

Women in Wine Expo Recap 2022

Kakheti, Georgia

Back in 2020, pre-COVID-19, I was lucky to receive a scholarship opportunity to attend the Women in Wine Exposition in Georgia (the country, not the close-by neighbor state!). This organization was founded by Senay Ozdemir with the mission of bringing greater economic power to women in the wine business.

Due to the pandemic, the conference was postponed two years in a row, but this May it was officially back on, and Kevin decided to join me and tag along for the ride! I'm so proud to have participated in this powerful event surrounded by incredible women winemakers, business owners, sommeliers, and industry journalists. The wine industry is a relatively small one and is still mostly male dominated, however, this is slowly changing and more women are entering this profession. The WIWE is an incredibly unique event to get women from all over the world into one room to discuss ideas and important issues regarding our industry. I made some great friends and contacts that I look forward to seeing again at the next Expo, wherever it may be!



Geographically, Georgia is situated south of Russia and north of Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Turkey.



Historically, Georgia and its surrounding regions are considered the ‘cradle of wine’. Archaeologists have traced the origins of grapes and winemaking back to the South Caucasus in 6,000BCE. What sets Georgia apart from other wine regions is the technique that they developed for their fermentations and cellaring of the wines by using Qvevri, hand-built clay pots that are buried into the ground.



Qvevri at Chateau Buera

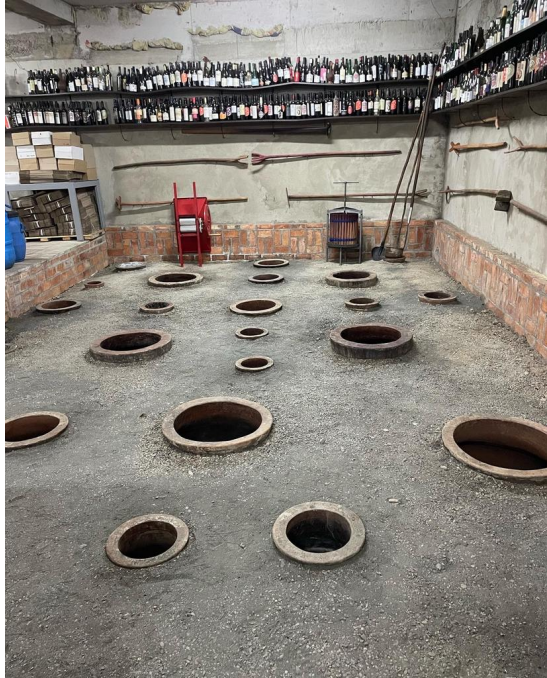
Certain regions within Georgia also utilize skin contact on their white varieties, creating an Amber colored wine that has a depth of flavor and complexity that is unmatched. The wines we tasted were powerful yet elegant and refined with so much variation in the wine styles they produced. Georgia is also home to over 500 native grape varieties, so there is so much more to learn and taste from this growing region! For more information on the fascinating winemaking traditions of Georgia, click the link to this UNESCO video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NN5ziogyxPQ>

For the rest of our trip, we decided to stay a little while longer after the Expo to be able to go out and explore the wine region where the Expo took place, as well as Telavi and the capital, Tbilisi. The Expo itself was located at Lopota Lake Resort where the stunning Chateau Buera also resides. Wines at the Chateau were a mix of conventional winemaking and the modern traditional style produced in a very elegant setting. Pictured below



When we left the resort and traveled to Telavi, we found much smaller producers who had their own Qvevri wineries in the basements of their house or very small wineries attached nearby. Most of the wines we tasted from this region in Kakheti were Rkatsiteli, Kisi, and Mtsvani, (white grapes) and Saperavi as the primary red varietal and ranged from sparkling wines to amber wines to big bold reds (and of course the local brandy, called ChaCha!).



After a couple days in wine country, we traveled back over the mountains to the city and capital, Tblisi. We had a blast here and recommend any wine geek to visit at least once in their life. The prices were extremely affordable, and the food was rich and delicious which kept your all-day drinking extravaganza from getting too out of control, which is easy to do since the people of Georgia LOVE to share the wine and chacha that they made with you. There is certainly a drink for every palate in this beautiful country and I hope to get back there again as soon as possible!



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Gaumarjos!
(Cheers)