

Tasting notes

Douloufakis Vertical, 3/5/2019

Elias Kiritsis

:

Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	White Dafnios	2
3	Red Dafnios	5

1 Introduction

On May 3rd, 2019, we have assisted in a vertical tasting at Douloufakis Winery one of the main Cretan wineries, located in the village of Dafnes, south of Heraklion. The wines tasted were the White Dafnios cuvée, made from 100% Vidiano grape, and the red Dafnios cuvée, made from 100% red Liatiko grape.

The bottles came from my cellar² as well as from the Winery's cellar³.

The wines were tasted blind, in flights of two or three. Below I present my tasting notes for the bottles that originated in my cellar.

²Where they were kept at 11.5 °C and 80% humidity. All bottles from my cellar were bought in pristine condition with the exception of the White Dafnios 2015, that was bought in September 2016, having remained for about a year in the storage space of the winery.

³The winery's cellar has varying temperatures that become substantial in the summer and relatively low humidity.

2 White Dafnios

Remark: This wine is made from 100% Vidiano grown on the Winery's vineyards around the village of Dafnes. The yields are relatively high (between 60-75 hectoliters/hectare). It is a wine that is vinified entirely in stainless steel tanks.

- **Dafnios 2011:** Brilliant intense yellow color. The first nose is dominated by fruit, albeit of the tertiary type, cumulating in notes of citrus, loquat (also known as Japan plum) and quince. There is a secondary mineral component that soars with some airing from the glass. In the mouth there is a very vivid attack dominated by the pronounced acidity of the wine. It slowly gives way to the fruit (with aromas that mirror the nose) dominating the mid-palate and eventually balancing the acidity but the wine remains vivid. The finish is long and persisted showing later herbal aromas. This is a wine at its plateau of maturity. It will stay there probably for another 5-10 years.
- **Dafnios 2012:** Brilliant yellow color. The first nose is very expressive and highly complex with three classes of aromas. The first is that of fruits, mostly citrus and hints of apricot. The second comprises strong mineral aromas that go in parallel with the fruit. The third is herbal aromas that after some time hint at laurel (*Laurus nobilis*). Finally in the second nose there are hints of honey. In the mouth, there is a very smooth attack with loads of fruit in the palate developing all the aromas seen in the nose. The acidity is very well balanced with the fruit. The mid-palate has medium weight, and ends in a very long finish. Some herbal notes distinguish themselves in the long finish, hinting again at laurel aromas. This is an impressive wine at its plateau of maturity. I expect it to last and evolve another 5-10 years.

- **Dafnios 2013:** Brilliant yellow color. The first nose is reserved and upon coaxing some mineral aromas emerge along with herbal aromas hinting again of laurel. Several minutes later the nose is much more expressive along the same lines, and hinting also at some yellow fruit aromas (loquat). In the

mouth it has a rather vivid attack with marked acidity that is well balanced with the fruit that develops. The mineral and herbal aromas are rather marked and pleasant. The mid-palate has medium weight and the finish is again long with the same herbal notes dominating it. This wine seems to be still semi-closed and I expect it to open up in 3-4 years from now.

- **Dafnios 2014:** Brilliant yellow color. The first nose is very expressive with fruit and citrus aromas as well as aromas of noble resins. The second nose after some coaxing is even more sustained with similar aromas that seem to evolve. In the mouth the first attack is smooth and seamless, quickly developing into a fruit symphony, accompanied with some mineral flavor as well as herbal flavors in the background reminiscent of laurel. The midpalate is balanced and medium bodied. The finish is long as usual with the herbal flavors dominating in the end, accompanied with a slight bitter touch, that ties well the laurel aftertaste.

- **Dafnios 2015:** Deeper yellow color. First nose rather reserved with evolution-type aromas of loquat and mineral flavors. After substantial coaxing the second nose is somewhat more present along similar aromatic lines. In the mouth the attack is very vivid with lively and high acidity. The fruit is less present and the midpalate is unbalanced. The finish is long but not as expressive as in previous wines

Remark. This wine, unlike all others in this report, was not bought in early spring when the winery releases its wines. It was bought in late September, and therefore it has spent the summer in the winery's storage place where temperatures soar. When upon purchase it was tasted in September 2016 it was already quite evolved and it showed a substantially higher acidity that is a characteristic of the 2015 wines. This explains the fact that the 2015 appears much more evolved than older years. It seems however that the wine is in an intermediate closed phase.

- **Dafnios 2016:** Bright yellow color. The nose is very young and expressive, dominated by primary and secondary aromas of flowers (camomile and paeonia), fruits (apple, apricot, loquat, citrus) and a touch of incense. In a second round, the nose shows beyond the previous aromas the first hints of mineral flavors. In the mouth the first attack is smooth and balanced with the fruit exploding in the mouth. All the aromas of the nose reappear in the mouth in a layered and balanced ensemble, tied with an appropriate acid lace. The midpalate is medium to full bodied, and the finish is exceptionally long even for the grape's standards. This is a remarkable wine, and the best white Dafnios so far (in my opinion), that has a brilliant future. It will evolve for the next 20 years if properly cellared and will provide continuous pleasure throughout.

3 Red Dafnios

Remark: Red Dafnios is a wine made from 100% Liatiko grape grown on the Winery's vineyards around the village of Dafnes. The yields are high, ranging from 80-100 hectoliters/hectare. This is a wine that is vinified in stainless steel tanks and large foudres.

• **Red Dafnios 1996:** Color light brick. The nose is rather intense with clear aromas of cinnamon and liquorice, with hints of leather. In the mouth the first attack is lively, and is dominated by the spice aromas of the nose that evolve and dominate the mid-palate. The balance is good and the wine is light to medium bodied. The finish is long and dominated by spices especially liquorice.

Remark: This is from a bottle kept at the Winery, at temperatures higher than optimal. The wine however is in a superb form.

• **Red Dafnios 2011:** Ruby color. The first nose is delicate with aromas of leather, liquorice and smoke. After some coaxing, the nose becomes more expressive showing more spices (clove and allspice). In the mouth the first attack is lively, evolving into a rich fruity mouthfeel with a hint of well-integrated tannins, and very good balance. The midpalate is light to medium. The finish is long and fruity. This is a wine that is nice to drink now, but it can last another 10 years. It can be drunk even beyond the 15-20 year mark, but as seen in older millesimes, the profile of the wines simplifies although it is very nice to drink. The aroma that dominates is liquorice.

• **Red Dafnios 2013:** Intense Ruby color. The first nose is beautiful and complex, with red fruits, leather, smoke and spices (liquorice, clove, allspice). In the mouth the first attack is smooth, balanced and evolves into a fruit bomb where all the aromas of the nose reappear. The tannins are imperceptible, the acidity medium to low and the wine has a great balance. The midpalate is medium bodied. The finish is long and fruity. This is a wine

that can start drinking in 4-6 years from now.

- **Red Dafnios 2015:** Intense Ruby color. The first nose is dominated by red fruits and spices (liquorice, clove, allspice) with a hint of leather. In the mouth the first attack is very lively, dominated by the high acidity of 2015. It evolves into a fruit complex where all the aromas of the nose reappear. The tannins are low, and the midpalate is medium bodied. The finish is long and fruity. This is a wine still in evolution and it should start drinking in 5-7 years from now.