

Lyrarakis

A rare and captivating white from 100% Dafni , this wine highlights the distinctly herbal and citrusy personality of one of Crete's most aromatic native varieties.

Psarades Vineyard Dafni 2024

Crete, Greece



Alcohol :12,70 %

Composition: 100% Dafni

Region and Vineyards

The **Psarades Vineyard** lies in **Alagni**, in the heart of **Central Crete**, at **480 meters above sea level**. This elevated location benefits from a **northeast exposure**, allowing for gentle morning sun while protecting the vines from the intense heat of the afternoon. The result is a **longer ripening period**, ideal for preserving the delicate aromatics and acidity of **Dafni**, one of Crete's most distinctive native white grape varieties.

The soils are predominantly **clay-loam**, offering balanced water retention and drainage, which supports vine health without the need for irrigation. The vines are **cordon-trained and spur-pruned**, yielding around **9 tons per hectare**, striking a balance between aromatic concentration and freshness. This specific microclimate—cool, dry, and slightly sheltered—amplifies the variety's **signature herbal and citrus profile**, producing a wine of expressive character, marked by **laurel, Mediterranean herbs, and mineral precision**.

Winemaking

After harvesting, the grapes undergo **8 hours of skin contact**, enhancing aromatic extraction and textural depth. Uniquely, **8.5% of the juice** is sourced from **early-picked grapes**, boosting acidity and amplifying the variety's distinctive **bay leaf and herbal character**.

Fermentation takes place in **stainless steel tanks at 17–19 °C**, followed by **four months of lees aging**, which adds roundness and aromatic layering. No oak is used, maintaining varietal purity and freshness. The wine is best enjoyed young but can evolve gracefully over **3 to 4 years**.

Tasting Notes

- **Color**: Bright yellow with greenish reflections.
- **Aroma**: Intense notes of **bay leaf**, **rosemary**, **citrus blossom**, and soft white fruit.
- **Palate**: Crisp and savory, with **vibrant acidity**, herbaceous tension, and a **persistent, aromatic finish**.

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Did you know?

Dafni, meaning “laurel” in Greek, is named after its unmistakable bay leaf aroma. It was nearly extinct until **Lyrarakis revived it in the 1990s**, becoming the first to release a single-varietal Dafni—earning the winery international praise for preserving Crete’s vinous heritage.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Fried small fish (e.g. anchovies)**: A perfect match for the wine’s freshness and herbal bite.
- **Cuttlefish with spinach and herbs**: Classic Mediterranean pairing, echoing the wine’s green notes.
- **White meats with lemon and oregano**: Bright flavors align with the citrus and laurel tones.
- **Savory herb pies or pulses**: The wine’s structure complements plant-based textures and aromatics.

Robert Parker (RP) : 89 Points (2019)

The 2019 Dafni Psarades is unoaked, nicely dry and comes in at 13.1% alcohol. The new labeling reflects the vineyard here. I'm told it's the same wine as before. That makes it a typically pungent Dafni with nuances of resin and herbs. (In the past, I discussed rosemary and green eucalyptus as well.) You'll like it or you won't. Aromatic and distinctive, this spicy white can be drunk on its own. With a difficult food pairing, though, you might find it provides a solution in the same way Gewürztraminer does in France. It has only average depth, but the crisp, lively finish is invigorating. The personality is not my personal choice, but this is certainly very nice this year in terms of structure and craftsmanship. Whether you like it or not will depend simply on personal taste. I found it rather invigorating this year and gravitated to it a bit more than I usually do. At a fairly nice price, it's well worth a try.