

Wine map of Cyprus

Based on archaeological discoveries Cyprus has been producing wine for more than 6.000 years. A visit to the wine producing regions of the island is an exciting venture, especially during the grape harvesting season. Visit rolling vineyards and learn about centuries-old winemaking traditions along the Cyprus Wine Routes. Nestled among hills and valleys, are regional boutique wineries that offer panoramic views that perfectly complement the sensory journey of wine tasting.

Climate and soil
the expression of the terroir of Cyprus

Cyprus's long, sunny Mediterranean summers are a great asset to winemaking ripening the fruit and giving it its full flavor. Winters are mild and the gentle winds and breezes check the frosts, dispel the fogs and protect the vines and grapes from fungus diseases.

The island's terroir, stretching from high mountains down to the sea, is as complex, varied and influential as anywhere else in the world. Vines are planted from the sea to the mountains, with the most interesting vineyards sited between 600–1,500m (1,970—4,920ft), among the highest in Europe.

Indigenous wine varieties of Cyprus

The vineyards of Cyprus are among the very few vineyards of the world not affected by the vine pest, known as phylloxera, that fell upon the greatest part of Europe's vineyards at the beginning of the 19th century. Having escaped phylloxera, Cyprus's wines are owned routed plants of the European species Vitis Vinifera L. retaining their classic organoleptic characteristics as well as the potential of a long life. The most prominent local wine varieties are:

White Wine Varieties

Xynisteri (pronounced Xin-i-steri, meaning low acidity) is the prevailing white grape variety of Cyprus and is proving remarkably versatile wines. It produces excellent light-colored white wine with relatively low alcohol levels (11-11.5% vol.) and low to medium acidity. At higher altitudes, *Xynisteri* displays more aromatics, with crisper acidity and floral, lemony, beeswax, lanolin characters, while lower altitudes lean more toward nectarine, stone fruit, and green melon notes. Similarly, multi-layered textures range between very fine viscosity to unctuous oiliness.

Promara: Harvested in August, Promara (meaning "earliest") is the first Cypriot grape to mature. Like *Xynisteri* it is thick-skinned, so quite textural and with low yields. Darker-coloured, with slightly higher acidity, *Promara's* fruits range from pears through green melons and cantaloupe.

Spourtiko: A white grape variety of Cyprus. The medium-maturing variety is relatively resistant to various diseases. Significant is the sensitive berry skin, to which the name (meaning "burst") also refers. It produces low-alcohol white wines with aromas of grapefruit and lemon. It is also grown in rows alternating with the all-female variety Maratheftiko to improve its pollination.

Chardonnay, Riesling, Semillon and Sauvignon Blanc constitute the international team of white wines grown in Cyprus which are produced in small quantities and have a characteristic that is essentially Cyprus, like the Semillon single vineyards near the village of Vasa in the Krassochoria (wine producing villages) region with a protected designation of origin in Limassol district.

Red Wine Varieties

Mavro: Is a red variety that dominates the Cypriot vineyard. It is very productive and characterized by large juicy grapes.

Wines made from Mavro are delightfully frank, cherry-esque quaffers, light-bodied, finely tannined, and refreshingly juicy. Perfect every day wines.

Maratheftiko is difficult to grow and unpredictable. It has to be planted with another variety that blooms at the same period, because *Maratheftiko* as physiologically female variety is not able to self-pollinate, like 99% percent of the worlds grape varieties do. This non-hermaphrodite grape pollinates, as tests showed, when pairing up with another local variety *Spourtiko or Xynisteri. Maratheftiko*, when harvested and vinified correctly, gives rich intense red wines, with soft tannins and characteristic aromas of small red berries, coffee and cacao that blend harmoniously with the vanilla aromas and spicy substances from the oak. Clearly a rising star, several winemakers praised its "wild" fruit characters: brambly mulberries, blackberries, blueberries, tinged with freshly picked strawberries and cherries. *Maratheftiko* can be found as **Vamvakada** or **Pampatzia**, as the vine growers named it like this because at the back of its leaves there is a fluffy white layer to reduce evaporation. In the Cypriot dialect this fluffy layer is called *"pampaki"* (cotton). This is very characteristic of vines of the warmer Mediterranean countries. It can produce rosés and light reds to red wines suitable for ageing. It gives high quality wines of intense color and full body with distinctive fruity aromas of cherries and blackberries.

Giannoudi is an old red variety found in 500-year-old abandoned vineyards alongside *Mavro* and *Xynisteri*. An undomesticated wild-grape hanger-on, its flowers require *Xynisteri* co-planted to pollinate, but *Mavro* and *Syrah* will also do the trick. Interplanting usually alternates every two or three vines, with experience teaching that higher ratios of *Xynisteri* can cause overproduction in *Giannoudi*.

Giannoudi's aromatics and flavors tend toward herbal bay leaf and balsamic notes with a mix of savoury, roasted red and black fruits. Higher elevations produce more florals and black fruit characters; lower, warmer climes deliver fuller-bodied, red-fruited wine, marked by high acidity and ultra-firm, sometimes chunky, tannins. The recent trend is for gentler handling, less extraction, and older oak, shifting *Giannoudi* towards finer, more transparently elegant styles.

Lefkada is a 'big' variety. Very demanding during vinification, it gives structured wines, with a deep red colour, and with a subtle flavour, especially after it undergoes malolactic fermentation and careful barrel maturation. Its aromas of red fruit are intense and with time they perfect to a harmonious equilibrium. It needs co-planting with *Xynisteri*, and is notoriously difficult in the vineyard and late ripening. Exceedingly tannic, *Lefkada* demands light extraction and gentle handling to avoid astringency.

Other grapes—*Flouriko, Kanella, Morokanella, Ofthalmo, and Vasilissa*—are too early in the rediscovery stage to even begin mapping out possibilities. Some of the highlights of the red wines imported to Cyprus include Cabernet Franc (France), Cabernet Sauvignon (France), Syrah (France), Grenache Noir (France) and Mourvèdre (France).

Grape Harvest

A typical viti-vinicultural year in Cyprus starts in December or January when the vines are pruned. The new vines are planted right after, from March to April. Harvesting takes place between August and October.

Autumn months, especially September and October, are the traditional months of the grape harvest from the vineyards covering the rolling slopes of Cyprus.

Grapes are exclusively harvested by hand, which is the preferred method for high-quality wine production and it's the best way to separate the good grapes from the bad.

At the same time, communities around Cyprus, especially in Troodos mountains, organise festivals dedicated to grape harvest and products made of grape juice, and invite both local and foreign visitors to participate in fun filled activities on this occasion, that brings people together, to celebrate and share cultural heritage and natural environment.

Grapes in Cyprus are not only used for wine making. People got creative in the kitchen and discovered many ways to consume and preserve the excess of the grape juice, such as *Soutzioukkos, palouzes, kiofterka, epsima and portos.*



Soutzioukkos is unique to Cyprus. The preparation starts with almonds or walnuts, shelled and soaked to turn soft, and then sewn on a thread of about two meters long. The thread is then dipped into hot palouzes (grape juice mixed with flour) several times. Each time the threat has to be left to dry before it is dipped again. Every time a new layer of *palouzes* is added to the previous one until its diameter becomes four to six cm. *Soutzioukkos* is then left to dry for five to six days, losing much of its moisture, thus increasing its longevity.



Palouzes is prepared from the filtered grape juice, which is reheated until its colour turns golden and is then mixed with flour. The mixture created is then stirred continuously until it thickens to a creamy consistency. Rose water or mastic or cinnamon is added to give an extra intense flavor. *Palouzes* is now ready and poured into plates to cool. Some people enjoy eating *palouzes* hot but it is more commonly served cold topped with crushed almonds or walnuts.

Kiofterka are rectangular shaped pieces of *Palouzes* that are left to dry in the shade for many days.

Epsima is concentrated grape juice made of black grapes. The grape juice is left to boil without stirring until it condenses into a thick, black, sweet and sour syrup that has the consistency of honey. *Epsima* can be used as a substitute for honey or sugar.

Portos is a kind of marmalade. Crushed wheat is stirred into hot grape juice and heated until it thickens. When ready, roasted sesame seeds are added into the mixture.

These delicacies are often accompanied by a drink of *zivania*, the local drink made from kernels, which are best enjoyed in winter.

Cyprus Wine Routes

Whether you're a connoisseur, or a simple lover of the drink that locals once worshipped as the 'nectar of the Gods', you will delight in discovering a host of charming wineries and wine growing regions along seven wine routes.

Along the way, you will be welcomed warmly at quaint villages and wineries, where you can sample choice vintages, learn from the locals, and even find a wine museum or two. After all, the art of wine in Cyprus is more than simply a way of life; it is an inherent passion with roots that go even deeper than those of its vines.

Dozens of wineries are ready to host a wine tasting session. It is recommended to contact them in advance to arrange a visit. There is an extra charge for wine tasting.

Wine Route 1 – *Laona – Akamas*

Travel through an evocative region of rugged coastlines and charming little villages, abundant with culture and lush vines and possessing a unique character that is both rustic and contemporary.

Situated in the north-western shores of Cyprus, quaint villages and wineries invite you to visit their windswept vineyards, where you will discover the indigenous *Xynisteri* (white) grape variety that grows in a climate tempered by the sea breeze.

The wines produced here are cool yet solid, with a fine aroma and among the best white wines produced on the island. When it comes to red wine, the region also produces some of the best, thanks to the rare and ancient grape variety of *Marathefiko.*



Wine Route 2 - *Vouni Panagias - Ambelitis*

Embark upon a panoramic excursion into a glorious inland landscape on the Vouni Panagias - Ambelitis wine route, accompanied by the delights of the locally produced wines.

In the western part of the island, east of the Pafos (Paphos) mountainous area, the route unfolds at an altitude of 800 metres to offer an unparalleled wine experience.

The wineries of the route are diverse and produce white wines of particular fineness in aroma and lightness of body, thanks to the local *Xynisteri* (white) grape variety that predominantly grows here. Hints of green apple, peach and apricot characterise the white wines of the area, whilst the ancient - and rare - red *Maratheftiko* grapes are enriched by red fruit, violets and roses. The villages on this route also produce some of the best wines of the indigenous *Mavro* (red) variety, thanks to the relatively high altitude and a mild climate, which benefit the vines and combine to produce pleasant dark and rose wines.





Wine Route 3 - *Diarizos Valley*

Take a fascinating journey along the *Diarizos* River, through beautifully unspoiled green landscapes dotted with picturesque vineyards, where you will discover the lesser-known wine-producing region of the *Diarizos* Valley, located east of Pafos (Paphos).

Situated at a lower altitude than the other main winegrowing areas, the wines produced in the area are remarkable. Climbing upwards, you will come across 18 different types of vines, with the predominant being that of the local *Mavro* (red) grape variety. Its tranquil scenery and interesting flora and fauna are further enhanced by the genuine hospitality of the local people, and the pleasurable delights of its expanding wine trade.

Wine Route 4 – *Krassochoria Lemesou – Route of Limassol wine villages*

The Lemesos (Limassol) winemaking villages are renowned for their deep-rooted history of viticulture, as well as their excellent local wines and the stunning scenery of the area that produces them.

Located on the southern slopes of the Troodos Mountain range, nowhere else in Cyprus can such a great presence of wineries be found! Collectively, the villages are known as *'Krassochoria'*, which is comprised of the two Greek words for 'wine' and 'villages' - a name that tells the story of its rich winemaking history in itself.

The route is outstanding; a dry climate combined with a unique geology, results in first-rate wines, made mostly from the local grape varieties *Xynisteri* (white) and *Mavro* (red), as well as some imported varieties, including Cabernet Sauvignon, Mataro, Grenache and Syrah among a total of 23 different varieties.

Wine Route 5 – *Commandaria*

Take a trip back in time and discover the secrets of the island's most ancient and famous wine - the sweet dessert wine of Commandaria - that has been praised and world-renowned for centuries.

The route through 14 Commandaria villages goes back to 1192 AD when the knights of St. John were perfecting the production of the world's first named wine. The sweet wine took its identity from the place it was mainly produced - 'La Grande Commanderie' - which is the area now known as Kolossi. So famed was Commandaria that it even won in the first recorded wine tasting competition - the 'Battle of the Wines' - which took place in the 13th century, and was held by the French king Philip Augustus.



Indigenous *Mavro* (red) and *Xynisteri* (white) grapes are picked late in the season and dried in the sun to intensify their natural sweet flavours, giving the drink its distinctive taste. The dried grapes are then pressed, with the run-off collected and fermented in tanks or huge earthenware jars – much like those used in bygone times.

Wine Route 6 – *Pitsilia*

In a region where pines and vines grow freely into the mountainsides, neat villages exude rural charm and produce a range of fine wines that are yours to discover and savour. A cluster of 11 villages are included in the 'Nom d'Origine' *Pitsilia* - an area that spreads around the mountain peaks of Madari, *Papoutsa*, and the north-western part of *Machairas*. Here, the altitude secures a more slow and effortless grape maturity, whilst the arid and sloping earth forces the vines to huddle together and produce richer wines.

Classic local grape varieties continue to have a dominant presence amongst the vineyards of *Pitsilia*, with smatterings of the rare and ancient red variety of *Maratheftiko*.



Wine Route 7 - Mountainous Larnaka (Larnaca) - Lefkosia (Nicosia)

Comprising the expanse of the mountainous areas of both Larnaka (Larnaca) and Lefkosia (Nicosia), this varied route is one that marries the old viticultural history of the island with the new, modern face of the winemaking industry.

Even though it is outside of the traditional wine regions, there are active winemakers here who have planted vineyards with the white varieties of *Assyrtiko, Malvasia Aromatica, Chardonnay Xynisteri* and *Sauvignon blanc*, and the red varieties of *Marathefiko, Cabernet and Merlot* - ensuring their fast integration into the island's winemaking portfolio.

Festivals

Every September and October, is time to harvest the grapes and an opportunity for Cypriots to celebrate their long wine making history and tradition. Most of the celebrations take place in the so-called *Krasochoria* (wine producing villages) area, which covers the hilly areas of Lemesos and Pafos districts.

It is best to visit late in the afternoon at sunset. The wine villages are charming villages with traditional stone houses and cobbled streets. Happy voices, music and grape juice aromas fill the air. Wine with its intoxicating, aromatic taste triggers your taste neurons.

Nowadays there is still plenty of folk dance and music to watch and enjoy competitions in winetasting and revival of old traditional customs. Kiosks selling fresh fruit and vegetables, local products and traditional delicacies for you to taste. Among all these activities, the preparation of traditional sweets from grape juice takes center stage. *Palouzes, Soutzioukkos and kiofterka* are traditional sweets made from grape juice.

For more information on festivals please visit www.heartlandoflegends.com or www.visitcyprus.com

Museums

The trip to the vine and wine of Cyprus cannot be completed without a rendezvous with history. A visit to the wine museum of Erimi and the wine-presses of Omodos and Lania will reveal to you the rich texture of the Cyprus wine growing tradition.

Cyprus Wine Museum
Erimi, Lemesos (Limassol)

Showcases the wine production history of Cyprus

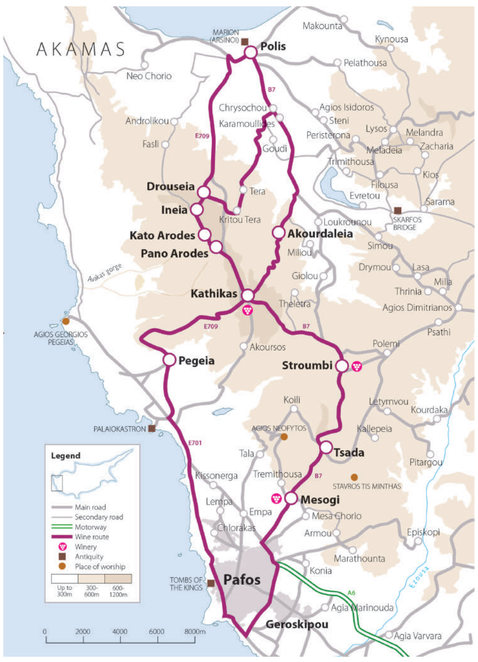
Tel: 25873808 / 99907636,
www.cypruswinemuseum,com

Viticulture Museum Koilani
Lemesos (Limassol)

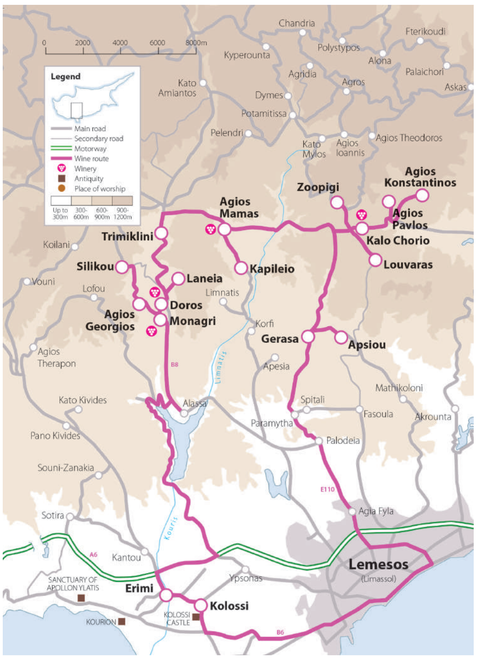
Exhibits viticultural equipment and folk-art pieces.

Tel: 25 471 008 / 99 198 789









Route 1 Wineries

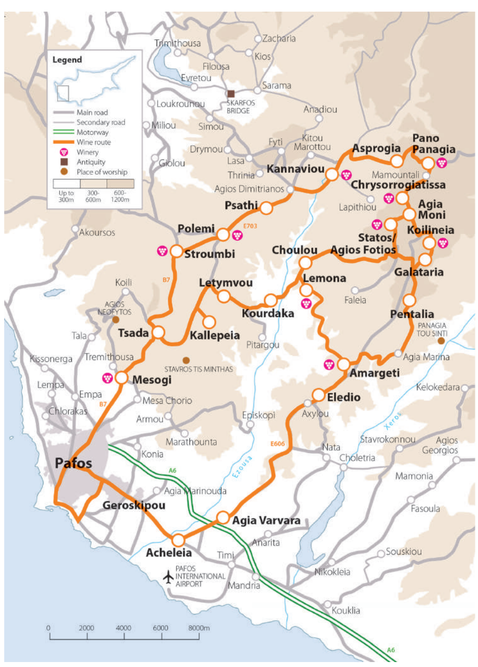
Winery	Village	Telephone	Website
Fikardos Winery	Mesogi	26949814, 99126595	fikardoswines.com.cy
Kamantarena Winery	Stroumbi	26633000	kamanterena.com.cy
Vasilikon Winery	Kathikas	26633999, 99647004, 99466960	vasilikon.com
Sterna Winery	Kathikas	99170699, 99699082	sterna-winery.com

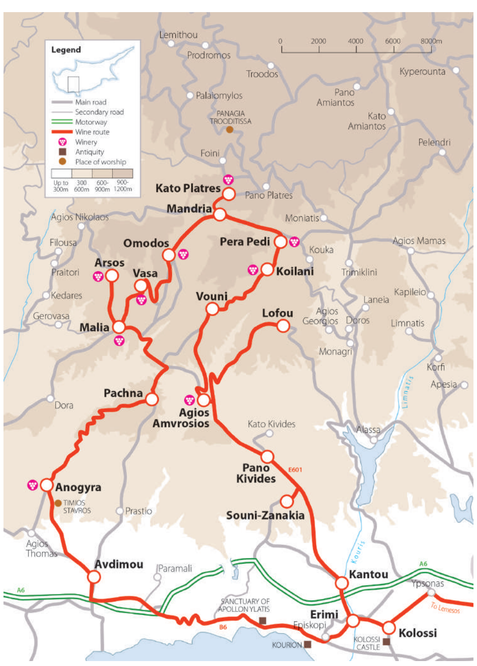
Route 3 Wineries

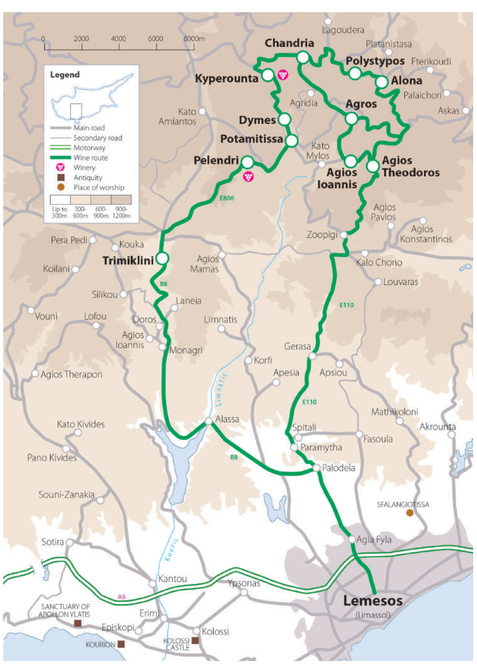
Winery	Village	Telephone	Website
Lagria Winery	Salamiou	99764400,26952411, 99346990, 99612719, 99425273	www.lagriawinery.com
Nelion Winery	Praitori	25442445, 99536550	www.nelionwinery.com

Route 5 Wineries

Winery	Village	Telephone	Website
Menagros Winery	Monagri	25433674, 99478279	www.commandaria.wine
Karseras Winery	Doros	99319646	commandariakarseras.com
Revecca Winery	Agios Mamas	25433433	www.revecca.com
Co-op Commandaria Winery	Kalo Chorio	25542266	-
A.A. Evangelou Winery	Agios Konstantinos	-	aeuaggelou@yahoo.com







Route 2 Wineries

Winery	Village	Telephone	Website
Fikardos Winery	Mesogi	26949814, 99126595	fikardoswines.com.cy
Kamantarena Winery	Stroumbi	26633000	kamanterena.com.cy
Ezousa Winery	Kannaviou	70008844	www.ezousa.com
Vouni Panayia Winery	Panagia	26722770, 26722878, 99453138	vounipanayiawinery.com
Chrysorrogiatissa Winery	Panagia 99547083	26722457,	-
Kolios Winery	Statos -Agios Fotios	26724090, 99479330	kolioswinery.com.cy
Avacas Winery	Statos -Agios Fotios	26945792, 99632562	avacasw.weebly.com
Makkas Winery	Statos -Agios Fotios	77772221	makkaswinery.com.cy
Shoufas winery	Koilineia	99435436	www.shoufas.com
Kalamos Winery	Amargeti	26723224, 99519268	kalamoswinery.com
Lazarou Winery	Choulou	99293789	www.lazarou.wine
Tsangarides Winery	Lemona	26722277, 26963789, 99863205	tsangarideswinery.com
Makarounas Winery	Letymvou	99791915	makarounaswinery.com

Route 4 Wineries

Winery	Village	Telephone	Website
Zambartas Wineries	Agios Amvrosios	25942424, 99300166	zambartaswineries.com
Vlassides Winery	Koilani	97789560	vlassideswinery.com
Ayia Mavri Winery	Koilani	25470225, 25370777, 99491649,99341535	www.ayiamavri.com
Michaelides Winery	Koilani	25752755, 99598555, 99901103	michaelideswinery.com
Erimoudis Winery	Koilani	99625826	erimoudeswinery.com
Constantinou Winery	Pera Pedi	25470370, 99681341	
Antoniades Winery	Mandria	25384121, 25422638, 99824475	antoniadeswinery.com
Lambouri Winery	Kato Platres	25422525	lambouri.com
Zenon Winery	Omodos	25423555, 99492979	
Ktima Gerolemo	Omodos	99667903, 99696031, 25422122	
Oenou yi – Ktima Vassiliadi	Omodos	25446 000	oenouyi.wine
Linos Winery	Omodos	25422700, 99672104	linoswines.com
Argyrides Winery	Vasa	25945999	argyrideswinery.com
Papaioannou Winery	Vasa	99608247	papaioannouwinery.com
Malia Winery	Malia	25942131, 99692295	keo.com.cy
Monolithos Winery	Pachna	99557457	monolithos.eu
Yiaskouris Winery	Pachna	99633730, 99599998	yiaskouriswines.net
Nicolaides Winery	Anogyra	25221709, 99649655	nicolaideswinery.com

Route 6 Wineries

Winery	Village	Telephone	Website
Ktima Dymatou	Dymes	99328857	ktima.dymatou@gmail.com
Tsiakkas Winery	Pelendri	25991080	www.tsiakkaswinery.com
Kyperounda Winery	Kyperounda	25532043	kyperoundawinery.com
Ekfraseis Winery	Chandria	25211604, 99400205	www.ekfraseis.com
Pittali Winery	Agios Theodoros Agrou	96605030	pittaliwinery.com

Other Wineries

Winery	Village	Telephone	Website
Kykko Winery	Tsakistra	22942727	kykkoswinery@gmail.com
Rodothea Winery	Pera Orinis	99055550	-
Marathasa Wines	Kalopanagiotis	22008500	marathasawines.com
Theophanous Winery	Pissouri	99674943	ktimatheophanous.com.cy
Domes Sergiou Winery Email	Skarinou	panos.sergiou@gmail.com	mc.massou@gmail.com

Route 7 Wineries

Winery	Village	Telephone	Website
Dafermou Winery	Lefkara	70008373, 99635469	www.dafermouwinery.com
Ktima Christoudia Winery	Kato Drys	99034828, 99813075	www.ktimachristoudia.com
Santa Irene Winery	Farmakas	22515515, 99299990	www.santairenewinery.com
Aes Ambelis Winery	Kalo Chorio Orinis	22050015, 99335358, 99651361	www.aesambelis.com
A.A. Evangelou Winery	Agios Konstantinos	-	aeuaggelou@yahoo.com

