

MYLONAS WINERY, ATTIKI - April 28th, 2013

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I love Savatiano (Greek white grape variety) and I also love those who love Savatiano. The historical grape variety from Attica has the ability to give great, balanced and pleasant white wines. Moreover, the Attica vineyard remains the largest vineyard in Greece, even after a large part of it was expropriated for the sake of building the Athens International Airport 'Eleftherios Venizelos' and Attiki Odos.

WINE EVENTS AT ATTIKI

In addition, I guess my childhood memories from harvesting our tiny family vineyard in Keratea on Lavriou road, explains my liking to Savatiano. Unfortunately however, many wine Estates in Attica are not interested in quality winemaking and put their whole effort into a much more profitable and business: organizing events, wedding and christening receptions and making wine for catering purposes, most of the times a low-quality one. However, there are producers who are able to see beyond this and are dedicated to quality wine production; these producers are few and well known to the wine lovers. Mylonas Winery in Keratea Attiki is one of them, and this indeed is a relatively new endeavor. The brilliant summer weather and we wanting to attempt the first sea-dive for the season, is what brought us to Mesogia. But before the dive, it is a great opportunity to visit Mylonas winery!



I guess we just arrived!



A happy place for both kids and grown-ups!

DEGUSTATION ALA ATTICA!

Stamatis Mylonas is the person in charge of the winery and he gave us directions; we easily arrived at their winery in Keratea. Many kids were playing at the front yard creating a 'Greek village atmosphere' (in a very good sense!). By the entrance the family had set a table for people to taste their whole wine range, as well as cold cuts, cheeses, whole mill breads and an olive oil range branded 'My Physis', another family project. Young people interested in taste are sampling those goodies and the whole picture brings to mind the mature and refined –tasting and consumer wise- Italian and French consumers.



Wine lovers at Mylonas Winery, at Keratea...



...sampling everything!

A FAMILY AFFAIR

Stamatis starts guiding us to the winery, at the same time talking to us about its history. Their grandfather started a small family winery back in 1917. It's a long time ago, almost 100 years! In 1975 the founder's son, Dimitris Mylonas, took the wine production to more professional levels, and several years later, his sons Stamatis, Anthonis and Tassos, along with the bulk wine business, they decided to take the plunge and enter the bottled wine market. A market segment which -as Stamatis said- is very competitive; it is rather a championship, as he said! What's more important in this case is differentiation and not (only) selling cheap, plus producers are every day judged and compared with the best in Greece and abroad. Can you handle it? Milonas family took the chance and they have built a loyal audience so far.

ANGELOS NOULAS

Angelos Noulas wines branded 'Dialogue' are also housed and made under the same roof. Angelos has engaged a very interesting way of work: he sources the

best grapes possible from various varieties and regions all over Greece and offers wines of limited production. One of the two presses is his; we will meet him later, in the barrel cellar.



The two horizontal grape presses; Pneumatic on the left and its ancestor on the right.



The future winery!

THE FUTURE IS HERE!

Just outside the construction of a big steel frame is on, as the winery will be expanded and this is where all tanks and machines will be housed. It will happen in due time! Although Stamatis is going rather fast, as his work has already received critical acclaim, even when the first bottling took place in 2006 and the new winery operates since 2010! We get to see the rest of the machines: a bottle washer, wine filler, capping machine, all semi-automatic! All bottles are washed, filled and capped by hand and this makes sense, since annual production is no more than 30,000 bottles. Of course the production will be increased in the future as per Stamatis' plans...

ADVENTURES IN THE CELLAR!

We go down to the cellar where we finally meet Angelos Noulas and get to taste his brilliant Sauvignon Blanc! I really like his approach. Of course we also taste various Mylonas goodies from the tanks, Savatiano among others, which is vinified on the lees to obtain a good structure and character. It was really good! Stamatis shows us a clay amphora in which he experimentally crafts a small batch of wine. This year he also painted the inside with resin, as clay is a highly porous material. When we have something new on this I will let you know; however, the experiment itself is very interesting!



Trying wines from the tank and conversing...



The winery's stainless steel tanks.



And the amphora I was telling you!

WINE AND OLIVE OIL... ATTICA!

Back to the basement, we tried out 4 white wines: Savatiano (featuring an unexpected acidity!), Assyrtiko (tasting most neutral and austere, being a perfect match for fishes), very mild and delicate Retsina and an aromatic Malagouzia, a female favorite! Finally, the oak aged 'Apopsis' (Savatiano - Assyrtiko) had a pretty richer, creamier taste that can perfectly accompany one's favorite 'ala crème' dishes! Of course we also tried out 'My Physis' olive oil, which I found very tasty, both the regular and the marinated with various herbs and chilies one.



Stamatis serving his hand-crafted wines...



Savatiano, Malagousia and retsina side-by-side!



Well done!...

In short, our visit was perfect! The work that takes place at Mylonas Winery is very serious and shows that Attiki deserves and must have determined winemakers who make wines that are not just to drink, but to enjoy! The only thing missing from our visit was a visit to the vineyard, to have the full picture of their work. Stamatis please take care of this, next time we want to visit the vineyard!

So let's have a glass of Savatiano to the honor of Savatiano and Mylonas family!

Photos: Stavroula Mariamou