

# Experiences on Marketing and Promotion for Greek wine

## Key Messages for Eastern Macedonia and Thrace

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NEW YORK TIMES  
MR. ERIC ASSIMOV

The most influential newspaper in the US urged their readers to try something different and more interesting, (besides grapes like Pinot Grigio, the 2<sup>nd</sup> most popular white variety in US) recommending they try Greek varieties instead like Assyrtiko, Moschofilero and Roditis.

## US SOMMELIER JOURNAL

The respected *Sommelier Journal* conducted a poll recently among its reader asking which unknown grape variety should become more prominent in the world of wine ... the first choice was a Greek variety, Assyrtiko

## US WINE MARKET COUNCIL 2014 REPORT

In its recent 2014 survey the WMC released data showing who was drinking premium wine. In response to this survey, Blake Gray, a prominent American wine bloggers wrote an article about which premium wines were being drunk. His opening remark was *“If you want to identify a high-end wine drinker in the United States.... Look for the guy drinking the bottle of Assyrtiko...”*

The article indicated that these people were also way ahead of the curve since they were drinking a premium wine, still at bargain prices.

JANCIS ROBINSON  
Master of Wine

In an interview for her recent book, *Wine Grapes*, Jancis was asked to choose on 1 of 1368 grape varieties in her book to comment on... she chose Assyrtiko, a Greek variety.

## THE BUZZ!

The fast growing awareness of Greek wine in the US has many in the media and trade identifying Greece as one of the *"hottest and most up-and-coming wine regions in the world"*

## MEDIA COVERAGE OF GREEK WINE

Greek wine receives regular coverage in the most important magazines, newspapers and online media in North America.

MEDIA OUTLETS: CNN, Forbes, The New York Times, Wall Street Journal, USA Today, Los Angeles Times, Sacramento Bee, Chicago Tribune, New Jersey Star Ledger, The Globe & Mail, The Montreal Gazette.

Lifestyle magazines such as Men's Journal, Parade, Departures, GQ and Mens Fitness.

Top wine & food media such as Wine Spectator, Wine Advocate, Wine & Spirits, Food & Wine & Wine Enthusiast.

Popular Blogs & Portals such as Jancis Robinson.com, Snooth.com, Eater.com, The Daily Meal, Wine Folly, Vinography, Tasting Table, Serious Eats, The Grape Collective, Wine Sleuth, 1 Wine Dude and more.

## NEW YORK AREA RETAIL/RESTAURANT DISTRIBUTION

According to the data compiled by the Greek Wine Bureau of North America (source: NY Greek wine distributors) in 2013 more than 1000 restaurants and retail outlets in the NY/NJ area carried Greek wine and the numbers increased for 2014.



## WINE & SPIRITS MAGAZINE RESTAURANT POLL

According to Wine & Spirits polls for the last 4 years, the presence of Greek wine in restaurants across America has grown to the level that Greek wine has been given its own category like other well-known wine regions.

Specifically in 2013, the presence of Greek wine had risen by a full percentage point catching and soon to pass more well known winemaking regions such as New Zealand

# WINE INTELLIGENCE STUDY

Wine Intelligence, a international beverage marketing and research firm, stated in a study commissioned by the EU, that Greece, together with Argentina, Chile and Spain were noted as increasing in consumer importance in the US market.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

In 2014 the EDOAO (National Interprofessional Organisation of the Vine & Wine of Greece) commissioned a specialized American company to create a 5-year Strategic Plan for Greek wine that will include a study of the current US market, awareness of Greek wine among trade and consumers, comparisons with other wine regions and more.

The company conducted in-depth Trade and Consumer surveys. The trade surveys included professionals in targeted US markets (New York, Chicago, Washington DC, Houston / Dallas, San Francisco, Seattle). The consumer surveys targeted 500 regular wine drinkers who were familiar with wine.

## SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Consumer Awareness: More than 60% of the consumers surveyed were aware of Greek wine .
- Consumption: 14% of those surveyed had consumed Greek wine in the month preceding the interview
- Trends: Both trade and consumers surveyed agreed that Greek wine offered an excellent "*ratio of quality for the price*".

## CANADIAN SALES DATA

According to data from the Canadian government, imported wine from Greece has increased by an average of 25% over the last four years

(CAD)

2010: \$3.995.906

2011: \$4.158.131

2012: \$4.651.183

2013: \$5.009.022

## QUEBEC SALES DATA

The largest percentage increases in Greek wine sales are in Quebec. In 2010 sales increase from \$1.4 million CAD to \$2.66 million CAD in 2013 (an increase of 85.7%)

(The Ontario market was next with imports of \$1.7 million CAD In 2013)

## US SALES DATA

According to the US Census Bureau, the imports of Greek wine, beer and other related products to the US have increased by around 27% in the period from 2009 to 2013

2009: \$9.326.000

2010: \$10.419.000

2011: \$11.136.000

2012: \$11.508.000

2013: \$11.876.000

HOW IT ALL STARTED ...



## GOAL

Create the Category of Greek wine...  
Take it out of the "Other" category

# STRATEGY

- Focus on the Mainstream American Wine Market
- Target top American markets that had an interest in imported wines and included a good presence of wine media and a well developed restaurant and sommelier culture
- Target the Trend-Setters/Opinion Makers and Gate Keepers (Media, including Bloggers as well as sommeliers)
- Feature the Greece's uniqueness and present the best wines Greece has to offer

# TACTICS

## MESSAGING

- Greek wines are unique ... they have something different to offer to the international wine market... Indigenous Grapes
- QPR ... Greek wines have an excellent Quality to Price Ratio
- “Food-Friendly” wines... Greek wines are made to be enjoyed with and compliment food.

## TACTICS (cont.)

- Tell the rich story of Greek wine and Greece's long winemaking tradition
- Promote Greek wine as part of the complete Greek cultural experience, by combining it with Greek Gastronomy, Lifestyle and History.
- Target Consumers willing to experiment with new varieties, such as the Millennials, as well as educated wine drinkers who enjoy travelling & are buying imported wine → Emphasize their unique qualities that show a "sense of place"

# TACTICS (cont.)

## EDUCATION

Cooperation with Top Wine & Food Educational Institutions

Culinary Institute of America NY & CA, UC Davis School of Oenology, The Court of Master Sommeliers, Guild of Sommeliers, Johnson & Wales University, Cornell University., the Society of Wine Educators, the Institute of Tourism and Hotels of Quebec, the Wine Writers Circle of Canada, the Canadian Association of Professional Sommeliers and others

# ACTIVITIES

- Regular Media Outreach-Press Office Service
- Grand Tastings in major Metropolitan Cities (NY, SF, Chicago, Atlanta, Toronto, Montreal etc)
- Educational Seminars for Trade & Press
- Familiarization Trips to the Greek vineyards
- Social Media Marketing
- Advertising campaign in major Print & Online Outlets

## ACTIVITIES (cont.)

- Participation in trend setting festivals/conferences: Aspen Food & Wine Classic, Epcot Food & Wine Festival, Culinary Institute of America Conferences, TedX Manhattan, Social Media Week NY, etc
- Promotional Activities with the Liquor Control Boards in Ontario (LCBO) & Quebec (SAQ) including education, in store tastings, marketing and visits to Greece

# Challenges We faced

## Main Challenges

- Lack of Awareness
- Lack of widespread & knowledgeable distribution network

## Secondary Challenges

- New Language-Difficult Pronunciation
- Different Grape Varieties & Regions



# Opportunities & Challenges Wines of Eastern Macedonia & Thrace

## Recommendations & Key Messages

# STRENGTHS

- One of the oldest wine regions of Greece. Rich history of winemaking (i.e. widespread cult of Dionysus, Maronios Oinos, Ismarikos)
- Breathtaking Natural Beauty
- Excellent Terroir
- Excellent winery infrastructure & use of modern technology
- Talented, well educated winemakers
- Organic Cultivation

# CHALLENGES

- Remoteness of Region
- Lack of Regional Marketing strategy
- Lack of adequate participation in important institutions such as EDOAO/New Wines of Greece, Wine Roads of Northern Greece that provide opportunities for increasing awareness
- Lack of adequate cooperation between wineries in the region
- Lack of focus on indigenous varieties

# RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish a marketing strategy for the wines of EMT
- Decide on the most important assets of the wines of EMT
- Create close cooperation between the wineries.
- Focus on the exports and therefore on indigenous grapes and EMT's unique terroir
- Take advantage of existing European funds for the reconstruction and conversion of vineyards
- Invest more on organic viticulture and environmentally friendly vineyard & winemaking practices

## RECOMMENDATIONS (cont.)

- All wineries become members of the top wine organizations i.e. EDOAO/New Wines of Greece, Wine Roads of Northern Greece, Greek Wine Federation
- Take advantage of the important marketing activities of New Wines of Greece that include all wine regions
- Establish important Synergies with the sectors of Gastronomy & Tourism
- Create innovative wine based products i.e. nutrition & beauty products for Spas, lower alcohol wines, etc

THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR INTEREST!