



Name :	BLE ALEPOU 2011
Type:	Dry red
Category:	PGI Imathia
Origin:	Selected vineyard blocks of the Kir-Yianni Estate in Yianakohori (#1 and #2 for Syrah, #24 for Merlot, 9 for Xinomavro, and #6 for the other varieties)
Varieties:	Syrah, Merlot, Xinomavro, Cabernet Sauvignon
Cellaring:	14 months in new 225-lt barriques for each of the separate varieties, additional 4 months in new 225-lt barriques for the entire blend –aging in bottle for 6 more months.
Aging potential:	12-15 years

VINEYARD

The Kir-Yianni Estate vineyards in PDO Naoussa are located at an altitude of 230-320m on the Eastern foothills of Mt. Vermio. The zone's climate is marked by abundant precipitation during the winter and spring, and moderate drought during the summer. The site spans over rolling hills with medium to high slopes and southeastern exposure. Its soil type is a mixed limestone ranging from clay to loam and sandy loam. Due to this diversity and complexity of the site the vineyards are established in 30 separate blocks –each one with its own particular characteristics and viticultural practices. In the Ble Alepou blend we used Syrah grapes grown on the loamy limestone soils of blocks #1 and 2, Merlot from the loamy limestone soils of block #24 and Xinomavro from the clay-limestone soils of block #9. All these blocks face southeast. A generous vine spacing of 3,500-4,000 per hectare is in place for optimal vigor and canopy management. The resulting yield is less than 80 hectoliters per hectare.

VINIFICATION

The winemaking objective for Ble Alepou is to highlight the terroir of the Kir-Yianni Estate and its potential for world-class wines. To that end, Ble Alepou is a blend of the best examples of the basic varieties grown at the Estate, selected according to their technical characteristics, such as acidity, alcoholic degree, phenolic ripeness, intensity of aroma and color.

After strict selection in the vineyard and on the sorting table, the grapes of each variety are cold soaked separately at 9-10°C in a reductive environment for a period of 5-7 days. For each variety a different fermentation temperature is applied. Fermentation for Merlot takes place at 27-28° C, followed by a post-fermentation extraction period of 8-15 days. Xinomavro ferments at 22°C in open-top tanks. A monitored hydraulic *pigeage* is used in order to avoid the breaking of grape seeds and the extraction of undesirable tannins. Grape skins are removed before the end of fermentation. The wine is aged in new 225 and 500-lt French oak casks.

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

Alcohol volume:	15.2 % vol
Volatile acidity:	0.63 g/lit
Total acidity:	5.9 g/lit
pH:	3.4
Residual sugar:	3.4 g/lit

WINE MAKER NOTES

Ble Alepou is a deep red, almost opaque wine with purple hues. The slow, thick tears on the sides of the glass reveal its rich alcohol, which adds volume and sweetness to the body. Red fruit aromas interlaced with pronounced notes of vanilla, tobacco and bread crust, from the maturing of the wine in new oak barriques, create a seductive and complex character. The excellent quality tannins offer a robust structure and a long aging potential, while the acidity adds zing and contributes to the creation of a balanced body. The lingering, fruity aftertaste underpins the rich character of the wine. This is definitely the best vintage of Ble Alepou so far.