GUIDE · CORINTHIA

Nemea Wineries: A Journey to the Heart of Corinthia’s Agiorgitiko



About

Introduction: The Heart of Agiorgitiko in Corinthia

Welcome to Nemea, Corinthia's esteemed wine capital – a place where history, myth, and tradition harmoniously intertwine with the art of winemaking. Here, amidst the fertile hills, flourishes Agiorgitiko, one of Greece's most important red grape varieties, yielding wines of distinctive character and international acclaim. The Nemea region, with its Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) status, is a focal point for wine lovers eager to discover the authentic taste of Corinthian land. Join us on a journey through Nemea's wineries, where every glass tells a unique story.

History and Myth of Nemea: Where Wine Meets the Gods

The history of winemaking in Nemea stretches back through the mists of time, intimately linked with the myths and traditions of ancient Greece. It was here, according to mythology, that Heracles performed his first labour, slaying the fearsome Nemean Lion. On this very ground, the renowned Nemean Games were held in honour of Zeus, drawing vast crowds. Fittingly, Dionysus, the god of wine, was particularly revered in the region.

Archaeological excavations in Ancient Nemea, located entirely within Corinthia, have unveiled traces of viticulture and wine production dating back thousands of years. This deeply rooted tradition, combined with the region's unique terroir – an ideal microclimate featuring diverse soils and ample sunshine – has created perfect conditions for cultivating Agiorgitiko, a grape that has become an ambassador for the Corinthian vineyard.

Agiorgitiko: The "Prince" of Greek Red Wines

Agiorgitiko, Corinthia's most treasured red grape variety, is widely celebrated as the "Prince" of Greek wines. This isn't just due to its historical connection to the region, but also its remarkable complexity and versatility. Its name originates from Aghios Georgios (Saint George), the former name of present-day Nemea.

This variety is renowned for its deep, ruby-red colour and rich aromatic bouquet, encompassing notes of red fruits such as cherry, sour cherry, and blackcurrant. More complex nuances of spices, vanilla, and leather emerge, particularly in aged wines. Agiorgitiko produces wines with velvety tannins and balanced acidity, offering a long and delightful finish. Its versatility allows for a wide range of wines: from fresh, fruity rosés to rich, aged reds that can mature gracefully for decades.

Each Nemea winery strives to highlight different facets of this unique variety, offering visitors a rich tasting experience that showcases the diversity of the Corinthian vineyard.

A Wine Journey Through the Wineries of Corinthian Land

The Nemea wine route offers an unforgettable experience, guiding you through lush, green landscapes adorned with vineyards stretching across the entire Corinthian countryside. Nemea's wineries, many family-owned, blend tradition with modern technology, always keeping a profound love and respect for Agiorgitiko at the forefront.

During your visit, you'll have the opportunity for guided tours through the vineyards, learning about cultivation and harvesting, and uncovering winemaking secrets. Many wineries boast state-of-the-art production facilities and impressive aging cellars, where wines mature in oak barrels, developing complex character.

The highlight, of course, is the wine tasting. In specially designed areas, you will sample a variety of Agiorgitiko wines – from younger, fresh, and fruity to aged, full-bodied, and complex – always under the expert guidance of experienced oenologists or the winemakers themselves. You'll learn to appreciate nuances, distinguish aromas, and understand the philosophy behind each label. The warm hospitality of local winemakers will make your experience even more personal and memorable.

Beyond Wine: Gastronomy and Sights in Corinthia

A visit to Nemea's wineries can be seamlessly combined with an exploration of Corinthia's rich gastronomy and numerous attractions.

Local Gastronomy

Agiorgitiko pairs perfectly with Corinthia's local cuisine. Try it with traditional meat dishes, such as lamb and pork, prepared with local ingredients. Don't miss the region's excellent cheeses, virgin Corinthian olive oil, and the famous Corinthian grapes (if in season). Wine tasting is perfectly complemented by local mezedes (appetizers) and dishes that truly highlight the flavours of the land.

Ancient Nemea

Just a few kilometres from the wineries lies the archaeological site of Ancient Nemea, where you can wander through the impressive Temple of Zeus, the ancient Stadium, and the Museum. This visit will transport you back in time, offering a unique perspective on the region's rich history.

Lake Stymphalia

Lake Stymphalia, a place of natural beauty and mythical significance (where Heracles confronted the Stymphalian Birds), is also in Corinthia, offering a serene landscape for hiking and birdwatching. The Stymphalia Environment Museum is an excellent choice to learn more about the area's ecosystem.

Other Attractions in Corinthia

Corinthia offers a plethora of options for visitors. Explore Ancient Corinth and the imposing Acrocorinth, admire the engineering marvel of the Corinth Canal, or relax in the coastal resorts of Loutraki and Xylokastro. All these points of interest are relatively close to Nemea, making Corinthia an ideal destination for a combined holiday experience.

Practical Tips for Your Corinthian Wine Experience

- ### Access and Transportation:

  Nemea is easily accessible from Athens via the Athens-Corinth National Road (E94), about a 1.5-hour drive. From Corinth city, the journey takes 20-30 minutes. A car is essential to explore wineries and vineyards. If planning multiple tastings, a designated driver or taxi services are highly recommended.

- ### Best Time to Visit:

  The best times to visit Nemea's wineries are:

  - **Autumn (September-October):** This is harvest season, when vineyards bustle with life and many wineries host special events.
  - **Spring (April-May):** The weather is mild, nature is in bloom, and vineyards boast a splendid green hue, perfect for leisurely strolls.
  - **Summer:** While days can be warm, evenings are cool, making them ideal for relaxed tastings.

- ### Tips for Visitors:

  - **Reservations:** It's advisable to contact wineries in advance, especially for weekend or peak-season visits, to book tours and tastings.
  - **Attire:** Wear comfortable shoes, as you may walk through vineyards or cellars.
  - **Accommodation:** Options are available both in Nemea and broader Corinthia, such as Corinth city or Loutraki, to suit your needs.
  - **Combine your experience:** Don't limit yourself to wine. Pair your winery visit with archaeological sites, museums, and the natural beauty of the Corinthian countryside for a comprehensive experience.

Conclusion: A Glass of Agiorgitiko, A Corinthian Memory

Nemea, with its celebrated wineries and emblematic Agiorgitiko, offers a unique opportunity to immerse yourself in Corinthia's wine culture. Beyond a simple tasting, it's a journey for the senses, into the history and tradition of a place that truly loves and honours wine. Whether you're a dedicated wine enthusiast or simply seeking an authentic Greek experience, Nemea's wine route awaits you. Come discover the treasures of the Corinthian vineyard and create unforgettable memories with a glass of Agiorgitiko in hand.

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.

Browse the guideMore articles
Want to visit wineries beyond Nemea? Read our guide Corinthia wineries: beyond Nemea.

Take it with you

Open this page on your phone
visitcorinthia.com/en/blog/nemea-wineries-corinthia-agiorgitiko-wine-journey

Enjoy exploring Corinthia!