



Hurrah for Cyprus!

Come and join us at the
LONDA HOTEL LIMASSOL

To celebrate

The Best of **CYPRUS WINE AND FOOD**

Friday May 13th. 6.00 – 8.00 pm

The presentation of the "Cyprus Gourmet" 2011 WINE AWARDS

Wine and Canapés will be served.

Admission free, but reservations necessary.

Call the Londa on 25865540 or email: publisher@cyprus-gourmet.com

A Celebration of Cyprus Food and Wine

The 2011 "Cyprus Gourmet" Dinner

Friday 13th May at 8.30 pm prompt

A superb three course epicurean menu,
created by the Londa chefs from 100% Cypriot ingredients,
served with our 2011 Award Winning Wines

The Menu

First Course

Our Chefs' Mediterranean Salad:

Red mullet, water cress, radishes, spring onions and cherry tomatoes
served with oven-dried Hiromeri and Halloumi meat balls

The wine: Award Winning 2010 Xynisteris

Main Course

Whole Roasted Pork Fillet served with lemon Jerusalem artichokes,
sautéed local sorrel and Commandaria sauce

Award Winning Maratheftico red wines

Dessert

Fresh Anari in Fyllo nest with walnuts, cinnamon and honey
served with citron in sugar and carob syrup

Award Winning Muscat wines

€45.00 per person

Our Speaker and Guest of Honour, the great French wine personality,
Mr Michel Picard, a good friend of Cyprus wine and food who
will talk about his 12 year long love affair with this country

Reservations: Call the Londa on 2586 5540
or email: Publisher@cyprus-gourmet.com

CYPRUS GOURMET

weekly newsletter

Editor: Patrick Skinner

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WINE & FOOD AWARDS. SYNDICATED FEATURES. MAGAZINE.

Off the beaten tourist track again



COMMENT Patrick Skinner

A few weeks ago we ran a piece about the island of Evia, which even

now is relatively unharmed by mass tourism and where local food and wine is very good, the welcome warm and you get a feeling of real "place". (See HAPPENINGS on the next page) Such places, of course, won't stay the same – as Cyprus didn't – and with the

turmoil in the Middle East and North Africa many tourists, especially the more discriminating ones, will be seeking new places to go. So I was delighted to receive an email from a regular reader, Alexandros Alexandrou, telling what a wonderful time he and his wife had had in Calabria. I asked him to tell us about it.

Calabria? I hear you say. Where's that?

So, before handing over to Alexandros, who duly sent me a delightful account with some fine photos, let me set the scene.

Calabria – where it is.

Calabria is the southernmost province on mainland Italy with quite narrow straits separating from Sicily. It is the "toe" of this leg-shaped land mass. Its area is 15,079 sq kms and the estimated population is 2,070,400.



A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY

In the 8th century BC Calabria became a colony of the Greeks, who founded the cities of Reggio Calabria, Sibari and Crotona. Then in the 4th century BC it was occupied by the Bruttii, who during the Punic wars sided with Hannibal against the Romans. In 132 BC it was conquered by the Romans and included in the Third Region as Brutium, while the name Calabria was used only for the Salento Peninsula.

After the Roman Empire was split into Western and Eastern (with capital Byzantium), Calabria stayed under the Byzantines until the Lombards occupied it in the 7th century AD. In 885 Byzantine general Niceforo Foca defeated the

Lombards and Saracens, recovering the region. Later on it was conquered by the Normans (1060), then by the Swabians, the Anjou and the Aragonese, under whose domination there were peasants' riots in 1459 and the famous rebellion led by Tommaso Campanella in 1599. The Spanish occupation was especially tyrannical for the region, and the 19th century saw the rise of patriot movements (the Carboneria) and riots, until in 1860 the population rose to support Garibaldi after he landed with his "red shirts" at Melito.

As all the Kingdom of Naples, Calabria was then united with the newly established Kingdom of Italy. The decades that followed saw an increase in poverty and emigration, also due to the great disparity between the rich industrial regions of Northern Italy and the agricultural, poorer South. Calabria was particularly unfortunate because of its inaccessibility, difficulty of travel inside the region, lack of good arable land and other deleterious economic factors.

So in times past the citizenry of Calabria tended to seek the fortunes elsewhere in Italy or abroad. What livelihood there was saw to it that the population was concentrated in the plains and along the coast. Not many foreigners travelled there and among writers only the hardy, the foolhardy or the quirky did. One such was the eccentric Englishman Norman Douglas, no stranger to scandal. In the early years of the 20th century he travelled to and in Calabria and wrote a detailed account of his journeying on foot, on horseback or with a donkey. If you like to have



an earlier personal view of a place rather than a history or guide book, then works like Douglas's "Old Calabria", first published in 1915 are delightfully diverting.

So, in 1915 Calabria was a wild and woolly place, with little that was charming to attract anyone other than the intrepid. And, until its lovely coasts and rugged hills and pleasing climate were opened to tourists, so it remained through most of the 20th century, with a low level of industry and a not very productive agricultural sector. But all this has changed. You can now enjoy Calabria easily and comfortably without recourse to hiking the hills or using horse or donkey as a mode of transport.

A VISIT TO CALABRIA TODAY – BY ALEXANDROS ALEXANDROU



Calabria is well known in Italy for its culinary heritage and traditional way of life and this is exactly what made us decide to take a short holiday to the region. The holiday I booked was no ordinary

one where one just basks in the sun laying near the swimming pool.

This trip was all about Calabrian food and wine. It was a marvellous experience with lots of variation and acquaintance with the local products and culture. Our base was the little town of Tropea situated on the front foot of south Italy with a population of 6,500.

Native Mrs. Mariana was a testimony to all this. We had two cooking classes with her in the little village of St. Angelo where we enjoyed authentic cooking classes in her traditional rustic kitchen. In fact, participating in a cooking class with Marianna is like “coming home” to a favourite Italian aunt, with her laughter and enthusiasm infusing every moment. During our stay with Marianna we gathered ingredients from her organic, sun-soaked vegetable and herb garden, surrounded by the scent of orange and lemon trees. We also discovered how to prepare dishes using ingredients like the exquisite local fish, meats, cheeses and the famously sweet ‘cipolla rossa’ or red onions of Tropea. We enjoyed the same experience in the village of Ricadi with the excellent Mrs. Rosana. Stuffed sundried tomatoes (homemade) with anchovy paste (homemade) was something I still have the taste of in my mouth.

Calabrian Wines

The best local wines of Calabria are in actual fact of DOC classification. We visited the winery of Statti in the town of Lamezia Terme and sam-



pled their wines. It reminded me of Cyprus wines some 30 years ago when nobody knew of the imported vine varieties. Strong, full bodied and rich with tannins. They are authentic in their wine making because they only use the local vine varieties such as Greco Bianco, Guarnaccia, Trebbiano for white wine and Castilione, Gaglioppo, Greco Nero and Prunesta for red. I was told that the Greeks played a big hand in cultivating the first vines in the region which they called Enotria meaning the “Land of wine” and derives from the Greek word “Oenos” meaning wine.

Some of the wines we drank were Ciro, Donnici, Lamezia Statti, Melissa and Pollino.

Why and how we chose Calabria

My wife’s birthday and our wedding anniversary are more or less at the same

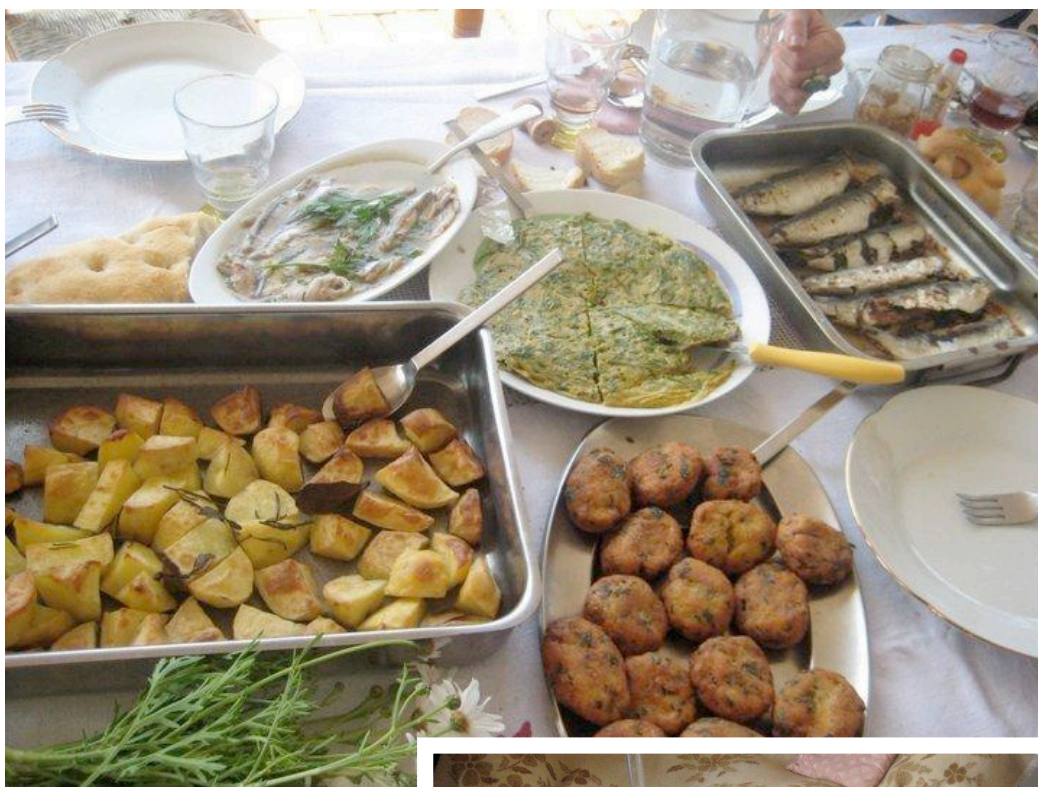
time in April. I decided to make her a combined present for both occasions. The Internet must be the latest miracle man has ever discovered, because, looking around travel options I came across a site called “In Italy Tours” hosted by a magnificent lady called Tania Pascuzzi. (See photo and note below – Ed.)

The package you find on the site is very well detailed with several photos. It may seem expensive but I can say it was worth every cent. It cost us €1450 each and this did not include the airfare which was an additional €530 per person.



Winery Visit: From left -- tour organiser Tania Pascuzzi, Monika Alexandrou, Alexandros Alexandrou and fellow group members Noel and Jenny from Australia. Like so many migrants from Mediterranean countries who settled elsewhere when times were tough, Tania made her livelihood in Australia, but has returned to be a part of the emerging tourist industry of the region.





Getting There:

We flew from Larnaca to Rome and then on to Lamezia Terme (50 minutes in a McDonnell Douglas MD80). We were collected at the airport and transported to Antica Hotel – a nice little boutique hotel, the rooms of which were painted with frescos.

Included in the price:

All transfers to and from the airport (60 mins), from the hotel to cooking villages (twice to St. Angelo and once to Ricadi), cooking lessons and the cost of products used. Unlimited wine, two meals on separate days, dinners in local tavernas with unlimited wine.

A boat trip along the Tropean coast (4 hours including fishing) together with a pre-packed snack, an excursion to Capo Vaticano some 40 kms from Tropea and finally a guided tour of the town of Tropea. Mythology has it that Hercules frequently visited Tropea and Ulysses also landed in Tropea after having

escaped Scilla which turned his men to pigs (or something like that). Scilla

is only a 60 minute drive from Tropea.



Conclusions:

Considering all that was offered I have changed my mind about the holiday seeming expensive. I only had to spend some €20 on coffees during our five days in Tropea. The rest was all included. I can't compare prices with those in Cyprus because everything was covered in the all-inclusive package. I can tell you though, that good coffee only costs €2.50 compared to our prices of €4.00 or €5.00.

www.initalytours.com/calabrian-table-tour.htm

Book Note:

Old Calabria (1915) by Norman Douglas is available in book and electronic forms. My copy is a Bibliobazaar Edition recently published in the USA and available from Amazon at US\$20. There are several others. Douglas's is an interesting story. Fleeing England after accusations of naughtiness with young chaps, he travelled a lot, much of it in Italy, settling for many years in Capri. There he was a neighbour and friend of Gracie Fields. In his later years, just after World War II, the now legendary food writer Elizabeth David visited him and struck up a friendship that would last until his death in 1952.

Thomas Cook also published a well reviewed Guide "Traveller's Calabria" at £6.99 and there is a small but interesting range of books about the area at Amazon.

CAPRICE
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Any two courses just for €25.00
including a glass of wine or cup of coffee

With friends, family or business contacts, enjoy our award winning cooking at budget cost, choosing from six starters, five main dishes and five desserts.

To see the full menu go to:
www.londahotel.com/restaurant-bar
Monday to Friday lunchtime.
Offer valid until 30th April 2011.
Excludes Public Holidays
Londa Hotel, Limassol. Tel: 2586 5555
Email: info@londahotel.com

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[click here](#)

Old Calabria

Norman Douglas

HAPPENINGS



DINNER WITH MICHEL PICARD

Wednesday, May 11, at 8p.m., Columbia Steak House, Columbia Plaza, St. Andrews Street, Limassol.

To welcome to Cyprus Mr Michel Picard, the “Big Man from Burgundy”, producer and negociant extraordinaire and the owner of Chateau de Chassagne Montrachet, Oenoforos of Limassol have arranged an evening of good food, fine wine and the opportunity to hear at first hand the story of Maison Michel Picard.

Three course Epicurean dinner including Michel Picard Wines, €75.00 per person. Dress

code: smart casual. For reservations, till May 9th, contact Columbia Plaza, Tel. 2527 8000 or Oenoforos, tel. 2576 0608, 9964 5655

SPECTUS TUTORED TASTINGS

On the occasion of the visit to Cyprus by Mr Constantinos Vrinioti from Evia, Greece, Spectus has organised Tutored Tastings and Wine Dinners featuring his wines.

Nicosia:

Tutored Tasting at Spectus Shop, Friday May 13th from 4p.m. till 7.30p.m. Free - open invitation.

Dinner at the “Ellinikes Diadromes” Restaurant, Friday, May 13th, at 8.15p.m. Subsidised dinner price: €45 per person. For reservations call Spectus Nicosia Shop, Tel: 2251 1521.

Limassol:

Tutored Tasting at Spectus Shop, Saturday May 14th - from 10a.m. till 2p.m. Free - open invitation.



ART EXHIBITION

EMC Fine Art of Nicosia is organising “Golden Moments”, a solo exhibition of new works by Silvia Zwahlen Ragheb on Friday, May 6, at 7pm, featuring colourful abstract landscapes of Cyprus. The exhibition will run

until Sunday, May 15, opening daily between 10am - 6pm. This follows Silvia's sell-out first exhibition in May 2010 that also toured in galleries owned by EMC in London and Dublin.

For information contact Jim Donovan at EMC on 99181589 or email: eastmedc@cytanet.com.cy

Culture vs Gastronomy? Authenticity meets delicacy at Archontiko in Kornos



Hiding between the quiet cobbled streets of Kornos, Archontiko Papadopoulou opened its doors to the public on April 30 hoping to promote Cypriot cultural heritage related to gastronomy, wine and pottery art. The multi-function arts centre and restaurant is based in a traditional restored house that dates back to 1897.

Award-winning chef Savvas Savva has conceived dishes that are of authentic Cypriot cuisine, in some cases inspired by long-forgotten recipes.

The Archontiko uses fresh ingredients (free range chicken and domestic meat), which are cooked in virgin olive oil and freshly picked local herbs.

The cultural centre has a new pottery studio, library, shop (the old grocery store), Commandaria bar, cafeteria and a wine cellar with a wide selection of more than 200 wine labels. The cellar also houses the oldest Commandaria dating back more than one hundred years which was discovered in a concentrated form in a clay urn when restoring the house. Part of the concentrated substance was recently restored by the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment - Viticulture and Oenology Section.

For information call 22531000, 99568072

