



❖ Arak, The Haute Couture of Anis ❖

The difference between prêt a porter and haute couture fashion can be found in tiny details that together make a big difference in terms of quality and appearance.

It's much the same with arak. There are plenty of aniseed flavored spirits around the Mediterranean such as ouzo in Greece, pastis in France, raki in Turkey, sambuca in Italy but none has the sophistication and impact that arak has.

Even the commercial arak in Lebanon that was released on the market in the 1970s lacked the kick of traditional arak.

To determine in what category an arak belongs, we use a simple test: a haute couture arak should make you 'blast on the rocks'. Indeed, a refined arak should be smooth enough to be consumed without being diluted with water.

The ingredients:

Two noble ingredients are required for good quality arak: fleshy white grapes

and green aniseed.

Fleshy grapes are juicy with a very soft skin. Without these characteristics the tannins and the body that are in the skin will eliminate the lift and finesse that you should find in a good quality arak. The best grapes in our opinion are the Obeïdi and the Merwah. Both are indigenous to Lebanon but other varieties could work such as ugni blanc or muscat while the terroir is not all that important.

A crucial factor is the freshness of the anise. It should be picked young for its chlorophyll and other substances that make the flavor so balanced and so special. On top of that, the terroir for aniseed is very important. The best terroir in our opinion is Hinneh in Syria. We tried Egyptian and the Turkish varieties but the results were disappointing.

Elaboration time:

To make a comparison, you can cook a dish in a pan, in a pressure cooker, in a tray, in a microwave, on charcoal... Well, there are also lots of tools and devices you can use to prepare arak but nothing can beat the Moorish copper lid still. Making arak this way is a process that takes time and energy but it gives the spirit a quality edge.

Ageing in clay jars is equally important. We choose those made at Beit Chabeb because of their porosity. The clay of that region, terroir again, allows the micro-oxygenation of the arak while it is resting in the jars - a process that should take between one and two years.

Once you have done all that you can pour arak in a glass, just add ice, shake gently to turn the liquid into an intense white and then bring it to your lips and savor!

Nothing works as well as arak with some food ingredients such as lemon, mint, parsley, a taboulé or mezzé.

Arak is also one of the bartender's best friends. Nowadays, in sophisticated bars in New York, Miami, Los Angeles, London you often spot the blue bottle of arak behind the barman – and we serve some of the best arak cocktails in our bar at Faqra.

Here are a couple of our most popular recipes:

MASSAYA MULBERRY

Massaya Arak (1 measure)
Mulberry syrup (1-1.5 measures)
Water (3 measures)
Two thin lemon slices
Decorated with blackberries
or any other black fruit



MINT PAUSE

Massaya Arak (1 measure)
Peppermint syrup (1 measure)
Water (3 measures)
Poured into a glass of crushed ice
and decorated with mint leaves
and a slice of lemon or lime



Access more recipes:

<http://www.massaya.com/Library/Files/Arak%20cocktails%20recipes%20-%20Liban.pdf>

❖ Life at Massaya ❖



Join us, Massaya and Vieux Télégraphe at Vinexpo - Bordeaux, 13-16 May 2019, Hall 1.

Vinexpo is the reference exhibition for wines and spirits. For the 5th consecutive edition, Massaya has joined stand with Le Vieux Télégraphe.

Our team will be pleased to sampling you on the following labels: Massaya Blanc 2018, Massaya Rosé 2018, Le Colombier 2018, Terrasses de Baalbeck 2014, Cap Est 2017.

Don't miss the apero at the closing of each day, with miso-fermented hommos, mouhamara, jambon de bayonne.... and the star of the afternoon, arak on ice to refresh your palate.



How to walk up an appetite!

Massaya Faqra is organizing a mountain hike around Faqra before serving up its famous Sunday Brunch at the winery on **May 26**. Everyone's welcome to join the expedition that takes you to **Awala**, the top of Massaya hill, and passes Faqra's landmarks – the **natural bridge** and the **Roman temples**.

Our friendly staff will be ready at the finish with a choice of refreshments and aperitifs. What could be better than a chilled Massaya Rosé, a Massaya Blanc spritzer or even a Massaya arak cocktail before a well-earned Brunch.

PS: Hiking shoes are recommended

Massaya at Vinexpo, 13-16 May 2019,
Hall 1 stand C31

Massaya Faqra Hike & Brunch, Sunday
May 26, at 10:00 AM

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✦ The Coppersmiths of Tripoli ✦



Coppersmith in Lebanon is a know how that is in danger of dying out because it is labor intensive and requires skills that are developed over many years. Tripoli has been the center of this trade where techniques that can't be taught at schools are gained through apprenticeship and often passed on from father to son.

The handmade stills require an expertise that is the backbone of traditional arak haute couture. We must do all that we can to support the craftsmen at a time of globalization and mass production.

MAY SCHEDULE

Daily winery tours and tastings, 10:00-17:00

FIREPLACE RESTAURANT

Monday & Thursday lunch

Friday & Saturday lunch and dinner

Sunday's Brunch

SUNSETBAR

Reopens in June 2019
THE POND GARDEN - reopens June 2019

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