

Whether THE TASTING PANEL goes to the brand execs or the brands call us, there is an abundance of news to report, from the latest releases to behind-the-scenes experiences with some of the world's most influential importers, winemakers, distillers . . . well, you name it.

Brief Encounters

We may not have enough pages in each issue to devote as much attention as we would like to each person whose path we cross, but please note that if it's in the publication, we deem it noteworthy.

—Meridith May, Publisher & Editorial Director

Turkish Delight

Among the many places in the ancient world claiming to be the birthplace of wine, enter Anatolia, in southern Turkey. While that birthright might be up for debate, what's not is the quality of wines coming from modern day Turkey, and the belief of two impassioned advocates that Turkish indigenous grapes are among the most exciting varieties bridging Old and New Worlds.

Vinkara winery founder Ardiç Gürsel and winemaker Ennio Gugliotta make a convincing argument that Turkish wines are ready for prime time. "We are very lucky to have such grapes and we all have a passion for the land. What we have is extremely precious and we know it," Gürsel told THE TASTING PANEL. The French- and German-educated Gürsel had a long interest in wines, but said in the 1980s, so little was available, she asked "is there something wrong with the local grapes?" Established in 2003, the winery now produces three million liters annually under the guidance of Sicilian-born Gugliotta and two consultants from Piedmont. The winery may have Italian fingerprints, but these wines taste of Turkey.

For 2013, the white Narince expresses citric aromas and tart Granny Smith apples on the palate (its acidity helped by the elevation 700 meters above sea level). The red Kaleck Karasi delivered a mouthful of ripe red fruits: raspberry, strawberry with black pepper spice. Vinkara ferments both varieties in stainless tanks; both the 2011 reserve red and white wines spend 14 months in French oak barrels. All the wines, Gürsel notes, are "delicate, subtle and not manufactured." —Lana Bortolot



PHOTO: LANA BORTOLOTT

Ardiç Gürsel and Ennio Gugliotta at the High Line in Manhattan.