

VASSALTIS POST

QUARTELY EDITION

EDITOR IN CHIEF @QUIRKYCORK

Vassaltis Expands, Our New Warehouse is Ready!

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Vassaltis x Ungrafted Vines

Vassaltis continues to expand its global footprint as our wines are made available to more and more markets around the world. This year, Vassaltis is expanding into its first Asian market, Singapore. • P. 03



Yannis Trip to Belgium

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Meet Nina, Our New Assistant Winemaker!

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On February 5th we broke ground on a 100 sqm. supporting facility that will help us manage our growth. Half of the building will contain cooling rooms for the grapes coming in from the vineyards, and the other half will serve as a garage and storage for our viticulture equipment. This will help us run a smoother operation and increase our ability to manage our vineyards, the cornerstone of our operation. When considering the new building, we made sure of course that, it follows the aesthetics of the existing building and fits in nicely with the surrounding picturesque landscape of Santorini. Marking the occasion, Yannis Valambous founder of Vassaltis said: “It is a great milestone to see Vassaltis extend its infrastructure, a decade after setting up the existing facility. It gives me enormous pleasure to see not only the winery, but the team grow successfully year after year and we are all excited about what the future holds”

Those of you visiting us this summer will have the opportunity to see it with your eyes! ●



Vassaltis x Ungrafted Vines



Vassaltis continues to expand its global footprint as our wines are made available to more and more markets around the world. This year, Vassaltis is expanding into its first Asian

market, Singapore. Singapore is probably the most exciting market in South East Asia and its growing economy means consumers are not only drinking more wine, but are also open to new wines. Our importer is Ungrafted Vines (www.ungraftedvines.com), a newly established agency.

“Ungrafted was born to represent authentic, terroir-driven wines from family-owned vineyards—our philosophy centres around preserving traditional winemaking techniques showcasing unique regional characteristics. Our portfolio spans Greece, Italy, France, Oregon, California, and Australia, focusing on small-batch artisanal productions.” says Juliana Chan, General Manager of Ungrafted. When asked about the wine market in Singapore and the potential for Greek wine Juliana added: “Greek

wine in Singapore is gaining popularity, with Singaporeans increasingly appreciating the distinctive flavour profiles and value of Greek wines. The Singaporean wine scene is evolving, with a growing interest in boutique and artisanal wines, creating opportunities for wineries like Vassaltis”

To mark the occasion Yannis Valambous said *“South East Asia has always been a very interesting region for us and Singapore has been on our radar for a while. The pandemic meant we’ve had to postpone our plans for a couple of years, but now the time seems right. In Ungrafted Vines we feel we have found the right partner to represent our wines in such a dynamic market and couldn’t be more excited about the potential of our partnership.”* ●

Yannis Trip to Belgium



Despite 2024 already being a very busy year, including more plantings on Therasia (bringing the total since 2020 to 17ha!) and kicking the winery expansion into high gear (read about it [here](#)), Yannis found the time for a quick trip

to Belgium. There, along with our importer Andromachi Gogou of Andromachi Selection he met with new clients and old friends.

Over four days, Yannis visited a number of

cities, including Brussels, Liege, Leuven, and Waregem. While in Brussels, he attended a fantastic wine dinner held at Strofilia, the most iconic Greek restaurant in the city. We cannot thank the Svanias family enough for their caring attention and hospitality hosting the dinner. In Leuven, had the opportunity to host another wine event for friends new and old at Convento, a reference point for wine lovers in the greater Brussels-Leuven area. The trip was an excellent opportunity to introduce our Alcyone to the Belgian market and show off the new vintage of our other wines.

This was the second trip to Belgium since our partnership with Andromachi began in 2020. We are so pleased to see that the popularity of our wines has increases in Belgium due to her continuous efforts to market not only Vassaltis, but also the other Greek wines in her portfolio. Our wines were well received by everyone with whom Yannis met, and were thrilled that they will be available in several new places now. But more importantly we made many new friends on the trip! ●

Meet Nina, Our New Assistant Winemaker!



In January, Vassaltis welcomed a new team member, Nina-Eleni Christou. Everyone comes to wine in a different way, and Nina's wandering path took her through a PhD in the sciences before she landed in the vineyards of Santorini.

Nina began her studies in physics then moved onto physics applications in biology. After a few twists and turns, she ended her PhD studies in France in structural biology then completed a postdoctoral program in Germany. Back in France, her career was taking off at the same time she realized that her interest in wine was more than just a passing fancy.

In fact, Nina had been interested in wine since she was young, but never gave it much thought. Wasn't everyone interested in wine? Apparently not as much as she was! Over time, she slowly noticed that more and more friends and family asked for her advice about wine, thought about her in conjunction with it, and brought her wine and other wine-related gifts. At the same time, she saw that more and more young people in France

were beginning wine careers, something she thought was reserved for older people. I'll get to wine after I retire, she thought.

That retirement plan moved up several decades when she began to actively pursue wine while, at the same time, still deeply involved with her career in science. Her work in structural biology won her new programs, positions, and financial independence. Even though lab work didn't nourish her soul, Nina felt that she couldn't abandon the career that she spent years studying to achieve. Until one day, she could no longer ignore the siren call of wine.

A siren that sings the song of red wine. How does a red wine lover end up on Santorini? The home of Assyrtiko, King of White Wine! A high school friend, who also went from academia to wine, encouraged Nina's interest and helped her gain an internship at Gai'a Winery on Santorini where her academic grasp of chemistry gave her a leg up learning the ropes of winemaking. It was a big change going from a clean and calm lab environment to the literally dirty job of winemaking! But she loves it. Science has real world applications, but it is abstract. Wine is real. You can express yourself in the wine you make and Nina is looking forward to that opportunity.

Would she be strong enough to do the physical job of working in the vineyards and making wine? Nina admitted that was a worry she had when she started with Vassaltis. With Yiannis P.'s support, she's met every challenge so far. As she pointed out, many of the top winemakers on the island are women, so she knows that being physically smaller or a little weaker is not something that needs to hold her back.

How did a professed skeptic of Assyrtiko's allure end up at Vassaltis? Because Vassaltis changed her mind about it. Nina admitted that she prefers red wine because she does not feel an emotional connection with it and has had a difficult time relating to Assyrtiko's austerity. Drinking Vassaltis's Santorini 2018 changed her mind, giving her, for the first time, that emotional reaction to a white wine. She actively pursued a position at Vassaltis because of what she called Vassaltis's innovation and refusal to be bound by the box that defines Santorini Assyrtiko.

That appreciation has only grown since working with Yiannis P in the vineyards and in the winery. Nina especially loves working in the vineyards, and has found inspiration in how they've developed over the years and how durable they are. Since coming to Vassaltis in January, she has learned to appreciate Assyrtiko and sees more now its ability to age and how expressive it can be in the right hands.

Nina says she still has much to learn but is loving the journey. She credits one team member especially for helping her through the difficult periods, Vassanos, the Vassaltis winery cat! She says it is impossible to not feel happy with him around. With Vassanos at her side, Yiannis P to guide her, and a glass of Vassaltis Santorini 2018 (her favorite Vassaltis wine!) in hand, Nina is poised to become one of Greece's new, innovative winemakers. ●



A Taste of Cyclades

We asked our friend Yiorgos Katseas, owner of [Katogi Greek Tapas](#), to cook his ideal dish to pair with the Vassaltis Nassitis. He rose to the challenge and shared with us his recipe for bruschetta with grilled sardines, salsa, and lime aioli.

Yiorgos has lived and cooked around the Cyclades for the last 19 years. For him, the sensibility and feeling of the Cycladic Islands evoke the best of Greek food in the summer. It's no wonder that he based Katogi Greek Tapas on the island of Ios!

He searches for simplicity in his dishes. But simplicity does not mean boring, and he achieves delicious flavors by ensuring all his ingredients are fresh and local. It's impossible to go wrong with the tomatoes, lemons, cappers, oregano, honey, goat cheese, and freshly caught fish from his summer menu!

Grab a bottle of our Assyrtiko, Aidani, and Athiri blend, give it a try with Yiorgo's Bruschetta, and let us know what you think!

Ingredients

For the bruschetta:

1. Cleaned sardines
2. Slices of sourdough bread

For the salsa:

1. 1 medium tomato, finely chopped
2. 1/2 avocado, finely chopped

3. 1 tablespoon onion, finely chopped
4. 2 tablespoons olive oil
5. 1 tablespoon lemon juice
6. Salt, pepper, oregano to taste

For the aioli:

1. 1 egg
2. 1 teaspoon mustard
3. 1 teaspoon roasted garlic paste
4. 30 ml lime juice
5. Zest of half a lime
6. 1 teaspoon finely chopped dill
7. 200 ml sunflower oil
8. Salt to taste

Instructions

1. Clean the sardines, remove the bones, and open them like a butterfly.
2. Gently mix all the ingredients for the salsa.
3. Blend all the ingredients for the aioli with an immersion blender and place it in the refrigerator.
4. Heat a grill pan well.
5. Brush the bread with a little olive oil and place it on the grill pan, turning to brown both sides.
6. Brush the sardines with a little olive oil and grill them on both sides.

To assemble the bruschettas, spread a little aioli on the grilled bread, top with salsa, and arrange the grilled sardine over the salsa. Drizzle with a little olive oil and serve! ●

