



CYPRUS
WINE
ROUTES

route **5**
Koumandaria

cheers along!

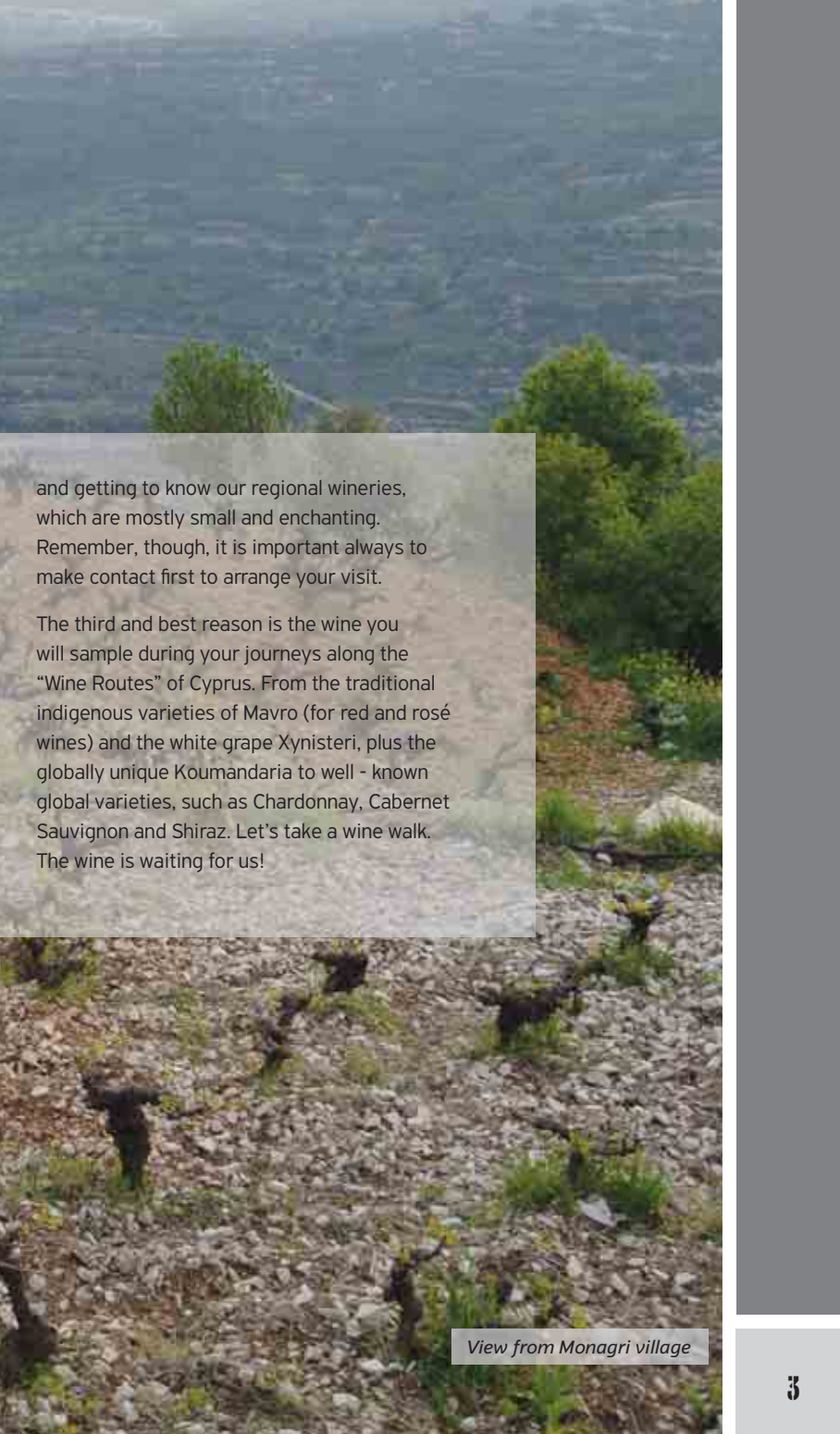


Wine is not a new story for Cyprus. Recent archaeological excavations which have been undertaken on the island have confirmed the thinking that this small tranche of earth has been producing wine for almost 5000 years. The discoveries testify that Cyprus may well be the cradle of wine development in the entire Mediterranean basin, from Greece, to Italy and France.

**Come -tour, taste
and enjoy!**

This historic panorama of continuous wine history that the island possesses is just one of the reasons that make a trip to the wine villages such a fascinating prospect. A second important reason is the wines of today -finding





and getting to know our regional wineries, which are mostly small and enchanting. Remember, though, it is important always to make contact first to arrange your visit.

The third and best reason is the wine you will sample during your journeys along the “Wine Routes” of Cyprus. From the traditional indigenous varieties of Mavro (for red and rosé wines) and the white grape Xynisteri, plus the globally unique Koumandaria to well - known global varieties, such as Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz. Let’s take a wine walk. The wine is waiting for us!

View from Monagri village

route 5

Koumandaria

Lemesos, Kolossi, Erimi, Alassa, Agios Georgios Silikou, Doros, Laneia, Trimiklini, Agios Mamas, Kapileio, Zoopigi, Kalo Chorio, Agios Pavlos, Agios Konstantinos, Louvaras, Gerasa, Apsiou, Paramytha, Palodeia, Agia Fyla

This route, travelling north from Lemesos, unites modern day vine growing and wine making with antiquity. Wines like those you will find have been made right here for many centuries.



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Ministry of Interior, KYPROS 2008

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SCALE 1:200,000

0 100 200 300 400 500 600 METRES



THE SWEET OLD GRAND-DADDY WINE OF CYPRUS...

As we drive north out of Lemesos on the B6 main road, a feeling of anticipation occurs. The road rises up and soon open country is around us. We are going to see a lot of villages and investigate Cyprus's great sweet wine tradition, produced since time immemorial. The very word sounds romantic: "Koumandaria". Now it covers not just the wine but its region of production, too. Fourteen villages make it, at altitudes of between 500 and 900 m, within an area of 12 km which lies parallel to the coast. This is a captivating tour with splendid views all around.

Probably sweet wine was made in Cyprus in antiquity and certainly it is older than its name, "Koumandaria". A millennia or longer ago, it was a Communion wine, referred to by Isiodos in his 10th century work "Days and Work".

Today's name dates from 1191, when Richard Coeur de Lion sold Cyprus to the Order of the Knights of the Temple. It is thought that this wine was served at his wedding to Queen Berengaria. The territories in which the Templars settled they called 'Commanderies'. In Cyprus the largest was at Kolossi Castle.

So the wine took its name from the Knights who were involved in its making and exporting it to the Courts of Europe. This tour, therefore, starts at Kolossi. As we explore the castle, in our minds we can see the Mediaeval feasting which once took place in its rooms, where the huge roasts were accompanied by this luscious sweet wine, whose consumption we confine today to desserts, a digestif, or -if we are adventurous- with *Paté de Foie Gras*.



general characteristics



Cyclamen, a characteristic flower of Cyprus

As we drive upwards, the road takes a dip downwards, running along the northern edge of the Kouris Reservoir. This is a region with interests for nature seekers, as well as hikers and walkers. There are ancient sites, too, and everywhere vistas in the foreground, middle ground and northwards in the mountainous distance.

Along the way, there are two wineries to visit.

- **Climate:** The Koumandaria region has a temperate climate with a pronounced variation between winter (which can be cold and frosty, with, in most years, regular rainfall) and summer, which is generally dry and warm, but with the cooling air one finds in the Troodos foothills.
- **Terrain:** In contrast with other wine areas the region often offers poor, shallow soil with comparatively high amounts of carbon and calcium. Consequently the grape yield per hectare is lower than, say, the Pafos region.
- **Vineyards:** All the villages on this route lie in the region of production of Wines of Controlled Denomination of Origin, "Koumandaria". The majority of vineyards are planted with the indigenous Mavro and Xynisteri. Five other varieties are also in evidence.
- **Red varieties:** Mavro, Otharmo, Cabernet Sauvignon, Grenache.
- **White varieties:** Palomino, Malaga, Xynisteri.



Vineyards vista in the Agios Konstantinos area



the route

Though we are going on a northwards route, it is appropriate to start at Kolossi, at a distance of about 14 kilometres from Lemesos (Limassol) on the B6. Despite the predations of modern man and the expansion of his residence and commercial activities, there is plenty of fertile farming and fruit growing land hereabouts. The region has a long agricultural history, frequently reported appreciatively in the diaries and logs of travellers in the Middle Ages.

Imagine the rich plantations of old surrounding the Crusader Castle of the Knights of St. John at Kolossi -sugar cane, cotton, vines, vegetables and fruits of every description.

Dominating the flat landscape is the square and rugged, stone-built and strong Castle, dating from the 13th century, where the Knights made their regional Headquarters.

When you sip a lovely little measure of Koumandaria, whether with dessert, fruit or even a liver paté, you are sampling quite a lot more than a wine of “Controlled Denomination of Origin”. You are imbibing a wine that is very much



The Wine Museum of Cyprus at Erimi

like those made in Biblical times, and you have encountered a method of making that is globally unusual, if not unique. The texture, the aroma, the flavour, these are just found in this noble wine of Cyprus.

To start with, the grapes are the indigenous varieties whose origins are lost in the mists of time, the red “Mavro” and the white “Xynisteri”, all grown here on the southern slopes of Troodos, laced by the rivers Mesa Potamos, Limnatis and Garryllis. But there is more to it than “terroir”; the vinification is preceded by the grapes being





The Mediaeval castle at Kolossi





laid out in the sun for a week after picking, to enhance sugar level and density. Vinification wine is barrelled for maturation in the sun. Wine which evaporates and is replaced by fresh, a process not unlike the Bodega system of Sherry making.

Visit the Castle. Walk around or relax in its shaded corners, interior and exterior. Marvel at the huge tree “Machairion” (Machaerium Tibu) in the courtyard, which, extraordinarily came from Argentina two hundred years ago. Even in this day and age the vineyards almost reach to the walls of the castle.

Leaving Kolossi westwards, we soon come to Erimi Village, the main part of which extends from this, the old Pafos road, to the boundaries of the Motorway. As we drive down a short slope, opposite a row of shops, on the left is the Wine Museum of Cyprus. Here, in a marvellous building constructed in traditional stone and tile, you can see vine and wine exhibits of historical and current interest, view an audio-visual presentation and taste and buy a range of Cyprus wines. The building is on the site of the former





The Agios Georgios Chapel near Kalo Chorio



Typical "Wine Routes" sign

family home of the Museum's creator Anastasia Guy, a noted musician and composer.

Now we cross the little bridge of Erimi, and turn right returning to the Lemesos - Pafos Motorway, where we strike out eastwards towards Lemesos. We drive on to the big flyover and look out for the turn off left to Agia Fyla, the B8 road. Agia Fyla is now a suburb of Lemesos, but we are soon in open country and climbing on a fine wide road. Shortly we will pass the Kouris Reservoir on the left - the biggest in the island - and Alassa village on the hill to our right.

We are ascending continually with a wonderful valley vista spread out to the left and the Troodos Mountains ahead. Turn off left when you see the sign to Monagri village, where wine has been made since time immemorial. A visit to the restored monastery and the little Church of the Archangel and the nearby monastery of the Virgin Mary of Amasgos are rewarding.

The bendy, undulating little road here weaves among delightful views and it is no wonder many people come to

live here, in countryside residences or restored village houses. The next village is the tiny one of Agios Georgios, where the "terroir" is ideal for growing the grapes that make Koumandaria.

Continuing on this well made country road we proceed to climb to 650 metres altitude, and Silikou village. A pretty little place, where one can relax, walk, take coffee or a meal and enjoy the scene. Sadly, the old wine presses (Linos) are abandoned, but there are fountains to be enjoyed, where in one's mind's eye we may see horsemen of olden days refreshing themselves and their animals! The springs that serve these have long helped irrigate the fruit trees and plots around the village. Silikou is famous for the quality of its raisins.

We retrace our steps to Agios Georgios, noting the completely different aspects of the scenery as we go in the opposite direction and from there to Monagri. We take a left turn to Doros village. The distances here are short, just a kilometre or two. In open situations, above the River Mesa Potamos, those villages constitute the western part of the Koumandaria region.



An old grape Press



Stroll the paved streets of Doros, take some coffee and a glass of cool mountain water, and then make for this first of two Koumandaria Wineries: "PANAGIOTIS KARSERAS" winery is next to the church of Agios Epifanios - 16th century.

Production here is around 100,000 bottles a year, half of which is made for the large Lemesos wine firm ETKO. The winery is owned by the Community President of the village, who has run it for more than 10 years. The winery uses both traditional and modern equipment and techniques in making this lovely sweet wine, taking in grapes from vine growers all around the village.

Conducted tours with Greek, English and Russian commentaries may be arranged, and it is recommended to contact the winery to set up your visit.

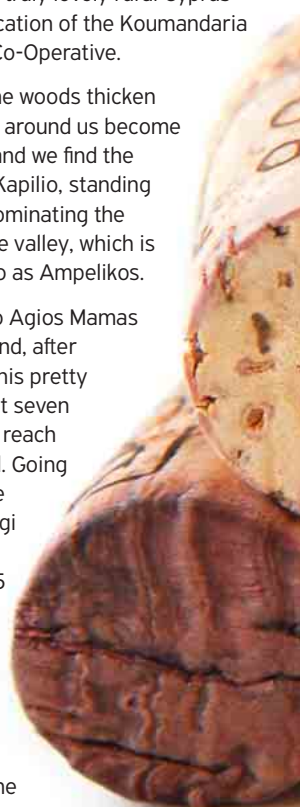
Our visit over and our Koumandaria tasted and purchased, we head back to the B8 and turn left. Very shortly we see the sign for Laneia and turn right. Laneia has not only remained well preserved, it has been lovingly restored and it is a popular place to live, whose residents include noted artists and writers. Here

you may see a traditional wine press which has been well restored. There are restaurants, coffee shops as well as places to buy souvenirs, art-works, craft items and sweet-meats like the famous Soudjouko, the *Eau-de-Vie* Zivania and, of course Koumandaria and other local wines. A walk around will demonstrate the harmony in which this modern, but traditional, village exists with the surrounding nature.

Returning once more to the B8 road, we turn right and head for Trimiklini village. The ride is only a few minutes. On the north side of the village we turn right and after about two kilometres we come to the settlement of Agios Mamas, in fertile and wooded areas, at an altitude of 600 metres. This is truly lovely rural Cyprus and it is the location of the Koumandaria winery of the Co-Operative.

We carry on; the woods thicken and the slopes around us become a lot steeper, and we find the tiny village of Kapilio, standing out on a hill, dominating the Limnatis village valley, which is also referred to as Ampelikos.

Driving back to Agios Mamas we turn right and, after driving along this pretty valley for about seven kilometres, we reach the E110 road. Going northwards, we come to Zoopigi village at an altitude of 885 metres. The views here are stunning, the powerful mountains of the region, dissected by the tributaries of River







Limnatis, (locally known as “Xilourikos”) and River Germasogeias, providing unexpected, harsh-seeming even, beauty.

We next make for Kalo Chorio village, which is an important centre of Koumandaria production and a landmark of the village. The winery, the “CO-OPERATIVE COMPANY OF VINICULTURE” is close by the Church of Agios Georgios in “Koumandaria Avenue”.

As is the case with most of the wineries we shall visit in these Wine Routes, the grapes used are essentially local. In this case, they are exclusively of the white Cyprus grape, Xynisteri. The wines produced are taken, aged and bottled by the two major companies, KEO and ETKO.

Here there may be no shop, but you may try a sip or two of the wine direct from the barrel, an experience not to be missed! Visitors may take a conducted tour (Greek and English languages) and see a fascinating audio visual presentation about the making of Koumandaria.

As we continue our journey in an eastern direction, after a short while we come to Agios Pavlos and Agios Constantinos



ΚΟΥΜΑΝΔΑΡΙΑΣ

NDARIA REGION



The three fountains of Silikou village

villages. The Koumandaria here is fine stuff, made from Xynisteri and Mavro, and benefiting from the high altitude at which the grapes are grown. The surroundings are almost Alpine -the mountain slopes, the forest, the air and the dense vineyard plantations. In the square of Agios Pavlos you can see a truly old wine press, while in Agios Constantinos there is an old church of traditional architecture, dedicated to the Agios Constantinos and Eleni. Also to be seen are an old mill and a fine village fountain.

The next village on our way is Louvaras. To get to it with drive back to Kalo Chorio village and, at the end of Koumandaria avenue, turn left and again left at a second road.

Louvaras is a very picturesque village, built on an open and flat place, above the beginning of the River Garillis Valley, surrounded by dense woodland punctuated by abrupt slopes and small canyons. Near the village is the small church of Agios Mamas, which was built in 1455 and includes murals of Philippos Goul.

The last and lower villages of the region

of Koumandaria are Apsiou and Gerasa. Although there is an unmade-up track parallel to the river that runs through the forest which can take you there, it will be more comfortable if you go back to Kalo Chorio. From here, downwards to the left for about five kilometres you will come to Apsiou village on the left and Gerasa village on the right side of the road. The distance between them is about one kilometre. Gerasa village is found in a fertile open and flat place in a thinly wooded area, above River Garillis. The vines most cultivated at this altitude (430 meters) are of the Mavro variety. Gerasa village maintains some characteristics of the traditional architecture of the semi-highland region but its having less water makes it less green.

Lemosos isn't far from here, about twelve kilometres south. After we have passed Paramytha and Palodia villages we reach Agia Fyla and the motorway. The total distance of our drive has been a little more than a hundred kilometres. For us, we have enjoyed a modern-age, speedy travelling of an olden-days wine route, making the acquaintance of one of the world's oldest wines.





2000

11



Inside a Winery in Kalo Chorio

A photograph of a stone wall in a winery. The wall is constructed from irregular, grey and brown stones. In the foreground, a large wooden barrel is visible, resting on a wooden stand. The barrel is made of dark wood with several metal hoops. The lighting is warm, suggesting an indoor setting.

wineries

**CO-OPERATIVE COMPANY OF
VINOCULTURE**

25542266, 99534060
Kalo Chorio

KARSERAS WINERY

99413238, 99589325
Doros

Inside a Winery in Kalo Chorio



Wine Tasting / Charged

Wine Tasting / Free

Maximum number of visitors per visit

Credit Card

Tour language

Sale of products

Parking for buses

Car park

Audio-visual presentations

Restaurant

Vineyard tour



50



80





tavernas / restaurants

PARAMYTHA

25452444, 99645247

Makedonias 1, Paramytha, Lemesos

SILIKOU VILLAGE

25470001, 99892027

Silikou, Lemesos

FILITOS

25543344, 99608135

Kalo Chorio, Lemesos

VILLAGE TAVERN KALO CHORIO

25542737, 99429119

Kalo Chorio, Lemesos



RAFTIS

25774001

Michalaki Karaoli 16, Palodeia, Lemesos

TO STEKI TOU MELI

25770225, 99752919

Eleftherias 5, Palodeia, Lemesos

TAVERNA TO APTALIKO

99639321

Peukou 1, Kalo Chorio, Lemesos

LANEIA

25432398, 99464759

Laneia, Lemesos



for a good
night's sleep...



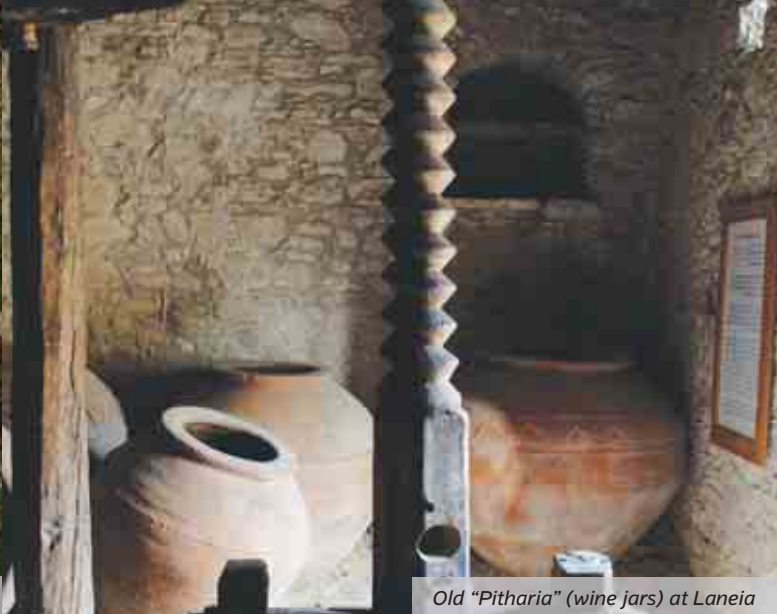
Alleyway at Laneia

AGRO-TOURISTIC ACCOMMODATION

NAME	LOCATION	TELEPHONE
Agrovino	Lofou	25470202, 99468151
Anerada	Apsiou	99649331
Antony's Garden House	Episkopi	25932502, 25932748
Arkela	Vasa Koilaniou	25375355
Blue	Apsiou	25822670, 99649331
Cornaro House	Arsos	25358836, 99314684
Dia's House	Arsos	25372368, 99636046
Mavrikios Village Apartments	Koilani	99642763
Moustos House	Arsos	99604955
Nicolas & Maria's Cottage	Anogyra	99406091, 99525462
Niki's House	Agios Athanasios	99334671
Themis House	Lemithou	22422938, 25462525
Vouni Lodge	Vouni	22323385, 99685395

HOTELS

Forest Park	Platres	25421751
New Helvetia	Platres	25421348
Pendeli	Platres	25421736
Edelweiss	Platres	25421335
Minerva	Platres	25421731
Petit Palais	Platres	25422723
Kallithea	Platres	25421746
Rodon	Agros	25521201
Vlachos	Agros	25521330



Old "Pitharia" (wine jars) at Laneia

WEB - ADDRESS

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www.agrotourism.com.cy

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www.arkela.com.cy

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www.rondonhotel.com

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«Helping reduce the gap between development levels and living standards among the regions and the extent to which least-favoured regions are lagging behind. Helping redress the main regional imbalances in the Community by participating in the development and structural adjustment of regions whose development is lagging behind and the economic and social conversion of regions».

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REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS



CYPRUS
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