

Greek Wines Are No Longer a Tragedy: Here Are Five That Are Hard to Pronounce, Easy to Drink

By Chantal Martineau, Tue., Apr. 13 2010 @ 11:30AM



Baby Bacchus drinks Greek wine. So should you.

Most people's first experience with Greek wine is pine-y, syrupy retsina -- that country white so ancient even Homer himself may have sipped it while composing his epics (poetry and booze being the **classic combo** that it is). But the cradle of winemaking civilization is now turning out wines that don't require a stiff ouzo chaser. A recent tasting of several Greek wines found good value bottlings that are easy to drink, if difficult to pronounce. Here were five standouts:

Domaine Porto Carras Limnio 2007 (\$14)

Made from the Limnio grape, the wine is made on the hillsides of Mount Meliton in Macedonia, near Turkey, and is certified organic. Reminiscent of a Pinot Noir with red fruit, clay notes, and a rusty color, you can find it on wine lists at [Kefi](#) and The Hideaway.

Harlaftis White 2009 (\$12)

This crisp white is made from Savatiano, the grape used to make retsina. It's clear in color, with great acidity and a saline minerality to it. Produced near Athens, the wines are pretty much organic, but the winery is too small to invest in the cost of certification. Sip it at Pera Mediterranean Brasserie.



Gai'a Assyrtiko Wild Ferment 2009 (\$26)

Pronounced *yeai-ah*, it's probably the only naturally fermented wine you're going to find from Greece. Based out of Santorini, winemaker Yiannis Paraskevopoulos is one of the most acclaimed in the country. The Assyrtiko grape, indigenous to the region, is known for good acidity and the ability to age. The wine is pretty, floral, and a little wild. Look for it on the lists at Molyvos and wd~50.

Gai'a Estate Red 2006 (\$45)

Made from 100 percent Agiorgitiko (*Ai-your-ye-tee-ko*), the second most planted grape in Greece, this full-bodied red is full of forest fruit and moss, but could probably use a little more time in the bottle. [Bar Boulud](#) and [Porter House](#) stock it -- proving Greek wines don't only pair with Greek food.

Domaine Spiropoulos Ode Panos NV (\$21)

If you like your sparklers full of yeasty breadiness, then these bubbles are for you. This 100-percent Moschofilero (*Mo-sko-fee-le-ro*) is full of aromatic notes like candied fruit and kiwi. Made in the Peloponnese, it's one of the first Greek wines to receive organic certification from the USDA. Have a glass at Snack Taverna or Okeanos in Park Slope.