

# Wine tasting at Chateau Kamnik

On Saturday July 3, Macedonia Welcome Centre organized a visit to the Kamnik Winery for a guided tour of the vineyards and the chateau, follo-

wed by wine tasting in their Enoteca. It was a fantastic opportunity to widen our knowledge on the wine production culture and simultaneously gain experience by seeing the production first hand.

The Kamnik Winery, located just on the outskirts of Skopje (east entrance), expresses the greatness of the ancient Macedonian traditions, soils and spirits in a truly contemporary wine style. Its eleven hectare vineyard is situated on a hill at an altitude of 300 meters above sea level with a southern slope exposition. Thanks to the excellent climate and soil conditions, the Kamnik estate has become a reference point for Macedonia's contemporary wine production. All the major cultivation operations are performed by hand. The harvest is also done by hand, at different times for each section and grape variety, in order to ensure that the grapes reach the cellars at the optimal degree of maturation. Harvest time is carefully chosen when grapes are rich in sugars, showing an excellent balance of sugar

and acids, and high concentrations of polyphenols and anthocyanins at the exceptional physiological level of ripeness. The conditions met at Kamnik require respect for the delicate environmental balance and the production volume of less than 40 hl per hectare, which guarantees a high quality and distinctive character of the wine. The vineyard's perfect exposure to the sunlight, the excellent pedological and microclimatic conditions, and the density of the vines result in the production of complex, elegant and powerful wines. The grape varieties cultivated at Kamnik are: Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Carmenere, Sangiovese, Aglianica, Nebbiolo, Primitivo, Montepulciano from the reds, and Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Grigio, Gewurztraminer, Muscat Petits Grains, Moscato Giallo from whites.

The process of vinification takes place in special stainless steel or wooden tanks that have a pneumatic punch-down mechanism which produces an exceptional color extraction from the grape, with extremely mild, fine tannins and the preservation of all the aromatic components. Once the initial fermentation is finished, the wines are aged in barrique oak barrels where they complete their malolactic fermentation. All the stages, from fermentation to aging in oak barrels, are carried



out separately for each type of grape to guarantee an ample spectrum of variation. Shortly after blending and homogenization the wines are bottled, then aged for another few months in the winery before being released for consumption.

The wine card of Kamnik consists of Merlot, Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon from the red wines, and Chardonnay, Temjanika, Sauvignon from the whites. We had the opportunity to try and taste most of them including their Sexy Rose, and this is exactly how they named their rose wine. After four hours of wine lecture and wine tasting, we left Kamnik a bit dizzy, but in a good mood.

The jewel in the crown is the Kamnik Restaurant, where one can enjoy the warm and relaxing atmosphere, wild game specialties and international cuisine, accompanied by a choice of over 150 selected wines from Macedonia and all over the world, including of course all the varieties produced at Kamnik. One may visit the restaurant any time. It is open all day every day during the year.

