

VASSALTIS POST

QUARTERLY EDITION



McCabe Photo Exhibition

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The Captivating Beauty of Concrete

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London Visit

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The Vasilicos Offer

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McCabe Photo Exhibition

15/4-31/10 — 12:00-20:00

Vassaltis Vineyards

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Guests had the opportunity to admire McCabe’s photos and hear stories of the era from McCabe himself. The exhibition is comprised by 29 photographs – some of them shown for the first time on the island- from the artist’s early travels to a post war Greece. They picture in a very vivid way an isolated island mostly without electricity and roads and of course no telephone or airport. The hardship of the times but also the purity of the place and the people are portrayed to the viewer in a striking way through the lens of McCabe. In the words of Christina Petkopoulou, the exhibition’s curator

“With the sensitivity of a naturalist rather than the gaze of a traveler, the photographer documented mid-20th-century Santorini, a time when its inhabitants lived with the arid, volcanic land—coexisting with the fantasy, the experience and the historical myth of a possible catastrophe. Stone, ash, sulfur, the dense fruits of the land, the unfathomable depths of the Aegean, and its strong winds alongside sailors, working women, laborers, fishermen, animals, and archaeological remains appear as active agents of Santorini’s history, that is here narrated bottom-up.

The exhibition which runs from April 15th to October 31st and is held as part of the celebrations for the 10th anniversary of our winery and our sister hotel The Vasilicos. ●



The Captivating Beauty of Concrete

By Nina Christou
– Assistant Oenologist

At the heart of our winery’s production space lie the mysterious black concrete “diamonds.” The latest addition to the Vassaltis oenology team’s toolkit not only blends aesthetically into the space but also brings us one step closer to the “ideal” wine.

As oenologists, our goal is to allow the wine to express the grape variety and the place it comes from—without excessive intervention. To achieve this, we need a range of tools, each serving a different purpose in the winemaking process. In this case, the vessels in which the wine ferments and matures can unlock different expressions of the wine. Most of us are familiar with stainless steel and wooden tanks, as well as barrels of various types of wood, all of which we also use at Vassaltis. But concrete?

To understand why we’re experimenting with concrete, we need to first evaluate and compare the tools we already have. Stainless steel tanks are neutral, stable, and have little to no influence on the wine’s character. Wooden tanks—and even more so, wooden barrels—significantly impact a wine’s profile. Any wine lover can usually detect whether a wine has been aged in wood from the very first sip!

A key difference between these vessels is the permeability of the material, meaning how much oxygen comes into contact with the wine. Minimal to no oxygen contact preserves freshness and delicate aromas, while greater oxygen exposure can lead to more developed notes such as ripe fruit, caramel, and nuts—hallmarks of wines that have undergone oxidative ageing. Stainless steel tanks are virtually impermeable, whereas wooden vessels—depending on the type of wood and the treatment it has undergone—can allow varying levels of oxygen transfer. More oxygen encourages the development of secondary aromas and softens the wine, creating a rounder, fuller mouthfeel with greater complexity.

Another characteristic of wines fermented or matured in wooden vessels is the well-known influence of wood aromas—smoky notes, coconut, clove, and more. While these can add complexity, there are wines where we seek the benefits of micro-oxygenation without the dominant overlay of such aromas. In these cases, concrete vessels provide an ideal solution.

What is concrete, and how does it benefit winemaking?

Concrete is a mixture of inorganic materials that, upon contact with water, bond together to create a solid structure—much like its use in construction. Once set, it forms a porous matrix that not only allows



controlled oxygen transfer but also has excellent thermal properties. This excites us because it combines the best of both worlds: the oxygen permeability of wood (without imparting flavor) and the neutrality of stainless steel. It also enables gradual temperature adjustments during fermentation or maturation, avoiding the abrupt changes that can occur in stainless steel tanks—thus treating the wine more gently.

Another fascinating feature of concrete is its mineral composition, which closely resembles that of wine itself. This creates a constant interaction, a balance, where the wine’s ions are in continuous exchange with those of the concrete. This subtle movement contributes to a vibrancy and liveliness in the wine—quite different from the inert environment of stainless steel or the extractive nature of wood.

What’s also intriguing is the historic relationship between Assyrtiko and concrete. We know that in Santorini, old kanaves (traditional wineries) and historic estates—such as the iconic Venetsanos Winery—relied almost entirely on concrete cisterns carved into the earth for fermentation and storage. The mixture of island pumice stone and water produced some of the finest concrete in the world, protecting the wine from leaks and uncontrolled oxidation. According to some older craftsmen, pumice was sometimes even mixed with wine lees to create an especially dense and durable cement!

Why “diamonds”?

Our concrete tanks resemble black diamonds—some visitors have even called them “gothic diamonds!”—making quite an impression. However, the shape wasn’t chosen for aesthetics alone. It was designed for natural wine circulation. While other tanks rely on mechanical stirring, here we take advantage of the vessel’s geometry to achieve gentle, continuous movement of the wine.

So far, the results of using concrete have been promising: a vibrant, expressive wine, with a full, balanced palate that showcases the true grandeur of Santorini Assyrtiko—captivating even the most skeptical wine lovers. ●



London Visit

In May, Yannis and Yiannis visited London to celebrate our 10th anniversary. The main event of the visit was a masterclass at 67 Pall Mall for members of the trade and press.

There, they had the opportunity to travel back in time and showcase wines from as far back as 2016. There was great interaction with attendees regarding Santorini and the past, present, and future of its wines. The lineup included, among others, Santorini from 2022 to 2016, Gramina 2020 & 2018, as well as Plethora 2020 and 2018. The finishing touch was a 2020 Vinsanto.

In the following days, the duo visited a few trade clients and held a couple of dinners for private clients. It was a great opportunity to catch up with old friends and make new ones, to show people our work, and to look back on 10 years of winemaking and how beautifully our wines have developed over time. London will always hold a special place for Vassaltis—one of the first markets outside Greece where our wines were sold. ●



The 10th, Social Media Campaign

Head to our Instagram account to watch interviews with several friends serving our wines this summer! As part of our 10th anniversary celebrations, we have released older vintages to a few selected restaurants around Greece. These include Blue Fish, Botrini's, Delta, Papaioannou, Patio at The Margi Hotel, and Tudor Hall at the Grande Bretagne Hotel in Athens. In Mykonos, participating restaurants include Alemagou and Scorpions. We caught up with their sommeliers to hear their thoughts on Vassaltis's 10th anniversary.

The videos will be airing throughout the summer. Stay tuned! ●



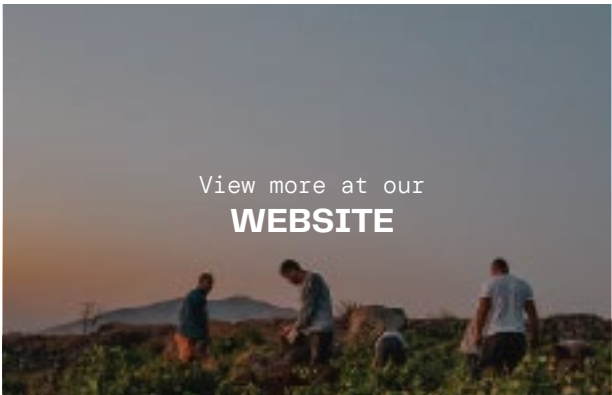
The Vasilicos Offer

While building our wine club offering, we have a surprise in store for our members! Starting this summer, members of the “Vassaltis Friends & Family Club” will enjoy a 10% discount at our sister hotel, The Vasilicos.

Formerly the private sanctuary of passionate art collector Vassilis Valambous (the late father of Vassaltis founder, Yannis), The Vasilicos is a constellation of hyposkafa—the cave-like structures typical of Caldera architecture. Furnished with unique pieces, either commissioned or handpicked from the family’s private collection, the beautifully pared-down suites reflect the ambience of an eclectic and highly private retreat. The history of the property is visible in every comfortable and elegant detail.

When The Vasilicos transitioned from carefree summer house to boutique hotel, the intention was for it to function as a hotel while retaining the spirit of a summer home. Little clues telling its story are scattered throughout the property—offering curious guests the chance to enjoy their stay like a treasure hunt.

If you fancy yourself sipping a glass of Gramina at sunset—now’s your chance! ●



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