



Written by
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Northern Greece part 1 - Amyndeo



See also Northern Greece part 2 - Gouménissa and Náoussa.

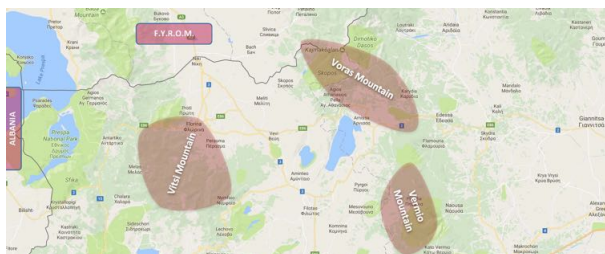
Western Macedonia has the highest level of unemployment anywhere in the EU. In 2016 it was 31.3% according to Eurostat. However, as Alpha Estate's Angelos Iatrides points out, the regional GDP is high because Western Macedonia is home to *six of Greece's power stations*, which reduces the level of EU funding available to local businesses. Power generation and mining for lignite, plus associated companies, employ about 9,000 people out of a regional total of around 285,000. While there are no official figures for the agricultural sector – as well as vines, there's arboriculture, cereal crops, sunflowers for bio-diesel, fruit and vegetables (there's even a DOP for *Florina peppers*) and livestock – Iatrides estimates that wine contributes about €50 million to a total GDP of about €4.1 billion and that this contribution is growing as the potential for quality wines in this relatively cool region is increasingly recognised. It is impossible to estimate the number of people employed in the winegrowing sector because so much work is

seasonal or part time.

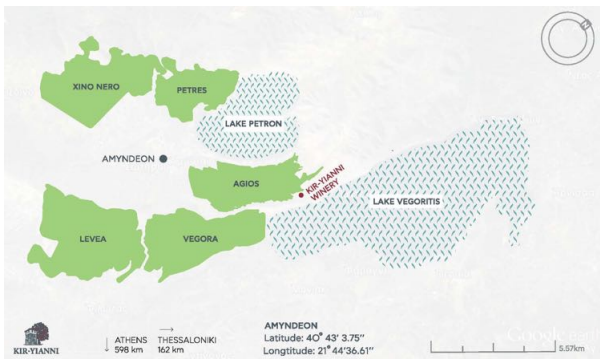
I walked through the Kir-Yianni vineyards with [Dr Haroula Spinthiropoulou](#), one of the most experienced and highly regarded agronomists in Greece, and she reflected on the continuing consequences of the financial crisis in Greece, describing it more holistically as a human crisis that requires a redefinition of values, putting respect for work and for people of all ages in place of a craving for the latest electronic gadget. She is optimistic about people coming back to work on the land, not only the hard graft in the vines but also graduates who want to put their skills into creating a better natural environment for families and communities to thrive. 'We will find our ways', she concludes, smiling. (I will be writing about her own small-scale winegrowing at her Argatia estate in my next article on Gouménissa and Náoussa wines.)

My last visit to Amyndeo (spelt variously as Amyndeon, Aminteo, etc, according to the transliteration) within the regional unit of Florina in north-west Greece, close to the border with the Republic of Macedonia, or FYROM, was in the summer of 2008 as part of a [road trip across the north of the country](#), the Greek region of Macedonia, from Drama in the east to Náoussa and Amydeon in the west. This time I was travelling with my good friend Tara Thomas, editor of [Wine & Spirits](#) magazine based in New York and specialist in all things Greek (food as well as wine). Our focus was mainly on Amyndeo and Gouménissa though we also tasted wines from Náoussa and finished at Kechris, a retsina specialist on the outskirts of Thessaloniki, before a dash to the airport. To see how these regions fit together, take a look at the northern part of the [World Atlas of Wine map of Greece](#).

This first part of my report focuses on Amyndeo, a mostly sandy, very windy plateau at around 600–700m that is crucially influenced both by elevation and by the mountains and lakes around the plateau. This annotated map taken from a presentation by Alpha Estate (see notes below) shows the location of the mountains and how close this region is to the country's borders.



This second map, created by Kir-Yianni (more detail below), shows the most highly regarded of the 16 official subregions named after the local villages, those most influenced by the [lake effect](#). Individual producers are also keen to identify their best sites or crus within these subregions (see the second Kir-Yianni map just above their tasting notes below). At the moment I am not convinced that the subregions will be of great value to the wine drinker – not because they do not influence the taste of the wine but because this is still an emerging region in terms of recognition on the global market. However, the specific vineyard names on labels, for example [Alpha's Hedgehog](#) or Kir-Yianni's all-white Samaropetra, may be since they are the result of careful site and variety matching.



The 72 wines described below are grouped by producer, the producers ordered alphabetically. Within each group, the wines are more or less in the order tasted but you can change that using the drop-down menu.

Order by ▼

ALPHA ESTATE

From their beginnings in 1997, when they planted the Hedgehog vineyard, and first experimental vintages in 2000 and 2001, Athens- and Bordeaux-trained winemaker Angelos Iatrides and fourth-generation viticulturist Makis Mavridis have forged a strong path, especially on export markets. Since the completion of the winery in 2004, they seem to have had a constant building and investment programme, in the vineyards as well as the winery, supported in part by EU co-funding: 'Every year we want to build something', explains Iatrides. The construction in play when we visited in May involves a further €1 million investment in an education centre - for the region as well as for themselves - and facilities for servicing all their own vehicles.



Of the 850 ha (2,100 acres) of vines in Amyndeon, Alpha own or farm 120 ha, including the 40 ha planted two years ago. Their current production is 700,000 bottles, making them second only in volume to the Amytaion Co-op (see below) and their ultimate goal is 1 million bottles. But size is not their only goal. They have recently begun the Ecosystem Project, which aims to identify the exact origin of the grapes, and vineyard yeasts (in collaboration with Geisenheim), in every bottle of wine, though the plan is to isolate their own yeasts and culture them for inoculation rather than allowing spontaneous fermentation to occur. 'Nature doesn't always make the best', says perfectionist and control freak Iatrides. Currently only a small proportion of the vineyards have been mapped and analysed in this way - with fulsome details on the labels - but they expect all 120 ha to come within the scope of the project over the next 25 years. Their goals are nothing if not ambitious.

The photo above shows their super-tidy and very sandy old-vine vineyard that is anywhere between 80 and 100 years old and produces one of their best wines, the Xinomavro Vieilles Vignes. When I expressed some surprise at their regimented appearance – old bush vines are usually much more higgledy piggledy – Iatrides recounted their venerable story, which reveals just how much time and effort is hidden from the eyes of those who drink the produce of such vineyards: 'The initial owner of this block was a real perfectionist and revolutionary for his age. Back in the 1920s he initially planted this block in a bush-vine format. Then, at the end of 1950s, with the foundation of Amyndeo Co-op and the overall development of the agricultural sector of the area, he decided to re-shape it as a linear vineyard. Finally during the last 15 years we have put a lot of effort and care to rejuvenate it and make it look like its initial state. Into this effort some vines had to be taken out, in order to make vine-caring tasks easier.'

I have had a good-natured but long-running battle with Iatrides about how heavy the Alpha bottles are. This time his explanation was a little more convincing. He claims a Bulgarian producer is using a label that looks very similar to theirs and the only way they can remain distinctive and avoid imitation is to have a unique bottle and one that is tough enough to support the embossing.

- Alpha Estate, Axia Syrah/Xinomavro 2014 PGI Macedonia *Equal shares of Syrah and Xinomavro, 12 months in French oak.*
Deep cherry colour. Deep, generous dark fruit. Black cherry. Smooth, juicy and fresh. So drinkable and digestible and with persistence. Moreish. Impossible not to like. (JH)13.5% Drink 2017-2020
16.5
- Alpha Estate, Axia Tannat/Xinomavro 2014 PGI Macedonia *New Axia blend, half and half. 12 months in French oak, medium to light toast.*
Dark cherry red. Lovely dark-fruited nose and surprisingly silky texture but with plenty of grip. Fluid even though well structured. Tannat yields have to be controlled, apparently. More austere than the Axia Syrah/Xinomavro 2014 but the dry texture of the tannins is elegant not hard. Sophisticated and needs time. (JH)13.5% Drink 2018-2025
16.5+
- Alpha Estate, Turtles Vineyard Syrah 2014 PGI Florina *12 months in medium-toast French oak. RS 2.3 g/l, pH 3.6, TA 5.4 g/l. Currently inoculated with commercial yeast but in the future this wine will come into their Ecosystem project so that they will change to using ambient yeast from the same site as the grapes.*
Deep cherry red. More clay in the soil here. Riper, darker and richer fruit than the two Axia blends just tasted. Firm and more tannic, more structured but still with the Alpha finesse. Peppery and spicy and still packed with juicy fruit. Delicious fruit. And great finesse even with more power. Persistent. (JH)13% Drink 2018-2025
17+
- Alpha Estate, Hedgehog Vineyard Xinomavro 2014 Amyndeo *Lightest soils of all their sites, giving the most aromatic wines. Deep ruby. Dusty finesse and lightly peppery. Smooth, fine grained and elegant, scented dark fruit and pepper on the palate. Long. (JH)13% Drink 2017-2023*
17
- Alpha Estate, Vieilles Vignes Reserve Xinomavro 2013 Amyndeo *Now labelled as part of the Ecosystem project. From the Barba Yanniss block. 24 months in French oak, unfiltered.*
Mid ruby. Gorgeous cherry fruit on the nose. Beautifully scented. Fine boned, firm, compact but so supple, with the alcohol well integrated. Notable intensity. Aromatic and just starting to show complexity and some dried tomato. (JH)14.5% Drink 2017-2030

17.5

- Alpha Estate, Strofi Pinot Noir 2014 PGI Florina *In the Ecosystem project, from a single block, between the Hedgehog vineyard and the old-vines plot, where there is a very thin layer of sand over high limestone content - had to wait for 7 years for roots to go deep. 777 and Dijon clones. Planted 1997. 12 months in French oak, unfiltered. pH 3.38, TA 5.3 g/l.*
Light to mid cherry red. Peppery red fruit, quite a bit of spice. Juicy and rocky/spicy on the palate but without loss of Pinot's elegance and red fruit. Dry, paper-fine tannins. Great finesse. Place as much as variety revealed here. Impressive. (JH)14.5% Drink 2017-2020

17

- Alpha Estate, SMX 2014 PGI Florina *12 months in French oak, medium toast. Unfiltered. pH 3.44, TA 5.6 g/l. Consultant blender is Bordeaux's Eric Boissenot. This their top wine is a selection from 120 barrels.*
Deep black cherry. Deep dark fruit with a savoury olive character. Also sweet and ripe but not overly sweet. Secret of blending is the choice of press wine - for both structure and aromatics, says Alpha's Angelos Iatrides. Big and rich but so elegant. Firm and rounded, fresh and already silky even though it has such a great future. Average vintage, fairly typical for the region. Super-elegant tannins. Succulent and long and great harmony. (JH)13.5% Drink 2018-2034

18

- Alpha Estate, Utopia Tannat 2012 PGI Florina *Cool vintage. You have to work with low yields to get even ripening with Tannat, says winemaker Angelos Iatrides. Different levels of ripening within the bunch. Two bunches in one and you have to cut out the less ripe part. 18 months in French oak, unfiltered. TA 5.9 g/l, RS 2.5 g/l, pH 3.41.*
Inky crimson. Dark and peppery, really dark fruit. Rocky and savoury and intense on the nose but not really aromatic at first, then opens to a floral character. Dark and chewy on the palate, all in embryo. All closed and savoury and dry on the palate. There's beauty in its restraint. Very sophisticated Tannat. (JH)14.5% Drink 2018-2028

17.5

- Alpha Estate, Alpha One Xinomavro/Mavrodaphne 2010 PGI Florina *In this vintage this was a blend of equal parts Xinomavro and Mavrodaphne, from the Strofi subregion of the Amyndeon plateau. 36 months in French oak, with two lots of new barrels during that time. Unfiltered. pH 3.46, TA 5.9 g/l, RS 2.9 g/l. Alpha One all sold on allocation.*
Dark cherry red. Black fruit and black olives. Savoury. Sweet cherries too and the Xinomavro dominates on the nose. On the palate, the Mavrodaphne gives spice. Velvety texture thanks to the Mavrodaphne. Chewy finish. Mavrodaphne cultivated in Macedonia but apparently it is illegal to mention it on the label. 'It is not allowed but we can.' Both meaty and sweet. Sweeter fruited than the Tannat but the Xinomavro gives structure and longevity. (JH)14.5% Drink 2018-2025

17.5

- Alpha Estate, Alpha One Syrah 2011 PGI Florina *Syrah in this vintage. TA 6.1 g/l, RS 2.3 g/l, pH 3.35. 36 months in French oak (Jupille), with two lots of new barrels during that time but all untoasted oak. Unfiltered. Apparently the steaming process of the barrels (as opposed to toasting) removes some of the mannose (a type of sugar) so the sweetness often bestowed by barrels is reduced.*
Black cherry colour. Ripe, dark and meaty. Really savoury like a ripe northern Rhône. Black cherry and pepper. Big and rich but not sweet. Savoury power. Dark, rich but still suave. A bit of heat on the finish. Immense power. This was the first ever bottling of Alpha One that was aged in white oak. I would never have guessed that it had had all this new oak. (JH)14.5% Drink 2020-2030

18

- Alpha Estate, Rosé 2016 Amyndeon *Saignée from Hedgehog vineyard. Two months on lees with*

bâtonnage. First release that is 100% Xinomavro, and Amyndeio is the only PDO for rosé in Greece. TA 5.4 g/l, pH 3.36, RS 1 g/l.

Very pretty pale pink. Pretty, lively red fruit. Dry and with a lightly chalky texture. Great freshness and that chalky character adds length. Bags of fruit giving a sweetness but still so fresh. Serious rosé. (JH)13% Drink 2017-2018

16.5

- Alpha Estate Malagousia 2016 PGI Florina *Two months on lees with bâtonnage*. Perfumed – floral and almonds. Fresh and with a certain stony character to balance the aromatics. Bone dry but creamy. Less terpenic and more white blossom (heavier soils tend to give more terpenes, apparently). Creamy, citrus purity. (JH)13% Drink 2017-2018

16.5

- Alpha Estate, Axia Sauvignon Blanc/Assyrtiko 2015 PGI Macedonia *Equal parts of the two varieties*. TA 6.3 g/l, pH 3.2, RS 1.1 g/l.

Very herbal and fresh. The Sauvignon dominates in the character but there's an attractive dry texture thanks to the more mineral Assyrtiko. Dry and deliciously mouth-watering. Great length and intensity without being pungent. Really zesty and irresistible. (JH)13% Drink 2017-2019

17

- Alpha Estate Sauvignon Blanc 2016 PGI Florina *Skin contact for 4–8 hours, tank fermented, aged sur lie for 4 months*. TA 5.9 g/l, pH 3.32, RS 1.2 g/l.

Lively, fresh varietal. Herbal and citrus with impressive length and intensity without being OTT. One picking only. Crisp, and the lees ageing has given a depth and richness without any loss of freshness. (JH)13% Drink 2017-2019

17

- Alpha Estate, Fumé Sauvignon Blanc 2015 PGI Florina *From the Kaliva single vineyard and in Alpha's new Ecosystem series. Fermented in untoasted Tronçais barriques then aged with lees stirring for 7 months in the same*. pH 3.16, TA 7.2 g/l, RS 1.6 g/l. No malo.

Smoky and mildly reductive with superb freshness. Varietal character without stereotype. Lovely reductive character on the palate. Has the texture of the lees. All about texture and site not about variety. Complex but not oaky. Lovely volume in the mouth. Food wine incarnate. Mainly R3 clone with super-low yields. (JH)13% Drink 2017-2022

17.5

- Alpha Estate Chardonnay 2015 PGI Florina *From the Toumpa single vineyard and in Alpha's new Ecosystem series. Fermented in untoasted Bertrange and Jupille barriques then aged with lees stirring for 7 months in the same*. pH 3.51, TA 5.7 g/l, RS 1.6 g/l. No malo.

Creamy and apple fruit and yellow peach (76 and 131 clones). Rich and creamy on the palate. Soft and fleshy. Full flavoured but a bit flat on the finish. (JH)13% Drink 2017-2020

16.5

- Alpha Estate Assyrtiko 2015 PGI Florina *From the Aghia Kiriaki single vineyard and in Alpha's new Ecosystem series. Fermented in tank then aged with lees stirring for 4 months in the same*. pH 3.13, TA 6.6 g/l, RS 1.8 g/l.

Assyrtiko in Amyndeion ripens two months later than on Santorini. Smoky citrus, totally mineral. Really tight and fine-boned, cool, dry and stony. One of the best I have tasted from outside of Santorini. Mouth-wateringly precise and persistent. (JH)13% Drink 2017-2022

17

- Alpha Estate, Omega Late Harvest 2014 PGI Florina *85% Gewürztraminer, 15% Malagousia. No botrytis. Fermented in tank and aged 12 months in medium-toast oak casks*.

Lots of honeyed apricot and a touch of almond. Creamy, sweet and soft but balanced. Grapes dried on the vines. Succulent and floral on the palate. Really well balanced with impressive freshness. Malagousia, if it is concentrated by late harvest, can add acidity. Ripe green fig on

the finish. Peachy finish. Long. (JH)13% Drink 2017-2022

17

- Alpha Estate Mavrodaphne 2006 PGI Florina Tank sample which has spent ten years in barrel and is now in tank on its way to the bottle. This is the first vintage. Difficult to make this wine because it has thin skins and needs a really dry vintage to be able to pick late without rot. Only free-run juice used, initially fermented in red-wine fermenters then the fermentation finishes in new oak barrels. 24 months sur lie with bâtonnage. Ten years in lightly toasted Jupille casks. TA 7.1 g/l, RS 199 g/l, pH 2.96.

This is a very special wine. Some oak sweetness on the nose and sweet cherry. Sweet with cherry fruit on the palate allied to amazing freshness. Youthful and lively. And some garrigue herbs and liquorice. Amazing that there is no volatile acidity, and just look at the numbers. Seductive and the tannins seem to moderate the sweetness. Will be less than €25 for half bottle (which strikes me as a bargain). Smoky and complex and those tannins are a great balance with the sweetness. Stunning. It went very well with goat's cheese and nuts. But I wouldn't mind trying this with a steak, even with so much residual sugar. (JH)13% Drink 2017-2025

18

- Alpha Estate, Vieilles Vignes Xinomavro Reserve 2008 Amyndeo 24 months in French oak, one year in bottle. TA 6.6 g/l, pH 3.42, RS 3.4 g/l.

Mid garnet with bricky rim. Scented with senescence. Mature red fruits, some undergrowth. One of the best vintages for Xin in the area, apparently. Silky, juicy, so fresh and lively. Beautiful and perfect now but plenty more life in it yet. Fruit sweetness and just the start of maturity with some spice and dried tomato. Still with dry finesse in the tannins. Very long. (JH)14% Drink 2016-2028

18.5

- Alpha Estate, Vieilles Vignes Xinomavro Reserve 2004 Amyndeo More than 50% green harvest. 60% of the fruit comes from the 83-year-old vines, the rest 35 years old. 50% aged in Allier lightly toasted oak and the rest in Missouri oak. TA 7.4 g/l, RS 2.4 g/l, pH 3.2.

Smells oaky. They had started using new oak – some high and medium toast. Less fruit intensity than in the 2008, evolved and showing an animal character as well as dried fruits. Tapenade (black-olive paste). But the oak is still there. Fresh nevertheless. (JH)13.8% Drink 2010-2020

16.5

- Alpha Estate, Vieilles Vignes Xinomavro Reserve 2003 Amyndeo Aged 8 months in medium-toast Missouri oak, unfiltered. TA 6.2 g/l, pH 3.4, RS 3.2 g/l.

First commercial release of this wine. But less oak than 2004 because they re-used the barrels from early non-commercial releases. Very nice undergrowth notes, still fresh, still structured, lively (it had some carbonic maceration). Juicy even now, the tannins almost resolved. Great balance and length with a spicy, dried-tomato-like finish. (JH)13.5% Drink 2008-2022

17

- Alpha Estate 2003 Amyndeo This is what is now labelled SMX though it was just 'Alpha Estate' at the time. 60% Syrah, 20% Merlot, 20% Xinomavro. Aged 8 months in fine-grain Missouri oak, medium toast. TA 6.2 g/l, pH 3.4, RS 3.2 g/l.

Colour more developed than in the 2003 Vieilles Vignes. American oak gives more exposure to oxygen but winemaker Iatrides was an importer of American oak at the time. Mature, plenty of autumn leaves. Truffle-like maturity but lots of pleasure. Just much more developed. Sweet finish. (JH)13.5% Drink 2008-2020

16.5

AMYNTAION CO-OPERATIVE

Founded in 1959 and the sole winery in the region for almost 40 years, the co-op is still the biggest producer in the Amyndeo-Florina area, responsible for around 20%. They were also responsible for making the first sparkling rosé from the Xinomavro variety in the early 1970s, which quickly became and still is the only PDO for sparkling rosé in the country (the PDO also covers still rosé and reds). They have 50 growers farming 150 ha but they have been through a very difficult decade since I first visited them in 2008, mostly due to the financial crisis, which came just as they made some big investments, but as with many co-ops it has been difficult for them to add enough value to their wines to be able to fund such investment. It seems such a shame that just when they were gearing up for modernisation with a new dynamic team, they were hit by events outside of their control.

However, since 2009 they have been working with consultant enologist Pavlos Argyropoulos, head oenologist at Tsantali for 25 years and now winemaker and majority owner of Pieria Eratini estate in Kolindros in the foothills of Mount Olympus. In exchange for his consultancy, Argyropoulos is able to use the co-op's sparkling winemaking facilities to make his own sparkling wine Blink. Thanks to this mutually beneficial partnership, the co-op seems to have been able to maintain, even improve, the standard of their wines and to be weather the storm remarkably well. It was Argyropoulos's daughter Fanny who presented these wines at the Dimopoulos winery, where we tasted wines from several local producers. As she noted, the co-op has 'become more flexible and truly involved in the Amyndaion region to their advantage'. Working with her father has brought them not only expertise but also 'a strong connection to the wine market', allowing them to 'become a more viable organisation for the future with the opportunity to play an important role in the Greek wine market. Both co-ops and private companies are needed for Greek wine to grow and win a position on the international market.'

- *Co-operative Amyntaion, Petraia Gi 2016 PGI Florina 80% Sauvignon Blanc and 20% Xinomavro. Some oak influence but just for the texture/mouthfeel. The wine name means 'land of stones'.)*
Fresh and lightly herbal but the Xinomavro gives the character of the region and some structure. Mid-range wine. Has Sauvignon flavours but more body and weight from the Xinomavro. (JH) 13% Drink 2017-2019
16
- *Co-operative Amyntaion, Rosé Xinomavro 2015 Amyndeo* Bright orangey pink. Red fruits and apricot, even orange. Complex flavours as well as a nice light tannic presence. Some tomato flavours but not at all unripe. Interesting. Great freshness, and quite persistent too. (JH) 11.5% Drink 2017-2018
15.5
- *Co-operative Amyntaion, Rosé Sparkling Xinomavro Demi-Sec 2015 Amyndeo* RS 30–35 g/l but tastes more like 15 g/l.
Best seller among their sparkling wines. Candy pink. Lightly candied red fruits. Red cherry. Bags of red fruits and nicely aromatic on the mid palate. Still tastes relatively dry. Simple but great fun. (JH) Drink 2017-2018
€8–€12 in Greece 16
- *Co-operative Amyntaion, Selected Vineyards Xinomavro 2010 Amyndeo* Made only in the best vintages. 2007 and 2010 on sale at the cellar door at the same time and mostly in magnum. Mid cherry with some brick. Savoury dried tomato and still some red fruits. Red fruit and orange peel. Herbal notes. Silky and gentle now. Red fruited and still so fresh. Juicy and full of energy. Sweet-fruited finish with the potential to gain further in complexity. (JH) Drink 2015-2025
16.5

- Co-operative Amyntaion, Petraia Gi 2013 PGI Florina 60% *Xinomavro*, 20% *Merlot*, 20% *Syrah*.
The name means 'land of stones'.
Slightly nutty red fruit. Slightly woody, peppery thanks to the *Syrah* from Amyndeio. Dry, a little bit dull but decent red wine. Strawberries and pepper. Really nice harmony, but I think it would struggle for a USP on an international market. (JH) 13.5% Drink 2017-2020
€13 approx in Greece 16
- Co-operative Amyntaion, *Xinomavro Reserve* 2013 Amyndeio 30% *new French oak*, the rest is *older French*. *Low toast*.
Aromatic red cherry, lifted sweet red fruit. Juicy, fresh acidity but surprisingly soft tannins (for this variety). Playing a little bit safe with the variety. Juicy and mildly tannic, a gentle version of the variety. Even with tannins, it is succulent and mouth-watering. (JH) 12.5% Drink 2016-2023
16.5

DIMOPOULOS

Founded in the village of Xino Nero in Florina (west of Amyndeio) in 2014 by Panagiotis Dimopoulos (pictured on the right below with his viticulturist Georgios Kotsiou), a local entrepreneur who made his money in a variety of ways including construction and car parts, the estate is surrounded by 580 acres (235 ha) at an average elevation of 645 m (2,116 ft). The vineyards (pictured top right) are brand new - the first plantings started in 2013 - and their first vintage release was 2015. While their pride and focus is *Xinomavro*, which is not always easy to ripen fully in Amyndeio's continental climate, they have also planted *Syrah*, *Merlot*, *Pinot Noir*, *Montepulciano*, *Cabernet Franc*, *Roditis*, *Assyrtiko*, *Sauvignon Blanc*, *Chardonnay* and *Gewurztraminer*.

The spacious winery building is a converted furniture showroom, and still feels a bit like one. To judge from the four wines we tasted, they seem to be having teething problems with their barrels but I look forward to tasting the wines when this issue is resolved and the vines become better established. As for all winegrowers, the return on his €2.2 million investment (spent so far on vineyards and winery) may be some way down the road but thank goodness there are business people like Dimopoulos who are willing to give back to the local economy and invest in agriculture. He is also planning a guest house and restaurant to help promote the wines.



- Dimopoulos, *Rosé Xinomavro* 2016 Amyndeio *Destemmed but not crushed, saignée from the red*. *Cold soak at 5° C for 10 hours and then fermented at gradually increasing temperatures*. *Three months on lees in lightly toasted French oak, with bâtonnage*.
Deep golden pink. Plenty of red fruit. Nicely dry, light and fresh. Easy to make a good rosé

every year from Xinomavro, apparently – red not so easy. Fresh and easy. Little bit of almond. Serious and dry enough for the table. (JH)13% Drink 2017-2018

15.5

- Dimopoulos, Toumba 2015 PGI Florina A blend of Syrah, Xinomavro and Merlot. Toumba is the name of the vineyard. Destemmed but not crushed. Cold soak. Aged 6 months in new 300-litre French oak, medium and medium+ toast. Though they are apparently not very happy with these barrels. (In the previous year they had used French Nadalie barrels.)

Mid cherry red. That same almond character as on the rosé. Slightly earthy? That earthiness seems to be in the air so I am not sure if it is also in the wine. Moreish and juicy freshness and a little dusty. The oak doesn't show in toasty oak but more in wet almonds. Slightly odd – I can see why they are not happy with these barrels. (JH)12.5% Drink 2017-2019

15.5

- Dimopoulos Syrah 2015 PGI Florina Very young vines – planted 2013 and 2015 was not a great vintage, especially for Xinomavro, apparently. Nine months in new French 300-litre oak.

Deep cherry red. As with the Toumba 2015, there is that same earthy almond note on the nose from the oak. Some red and black fruit, firm texture but the oak does seem to dominate even if not in sweet or toasty character. That dusty quality too and the tannins quite dry. It does have young vines' juiciness. (JH)13% Drink 2017-2019

15.5

- Dimopoulos Xinomavro 2015 Amyndeo 1,000 bottles produced. Rainy vintage, especially during harvest. Nine months in new French oak.

Lightish cherry red. Some sweet red fruit and that almond note that seems to come from the oak not the fruit. Very high acid, fine-grained tannins. Shows promise for young vines. Shame the oak has hindered their endeavours in this vintage. (JH)12% Drink 2017-2021

16

- Dimopoulos Xinomavro 2016 Amyndeo Aged in 500-litre Serbian oak.

Lightish red. Red fruit shows better here than on the 2015. Very fine dry tannins, lively and juicy. More oxygen from Serbian oak than from French, the winemaker explains, and so better for Xinomavro. More aromatic and red fruited than the 2015. (JH)13.2% Drink 2018-2024

16

KARANIKA



Domaine Karanika, founded by Laurens Hartman-Karanika (Dutch father and Greek mother) and Dutch wife Annette van Kampen (pictured here in their vineyard right next to the winery) in 2006 when they bought 2 ha of vines near Alpha Estate, including some centenarian Xinomavro. Hartman describes their business as 'a two-person multinational'. (See their [website](#) for more on

their back story.) Hartman has very strong views on most things and especially on looking after the land, following organic and **biodynamic** practices, although there is no certification body in Greece, apparently. They have 5 ha of vineyards, including the 1.4 ha of calcareous south-facing slopes – sheltered from the prevailing NNE winds – they were in the process of planting while I was there in May (see below with a view down to Lake Vegoritis and the foothills of Mount Voras on the border with the Republic of Macedonia).

Planting was on hold because the water pump they use to make the holes for planting had broken down and getting parts is neither quick nor easy. Fortunately, Laurens seems to be multi-skilled. He is deliberately planting away from other vineyards because he does not want to have non-biodynamic neighbours spraying near his vines. They do buy in organically farmed grapes for their sparkling wines because, in his opinion, the vineyards have less influence on fizz, the quality and character of which is determined 50-60% in the winery, and the harvest-time rains are more easily avoided owing to earlier picking. Many of the old nearby vineyards, mostly field blends once cultivated by locals whose day job was in the mine, have been pulled up. He is also outspoken about producers who think it is possible to make great wines in every vintage: 'You cannot make good wine every year', at least not Xinomavro, which depends for its quality on low yields and full ripening. In 2014 and 2015, for example, both rainy vintages, they did not make any still reds. And it's not just vines that are his passion: he says that when he walks through natural vegetation, or 'weeds' on his land, all he sees is salad.



Although they make still wines, their reputation on export markets is mostly based on their sparkling wines, which are all traditional method and hand-riddled. The small vertical of Assyrtiko was fascinating and underlined Hartman's own views on the importance of making wines of the vintage rather than trying to make something consistent every year.

- **Karanika, Terra Levea Assyrtiko 2010 PGI Florina***First commercial vintage. Longer on the skins in this vintage hence a little more tannic. pH is about 3.15 to 3.2.*
Lime leaf and cedar/resin. Woody even though there is no oak. Super-crisp and tight. Bone dry. Starting to show some aged character a little bit like Riesling. Great length. Touch of honey and orange with air. Salty finish. (JH) 13% Drink 2012-2020
16.5
- **Karanika, Terra Levea Assyrtiko 2011 PGI Florina**Much less dramatic aroma than the 2010 at first but then gets very expressive and distinctive with air. As it opens up there's lime citrus and light cedar and it gets more of that woody (not oaky) character as it opens – woody and herbal. A little more chalky and mineral too. Something a little sweeter on the nose, more lemon oil. Seems less crisp and intense than the 2010 but just as dry, and that chalky character on the palate too. Mineral finish. (JH)13% Drink 2013-2020

- Karanika, Terra Levea Assyrtiko 2012 PGI Florina Piercing lime and linden/lime leaf on the nose, smells much younger than the 2011 and 2010. A hint of cedar/resin. Smells cool and stony. Terrific purity and precision, great line and length. Very tight and arrow-like. Incredibly crisp but still harmonious. Salty mouth-watering finish. (JH)13% Drink 2016-2022
17
- Karanika, Terra Levea Assyrtiko 2015 PGI Florina Lots of rain in 2015. Smells very young, with aromas of pear. More grip than in the 2012 and 2011. Stony and very dry. But not as much concentration here. Crisp and lively but light, with a stony finish. Less fruit here to balance. (JH)12.5% Drink 2016-2019
15.5
- Karanika, Terra Levea Assyrtiko 2016 PGI Florina *10 hours on the skins.* Still has some CO2 showing. Clean bright lemony citrus. Very tight and limey on the palate. Moderate concentration. Pure and precise. (JH) 12.5% Drink 2017-2022
16.5
- Karanika, Old Vines Xinomavro 2013 Amyndeo *Vines planted 1912.* A little darker fruited and more spicy than the 2011 but not as deep. Rounded and softer in texture but has good length and a way to go. A little more austere perhaps but still harmonious. (JH)12.5% Drink 2017-2022
16.5+
- Karanika, Old Vines Xinomavro 2011 Amyndeo *Older barriques for 16 months (barrels bought 2006).* Mid cherry with no sign of age. Really sweet fruited on the palate, juicy cherry and red fruits. Dry and fine-boned with chalky finish, chewy, refined texture. Still incredibly youthful and a big step up from the 2009 in harmony and vibrancy. (JH) Drink 2016-2021
16.5
- Karanika, Old Vines Xinomavro 2009 Amyndeo Mid brick ruby. Strong dried-tomato and tomato-leaf nose and a bloody/iron quality. A hint of orange too but no black olive until you get to the more savoury palate. Dry and chalky but fresh and not in the least tough. More developed on the nose than on the palate. Worcestershire sauce, says Tara Thomas, my tasting partner. Drying out a little bit. (JH) Drink 2011-2018
15.5
- Karanika Limniona 2013 PGI Florina *Fermented in plastic. Only occasionally vinified separately if he has any left over from the domaine blend.* Sweet juicy cherry nose then much more meaty on the palate. Gentle and fresh with fine-grained texture. Spicy finish, bone dry. Darker fruited than Zafeirakis Limnionas I have tasted in the past. (JH) Drink 2016-2020
16
- Karanika Xinomavro/Limniona 2013 PGI Florina *Made only in the best vintages and referred to as their 'domaine wine'. 50/50 blend using the old-vines Xinomavro. Co-fermented in foudre and aged in the same for 12 months. Early on owner and winemaker Laurens M. Hartman-Karanika thought the region could not produce a 100% Xinomavro and that Limniona was a 'bullseye match' for blending. It has big berries but still lots of colour and the tannins are soft and ripe. Rusticity of the two varieties seems to disappear when you blend them, says Karanika.* Mid ruby. Juicy red fruit, even strawberry. Soft, juicy and harmonious, with fine, rounded tannins but plenty of tannin/acid structure from the Xinomavro. Not particularly intense but very long. Nicely dry. (JH) Drink 2017-2023
16.5
- Karanika, Cuvée Prestige Brut 2013 Wine of Greece *70% Assyrtiko picked at 9.5% to 10.5% for different ripeness levels, 30% Xinomavro. First year of this blend. Two months on lees in old*

barriques after ferment, then second ferment and then 24 months on lees. Disgorged Dec 2015 but winemaker Laurens M Hartman-Karanika explains that he is still trying to work out the best time to disgorge. Dosage 6 g/l (down to 1 g in the 2014). Wines to England drier than those sold in Greece.

Very fine mousse. Creamy citrus brightness and just a touch herbal. Dry and firm and with great mousse. Chalky texture, dry and lovely stony finish. Very light creamy autolytic character. Opens to a note of blossom. The 2013 tastes more primary than the 2014. (JH)13% Drink 2016-2018

17

- *Karanika, Cuvée Prestige Brut Nature 2014 Wine of Greece 70% Assyrtiko, 30% Xinomavro. Traditional method. 1 g/l dosage. Disgorged Dec 2016.*

Again, like the 2013, a super-fine mousse. Searingly dry and a little cedary on the palate. Lightweight and fresh. But this is a little bit harder and broader. Smells fresher and creamier in the flute than in the wine glass. The 2013 Brut, with its higher dosage, seemed better balanced and more intense but 2014 was a difficult vintage, apparently. (JH)12.5% Drink 2016-2019

16

- *Karanika, Rosé Brut 2015 Amydeeo 100% Xinomavro, all domaine fruit. Saignée and fresh Xin in the dosage. 14 g/l (so not technically Brut). Disgorged Dec 2016.*

Pretty pale pink. Fresh red fruits and Victoria plums. Planning to go a little drier (down to 9 g/l) with this for export. Greeks like it sweeter. Bigger bubbles, slightly candied red fruit, fresh but with a sweetish aftertaste. Slightly cloying candied finish. (JH)12% Drink 2017-2018

15.5

- *Karanika, Cuvée Spéciale Brut 2015 Wine of Greece 100% Xinomavro. Disgorged Feb 2016. From bought-in fruit. Sparkling blanc de noirs is excluded from the Amydeon PDO regulations by omission, hence Wine of Greece - though, oddly, the PDO does allow Charmat-method rosé. Karanikas makes the only traditional method blanc de noirs in the region.*

Very nice creamy purity on the nose, bright lemon, soft (dosage is 4-6 g/l). Six months on the lees. Very fine mousse, tastes dry but balanced. Lively, fresh, and just a slight grip in the texture. (JH)12% Drink 2017-2019

16

- *Karanika, Cuvée Spéciale Brut 2009 Wine of Greece Traditional method, blanc de noirs, 100% Xinomavro. Disgorged April 2016. 4-6 g/l dosage. Six years on the lees.*

Very pale gold. Creamy apple nose with a light yeasty note. Fine combination of cedary crisp citrus and then the more rounded quality thanks to the lees ageing. Still incredibly fresh. Tastes pretty dry and still so fresh and youthful but with the start of autolytic complexity in a lovely toasty character on the finish, and even with all this time on the lees the toasty character is not dominating the citrus purity. (JH) Drink 2017-2022

17.5

- *Karanika, Cuvée de Réserve Brut Nature 2014 Wine of Greece Traditional method, blanc de noirs, 100% Xinomavro. Will be aged in batches, 3-4 years on lees. Biodynamically farmed fruit - 40- to 50-year-old vines from ungrafted vineyards in the Rasto subregion. Picked 15-20 September. pH 2.85, TA 10 g/l.*

Fine mousse, real citrus purity. Tight, dry beauty with a creamy texture. Lovely balance. Direct but not lean, just starting to show some tertiary roundness. Impressive length and has depth in the texture. 'Xinomavro does everything by the book for sparkling wine', says Laurens Hartman. (JH)12.5% Drink 2017-2021

17

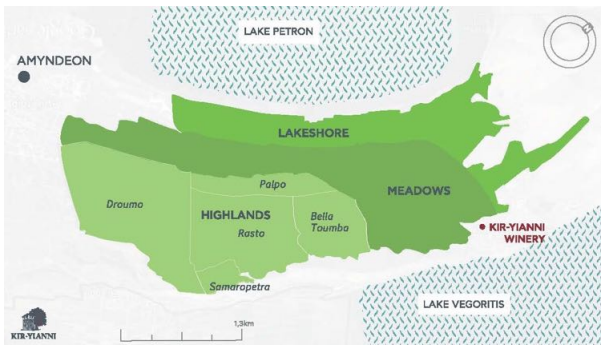
Established by Yiannis Boutaris in 1997 when he split off from the very Boutari family company established by his grandfather in 1879. Kir-Yianni now have a new winery in Amyndeo. Mihalis Boutaris, who is back in the family company now after seven years in China, importing wines from Greek producers and planting a Pinot Noir vineyard in the north-west of the country, described their focus here as originally 'more volume oriented' than at their winery in Náoussa, which I did not visit this time (although we did taste some of their Náoussa wines and I will review them in a separate article). However, they are now also making high-end wines in Amyndeo, upgrading their entry-level products and developing new ones such as a sparkling wine and a rosé.

Part of this process has involved identifying the (as yet unofficial) crus within the 16 official subregions of the Amyndeo DOP (those closest to the two dominant lakes are shown in their map above). These are empirical, based on tradition rather than on geology, but there are clear differences in soils and climates that influence the levels of ripeness, which is particularly critical for Xinomavro in this extreme continental climate. As Mihalis explained: 'The more fertile the land (mainly due to proximity to the Lake Petron), the lower the maturity, hence the lower the quality and price a grape grower could achieve'. Lower sites are therefore better suited to the production of rosé. However, some of the vineyards that have proved to be less good for Xinomavro are excellent for white varieties. Mihalis also pointed out that until the late 1990s, Amyndeo was almost entirely planted with Xinomavro, 'producing grapes to be vinified in different wine regions and only a fraction to produce a lightly coloured red and a deeply coloured rosé (and that mostly in bulk)'. In the last 20 years, thanks to Kir-Yianni, Alpha and the more recent arrivals, 'the landscape has changed completely', says Mihalis.

Kir-Yianni, who have 26 ha in Amyndeo, have the advantage of many years' experience in both Amyndeo and Náoussa. Their not-so-secret weapon is agronomist Dr Haroula Spinthiropoulou, who has worked with Kir-Yianni since 2005 and showed us round the vineyards with Mihalis as well as generously accompanying us on much of this trip. She is pictured below in Kir-Yiannis' landmark white-only Samaropetra Vineyard (acquired in 2000 and planted between 2001 and 2006, although they are still in the process of acquiring and planting neighbouring plots). She also has her own vineyards and winery and makes her wine under the Argatia label. I will report on these in my next article.



As well as new plantings in the region, they are experimenting with various scion-clone combinations for Xinomavro, with the aim of finding one that ripens earlier since full ripening is often an issue for the variety in this region.



- Kir-Yianni, Paranga 2015 PGI Macedonia 50% Merlot, 25% Syrah, 25% Xinomavro.
 Juicy, peppery, lightly reductive from the Syrah. Hint of mushroom. Lively red with fine texture. (JH) 13% Drink 2017-2019
 16
- Kir-Yianni, Kali Riza Vieilles Vignes Xinomavro 2015 Amyndeo Old vine (80-year-old) Xinomavro, ungrafted. Name means 'good root' - like a blessing on new vineyard. Six days' cold soak and one week post-fermentation maceration. Malo in barrel. 12-18 months in oak - none new. Light red with brick rim. Hint of earthy mushroom but still with juicy red fruit, a little severe on the palate for now but still fresh and juicy. Quite light bodied. Needs time or food. Very fresh and tight. (JH) 13% Drink 2018-2028
 16.5+
- Kir-Yianni, Rasto Xinomavro 2016 Amyndeo Single vineyard. Rasto is one of the unofficial subregions in Amyndeon and at the centre of the most significant grape-growing village of Agios Panteleimonas. There's less sand here than in some other subregions (75%) with the balance clay and just a little calcium carbonate. Good drainage from north-west-facing slopes. Barrel sample. Not yet through malo. Very youthful red fruits. Super-high acidity and clenched. Grapefruit. Selection of best from Kali Riza vineyard. Unfinished. (JH) 13% Drink 2018-2030
 17.5
- Kir-Yianni, Akakies Rosé Xinomavro 2016 Amyndeo This wine, or one very similar, is sold under the Phaedra label in Waitrose in the UK. pH 3.2 and RS just 1 g/l. Deep pink. Sweet but fresh and with some tannins. Modern and juicy. Full-flavoured and quite powerful. (JH) 12% Drink 2017-2018
 16
- Kir-Yianni, Akakies Rosé Sparkling Xinomavro 2016 Amyndeo Same wine as the still Akakies rosé but goes through Charmat second ferment. RS 19 g/l (the lowest it can be in the Sec category). Deep Victoria plum colour. Juicy, fruity, fun and fresh. Soft finish because it went thro malo. (JH) 12% Drink 2017
 15.5
- Kir-Yianni, L'Esprit du Lac Xinomavro 2016 Amyndeo Provençal rosé colour. Red fruited with the floral character brought out by the yeasts, apparently. Dry and relatively simple. (JH) Drink 2017
 15.5
- Kir-Yianni, Méthode Traditionnelle Rosé Xinomavro 2013 Amyndeo Old vines. pH around 3. Dosage is 8 g/l. Pale, apricot pink. Some lees depth balances the acidity. Leesy/creamy nose. Good depth and length. (JH) 12.3% Drink 2017-2020
 16.5

- Kir-Yianni, Paranga 2016 PGI Macedonia 80% Roditis, 20% Malagousia. *Later part of the bottling may have had some barrel influence because it is bottled on demand and they don't want to leave barrels empty. 400,000 bottles produced.*
 Has the aromatics and richness of Malagousia – a variety that needs to be in homeopathic doses when in a blend or it dominates, says Mihalis Boutari. A serious white. Power and depth without being excessively aromatic. Savoury spice on the finish. Salty aftertaste. Spends time on full lees. (JH)12% Drink 2017-2019
 16
- Kir-Yianni, Samaropetra Vineyard 2016 PGI Florina *The vineyard, whose name means 'stone on the hill', was planted in the early 2000s by Mahalis Boutari, all white varieties. It is at the highest point in the Rasto subregion (600–720 m). This wine is 50/50 Roditis and Sauvignon Blanc. Less than 20 cm of topsoil. Limestone bedrock on the highest parts.*
 Roditis/Sauvignon blend with a spicy finish. The Sauvignon from this vineyard is subtle. Tight and dry and a little bit tannic. Salty, dry and with a meaty depth and spicy finish. (JH)12.5% Drink 2017-2020
 16.5
- Kir-Yianni, Droumo Sauvignon Blanc 2016 PGI Florina 100% Sauvignon Blanc from a single vineyard. *Two different yeasts - for body and aroma. Drumo (also written Droumo) is at the western limit of the Agios Panteleimonas vinegrowing area. Soils are typical for the area with loamy sandy over a marl bedrock and low calcium carbonate content.*
 Some SO₂ showing on the nose. Lightly herbal, dry, fine boned. Subtle, restrained and much more about origin than variety, even with these selected yeasts. Rocky and herbal. (JH)13.5% Drink 2017-2019
 16.5
- Kir-Yianni, Palpo Chardonnay 2015 PGI Florina *From a single vineyard in the Palpo subregion, with the oldest Chardonnay vines in the region, planted in the late 1990s. Soils here are a little heavier with more clay (65% sand) and more calcium carbonate. Barrel fermented and 8 months in oak. New barrels. White toast for most of the barrels.*
 Creamy, buttery nose. Pretty oaky on the palate, a little bit sour on the finish. A bit hard overall. (JH)13% Drink 2017-2019
 16
- Kir-Yianni, Tarsanas Assyrtiko 2016 PGI Florina *Also from the Samaropetra vineyard. pH 3.1, TA 6 g/l. Barrel fermented. Some new oak.*
 Tank sample. Creamy oak nose. Dry and salty but the barrel-influence is restrained. Creamy, lees texture. Has some stone fruit flesh. Savoury and salty and satisfyingly deep and long. (JH)13.7% Drink 2017-2025
 17
- Kir-Yianni, Chrysogerakas 2013 PGI Florina *A 50/50 blend of Gewürztraminer and Malagousia from the Samaropetra vineyard, RS 80-90 g/l. Two years in new oak. Name means 'golden hawk' - Samaropetra is the home of a rare hawk.*
 Smells beautifully fresh, with fresh and dried apricots. And some floral notes. Cool and fresh and scented. Gewürz aromas dominate but it has a slight herbal character too so that it avoids heaviness. (JH) 13.5% Drink 2017-2022
 16.5
- Kir-Yianni, Chrysogerakas Gewürztraminer 2015 PGI Florina *RS 200-220 g/l. Ferment stopped naturally.*
 Much darker than the dry blended 2013. On the nose, chamomile and floral honey. Very very sweet, candied pear. Complex nose. Some ginger. Very sweet and with honeyed apricots. Hay and dried grasses on the nose. Something suggesting vermouth. (JH)9% Drink 2017-2025
 17

VEGORITIS

The name Vegoritis was first used by Yiannis Boutaris for his winery in Amyndeo when he established it in 1997. In 2003, it merged with the other family businesses based in Náoussa and Athens under the name Kir-Yianni. Christos Boskos was general manager of Vegoritis and took the name with him when he - entirely amicably and with support from Yiannis Boutaris, who was initially also a shareholder - set up an independent company not long after the merger. In a way this 'new' Vegoritis was the fulfilment of Yiannis Boutari's wish to see more producers established in the region.



- Vegoritis Sauvignon Blanc 2015 PGI Florina *Unoaked, skin contact for 5 hours and 3 months on the lees. 5,000 bottles. Variety well suited to the area, apparently.*
Light citrus aroma. Dry but rich texture and this is quite high alcohol for the region - picked 28 September. Very interesting textural wine not all about fruit and typical Sauvignon aromas. Firm, dry and savoury on the finish. Good weight and length. Hard to sell, they say, because not typical. (JH)13.5% Drink 2017-2019
€9 + VAT in Greece 16.5
- Vegoritis, Mylos Chardonnay/Malagousia/Roditis 2016 PGI Florina *Five hours' skin contact, on lees for 3 months, unoaked. 25,000 bottles.*
Much more aromatic than the Sauvignon Blanc and dominated by the lightly tropical and floral character. Roditis gives depth to the mouthfeel. They are planning on reducing the Chardonnay percentage because it is more expensive and this is their entry-level dry white. Firm, dry and **GV**. Roditis gives structure and some grip. (JH)12.5% Drink 2017-2019
€4.60 + VAT in Greece 16
- Vegoritis, Mylos Rosé 2016 PGI Florina *90% Xinomavro, 10% Syrah from saignée. 6-12 hours skin contact and unoaked. Bottled a week ago - they want to bottle on the solstice.*
Lightish pink. Relatively soft but still fresh. RS 2.7 g/l. Basic but plenty of fruit and not bad length at this price. (JH)12.5% Drink 2017-2018
€4.60 + VAT in Greece 15.5
- Vegoritis, Mylos Merlot/Xinomavro 2014 PGI Florina *A 60/40 blend. Aged 12 months in a mix of 80% French and 20% American oak, including 50% new. Six months on lees with bâtonnage. Not sure how they can afford this oak regime when the wine sells for this price.*
Mid garnet. Soft red and dark fruit. Juicy, slightly chewy, but with good Xinomavro character. Lightly chewy but with the freshness of the Xin and the roundness of the Merlot. (JH)12.5% Drink 2017-2019
€5.10 + VAT in Greece 15.5
- Vegoritis Xinomavro 2012 Amyndeo *12 months in a mix of 80% French and 20% American oak, the latter 'adding sweetness to the aroma'. 50% new oak. 5,000 bottles.*

Dry texture, juicy cherry fruit, an easy to approach wine. But probably still be better with food as the tannins and acid give notable structure. (JH)Drink 2017-2022

€8 + VAT in Greece 16

- **Vegoritis, Xinomavro Reserve 2012 Amyndeo** 24 months in a mix of 80% French and 20% American oak, including 50% new. TA 7 g/l. Only 700 bottles produced. Same basic wine as non-Reserve but different ageing.

Mild cherry red. Cherries and almonds. Juicy and full of red-fruited life. Excellent freshness and classic varietal character with the oak hidden. **GV** (JH)13.2% Drink 2017-2024

€12 + VAT in Greece 16.5+

- **Vegoritis Xinomavro 2014 Amyndeo** 12 months in a mix of 80% French oak and 20% American (50% new).

Lightish cherry red. Juicy red fruit. Attractively dry texture and really energetic. Chewy, chalky texture, well-priced Xinomavro. (JH)12.8% Drink 2018-2022

€7.70 + VAT in Greece 16

- **Pavlov Xinomavro 2010 Amyndeo** 12 months in a mix of 80% French and 20% American oak. 50% new. 10,000 bottles. Christos Boskos cultivates the vineyards and makes the wine for the Pavlos estate. 3 ha around the winery now owned by Christos but the ex owner asked him to keep the name for exports to Canada, where he lives.

Light bricky red. Definitely a note of maturity/decay here from the time in bottle: leathery vanilla red fruit a bit like Rioja. But the structure, ie tannins and acidity, is Amyndeon.

Oxidative sweetness but with dry texture and definite tannins. Not much SO₂, apparently.

Some oak sweetness and vanilla. Old school. (JH)Drink 2015-2020

€8.50 + VAT in Greece 16