

Kontozisis 'A-Grafo Limniona' 2018

Producer - Andreas Kontozisis and Aphrodite Tousia

Provenance: Karditsa, Northern Greece

Farming: Organic - certified

Grape(s): 100% Limniona

Vineyard: Grown on a slight slope in a low lying, cooler spot in loamy, iron rich soils.

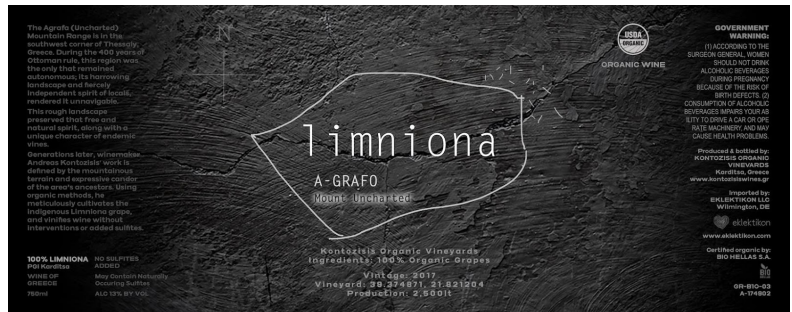
Vintage: 2018 was an extremely hot and dry year producing wines of subtler aroma and charming dry spice.

Fermentation/ Aging: Harvested and fermented in stainless steel without temperature control including about 20-30% in tact clusters in the vat. After fermentation, free run juice is racked to steel for lees aging for 6 months.

Fining/ Filtration: none

Sulfite: none added

Misc: As Greek producers search for red varieties that can succeed internationally, Limniona is starting to garner a lot of attention on account of its Carignan-like ability to endure intense heat without losing acidity.



The Producer:

Located at the edge of the famously unconquerable A-Grafo mountain range, the Kontozisis story begins in the early 90's when Andreas and his brother start helping their father make wine for the family tavern. The winemaking was informed by Andreas' father's upbringing in a small mountain village where wine was purely country ('natural'). The family's early winery is a small, open-air shack adjacent to their restaurant with three concrete tanks where they were processing 18 tons of fruit up until 2003 with the creation of the modern winery. Under Andreas' stewardship the winery has become a standard for oenological excellence producing supremely clean wines under the 'Sun' label alongside the zero sulfur, hyper pure 'A-Grafo' wines with more experiments and vineyards planned for the future.

The Vineyard

Today, serious and focused Andreas and his ebullient partner Aphrodite care for 13 hectares of scattered vineyards making them the largest single grower in Karditsa. The overwhelming majority of their fruit (about 10 ha worth) is sourced from about 150 tiny backyard plots.

The Limniona and Xinomavro grow side by side not far from the winery in the lowlands where the soils are almost spongy, sandy loam and ferrous, punctuated by rounded

stones that migrated from the nearby mountains. The yields in this vineyard are super low and they employ a technique to increase concentration by cutting back lower leaves during flowering in order to minimize fruit production by forcing the plant to drop blossoms. In general, the Limniona gets no spring pruning of the tops in order to prolong the ripening window. The 'A-Grafo' wines are farmed to get more concentration and a longer growing window so they can harvest later with more tannins and phenolics to help naturally protect the wine. 20 year old, ungrafted vines bordered by trees and a stream with tons of grass.

The Cellar

With the right eyes stepping into a winery can reveal a great deal about a producer and so it is no surprise that the Kontozisis facility would be as utterly immaculate as their wines. This is a very modern picture of a winery with pneumatic presses, a hyper-specific style up pump that allows them to transfer wine without losing lees or skins if they choose; a great asset for the reductive style of winemaking (minimal oxygen) they prefer.

The 'A-Grafo' wines are an antidote to all the stock objections to zero zero wines being rough, untamed things. Thick-skinned, more brightly acidic Limniona is fermented whole cluster in stainless steel without temperature control and 20-30% whole-cluster which Andreas accomplishes by sporadically turning the crusher/ destemmer on and off. 40 days of maceration and aged in steel. All the 'A-Grafo' wines are made from purely free run juice (the press run goes into the 'Sun' wines and other things they make for the local market) and is bottled without fining, filtration or added sulfur. The 2018 vintage was broadly hot and dry across Greece and so the 18's show a little more power and concentration than the 17's.

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