



While the Olympics progress in Paris...

Two unexpected races have started on the Eastern basin of the Mediterranean:

An undeniably early race to harvest our grapes is unfolding. When Massaya began in 1998, our harvest started in September. Ten years later, we were looking at a mid-August start; now, we are picking the grapes at the beginning of August. It does not take rocket science to realize that climate change is real.

We recycle, reprocess, produce solar energy etc. yet despite our efforts, I can't help but feel we are losing the fight for our planet. Lebanon is not the only country impacted by this, the phenomenon is global and there is nothing original or new in what I write.



Amid my climate frustration, I hear daily calls by countries urging their foreign nationals to evacuate, with warnings of imminent war. That Great Britain, France and the United States are asking their nationals to leave Lebanese territory is understandable, but when Air France announces that they were suspending their flights to Beirut airport, the feeling of dismay and abandonment increases.

While we have started the indigenous yeast preparations and programming this week grapes picking, the quirky challenge facing the winemaker now becomes very simple: how to harvest grapes in times of war?



Massaya has developed contingency plans to try to salvage the harvest, and I want to share with you the two models that inspire us:

- Our Phoenician ancestors, in anticipation of conflict and threats, established branches of their civilization in different cities along the coast as a way to share risk

Beqa and the other on Mount Lebanon, is not retained. War was part of our calculations.

- The inhabitants of Mount Lebanon, historically hid in unsuspected caves and ravines to maintain their activity and defy those threatening their existence. We, too, are going to play local this year, limiting our travel across the terroirs as we will have local pickers in each zone.



We are victims of both war and climate change. The only thing we can do is to analyze our our roots and listen to our gut to find ways to overcome these challenges and what lies ahead.

Until a new balance emerges, let's cling to our love of life and party!



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