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TARALAS ESTATE RED XINOMAVRO 2012

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Naoussa is regarded as one of Greece's two most important red wine regions, alongside Nemea. It is a verdant mountainous region in Greek Macedonia, where the climate is as much continental as it is Mediterranean. The winters are cold and often severe, and the summers warm to hot. The vineyards are mostly planted between 150m to 350m which helps moderate the summer heat

The grape synonymous with the region is Xinomavro, which translates to "acid black"; a reference to the black skins of the grape and elevated acidity of the wines. The wines themselves are often relatively pale in colour, with a brickish tint -in many ways similar to Nebbiolo, with fine grippy tannins, perfumed aromas of roses, game and typically hints of tomato and olive. These are great food wines of structure and elegance, and with a great potential for ageing.

The Taralas family have had an important role to play in Greek wine production, establishing a vine nursery in the late 1920s, which was one of the only sources of grafted vines and thus instrumental in driving the recovery of the Greek vineyards from the Phylloxera outbreak of 1935.

Today Christos Taralas runs this 10 hectare organic estate in Naoussa, populated with low yielding 40 year old Xinomavro vines located in the foothills of eastern Vermio at an altitude of 300 metres above sea level. The yield is about 7000 kg per hectare and organic sprays such as zeolite, dolomite and other minerals, as well as mixtures of nettle and other wild herbs and plants are used.

This wine is a special release, only made in exceptional vintages and held back in the cellar for a decade until Christos feels it's fully mature.

Classic red vinification, with the whole lees intact in the fermentation tank, a cold soak for 4-5 days at 10°C, then fermentation with native yeasts at 22°C for 18 days, followed by destemming and maturation for 3 years in second-use barrels.

Garnet red in the glass with brickish hints. A perfumed nose of wild brambles, damson, sundried tomatoes, roses, salted liquorice and smoked meats. Long, elegant ripe tannins. The complexities of a fully mature wine, while retaining a core of red fruits.

