

Red Feet Wine Market
HANG TIME “Portugal and Greece”
Thursday, October 16, 2008

PRICES ARE FOR:
1 BOTTLE–6 BOTTLES–12 BOTTLES
(mixing is ok!)

Domaine Porto Carras 2007 (Sithonia, Peloponnese, Greece) 100% Assyrtiko
\$15 each - \$13.50 (6) - \$12.75 (12)

This organic wine has a nose inflected with mineral, honey, herbs, and lime. Flavors of citrus, tarragon, and minerals—intense but delicate—lead into an almond finish. Try as an alternative to Sauvignon Blanc.

Loios Vinho Branco 2007 (Alentejo, Portugal)
50% Roupeira and 50% Rabo de Ovelha
\$12 each - \$10.80 (6) - \$10.20 (12)

Medium aromatics of lime and flowers introduce a fairly full, round, creamy palate with lime and stone, medium acidity. Pair with chicken, rich fish, or vegetable stir-fry.

Samos Golden Samena NV (Samos, Greece)
100% Muscat
\$16.50 each - \$14.85 (6) - \$14.03 (12)

Orange blossom, talc, and white peaches offer intriguing aromas. Honey, almond paste, and white peaches are joined by tropical fruits on the palate. Try this off-dry wine with curries, spicy Asian foods, or rich fish with mango salsa.

Gaia Notios Red 2007 (Nemea, Peloponnese, Greece) 100% Agiorgitiko
\$15 each - \$13.50 (6) - \$12.75 (12)

A wonderful nose of wild berries, plum, and clove with a touch of leather. This plush, medium-bodied wine offers fresh flavors of berry, spice, pepper, and herb with a soft finish. Would go well with moussaka or ratatouille. This is not a rustic wine, but it seems to cry for country food. MP calls it “cute and furry.”

Dow Vale do Bomfim 2005 (Douro, Portugal)
45% Touriga Franca, 30% Tinta Roriz, 20%

Touriga Nacional, 5% Tinta Barroca
\$15 each - \$13.50 (6) - \$12.75 (12)

Rich damson plums, black berries, and a touch of tobacco on the nose. Smooth tannins support dark black fruits and a bit of leather in this smooth, full-bodied wine. Pairs well with braised meats. Drinking well now and completely integrated.

See you next Thursday for HANG TIME!
Our subject will be “Exotic South Africa.”
EXPLORE THE WORLD IN YOUR GLASS.
Portugal and Greece

Both these countries are a bit off the beaten track with a long, if discontinuous, winemaking tradition. The earliest archaeological evidence of winemaking in the Greek world comes from 3000-BC tombs in Crete containing grape seeds, paintings of winepresses, and sets of wine cups. By the Mycenaean period (1600-1100 BC), the wine trade was sophisticated and well organized. By the eighth century BC, Greece had introduced grapes and wine to her colonies. By

the Golden Age, trade had expanded into northern Europe and the Black Sea. It continued to flourish in the Roman and Byzantine eras, but declined seriously during 400 years of Ottoman rule. Some of the islands escaped the Turkish military and cultural presence, continuing their wine traditions until Greece declared independence in 1821. A brief return to the vine was halted by 20th century wars, resulting in both destruction and emigration. Only in the 1960s did the Greek industry start to recover; the first modern laws were passed in 1971, and improvement and growth have followed.

The first written record of winemaking in Portugal dates from the Romans in the first century AD, though, though Greek archaeological remains from 800 years earlier point to wine. The tradition is more or less continuous until modern times—the Moors permitted wine even if they did not officially consume it. In 1703 a treaty with England created an exclusive outlet for Portuguese wine, resulting in a steady market but harming economic diversification. Wines made for export were quite different from wines consumed at home. Today this is changing.

Greece has over 300 known varieties of indigenous grapes. Assyrtiko, the main white grape, originated in Santorini. It produces age-worthy wines smelling of citrus and honeysuckle, with good acidity. Here it is blended with Athiri, a small, juicy berry with a soft aroma to produce Porto Carras [proprietary name]. This organic wine is made from estate-grown grapes harvested by hand in the early morning. Our second wine is made from very ripe Muscat grapes by the Cooperative of Samos. Off dry and very fragrant, it pairs with both appetizers and oily fish. Our reds are from the Peloponnese, made from the Agiorgitiko grape. George Skouras calls his St. George, a rough translation of the grape name, and ages the wine for a year in oak to soften the sometimes harsh tannins. Yiannis Paraskevopoulos, Greece’s most famous consulting oenologist (with a French PhD in wine), makes Gaia’s Notios from young vines. Unusually, it goes through only one fermentation before it is fined with egg white and bottled. The name means “the Southerner.”

Our Portuguese white is produced by João Portugal Ramos from the indigenous Rabo de Ovelha (Ewe’s tail”) and Roupeira. Named for a 15th century order of monks called Convento Loios, it comes from the Alentejo region in the south. The red we’re pouring was the table wine of the Symington family, producers of numerous ports for over 400 years; it has been available to the public only a few years. Made from Touriga Francesca (floral), 20% Touriga Nacional (balanced, firm, elegant), 30% Tinta Roriz (powerful, color, tannic), and 5% Tinta da Barca (very spicy). This is a full-bodied wine that is rich but with no over-ripe portlike sweetness, gritty, gutsy, and dense but not tough.