Winemaker: Giuseppe and Silvia Lonardi
Generation: 4th

GIUSEPPE LONARDI

Valpolicella Classico DOC

Even though they're Veneto's most important red varietals, few outside the region are versed in the outstanding Corvina and Rondinella grapes. Classically, they combine for a delightful, "dusty" palate of dried strawberries, cranberries, and even the bittersweet of rhubarb. Glycerin levels are modest in this old-fashioned Valpolicella, giving the wine a refreshing composition that's perfect for spicy, warm-weather foods. An everyday favorite in and around Venice.

WINEMAKER BIOGRAPHY

A true father-daughter team, Giuseppe and Silvia combine forces daily to make some of the last, old-fashioned Amarone from the Valpolicella Classico region. Given the level of care – and the number of years – that go into their wines, "hand-crafted" doesn't quite do their process justice. Despite its small size, their estate produces wines with enormous character and presence.

ENOLOGIST

Giuseppe Lonardi

TASTING NOTES

Color	Bright ruby red
Nose	Ripe cherry with earthy undertones
Palate	Fresh and lively, with ripe cherry and rhubarb
Finish	Mouth-watering and food friendly

VINEYARD & VINIFICATION

Vineyard Location	Valpollicella DOC, Veneto
Vineyard Size	7 ha
Varietals List	75% Corvina 20% Rondinella 5% Molinara
Farming Practices	Organic (non-certified); dry-farmed; grapes picked by hand
Elevation	350 m
Soils	Dense clay
Maturation Summary	In Steel for 12 months and Bottled for 6 months
In Steel	12 months
Alcohol	12.0 %
Acidity	5.5 g/liter
Residual Sugar	2.5 g/liter
Annual Production	13,200 bottles

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GIUSEPPE LONARDI

In a little village not far from Verona, tucked into the romantic hills of Valpolicella, you will find the estate of one of the best Amarone producers in Italia - Giuseppe Lonardi. “Bepi,” as his wife likes to call him, is a fourth-generation winemaker, and he leads a beautiful, streamlined life. On average, he hand-crafts just a few hundred cases per year of each of his finest wines. Marilena smiles fondly when you ask her about her husband: “He’s a workaholic. He basically sleeps with the wine.” Matching his stride and making wine right beside him is Giuseppe’s daughter, Silvia, who additionally runs “Corte Lonardi”, the family’s cozy, four-room inn. Over the years, she has gradually taken on more and more responsibility in the cellar and is now a formidable producer in her own right!

What sets Giuseppe and Silvia apart from so many others is their ongoing devotion to old-fashioned Amarone and Ripasso. Far from being sweet and cloying, their wines display endless layers of fruit, earthy tannins, and admirable acidity, and they’re often designed to cellar for decades. Structure-driven, yet full of nuance and grace, even their Amarone maintains its poise even after a 100-day, appassimento drying process. Without a doubt, altitude plays a large role in Lonardi’s ability to maintain this classical approach. Located in Marano, the loftiest of 8 hilltop villages comprising the region’s “green heart”, Lonardi’s is the highest single estate in all Valpolicella Classico. In an era of warming temperatures, their cooler clime plays a huge role when it comes to controlling ripeness. Intent is the other half of that coin: rather than harvest their grapes for Amarone later in the season, Giuseppe and Silvia hand pick the best fruit for their top wine first (usually in early September), so that the port-like flavors of Amarone stay concentrated after drying, but the sugar content remains modest and sophisticated.

REGION

VENETO

Home to the iconic cities of Venice and Verona, Veneto is also Italy’s second most prolific region in terms of wine production. Whites like Pinot Grigio and Prosecco, in particular, are made en masse in the lowlands proximate to the Adriatic. Beyond this, however, Veneto is also home to world-class estates and wines that couldn’t be made anywhere else (not least of all the renowned Amarone della Valpolicella). From coastal flatlands to subalpine hills, a vast diversity of microclimates gives this wine region a unique edge. There are an impressive 28 DOCs and 14 DOCGs, with Prosecco, Pinot Grigio, Soave, and the red wines of Valpolicella all calling the Veneto home.

Beginning on the edge of Lake Garda, this NE region has 7 provinces: Belluno, Treviso, Venezia, Verona, Vicenze, Padova and Rovigo. Its northern boundary is protected from harsh weather conditions by the Dolomites, and cooler conditions in the north are well-suited to white varietals like Garganega (the main grape in Soave). In contrast, the warmer Adriatic coastal plains and river valleys near Lake Garda are where the renowned Valpolicella, Amarone, and Bardolino reds are produced.

It is believed that Veneto is one of the oldest wine-producing regions in the world, dating back to the bronze age. Its main port, Venice, has long served as a point of entry for new varietals, and departure for its products. Italy’s very first school for oenology was founded in Conegliano in 1885, and today Europe’s most important wine fair, VinItaly - with a draw of some 200,000 people - takes place each spring in Verona.

VALPOLLICELLA DOC

Spanning a large portion of western Veneto, the Valpolicella district covers 240 sqaure kilometers, primarily to the north and west of Verona. Essentially, the DOC is a series of long hills and ravines dropping down out of the Lessini Mountains and forming a bridge between the Bardolino and the Soave DOCs. Two subzones also exist in this area: the subalpine Classico zone is situated in the region’s western third (a short distance north of Verona), while Valpantena sits further east in the middle of the appellation. The historic Classico subzone is generally regarded as having the finest terroir, especially around the villages of Fumane, Marano and Negrar. Higher altitude, more sunlight, and better drainage can lead to riper, healthier, more tannic and complex fruit. Soils vary greatly, although those in Valpolicella Classico are generally more calcareous, and those near Soave lean toward volcanic.

The driving force behind a Valpolicella DOC is Corvina, which must comprise 45-95%. The other required grape is Rondinella, which can make up between 5% and 30%. Most Valpolicella wines also contain a small portion of other approved reds such as Molinara, Negrara, and Oseleta. Wines have no particular aging requirements... unless labeled Superiore, which mandates a year in the bottle before release. Typically, Valpolicella DOCs are bright and lively, showcasing the telltale sour cherry aromas and flavors of Corvina. Rondinella, known for its generous yields, adds a savory, herbal component and helps round out the blend. The highly acidic, easy-oxidizing Molinara, more popular in the 1960s and 1970s, has been fading from view in the past 2 decades, with many producers phasing it out entirely.