

Novel

Short stories

True stories

Non-fiction

Ola sou ta 'matha, ma xehasa mia lexi (I Taught You Everything, But I Forgot One Word)



By Dimitris Bourantas Patakis
A professor tries to understand what part he has played in the life of the heroine, Anna. His quest will find echoes in every reader's experience. (374 pages)



Drive In
By Maria Markouli Kedros
Twenty short stories, all related in some way to cars and drivers, some on the road, in a new collection by a Greek journalist who has turned her hand to fiction. (280 pages)

I petalouda tou insenborn (The Insenborn Butterfly)



By Kyriakos Rokos Kastaniotis
Sculptor Kyriakos Rokos builds stories from real-life materials, his collection of fingerprints, a pebble, reflections on other artists, accompanied by his own sketches. (168 pages)



I drachmi sto kentro enos kosmou horis dystychia (The Drachma at the Center of a World without Unhappiness)
By Panos Kalaris
Kiritimati Editions
The author examines the possibility of life without poverty, banks and taxation in a world of social solidarity. (143 pages)

BY IOANNA FOTIADI

A Cretan vineyard with 400-year-old roots

After studying agriculture in Italy, Yiannis Economou revived family tradition in a winery that dates back four centuries

Yiannis Economou comes from a long line of Cretan winemakers with large landholdings on the island. He himself started out by studying agriculture in Italy.

"Like most young people, I wanted to head out into the unknown," he recalls, laughing.

During his years working in Europe, mostly in Italy, he learned about the world of wine. His experience included a stint at a winery in Freiburg, Germany, and at a Michelin restaurant. For two years he also lived in the village of Barollo, Italy, where he learned about the grape variety of the same name, as well as the Barbaresco. His career abroad peaked with a stint at the Chateau Margaux in Bordeaux, France.

Back to basics

'When I came back in 1994 the place was a wreck; I was faced with the dilemma of whether to restore the building or buy a new place for the business'

"But I wanted to do something of my own, back in my own country, even though everyone thought I was mad to leave a job like the last one," he said.

In 1994 he went home to Crete, to the village of Ziro, Lasithi, just 30 kilometers from Siteia.

"Of course I had no idea what I was in for," he said with a touch of bitterness. Bureaucracy, conflict with the local municipality and the unreliability of organic farming certification organizations were just a few of the problems he had to deal with.

"I have a lot of complaints about the certification organizations," he said. "First of all they take months to respond to an application. Then they only provide certificates and warnings about fines in the event of infringements of the rules, because it affects their own reputation. But as a producer, I want protection above all—but how can there be proper inspections when there are just three inspectors for the whole of Crete?"



New machines are now being used, but some of the equipment is as old as the building itself. (Kalaris Tsinganos)



Yiannis Economou at home in the vineyard.



Economou decided to restore the original building rather than start afresh.

He pointed out that wine, as a processed product, is very difficult to certify as organic. Persistence has paid off, however, and he has increased his

vineyards from 2.5 hectares to 16, although production levels are equivalent to 7 hectares due to a lack of water.

As yet he might not be making a profit, but Economou does not want to cut corners. He believes that by consistently following the rules, he will gain a reputation that will pay in the long term.

"When I took over the fields I gradually removed the two varieties being grown (sultanina and liatiko) which were no longer viable for me. Refugees from Asia Minor introduced them in 1922 and they were widely cultivated. Now all you get from them are subsidies, and that doesn't interest me," he explained. He now cultivates vilana,

thraspathiri, mandlari, some liatiko and foreign varieties Chardonnay, Cabernet and Merlot, which he buys from nurseries abroad because of complications he encountered when trying to get them in Greece. "The varieties available here are adulterated," he said. Most of his produce is exported, but some quantities are available at selected wine merchants. The wine he now sells is not yet certified as organic because of the delays he mentioned, but he hopes the next harvest will be.

Geneology

Curious as to how his maternal grandfather managed to acquire such a large property, Economou has been searching for archives and other records that might explain it. Although his father's family came from Alexandria in 1898, which means that he has relations around the Mediterranean as far as Lebanon, his mother's family has always lived on Crete.

"Our property dates from 1600, when the family had 200 hectares. At that time Crete was sparsely inhabited and the larger Byzantine families had huge landholdings. I found my grandfather's name in records of the island's major benefactors. He had been arrested as a revolutionary and, as a punishment, three of his homes and 15 vineyards were confiscated," said Economou.

Wine has been ever-present throughout the annals of the family history. The winery building itself dates from about 1600.

"In about 1800 one of my ancestors demolished about half the original house to make a larger storage area. They gradually acquired equipment to ferment the wine," said Economou, showing a pump, which he said works better than modern ones.

"When I came back in 1994, the place was a wreck and I was faced with the dilemma of whether to restore the building or buy a new place for the business. I decided to go with the old building," he said.

A low-ceiling structure houses the barrels and equipment, letting in very little light and retaining the right amount of humidity.

EATING OUT



Antiparos

Enjoy one of the best views combined with good food and service at **Captain Pipinos** on the south side of the island at Ai-Giorgi, next to the **Akroyiali**. Both serve good fresh fish and mezedes. At Soros, try the **Peramataki**. In Hora, for a more modern, creative cuisine, head for **Sweet Kapari** or to **Giorgis** for seafood. They make their own tsipouro, too. The **Margarita** in Hora is excellent for pasta dishes, salads, and great cocktails and breakfast.



Syros

For the best view in Ermoupoli, walk up through the old town to Ano Hora for mezedes at **Lilis** (delicious meatballs) or the **Thea**, both next to the Vamvakaris Museum. At Piskopio, try the seafood at the **Foradene**. In Galissa, ask where **Tou Psilou** is for fish. If you can't do without foreign food, try the **Italian and Mexicana Fox**, in Dimarchiou Square, next to the cinema. For a sea view, try the **Asotos Yios** at Finikas.



Ithaca

In the main port of Vathi, head for **Tsiribis** for seafood or to the nearby **Paliokaravo**. At the **Trehandiri**, the specialty is octopus. Don't miss the popular **Remezzo**, on the northern side of the island at Frikes, by the sea. Also good is **Katina's** restaurant at Perahori, where you get the added benefit of a great view. Lamb or chicken cooked in a ceramic pot known as a "tserepa" can be ordered at **Venos** in Perahori. For desserts, try **Ithaca's** "rodani," made of honey, oil and rice.



Icaria

At Faros, the beach outside Aghios Kirykos, there are good, reasonably priced tavernas, with **Leonidas** as a prime example. In Aghios Kirykos, **Stou Tsouri** in the square is highly recommended. The island's specialty is a vegetable dish called "soufiko," but it is usually only found in homes. You might find "pitarakia me tamboura" (small pies stuffed with pumpkin). Try local dishes at the **Platano**, in Ai-Dimitris. At festivals, they serve "prothesi," a goat broth.