass should be stemmed, made of clear crystal. Wine is served to approximately 2/3 of the glass.

07.

Throughout the courses of a meal, wines are served in the following order:

- > white wines before red
- > fresh, young wines before aged
- > dry wines before semi-sweet and sweet.

08.

For rich and rather young red wines, decanting may prove valuable. This will allow the wine to breathe, strengthening the aromas and smoothening its flavour.

09.

For vintage wines, decanting is necessary, to enjoy the wine clear, free of sediment.

10.

When planning a delightful menu, harmony is to be found in pairing dishes and wines that match in both colour and aroma, as well as flavour intensity.

Wine Roads of Northern Greece

What does the phrase “Wine Roads” bring to mind?

Imagine traveling in a wine country. Getting to taste your favorite wines and getting to know the people who make them. You will soon be surprised to discover that their aromas and flavours seem to blend with the landscape, in a way that you could just barely imagine when leaving behind the bustle of the city.

In a nutshell, Wine Roads is an exciting journey proposal for the contemporary explorer. Carefully selected routes run through the most picturesque sights of a viticulture zone. Signs lead the way to vineyards and wineries. An array of breathtaking views, archaeological sites, churches, monasteries, museums, and buildings of folklore or cultural interest are scattered along the way. Finally, the map could not possibly be complete without the most noteworthy restaurants, taverns, ouzeri, coffee shops and hotels in the area.

Wine Roads are to be traced out in almost all wine-producing countries. The first such attempt in Greece was brought to life by 28 winemakers, who established the Wine Producers Association of the Vineyards of Northern Greece with the trade name “Wine Roads of Northern Greece”.

The Association has indicated 8 routes that traverse Northern Greece from one end to the other, stopping at the most important wine regions of Thessaly (Rapsani and Krania), Epirus, Macedonia and Thrace.

Let us follow them!



Wineries

E. Tsantalis
Rapsani, T: 23990 76100
webmaster@tsantali.gr

Domaine Katsaros

Krania
T: 2410 536811,
24950 41666
katswine@hotmail.com

Wines

VQPRD Rapsani

Red full-bodied wine with intensity in the spicy bouquet.

Regional Wines of Krania

Opulent white wine with typical variety aromas. Generous, complex and well structured red wine, capable of long ageing.

The Wine Road of the Olympian Gods

In the vineyards of Olympus, the blue sky knits beautifully with the deep green hues of the conifer trees to form a stunning mosaic of colours: the ideal backdrop for tasting the wines of Rapsani and Krania.

The lovely village of Rapsani is famous for its lush vegetation, marvelous views, soft climate, cool water from the springs of Mount Olympus, and last but not least, its wine. Most vineyards are situated on the Tempi slopes, facing the sun from an easterly or southeasterly direction, at an altitude of 100 to 700 metres. Three grape varieties are cultivated here: Xinomavro, Krasato and Stavroto, all red. The blending of these three varieties gives us VQPRD Rapsani.

We continue our journey over the eastern slopes of Mount Olympus to reach the traditional settlement of Krania, with its exceptional microclimate: scarce rainfall, fairly cool summers, enhanced by the morning sea breezes from the Aegean Sea and mountain-fresh evening winds from Mount Olympus, not to mention its rich subsoil, perfect for growing vine. Here one can find the choice French grape varieties Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. These varieties are used to produce the white and red Regional Wines of Krania.



The Wine Road of Epirus

In Epirus we can savour the freshness and aromatic finesse of the white wines of Zitsa and the earthy solidity of the Metsovo reds.

The mountainous vineyards of Zitsa spread over the slopes and enjoy the view of the Ionian Sea. Here the altitude often reaches 650 to 700 metres; naturally, the varieties cultivated should be resistant to cold weather and chilly northerly winds. It seems that white Debina is the grape variety that lives up to the winemakers' expectations, thus covering 95% of the vineyards. It is this variety that gives VQPRD Zitsa.

Our journey continues high up mountainrange of Pindos, and we finally reach charming Metsovo. The natives of Metsovo are proficient craftsmen (and women!) in wood-working, weaving and embroidery. Their cheese is highly sought after, as of course is their wine. Up here, at the highest, most mountainous vineyards in Greece, with an altitude reaching 950 to 1.000 metres, the cultivation of Cabernet Sauvignon was introduced. Its successful performance has led to the spreading of the variety in all viticulture zones of the country. Next to Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Traminer, Chardonnay, Vlachiko were also planted. The reds are used for the Regional Wine of Metsovo.

Wineries

Zoinos
Zitsa, T: 26580 22297
zitswin@otenet.gr

Domaine Glinavos

Monastiri Zitsa
Zitsa, T: 26580 22212
www.glinavos.gr

Katoji & Strofilia

Metsovo, T: 26560 41684
www.katoji-strofilia.gr

Wines

VQPRD Zitsa

White wine of elegant fruit, amazing acidity and fresh flavour.

Regional Wine of Metsovo

Red, with an intense personality and endurance through time.

Regional Wines of Ioannina

Fine white and supple red.

Tsipouro

Epirotiko



Wineries

Ktima Voyatzi

Velvendo, Kozani
T: 24640 32283
yannis.voyatzis@boutari.gr

Alpha Estate

Amyndeo, T: 23860 20111
www.alpha-estate.gr

Amyndeon Co-operative Winery

Amyndeo, T: 23860 22258
easamyn@otenet.gr

Kir Yianni

Ag. Pandeimonas
T: 23860 61185
www.kiryianni.gr

Stergiou Winery

Metamorfoosi, Kastoria
T: 24670 72508

Wines

VQPRD Amyndeo, rosé

The only Greek rosé Appellation of Origin wine, it can immediately be identified by its expressive varietal nose.

VQPRD Amyndeo, red

Elegant, well-structured, complex with acidity lending tastiness and the possibility for long ageing.

Regional Wines of Velvendos

Rich white with intense aroma. Opulent, fruity rosé. Dark red with a delightful structure.

Regional Wine of Florina

White, with impressive fruitiness and typicity.

Regional Wines of Kastoria

Fruity white and rich red.

The Wine Road of the Lakes

Aliakmonas, the largest river in Greece, Lake Polyphytos, Lake Vegoritis, Lake Petron, Lake Kastorias... it is evident that the element of water plays a decisive role in the wines of Velvendo and Amyndeo.

The climate in the Velvendo area although continental, it is greatly influenced by its proximity to the lake and more specifically the ubiquitous winds, which serve as a source of refreshment for the vineyard during the hot summer months.

Here the grape varieties Roditis, Chardonnay, Trebbiano, Batiki, Xinomavro, Moschomavro, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon give us the Regional Wines of Velvendo.

The grape cultivated in Amyndeo is Xinomavro, the renowned red variety of Northern Greece. At this altitude – 600 to 750 metres – we are in the ideal setting for the making of exquisite red, rosé and sparkling VQPRD wines. All the same, the soil and climate of the area are also ideal for the cultivation of white grape varieties. Roditis, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Gewürztraminer are used to make the white Regional Wines of Florina.



The Wine Road of Naoussa

We are in Naoussa, a scenic town in the lush hinterland of Macedonia, which has associated its name with the women's sacrifice at the waterfall of Arapitsa, a famous Carnival and of course the vineyards that bring life to a deep red wine.

The vineyards of Naoussa are established in a privileged location on the southeast slopes of Mount Vermion, at an altitude of 150 m to 350 m. The soils are largely clay, with or without limestone. Protected against the chilly northerly winds, they make full benefit of midday sun.

The famous VQPRD wine is made exclusively of Xinomavro. A select red grape, Xinomavro easily attains ideal ripening in Naoussa. With noteworthy potential for fermentation aromas and ageing bouquet, but also a balanced content in sugars – acids – tannins. Xinomavro and the other red varieties cultivated in the region, mainly Merlot and Syrah, are the grapes used to produce the Regional Wines of Imathia.

Wineries

Vaeni Naoussa

Episkopi, T: 23320 44274
www.vaeni-naoussa.gr

Dalamara Winery

Naoussa, T: 23320 26054
ikdalas@yahoo.gr

Kir Yianni Naoussa

Yiannakochori
T: 23320 51100
www.kiryianni.gr

Boutari Stenimachos

Stenimachos
T: 23320 41666
www.boutari.gr

E. Tsantalís

Naoussa, T: 23990 76100
webmaster@tsantali.gr

Domaine Founti

Strantzà, T: 23320 48255
www.ktimafoundi.gr

Estate Chrysohoou

Strantzà, T: 23320 45080
www.chrisohoou.com

Wines

VQPRD Naoussa

When young it is tart, with ageing however, it softens and acquires a unique complexity, beautiful bouquet and flavour.

Regional Wines of Imathia

White "blanc de noirs". Fleshy and opulent red that endures through time.



Wineries

Aidarinis
Goumenissa
T: 23430 41293
23430 42555
aidarini@otenet.gr

Boutari
Goumenissa
T: 23430 41989
www.boutari.gr

Domaine Tatsis
Goumenissa
T: 23430 41053
ktimatatsis@acn.gr

Domaine Ligas
Giannitsa, T: 23820 24421
www.ligas.gr

Wines

VQPRD Goumenissa
Elegant, supple and complex, with emphasis on the Xinomavro fruit.

Regional Wines of Pella
Light, fruity white. Rosé with a fresh flavour. Red rich in colour and body.

The Wine Road of Goumenissa and Pella

Our journey will soon take us to Goumenissa, a lovely little town to the Northwest of Thessaloniki with the architectural features of mountainous Macedonia. After a brief stop, we will travel down the countryside to the valley of Pella.

The vineyards of Goumenissa stretch over the east slopes of Mount Paiko and on hills with mild slopes at the south of the town, at an altitude of 150-250 metres. Here the climate is continental, with chilly winters and dry summers. The northwesterly "vardaris" wind blows year-round and carries away diseases and the humidity from the neighbouring valley of Axios alleviates the summer heatwaves. Xinomavro and Negoska, a local red grape, are grown in this region. Both grape varieties have been planted in the vineyards to a proportion of approximately 3:1 and the blending of the two gives VQPRD Goumenissa.

At the highlands of Giannitsa, in the heart of Pella territory, the vineyard has been cultivated since ancient times. Here the soil is calcareous clay, with rich organic material. The favourable winds shift between northerly and southerly directions. In this ecosystem the indigenous varieties Roditis, Xinomavro paired with the noble Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Ugnié Blanc and Merlot are cultivated for the production of the Regional Wines of Pella.



The Wine Road of Thessaloniki

From the shorefront of the Thermaikos Bay to high up in the mountains of the region and back down to the plains, the region of Thessaloniki is the home of many famous wines. We will discover them one by one, with their colours, aromas and enchanting flavours leading the way.

Our first stop is Epanomi. Here the climate is Mediterranean, with hot summers. However, as we are next to the sea, the cool breeze prevents the grapes from ripening too abruptly. As a whole, this is an ideal ecosystem for the vine cultivation. The wines, Regional Wines of Epanomi, are produced of Assyrtiko, Malagousia, Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Viognier and Syrah. Merlot, Grenach Rouge, Limnio, Mavroudi, Mavrotragano.

In the mountainous parts of the region, on the southeast slope of Vertiskos, just before the traditional settlement of Ossa, the vineyards are stretched amidst

clumps of oak, beech and chestnut trees. Xinomavro, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot are grown alongside the white varieties Athiri, Assyrtiko, Malvasia, Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay. Xinomavro is the grape used to create the rosé Regional Wine Côtes de Vertiskos.

In the plains we will stop at Nea Messimvria. Most of the residents have brought their winemaking experience from East Romylia, when they emigrated to their new land. Today their vineyards foster the Roditis grape variety. It is blended with the white Zoumiatiko to make the white Regional Wine of Messimvria.

Wineries

Domaine Gerovassiliou
Epanomi, T: 23920 44567
www.gerovassiliou.gr

Domaine Kechris
Kalochori, T: 2310 751283,
info@kechri.gr

Domaine A. Babatzimopoulos
Nea Anchialos
T: 2310 519705 - 722309
www.babatzim.gr

Wines

Regional Wines of Epanomi
Whites of intense fruitiness and exceptional freshness. Opulent reds with volume and density that develop gracefully through time.

Regional Wine Côtes de Vertiskos
Fruity rosé with a refreshing flavour.

Regional Wine of Messimvria
Light, fruity white.

Tsipouro Makedoniko



Wineries

E. Tsantalis
Agios Pavlos
T: 23990 76100
webmaster@tsantali.gr
Domaine Porto Carras
Neos Marmaras
T: 23750 77000
www.portocarraswines.gr
E. Tsantalis
Chromitsa Mount Athos
T: 23990 76100
webmaster@tsantali.gr

Wines

VQPRD Côtes de Meliton
Classy white of cool and pleasing flavour. Complex red, fleshy, marvelously enduring through years of ageing.
Regional Wines of Chalkidiki
Lively white with fruity aromas. Supple, fresh red.
Regional Wines of Sithonia
Full-bodied white. Purple, dense red.
Regional Wines of Mount Athos
Pleasing white with a wide aromatic palette. Light rosé, full of fruit. Rich, well structured red.

Tsipouro
Agjoritiko

The Wine Road of Chalkidiki

Kassandra, Sithonia and Athos. Three peninsulas, three different worlds, three sites of incomparable beauty. The Wine Roads recommend an alternative journey full of visits to vineyards and wine-tasting experiences.

The first vineyards are to be encountered in central Chalkidiki. They are spread over the low hills, in close proximity to the sea; the cool sea breezes generously balance the extreme summer temperatures. The grapes largely cultivated here are white Roditis and Sauvignon Blanc for the production of white Regional Wine of Chalkidiki. Xinomavro and Cabernet Sauvignon blend to create the red Regional Wine of Chalkidiki.

At the sun-drenched slopes of Mount Meliton, the hot, dry climate and beneficial humidity of the Aegean Sea favour the production of choice wines. Thus, Limnio – an old Greek grape variety – and the French varieties Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc join efforts to create the red VQPRD Côtes de Meliton wine.

On the other hand, white varieties Assyrtiko, Roditis and Athiri team up to breathe life into the white wine under the same Appellation of Origin. Malagouzia and Syrah grapes respectively, give birth to the Regional Wines of Sithonia.

In nearly all the monasteries of Mount Athos one can find a long tradition in viticulture and winemaking. To a great extent, we are currently experiencing its revival. A large variety of grapes is cultivated in these vineyards: white Roditis, Athiri, Assyrtiko, Sauvignon Blanc and red Limnio, Xinomavro, Cabernet Sauvignon and Grenache Rouge. This blessed strip of land with a moderate climate, more than sufficient sunshine, cooled by mountain-fresh breezes and seaside humidity is the home of the Regional Wines of Mount Athos.



Wineries

Estate Biblia Chora
Kokkinohori, Kavala
T: 25920 44974
oinopedion@acn.gr
Domaine Pavlidi
Kokinogja, Drama
T: 252 10 58300
www.ktima-pavlidis.gr

Estate Wine Art Mikrochori
Mikrochori, Drama
T: 252 10 83626
www.wineart.gr

E. Tsantalis - Maronia
Maronia
T: 23990 76100
webmaster@tsantali.gr

Vourvoukelis Family Vineyards
Avdira, Xanthi
T: 254 10 75098
www.domaine-vourvoukeli.gr
Apostolis Vineyard
Vissaltia Ampelon, Serres
T: 23220 20830

Wines

Regional Wines of Pangeo
Fruity white of a rich refreshing flavour. Vibrantly coloured, intense rosé with lingering aroma. Purple, velvety red.
Regional Wines of Drama
White with intense fruitiness in aroma and flavour. Rich, rosy rosé. Heady, robust red with great endurance to ageing.
Regional Wines of Serres
Fruity white and red.
Regional Wines of Ismaros
Opulent white with typical varietal aromas. Complex, generous red.
Regional Wines of Avdira
Light, fruity white. Rosé with a taste of freshness. Red rich in colour and body.

The Wine Road of Dionysus

Our journey is slowly coming to an inevitable end; nevertheless, we still have intense wine experiences lying ahead: we are in the land of the wines produced on the slopes of majestic Mount Pangeo, Serres, Drama, Avdira and charming Maronia.

On the southeast slopes of Pangeo, the vineyards welcome the cool breeze of Strymonas Bay, while the mountains form a natural barrier against the chilly northerly winds. The soil is stony, infertile and well drained. Here winemakers have established prototype vineyards and excellent wineries. They have chosen to grow cosmopolitan grape varieties: Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Semillon, Ugnie Blanc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah and Greek: Roditis, Assyrtiko, Limnio, Agjoritiko to produce Regional Wines of Pangeo.

The irresistible Dionysian allure hiding in the slopes of Mount Pangeo leads us to Drama, to visit the wonderful wineries of the area. Their vineyards are model viticultures in the valley and the low hills to the east of the town, fostering a number of varieties, both white and red, for the most part French. Vineyards with

Roditis, Assyrtiko, Sauvignon Blanc, Semillon, Ugnie Blanc and Limnio, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot give the Regional Wines of Drama.

The vineyards of Maronia have been planted amphitheatrically on mildly sloping hills backed by Mount Ismaros which protects them against the chilly northerly winds. The Aegean Sea lies before them and softens the winter cold. Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Roditis, Limnio, Mavroudi, Syrah, Merlot, Mourvèdre and Grenache Rouge give us the Regional Wines of Ismaros.

Just recently the Regional Wines of Avdira designation was approved for white, rosé and red wines made of Zoumiatiko, Roditis, Pamidi and the well-known cosmopolitan grape varieties.

Glossary

Athiri. White grape, very popular in the islands of the South Aegean and Chalkidiki. Its wines present a slightly lemony aroma and rich flavour.

Assyrtiko. The predominant grape of Santorini, which has successfully migrated to Chalkidiki, Epanomi, Drama, Pangeo and the Peloponnese. White, with rather high acidity, even when fully matured.

Krassato. Red grape grown exclusively in Rapsani, participating in VQPRD Rapsani.

Limnio. Red grape, indigenous to the island of Limnos, with roots tracing back to antiquity. The Vine of Limnos, the wines of which have been celebrated by Polydeuces, is grown today – apart from Limnos of course – in Northern Greece.

Malagousia. Exquisite white variety, leading to full-bodied wines with exciting aromas.

Moschomavro. Aromatic red variety encountered in the region of Kozani.

Negoska. Red grape grown exclusively in Goumenissa. Participating in VQPRD Goumenissa, it offers colour, fruitiness and alcohol while reducing acidity.

Debina. A white grape from Epirus with remarkable potential for the production of fresh dry and sparkling wines.

Xinomavro. The choice red variety of Northern Greece. Well accustomed to continental climates, it is cultivated in more regions than any other variety in Greece. Its grapes have a characteristic acid flavour.

Roditis. Grown throughout almost all of Greece. When carefully cultivated and vinified, gives light wines soft on the palate and delightfully fruity.

Stavroto. A red grape grown exclusively in Rapsani participating in VQPRD Rapsani.

Appellation of Origin Wines (VQPRD).

Produced in specific regions, the names of which are indicated on the label. The legislator has specified the grape varieties used to produce the specific wines, as well as the viticulture conditions for proper ripening of the grapes and the winemaking techniques employed so that the wine displays tipicity. Greek Appellation of Origin Wines can be distinguished into Appellation of Origin of Higher Quality and Appellation of Controlled Origin. In Greece, 27 Appellation of Origin Wines are produced.

Table Wines. Can be distinguished into Vins de Pays Wines (see definition), Appellation de Tradition Wines and Brand Name Wines.

Regional Wines (Vins de Pays). Wines produced in specific geographical regions or small, designated areas. The production of such wines complies with terms respective to those of Appellation of Origin. On the label we can find the Geographical Indication of Origin e.g. Regional Wine of Macedonia.

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of the Vineyards of Northern Greece**
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