

# THE JOURNEY



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## On the Cover:

*by Terry Sullivan*

When we visited Archil Guniava Wine Cellar in Kvaliti, Imereti, in late September 2013, an aged long wood press was filled with Tsolikouri grapes. The 100-year-old wood press was made from the trunk of a single tree. Grapes are stomped by foot. The juice from the press goes directly into a qvevri. Archil adds about 20 percent chacha (pomace) and stems to the qvevri. He said that sometimes he uses stems and at other times does not.

### Cover Story

Focus on Georgia, Sakartvelo

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Terry Sullivan/Kathy Sullivan

### Writers

Kathy Sullivan

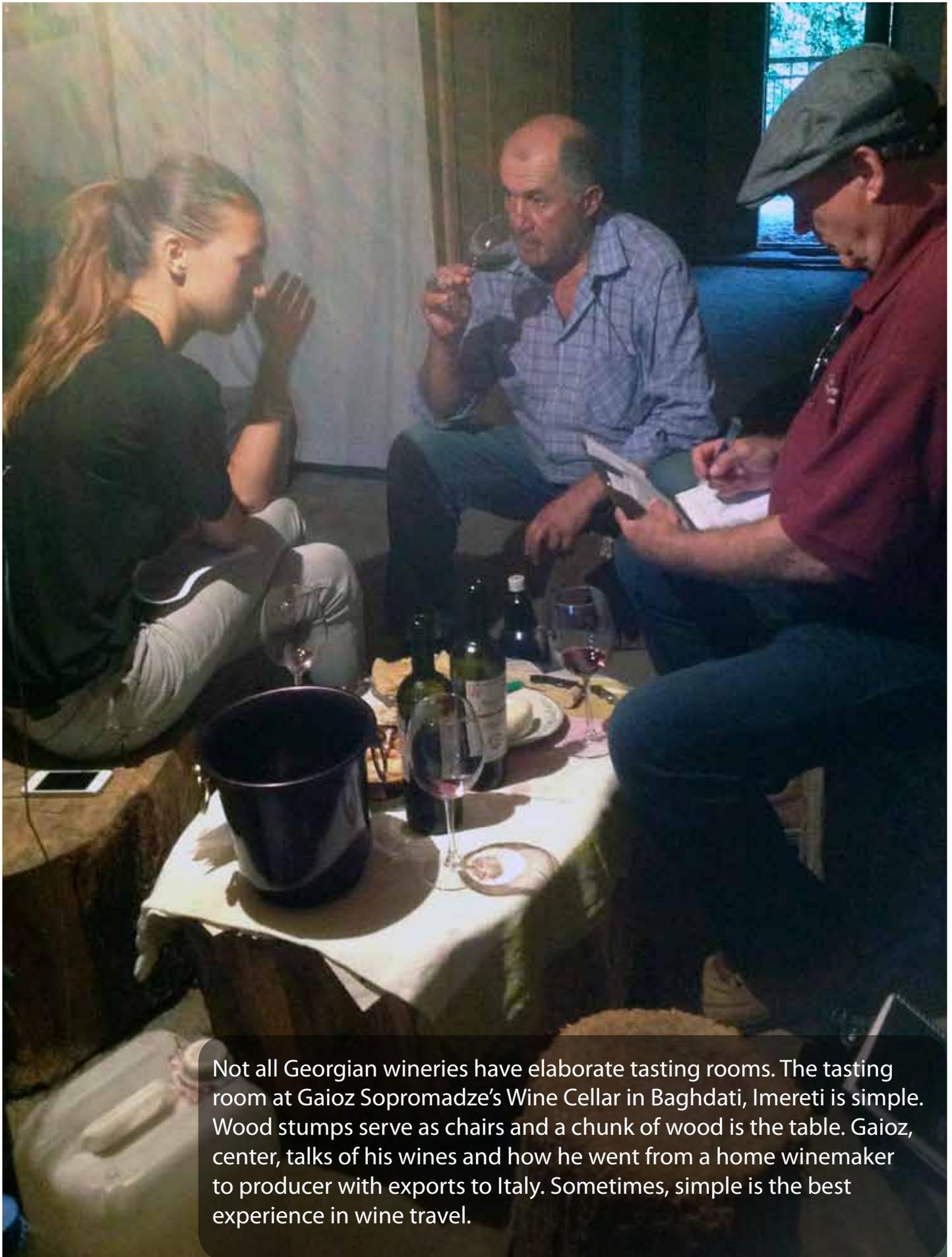
Terry Sullivan

Meghan A. Neumeier

## Focus on Imereti, Georgia, *Sakartvelo*



With a baseball bat-like tool, Archil Guniava of Archil Guniava Wine Cellar in Kvaliti, Imereti, Georgia seals a qvevri after tasting the wine. He pounds the end of the bat into moist clay that forms a seal in the opening. The qvevri is burried below the opening.



Not all Georgian wineries have elaborate tasting rooms. The tasting room at Gaioz Sopromadze's Wine Cellar in Baghdati, Imereti is simple. Wood stumps serve as chairs and a chunk of wood is the table. Gaioz, center, talks of his wines and how he went from a home winemaker to producer with exports to Italy. Sometimes, simple is the best experience in wine travel.



Work continues even when you have an appointment. We met Ramaz Nikoladze in his vineyards as he was harvesting grapes. He had the wine tasting out in the vineyard. This was a fitting location for the tasting since we were able to see the grapevines that produced the grapes for the wines. Ramaz Nikoladze's Wine Cellar is in Nakhshirghele, Imereti, Georgia.

Another simple tasting room in Imereti. Simon Chkhedze's Wine Cellar in Meore, Imereti was at a picnic table close to the marani. A pitcher of wine is used to serve the wine. Accompanying the tasting is a pudding made from grapes. This is a wonderful opportunity to taste wines in a home setting.



Our travels in Imereti took us to qvevri maker Zaliko Bodjadze. Zaliko has made qvevris for decades and his son is learning the trade. While visiting, we purchased a 24 litre qvevri and managed to bring it home. We plan on making a qvevri wine in the autumn of 2014.



## Focus on Racha-Lechkhumi, Georgia, *Sakartvelo*



At Aleksandreuli winery in Racha, workers label bottles by hand. This is an age -old way of affixing labels. The workers are fast and can label several cases in a short time.



Engusi Natberadze winery in Racha-Lechkhumi is a winery turning from home winemaking to commercial winemaking. Engusi shares a Chacha with Terry. Both drank the Chacha in one gulp. They drink it the way many Georgians drink Chacha. If you drink it quickly, there is not enough time for the devil to keep count of how many Chachas you drink.



At Vakhtang Aslanikashvile Winery , Vakhtang has planted his vineyard with Usakhelouri that is an unusual variety to find. It is one of the ancient original grape varieties. Vakhtang talked about the difficulties growing the grapes noting that it is hard to take care of. He has spent a decade working in the vineyard to get it into full production. The grapes are harvested in late fall when the leaves have turned red.

# Focus on Samegrelo, Georgia, *Sakartvelo*



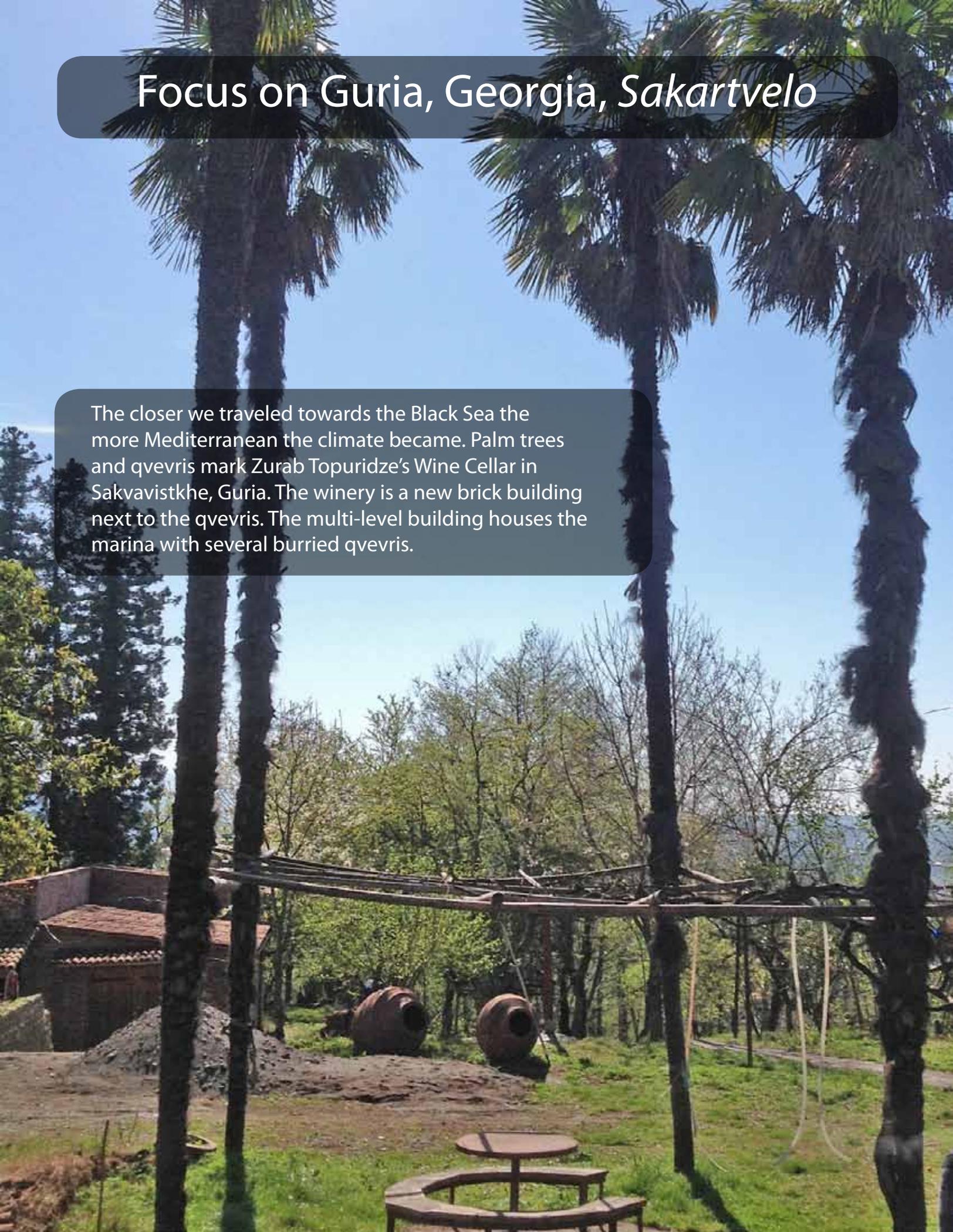
The monks at Dadiani Old Cellar have a qvevri under the table. A wine tasting of the rare grape Ojaleshi takes place in the winery ageing room. Oak barrels, qvevris and previous bottled vintages age in the dark, brick covered cave-like area.



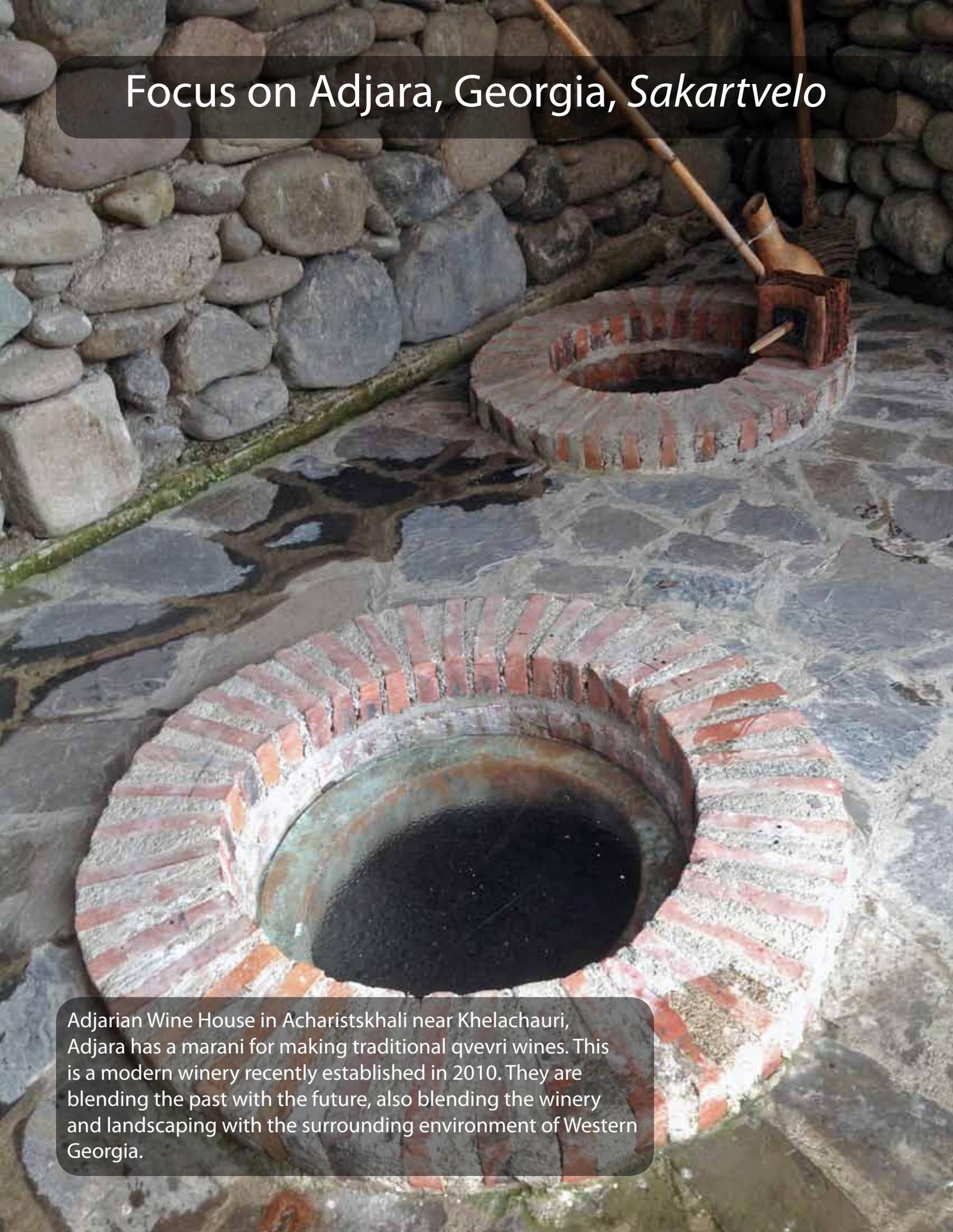
In Western Georgia, every wine tasting included food. Nika Parcuani served Ojaleshi with regional walnuts, acorns and meats. Nika's winery is just beginning. He sources grapes from the villagers and hopes to make commercial wine in the future.

# Focus on Guria, Georgia, *Sakartvelo*

The closer we traveled towards the Black Sea the more Mediterranean the climate became. Palm trees and qvevris mark Zurab Topuridze's Wine Cellar in Sakvavistkhe, Guria. The winery is a new brick building next to the qvevris. The multi-level building houses the marina with several burried qvevris.



## Focus on Adjara, Georgia, *Sakartvelo*



Adjarian Wine House in Acharistskhali near Khelachauri, Adjara has a marani for making traditional qvevri wines. This is a modern winery recently established in 2010. They are blending the past with the future, also blending the winery and landscaping with the surrounding environment of Western Georgia.



It was common for a supra to accompany our wine tasting. At Lado Shavishvili's Wine Cellar in Vaio, Adjara we spent a lovely couple of hours with Lado and his wife. We had a delicious meal featuring traditional Georgian foods. The weather was beautiful and we relished sitting outside to enjoy a bit of Georgian tradition. Our supra included katleti a beef-like sausage paired with Aladasturi wine. There was also a meat and rice mixture covered with a kale leaf. Other dishes included cold chicken, bread, and cheese.

## Revisit Kakheti, Georgia, *Sakartvelo*

A man with grey hair, wearing a black traditional Georgian jacket with white embroidery on the collar and cuffs, is kneeling outdoors. He is pouring a red, chunky sauce from a small copper cup into a larger one. The setting is a rural area with a wooden fence, a wheelbarrow, and bare trees in the background. The ground is dirt and grass.

We met Simon Zaoty, dressed in traditional Georgian-style outside of his home. He led us to his marani where he makes qvevri wines and hosts supra events. Simon and his daughter entertained us with a variety of songs accompanied by Georgian musical string instruments. Simon pairs his wines with traditional Kakhetian foods.



Nuna Kardenakhishvili offers a fascinating look into the centuries old winemaking traditions in Georgia. Visitors can taste Rkatsiteli and Saperavi wines with light Georgian-style refreshments. The facility includes a museum filled with an array of artifacts. Outside of the museum is a house constructed 300 years ago.



Currently Black Sea Wines has two warehouse-like facilities with hundreds of buried qvevis. One building is enclosed while a nearby facility with a straw roof and open sides holds many more qvevis. Qvevis range in size from 1.5 to 3 tons. The owners plan to rebuild. Black Seas Wines owns 180 hectares of vineyards.



We enjoyed visiting Lagvinari where we met owner and winemaker Dr. Irakli Glonti. He dipped into his qvevris to allow us to sample his qvevri wines. Dr. Glonti exemplified Georgians' hospitality by inviting us to his home in Tbilisi that evening. Lagvinari wines are exported to the United Kingdom, Austria, France and Latvia.



Temi is a community created for vulnerable people. The focus of Temi is "to empower" and protect the residents. With help, the residents farm, maintain vineyards and produce wine. This helps to support the community and provides a lifestyle where people can achieve a level of independence.



Danieli Winery is located in a small region where the town's name Argoichki means "no hail." The area is protected by surrounding mountains preventing hail from reaching the area. The owners Olaf and Eka are an enthusiastic couple who are cultivating the Kisi grape variety which grows well in this region.

# Opening our Qvevri Wine



During our first visit to Georgia in September 2013, we harvested Rkatsiteli grapes near Twins Wine Cellar in Napareuli. We destemmed the grapes and placed the crushed grapes and juice into a 60 litre qvevri buried in the ground at the winery. In April, 2014 we returned to open the qvevri.



When we arrived at Twins Wine Cellar, our qvevri was sealed and covered with black sand. A wood covering over the sand was removed. The wood was at floor level so that no one would step into the qvevri opening.



The sand was dusty, so we moistened it. Then using our hands we removed the sand from the qvevri top. Both twins, Gia and Gela Gamtkitsulashvili, who own the winery, helped with opening the qvevri and bottling the wine.



The stone cover was sealed to the qvevri with a ring of moist clay. It took some pressure to break the seal and lift the cover.



With twins Gia and Gela Gamtkitsulashvili, Kathy and I pose with our qvevri wine. The wine was a gold color. The clarity was clear as though the wine had been filtered. However, no filtering took place other than the natural filtering of the earthen winemaking vessel. Floral and tropical fruit enlivened the nose and mouth. There was a crisp finish and mild tannins, the result of the skins and seeds contact for several months.

# Wine and the Bible

## The "Drunken" Prayer of Hannah

by Meghan A. Neumeier

The first book of Samuel begins with the story of Elkanah and Hannah. Hannah is barren, and Elkanah has married a second wife, Peninnah, with whom he has born several children. Hannah, however, has remained Elkanah's favorite wife. During the family's annual journey to the temple to worship the Lord, the jealous Peninnah reproaches Hannah for being left barren and abandoned by the Lord. Hannah, in response, weeps and refuses to eat. Elkanah attempts to comfort her by asserting that he is worth more "than ten sons" (1 Samuel 1:8 NAB).

After Elkanah leaves for the temple, Hannah makes her own way there and prays near the doorpost. She pours out her bitterness to the Lord, "weeping freely" (1:10). In her fierce desire for a son, she promises to dedicate her son to the Lord, if she should be blessed with a fertile womb. As Hannah pours out her heart, a priest named Eli, sitting nearby, watches her. Eli observes Hannah's moving lips but does not hear her voice. Thinking her drunk, Eli reproves her, saying, "How long will you make a drunken spectacle of yourself? Sober up from your wine!" (1:14). Hannah quickly defends herself, answering, "No, my lord! I am an unhappy woman. I have had neither wine nor liquor; I was only pouring out my heart to the Lord" (1:15). Eli, moved with compassion,

tells Hannah, "Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have requested" (1:17). Sure enough, when Hannah and her family return home, she conceives a son, who is named Samuel, Hebrew for "God has heard."

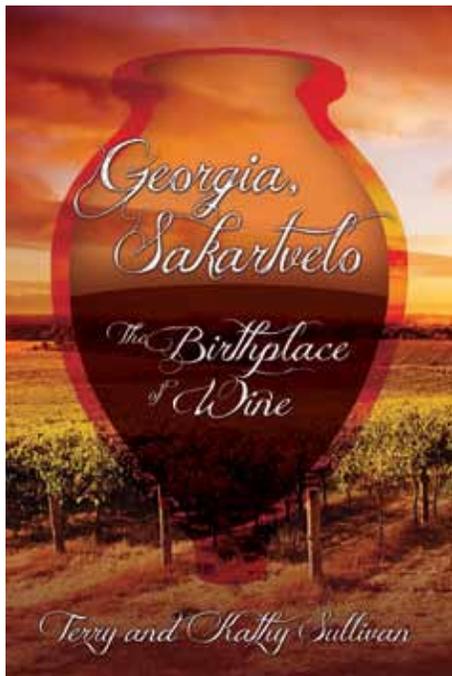
The Bible is full of advice about how to pray and how not to pray. Some of this advice is conflicting, perhaps because prayer is difficult to define. Some people define prayer as "communication with God" or a "turning towards God." St. Theresa of Jesus described prayer as "an intimate sharing between friends."

An examination of Hannah's exchange with God and Eli can teach us three things about prayer. First, Hannah teaches us that it is okay to be bitter, even angry, towards God. I have taught many students who expressed feelings of guilt in their anger towards God. "It's okay to be angry with God," I have told them. "God can handle it. After all, He is God." It is important, however, to share our emotions with God, despite our feelings of guilt or shame in them. This is the second thing that we can learn from Hannah's prayer. In her heartbroken, downcast state, Hannah does not turn her back on God; rather, she embraces Him, deeply hurt, yet still trusting in His goodness and willingness to provide for her. The third



lesson that Hannah has to share with us is that "drunken" prayer can be a good thing. When I drink wine, I become more loquacious. (In fact, my husband can tell if I've had one glass of wine because of how talkative it makes me!) Hannah's prayer resembles this unreserved, babbling speech. In her prayer, she pours out her heart to God. Although God may not answer our every prayer as he answered Hannah's, we can, like Hannah, share our feelings with God and find the peace to continue our journey toward communion with our Lord.

# Books by Terry & Kathy Sullivan



*Georgia, Sakartvelo: the Birthplace of Wine* by Terry and Kathy Sullivan reveals a cultural world unknown to many people. The country of Georgia is located to the east of the Black Sea between the Greater Caucasus Mountains and the Lesser Caucasus Mountains. This is a land with a Mediterranean climate where wine, history, food and religion intermix. The people in this region have been making wine continuously for 8,000 years. Discover the qvevri winemaking method that has been used to make natural wine for centuries. Terry and Kathy take readers into Georgia's culture with an emphasis on wine and history.

Paperback: 126 pages

Photos: color

Publisher: Infinity

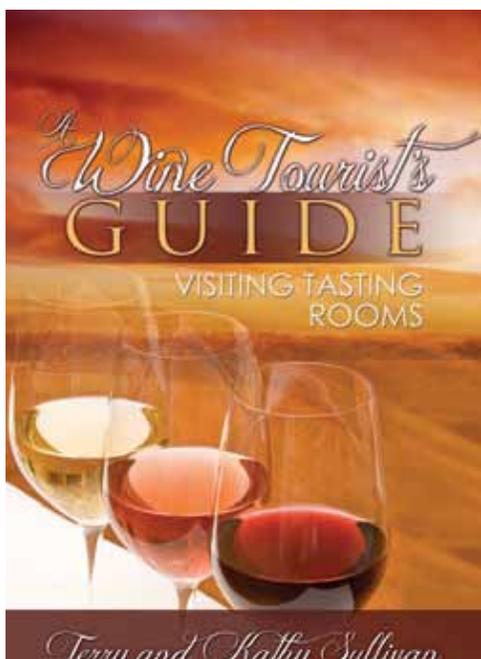
Published: March, 2014

Language: English

ISBN - 978-1-4958-0006-1

Product Dimensions: 8.8 x 6 x 0.5 inches

Book's [website](#)



*A Wine Tourist's Guide: Visiting Tasting Rooms* by Terry and Kathy Sullivan cuts the intimidation factor from the world of wine. After arriving at a winery tasting room, what will visitors see and experience? This quick guide will help newcomers to the world of wine and those more experienced wine enthusiasts. A Wine Tourist's Guide covers tasting room expectations, etiquette, wine tasting, and wine aroma charts. Also included are some common wine myths and misconceptions. Readers will find a suggested wine tasting form, a discussion of common grape varieties, and suggestions on how to plan a trip to wineries.

Paperback: 90 pages

Photos: black & white

Publisher: Infinity Published: 2013

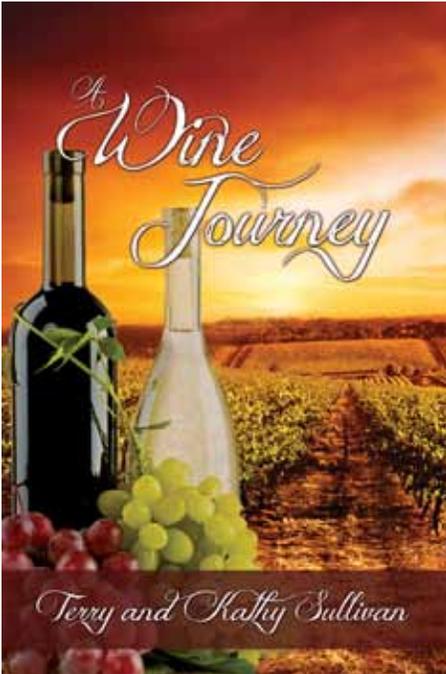
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Book's [website](#)



Millions of people drink and enjoy wine. How and when they came to an interest in wine is varied. For some, their wine journey may have started early, for example learning to walk holding on to a Grandfather's pants leg as he tends the barrels in the family winery. Others may come to wine while working in a restaurant and wanting to better inform patrons about the wine list. People in many countries see wine as a food to be drunk when eating. A wine journey may come later in life, as is the case for the authors, Terry and Kathy Sullivan. Anyone can go on a wine journey. All that is required is an interest in wine.

*A Wine Journey* looks at the trek of the authors as they learned about wine in different venues. The book continues with Terry's and Kathy's attempts of making wine, both at home and at wineries. Their journey recalls experiences they had while visiting and writing about over 850 wineries. Anyone can follow the same journey whether it involves wine learning, winemaking or wine travel. Discover the Sullivan's journey in *A Wine Journey*, then go out and start or continue your wine journey.

Paperback: 170 pages

Photos: black & white

Publisher: Infinity

Published: 2012

Language: English

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ISBN-13: 978-0741480453

Product Dimensions: 0.4 x 5.9 x 8.9 inches

Book's [website](#)

## Back Cover

Sighnaghi is a small Georgian village located in the mountains, southeast of Tbilisi. Walking along the cobble streets makes one think of what life was like during the 18th century. Today some refer to Sighnaghi as a town-museum. The curved roads and quaint building styles offer a relaxing atmosphere. This is a town to visit when you have plenty of time to walk along the small shops lining the roads.



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