



TWENTY REMARKABLE YEARS IN LEBANON'S WINE STORY

Wine making in Lebanon has recently transformed the countryside and opened the way for attractive business opportunities. Long established wineries and a host of newcomers have helped cement Lebanon's reputation as a centre of excellence. We at Massaya are neither an old name nor an eager novice and we are proud that during the past 20 years we have pioneered some of the best wines and sent a message to the world about the quality that comes from this ancient wine country.



Our first few bottles of wine were released in 1998 and since then we have matured into an international producer – from a run down property in the Beqaa to a wonderful modern wine resort in Mount Lebanon. So for us, 2018 is a significant year and this is a good moment to review what's been going on at Massaya and all around us.



Twenty years in business is a significant landmark for Massaya. We are established as one of the quality producers in Lebanon and we have opened channels to Europe, North America, Asia and the Gulf. Such has been the success of our message abroad that around 80 percent of Massaya wines and arak are now appreciated outside Lebanon.

This is important because in the last decade imports of wine into Lebanon have increased dramatically in value from \$3.5m in 2008 to \$8.5m last year while consumption has remained largely static at a yearly average of 3.5 bottles a head. With foreign wines ramping up their presence in the country it makes good sense for all domestic producers to explore the overseas markets.



When we started in 1998 the big three wineries controlled the sector: Chateau Musar, Ksara and Kefraya. Massaya entered this territory and within ten years had built a strong reputation. The period from 2009 to the present saw a surge of newcomers into the business. Not all of them were successful and there have been sales, closures, alliances and consolidations but inevitably all this new activity (today there are more than 50 producers working the ever-spreading vineyards) had an impact on the established trio.

The success story of Chateau Musar is well known as it maintained exports and high profile marketing throughout the civil war. Massaya followed this example and has successfully established new networks abroad. Almost all Lebanon's producers realise that the home market alone is not enough to secure viability, so exports are vital. The results are encouraging. In 2008 Lebanon exported wines worth just under \$12m. Last year this rose to \$16.7m.



Sometimes we look back nostalgically to our pioneering days at Tanaïl and the past generation of barons such as Serge Hochar and Michel de Boustros but we are a forward thinking operation. We believe that over the last 20 years we have built a sustainable wine and arak operation promoting Lebanon's heritage, cuisine and values. This has been achieved through our philosophy of hard work, authenticity, curiosity and respect for nature.

So this year we will celebrate our 20th birthday with the clear conviction that our model is stronger for a more competitive environment of globalisation and that through innovation and a positive work ethic we will continue to meet the threshold of higher quality that is demanded by discerning drinkers everywhere.

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