

Vintage Report 2022



It was almost a unicorn vintage.”

Yannis Papaoikonomou, Vassaltis enologist

A welcome coolness

After the viciously hot and dry summer of the 2021 growing season, we slid into a blessedly mild autumn. Clouds, light rain, and lower temperatures put a nip in the air and provided much needed relief to the heat-stressed vineyards.

Winter followed with more rainfall than Santorini usually sees. Instead of the average 220 milliliters, the island received 294.5 milliliters which helped the vines combat the island’s usually dry climate heading into the growing season. Outside of a few cold days scattered through December and February, temperatures were generally mild.

Meltemia to the rescue

We entered spring with some additional, if light, rain in March followed by a dry and balmy April and May. Bud burst occurred in March and, with no late season cold or violent storms, buds transitioned safely to the flowering stage with no interruptions.

We had a longer than usual growing season overall this year thanks to lower summer temperatures and winds. Compared to last year, when the temperature met or exceeded 35 C every day in July, we had a very mild summer, reaching 35 C only twice. This was largely thanks to 50 straight days of the northern meltemia winds.

These constant winds kept vineyard temperatures cool and the vines healthy, generally pest-free, and less stressed. It’s very unusual to have these winds for such an extended period of time and this meant that our grapes were able to develop better phenolic maturation before reaching the sugar levels needed for harvest.

Almost perfect

Harvest began a little later than 2021. We began with our Athiri grapes on August 7 and continued picking in staggered intervals as usual, due to the different grape varieties’ characters. From Athiri we moved onto some early ripening Assyrtiko plots on August 9, then picked Mavrotragano on August 13 and 14. We resumed harvesting Assyrtiko on the 17th and shortly thereafter, disaster struck. The almost perfect vintage was ruined by a sudden rainstorm in the predawn hours of August 24. The storm dumped an unprecedented 25.5 ml of rain on the vineyards, swelling the grapes still on the vine.

Once we were able to resume harvest, we continued to pick Assyrtiko until September 8 along with some later-ripening Aidani. Our harvest officially ended on September 9 with the last of our Aidani grapes. In total, Vassaltis harvested a record 136.000 tons meaning that our winery is producing at almost full capacity this year!

While many of the wines are still being shaped in the cellar, we expect to see some of our best wines yet. This year's almost perfect climatic conditions meant that the phenolics were ready before the grapes reached peak sugar levels giving wines with extraordinary primary fruit aromas which will add to the complexity of the wines.

We're especially excited about the Assyrtiko as we managed to pick grapes that are going to give full-bodied, well-balanced wines with high acidity, a salty character, and long finish.

2022 Relative Data

Average Temperature	Average Rainfall	Harvest Dates	Total Harvest	+/- 2021 Harvest Amt
19,2 C	320 mm	August 7 - September 9	136.000 kg	+67,28%