

# Vintage Report 2021



## **A difficult beginning**

After our 2020 harvest ended, we had a mild but dry autumn with only two days of rain between October and December. The year closed with a total of only 90 mm of rain, significantly less than the average annual precipitation amount of around 280 mm.

Winter continued mild with temperatures rarely falling under 10°C, a mean of 13°C, and with March being the coldest month. Unfortunately, the dry streak also continued throughout the winter making the beginning of 2021 one of the driest winters in the island's recent history. Budding began relatively late, starting after the 10th of March and continued to the end of the month. Strong, north winds of 37-40 knots hit the vineyards during this delicate time, heavily reducing the number of primary fruitful shoots.

Spring followed warm and dry without strong winds, helping the vines develop and encouraging flowering. However, a hailstorm at the beginning of April struck a number of plots in the north and northeast of the island, lowering their potential yield by up to 70%.

## **A summer of heat waves**

Summer opened dry and warm allowing berry development to take place safely without worry about developing molds but water stress from the lack of rainfall started affecting the vines in June. The overall lack of precipitation, only 50 mm by the end of August, along with three consecutive heat waves, at the end of June, mid July, and early August prevented berries from having a proper maturation period and shortened the process to 23-27 days.

## **Beauty born of difficult times**

Harvest began the first week of August, with Assyrtiko on August 4, followed by Mavrotragano on August 7, and we ended the month by picking the Aidani. In total, we gathered 7.000 kilograms of grapes. Overall, the 2020-2021 season was both very dry and hot. While it meant that grapes were unaffected by botrytis or black rot; the summer heatwaves and shortened maturation period resulted in uneven ripeness, sunburn, dried-on-the-vines berries, and high potential alcohol.

*“Sunburned small berries, extremely phenolic juice: challenge accepted.” -*

Yannis Papaoikonomou, Vassaltis enologist

Despite the difficult year, this year's harvest revealed a great deal of potential. After a huge sorting operation to remove dried and sunburned berries, we pressed the grapes in whole clusters to maintain freshness in the juice we collected. After fermentation, lees ageing and battonage helped add to the wines' body and richness. In the end, our 2021 wines achieved medium to high acidity with pH levels ranging from 3,01 to 3,2 and alcohol from 13,8% to 15%. This, combined with intense aromatics from each grape make us feel confident in the high quality of the 2021 wines and their great ageing potential.

## 2021 Relative Data

| Average Temperature | Average Rainfall | No. Maturation Days | Harvest Dates    | Total Harvest | +/- 2020 Harvest Amt |
|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 20,7 C              | 130 mm           | 23-27               | August<br>4 - 24 | 81.300 kg     | -13,5%               |