

[WINE TOURS](#)[ABOUT](#)[PHOTO GALLERY](#)[CONTACT US](#)[BLOG](#)

CRETE: A HUGE ISLAND OF WINE IS GETTING NOTICED

 No Comments 0 0

By Vin Marottoli | July 2, 2017 | Greece, Wine Recommendations, Wine Tasting, Wine Tours, Wineries, Wines

Crete may not always be on the radar screen of most wine lovers. But my job as wine blogger is to be a beacon showing the way to wine destinations that are worthy of any wine lovers' attention.

Crete is one such destination. The island is beautiful, massive and diverse (Crete is the 5th largest Island in Europe and the largest of the Greek Isles) and a host to plenty of grape varietals and wineries.



The charming town of Chania in Crete.

I had the opportunity recently to attend a tasting sponsored by **Wines of Crete**. There were 19 wineries present and it was a refreshing delight to try the whites, rosés and reds made mostly from local grapes.

Assyrtiko was the lone grape with name recognition. But Vidiano, Liatiko, Kotsifali.

Thrapsathiri, Mandilari, Romeiko, Vilana, Plyto, Kotsifali – how about that for local grapes that I'm pretty sure you've never heard about before. There are in fact 11 indigenous varieties on Crete.

I was especially impressed by the white wines: they exhibited a freshness and acidity that made them easy to drink and they came with a sense of place.

Nikos Douloufakis

When you try a wine for the first time, your sensory perceptions detect aromas and tastes that are new. But Cretan wines have been around for milleniums. Archaeologists found a sealed amphora filled with Cretan wine in the wreckage of an Egyptian ship. Most of the action is near the main city of Heraklion, so if you stay there, it's an easy trip to any of the wineries. Even the furthest wine region of Chania is 2 hours away.

Although I was impressed by all the wines present at the tasting, 4 wineries stood out in my opinion:

- **Douloufakis Winery** in Heraklion had a delicious white, Femina 2016, made from Malvasia di Candia Aromatica and their Enotria, a red made from Syrah and Kotsifali;
- **Dourakis Winery** in Chania had 2 outstanding wines: Lihnos Vidiano 2016 and Euphoria 2014, made from Romeiko sun-dried grapes;
- **Idaia Winery** in Heraklion with a superb Liatiko 2012, a red grape sun dried for 10 days; and the
- **Rhous Tamioiakis Winery** in Heraklion with two wonderful wines: Rhous Red and Rhous Skipper. This winery was written about in a Boston Globe article of June 18, 2017. A husband/wife team took over from her parents and have made this winery one of the cutting edge wineries on the island. You should be able to find Rhous wines in larger markets in the US,

Although Crete has been making wines for thousands of years, it is only in the past 15 years that they have been getting noticed making world class wines. All serious wine lovers should do themselves a favor and search out wines from Crete.