GUIDE · CORINTHIA

Corinthia Wineries: Beyond Nemea, A Flavorful Journey



About

Corinthia, a land blessed with rich history, ancient monuments, and stunning natural beauty, offers far more than meets the eye. Amidst its lush landscapes and historic sites lies a vibrant wine world waiting to be discovered. While Nemea is rightfully the flagship of our wine region, Corinthia boasts a rich diversity that extends far beyond, inviting you on a captivating flavorful journey.

Join us as we explore the wineries of Corinthia, taste its exceptional wines, meet the passionate people behind their production, and uncover the hidden vinicultural surprises our region has to offer.

The Wine Soul of Corinthia: The Nemea Region

Nemea, one of Greece's most important Protected Designations of Origin (PDOs), is undeniably the "land of Agiorgitiko." Here, this impressive red grape has been cultivated for centuries, yielding wines with deep colour, rich aroma, and a velvety taste. The history of wine in Nemea is lost in the mists of time, deeply intertwined with the ancient Nemean Games and the legendary hero Hercules, weaving a myth around every drop.

Agiorgitiko: The King of Nemea

Agiorgitiko is one of the most versatile Greek red grape varieties. It can produce everything from fresh, fruity rosé wines and light, approachable reds, all the way to complex, age-worthy reds with a robust character, capable of competing with world-renowned varieties. The PDO Nemea guarantees the quality and authenticity of these wines, which are produced across a wide range of altitudes and terroirs, imparting distinct characteristics to each label. From the valley floor's softer expressions to the high-altitude vineyards offering more structured and aromatic wines, Agiorgitiko truly reflects its diverse birthplace.

What to See and Do in Nemea

- **Visit Wineries:** The Nemea region is home to many modern wineries that are open to the public. Here, you can tour the state-of-the-art facilities, learn about the winemaking process from grape harvest to bottling, and of course, enjoy guided tastings of their exquisite wines. Many wineries also offer walks through their vineyards, allowing you to appreciate the terroir firsthand.
- **Archaeological Site of Nemea:** Don't miss a visit to the impressive archaeological site, featuring the magnificent Temple of Zeus, the ancient stadium where the Nemean Games were held, and the museum. It's a wonderful way to combine wine tourism with exploring Greece's rich cultural heritage.
- **Traditional Villages:** Explore the picturesque villages surrounding Nemea, such as Koutsi, Leontio, and Agios Vasileios, where you'll find charming traditional tavernas serving authentic local cuisine and friendly, welcoming locals eager to share their way of life.

Beyond Nemea: Discovering Corinthia's Wine Diversity

While Nemea is the epicentre, Corinthia offers a much broader wine experience. Its unique geographical position, with the mountainous slopes of Ziria, the rolling hills around Sikyona, and the fertile lowlands, creates a mosaic of microclimates that favor the cultivation of various grape varieties and the production of wines with distinct characters.

Wineries in Other Regions of Corinthia

Beyond the heart of Nemea, you'll find smaller, often family-run, wineries scattered throughout different areas of Corinthia. These boutique wineries frequently offer a more personal and intimate experience, often focusing on organic cultivation, experimental grape varieties, or unique expressions of Agiorgitiko from specific altitudes and soils, showcasing the region's broader potential.

- **Sikyona Area:** In the hills surrounding ancient Sikyona, where the history of viticulture is also deeply rooted, new wineries are emerging. They experiment with both indigenous and international varieties, taking advantage of the mild climate and fertile soil to produce innovative and high-quality wines.
- **Mountainous Corinthia:** On the foothills of the Ziria mountain range, at higher altitudes, varieties are cultivated that benefit from significant diurnal temperature variations. This results in wines with refreshing acidity and intense fruity aromas, often with a crisp, mineral character.

Exploring Varieties Beyond Agiorgitiko

While Agiorgitiko rightfully dominates, Corinthia's vineyards are far from monotonous. You'll discover other intriguing varieties thriving in its diverse terroirs:

- **White Varieties:**
  - **Roditis:** A traditional Greek variety that produces fresh, aromatic white wines, often with hints of citrus and floral notes, making them ideal for the summer months.
  - **Savatiano:** Known for its resilience and its ability to yield wines with pleasant acidity and subtle herbal or botanical undertones. It's a key grape for traditional Retsina but also makes excellent dry whites.
  - **Moschofilero:** Although more famously associated with other regions, Moschofilero is also cultivated in Corinthia, offering wines with a vibrant aromatic character, crisp acidity, and refreshing taste, often displaying notes of rose, citrus, and spice.
- **Red & International Varieties:**
  - Beyond Agiorgitiko, you'll encounter international varieties such as **Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Syrah**. These are either bottled as single varietals or used in blends with Agiorgitiko,

adding even greater complexity, structure, and a different aromatic profile to the region's red wine offerings.

Wine Tourism in Corinthia: A Practical Guide

A visit to Corinthia's wineries can easily be transformed into a comprehensive and unforgettable travel experience, blending culture, nature, and gastronomy.

How to Get Here

Corinthia is exceptionally accessible from Athens. You can reach the region by car via the Athens-Corinth National Road in approximately one hour, making it an ideal destination for a day trip or a longer stay. For exploring the wineries and the surrounding areas at your own pace, a car is essential, offering the flexibility to visit various locations off the beaten path.

When to Visit

- **Harvest Season (late August – September):** If you wish to experience the grape harvest process and the beginning of winemaking firsthand, this is the ideal period. Many wineries organise special events and activities for visitors, allowing you to participate in the 'trygos'.
- **Spring and Autumn:** The pleasant weather, vibrant nature, and fewer tourists make these seasons perfect for relaxed visits and leisurely strolls through the vineyards. The landscapes are particularly beautiful in spring with blossoming flowers and in autumn with changing leaf colours.
- **Winter:** The atmosphere in the wineries is calmer and warmer during winter, often with crackling fireplaces, making it ideal for more personal and intimate tastings and in-depth discussions with the winemakers.

Accommodation and Gastronomy

For your accommodation, you can choose between charming traditional guesthouses in the Nemea region, offering an authentic rural experience, or opt for hotels and resorts in coastal towns like Loutraki, Xylokastro, or Kiato, allowing you to combine your wine experience with the refreshing allure of the sea.

Corinthia's gastronomy perfectly complements your wine journey. Traditional tavernas offer a plethora of rich local dishes that harmonise beautifully with the region's wines. Be sure to try succulent grilled meats, local cheeses such as Manouri or Feta, Kalamata olives, and the famous Corinthian raisin bread (stafidopsomo). Don't forget to sample dishes based on the exquisite extra virgin olive oil, another outstanding product of Corinthia, often served with freshly baked bread.

Local Tips

- **Book in Advance:** It's always a good idea to contact wineries beforehand to book appointments for tours and tastings, especially if you are travelling during peak season or with a group. This ensures a personalized experience.
- **Designate a Driver:** As wine tasting is a central activity, it is wise to designate a sober driver within your group to ensure everyone's safety and enjoyment.
- **Combine Activities:** Beyond the wineries, explore the archaeological site of Ancient Corinth, visit the Monastery of Agios Gerasimos in Geraneia, discover the serene Lake Stymphalia, or relax on the beautiful beaches of the Corinthian Gulf. Corinthia offers countless options for every interest.
- **Purchase Local Products:** Apart from wine, don't forget to take home other exquisite local products as souvenirs or gifts. These include premium extra virgin olive oil, fragrant honey, sun-dried raisins, and a variety of fresh seasonal fruits, all testament to the region's rich agricultural bounty.

Conclusion

Corinthia is a destination that offers a comprehensive experience for wine lovers and beyond. Past the renowned fame of Nemea, a rich and diverse wine world awaits you, filled with flavours, aromas, and stories worth discovering. Come and immerse yourself in Corinthia's vinicultural tradition, enjoy the warm hospitality of its people, and create unforgettable memories in this blessed land. Your flavorful journey through Corinthia has only just begun!

Planning your visit to Corinthia?

Visit Corinthia is the travel guide for the region — hotels, tavernas, wineries and things to do, all in one place.

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Enjoy exploring Corinthia!