

Friday, 26 September 2014 06:31

# Sharing a Love for Greece, One Pour at a Time

Written by [Maria A. Karamitsos](#)



Rebecca and Peter Work share their love of Greece through Ampelos Cellars.

Image: Ampelos Cellars

Tweet



Like Share 2 people like this. Be the first of your friends.

CHICAGO—California’s Central Coast boasts a Greek-inspired winery called [Ampelos Cellars](#). Philhellenes Peter and Rebecca Work have infused their love for Greece, and are sharing that love, one pour at a time.

On our recent trip to California, we visited Ampelos, however, Peter and Rebecca were in Greece. I caught up with Rebecca recently, to learn more about Ampelos and their unique story.

Peter’s sister married a Greek and lives in Greece. He visited often and was captivated by Greece. When he met Rebecca, he couldn’t wait to bring her there. She immediately fell in love with Greece, too. They decided it was the best place to bring together Peter’s family from Denmark and Rebecca’s, from Alaska. Their wedding and honeymoon took place on the island of Folegandros.

After reading the book, “Harvest of Joy,” they were inspired. They dreamed of someday owning a vineyard. They thought, perhaps when they were ready to leave the corporate world, they would do it. Then everything changed on that fateful morning of September 11, 2001.

“We flew into New York that day, as Peter had a meeting scheduled at the World Trade Center, but at the last minute, it was cancelled,” Rebecca explained. “On the way back we both decided we were tired of the corporate world and would trust that our son, a winemaker for Sea Smoke, could teach us to make wine.”

They purchased a vineyard in the Santa Rita Hills, in 1999, and then in 2007, converted a leased building in Lompoc into a winery. They named it Ampelos, after the Greek word for vine, to celebrate their love for, and their ties to Greece. The inaugural harvest came in 2004.

The year 2004 also saw the opening of [Ampelos Resort](#), a bed and breakfast located on the island of Folegandros, which is run by Peter’s sister and her husband.

“We bought the land with dreams of someday watching the nightly sunset over the hills and our dogs running through the vines,” she shared.

The Ampelos philosophy is simple: to produce quality eco-friendly, natural wines with no added yeasts, tannins, artificial bacteria or coloring. The goal is for every sip “to evoke cool ocean breezes and sunny afternoons wondering at the beauty of the rolling Santa Rita Hills.”

Their commitment to staying small, being sustainable and to producing high quality wine to share with family and friends, has led to some distinct and enjoyable wine. Recently, *Wine Spectator* gave their Pinot Noir Santa Rita Hills Lambda: The Magnitude 2010, a rating of 88 points, calling it, “elegant and graceful.”

In keeping with the Greek theme, all bottles possess a Greek character and name—a representation of the special characteristics of the wine. Also, the wine club is called “Filos”.

“Filos is Greek for friend...at Ampelos we are very lucky to have an extended group of friends,” the club literature states. Unfortunately, the club is closed to new members, to allow existing members some flexibility while keeping the “family” or “friend” feel. There’s a waiting list.

“We closed it because we allow folks to ‘roll their own,’ on which wines they are interested, and so they don’t have to take, say a Grenache, if they aren’t into Grenache. This makes shipments complicated, so we cannot do large shipments. We also want everyone in the club to feel it is family, and you can’t do that if it’s large.”

We’ll visit again for sure. But next year, Folegandros!

**To continue reading, login or sign up for The Greek Star:**

Login ▶

Sign Up ▶





## **MARIA A. KARAMITSOS**

### **Associate Editor**

A proud Greek-American, Maria A. Karamitsos loves to write about all things Greek. She began contributing to *The Greek Star* in June 2005, and has served as Associate Editor since January 2006.

Maria's work can also be found in *GreekCircle* magazine, [USA.GreekReporter.com](http://USA.GreekReporter.com), *The National Herald* and [Harlots Sauce Radio](#). She recently contributed to The [Chicago Area Ethnic Handbook](#) and the [Voices of Hellenism Literary Journal](#). Under her maiden name, Maria A. Fotinopoulos, she served as Food Editor for the book, [Greektown Chicago: Its History, Its Recipes](#), by Alexa Ganakos.

Additionally, she's the author of the forthcoming book, "Positive About Negative: Adventures in Molar Pregnancy," about her experience with molar pregnancy and is the moderator of an online support group for women who've endured a molar pregnancy. Maria takes a light-hearted look at the trials and tribulations of parenting on her blog, [From the Mommy Files](#).

LEAVE YOUR COMMENTS

### Login to post a comment

Username

Password

[Register](#)

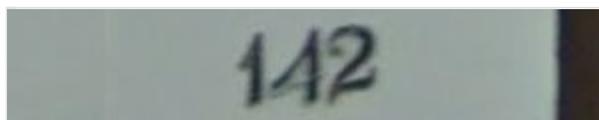
[Forgot password](#)

Remember me

### POST COMMENT AS A GUEST

Name (Required):

Email:



Type the text

[Privacy & Terms](#)

### Comments

COMMENTS

---

**No comments found**