



Qvevri (Pitcher)

Viticulture in Georgia

Name “Georgia” was given to the country by Europeans, and is linked to the Greek word *georgos* meaning farmer and – by extension – winegrower. National identity of the Georgians is closely linked to the cult of wine, which has a long and uninterrupted history in the region with 8000 years of winemaking history. Ancient people had discovered the mysterious transformation of wild grape juice into wine by leaving it in clay vessels called Qvevri, buried in the ground. This knowledge was then slightly developed and refined over the centuries. Qvevri is a special vessel for making wine. It still maintains the same importance in wine-making as ever before. Many Georgian families unchangeably and strongly follow the rich culture of making wine. They own special places called *Marani* (wine-cellar) at their houses, with different sizes of Qvevries buried in the ground. The knowledge and skills of wine-making in Georgia were widely acknowledged in the ancient world. Many outstanding figures of the antiquity, such as Appolo of Rhodes, Strabon and Procopious of Caesaria mentioned Georgia as the land of the first known cultured grape varieties. Vessels similar to Qvevri were found in the Roman Empire, where they were called “Dolium”, in Greece “Pithos” and in Spain “Tinaja”. Even the modern English name of wine is believed to derive from Georgian “Ghvino” (“Vin”; “Wein”; “Vine”; “Vino” ...). Qvevri is an egg-shaped earthenware vessel used for making, ageing and storing the wine.

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