

Beyond Xinomavro: Wine discoveries in Naoussa and Amyndeon

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Some local favorite wines in Naoussa and Amyndeon
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A trip to Greece can be a [wine](#) lovers paradise. With over 300 different varietals one is always bound to find something new whether it be a new wine or appellation. Recently some new discoveries were made while traveling in Macedonia.

The emphases of these travels were the wines of Naoussa and the signature grape of the area, Xinomavro. Looking beyond, one can experience some other excellent alternatives. Here are a several favorites.

A quiet secret for foreigners is a local grape that is made into a delicious white wine known as Preknadi. This grape was plagued by phylloxera and is now making a comeback. The name comes from the Greek word Preknariis, which means freckle faced. The skin of this grape is spotted. It is an elegant wine that hopefully will soon come to the United States.

At [Chrisohou](#), a boutique winery in the center of the Naoussa appellation, the wine is called Preknariiko. The grapes are fermented in barrel and the wine has aromas of gardenia with flavors of banana and guava.

[Domaine Diamantakos](#) is another small family owned winery that specializes in the Preknadi. Here Preknadi has a more viscous quality, which is unusual since this wine sees no oak. The wine is sweet on the mouth and mid palate. It has nice citrus flavors with acidity and minerality. It is definitely a fruity

wine.

The Naoussa wine region lies in a valley along the foothills of the eastern slopes of Mount Vermion. The western side of the slopes is Amyndeon, known as the coldest winemaking region in Greece. Four lakes in the region help balance out the extremes climate variations of the area. The soils are very poor and sandy but deliver wines that are crisp and highly aromatic.

Kir-Yianni, one of the largest wineries in the area produces wines in both Naoussa and Amyndeon. The vineyards in Amyndeon reside near Lake Vegoritis.

One of Kir-Yianni's most outstanding wines from the Amyndeon region was a sparkling Rosé called Akakies. The luscious bright cherry color entices one to gravitate towards this sparkling wine. Created in the Charmat method this sparkling expresses a different twist on what is typical of the Xinomavro grape especially since the terroir is so different in this region. The wine exuded flavors and aromas of strawberries and cherries with a little candy mixed in.

Although not a Greek varietal, Kir-Yianni experimented with combining a blend of Chardonnay and Gewürztraminer. One gets the wonderful florals of the Gewürztraminer but in a very subtle way. Honeysuckle and white flowers are accented by the peach and apricot flavors of the Chardonnay. Half of the Chardonnay is age in oak. This might be called a Yin Yang wine because on the one hand there is a very feminine side to this wine while at the same time there is some masculinity, which is brought out with the Chardonnay. In this case the two varieties compliment one another.

There are many other Greek varietals grown in these two areas including Roditis, Malagouzia and Assyrtiko.

Three interesting white wine blends are:

The Kir-Yianni Paranga Petra, a blend of Roditis and Malagouzia with its floral, lemon and tropical flavors.

Dalamara's Kapnistos is a blend of Malagouzia, Assyrtiko and Roditis that is aged in oak for 12 months. The oak brings out the honey flavors that are enhanced by the flavors of dried fruits.

The Orizontes from **Elinos Vineyards** is a blend of Preknadi and Roditis. With floral aromas, the wine is refreshly balanced and one that could sipped over an entire afternoon.

The selections of grape varieties are so vast in Greece that these are just a few wines to entice the palate to explore further the wine, grape varietals and various regions of Greece.



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