

AMARONE

THE ART OF *appassimento* AND THE SOUL OF VALPOLICELLA

A HISTORY OF ONE OF
ITALY'S GREATEST WINES

THE MAKING OF AMARONE

The Historic Producer
Armando Fumanelli

ECONOMICS OF AMARONE

The industry's rising stars
highlighted

UNVEILING THE FUMANELLI
AMARONE DEL VALPOLICELLA DOCG

Visiting San Pietro in Cariano

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FROM THE EDITOR

A Legacy Etched in Stone and Vine

In the world of fine wine, we often speak of "history" as an abstract concept—a date on a dusty bottle or a story told in a tasting room. We ask our palates to imagine the centuries that shaped the terroir. However, at Marchesi Fumanelli, imagination is unnecessary. History is not a story there; it is the very ground you walk upon.

To stand on the grounds of the Fumanelli estate in the heart of San Pietro in Cariano is to witness the physical continuity of civilization. Beneath the ancient vines lie the excavated remains of a Roman temple dedicated to Flora, the goddess of flowers and the season of spring. Seeing those stones—monuments that have watched over the Valpolicella valley for millennia—reminds us that we are merely the current stewards of a much older magic. It is with immense pride and a deep sense of responsibility that I have chosen this estate to craft our Kosher Cuvée.



"AMARONE IS A WINE THAT DEFIES THE LAWS OF NATURE... IT IS A CONCENTRATE OF THE SOUL OF THE CORVINA GRAPE."



A Lineage Without Equal

While many noble estates across Italy boast long histories, Fumanelli stands in a category of its own. It is the only winery in the entire Valpolicella region—and perhaps all of Italy—that has been preserved and handed down through 28 generations. This is not merely a business; it is a living legacy.

At the helm of this legacy is Armando Fumanelli. His dedication to his family's heritage and the painstaking Amarone process is a gift to the wine world. In an era of fleeting trends, Armando's commitment offers a profound lesson that resonates beyond the cellar—it is a lesson in fatherhood. The way he preserves the past for the next generation, acting as a bridge between ancestors and descendants, is a standard of devotion we can all aspire to as fathers to our own children. I already can see these same characteristics in his son Federico, who works side by side with his father.

Where Tradition Meets the Future

What impresses me most about Armando is his masterful balance of dualities. He possesses a scholar's passion for history, yet he is never trapped by it. Within the walls of the estate, he employs modern techniques and technological advancements to ensure the highest quality, yet he never compromises the historical soul of the Amarone method. The appassimento—the drying of the grapes—remains a sacred ritual, handled with the same reverence today as it was centuries ago. When searching for a partner to create a wine that represents our standards of excellence, I could think of no greater winery and no greater person. Our Kosher Cuvée is more than just a collaboration; it is a tribute to the enduring spirit of the Fumanelli family and the timeless beauty of the Valpolicella.

I invite you to taste the history, the passion, and the 28 generations of dedication in every glass.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ralph Mader, MD". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the letters "R", "M", and "D" being particularly prominent.

The Wine Doctor

IN THIS ISSUE

IN THIS ISSUE YOU WILL FIND A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW OF AMARONE DELLA VALPOLICELLA, SPANNING ITS ACCIDENTAL ORIGINS TO ITS CURRENT STATUS AS A GLOBAL POWERHOUSE OF LUXURY VITIVULTURE.



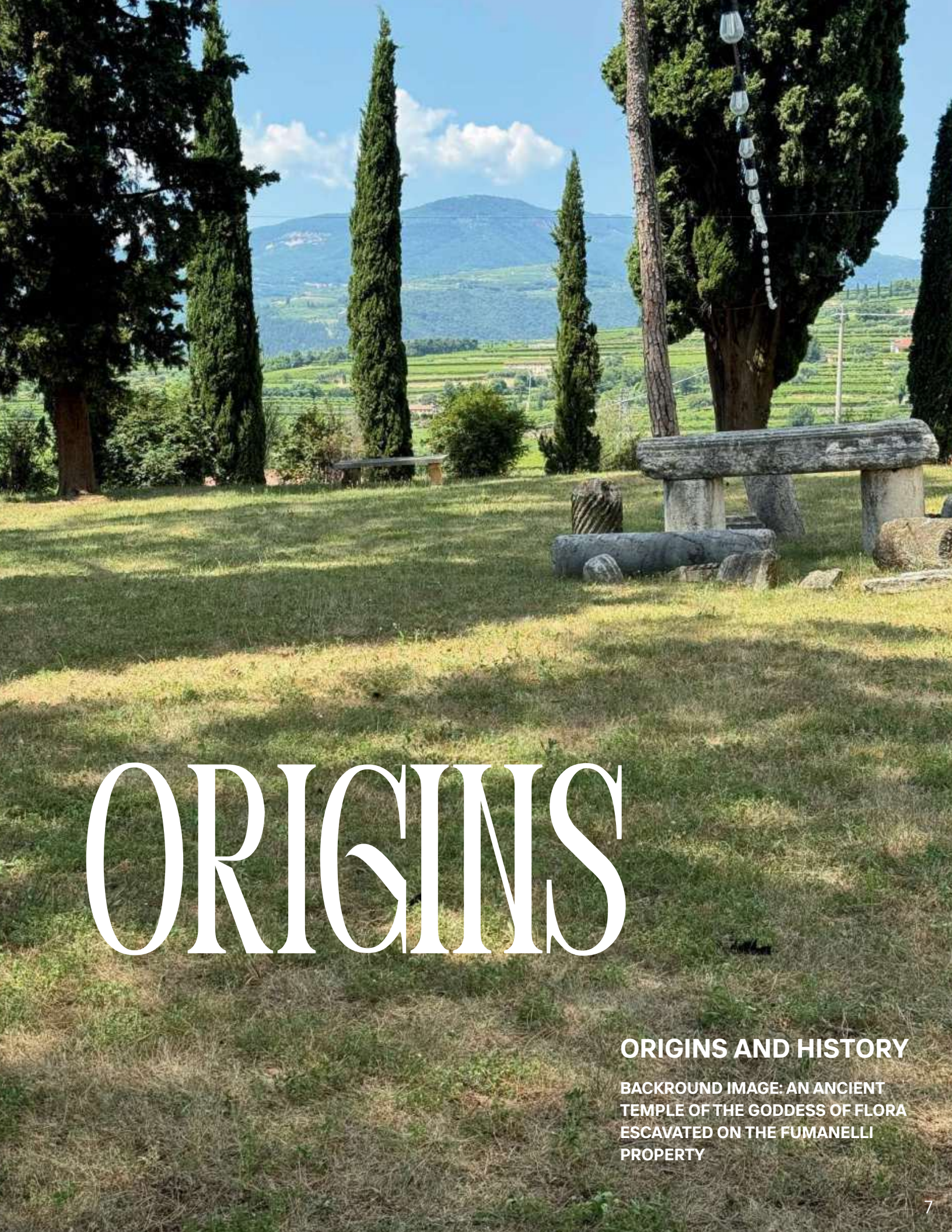
Understanding the region, the Terrior and the appassimento technique



Historic winery and Nobility for over 500 years



Tasting Notes of Amarone Della Valpolicella



ORIGINS

ORIGINS AND HISTORY

BACKGROUND IMAGE: AN ANCIENT
TEMPLE OF THE GODDESS OF FLORA
ESCAVATED ON THE FUMANELLI
PROPERTY

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Amarone della Valpolicella is one of Italy's most storied and revered wines, a deeply concentrated dry red that emerges from centuries of tradition in the Veneto hills north of Verona. Its roots reach back to antiquity. Viticultural evidence from the Valpolicella area traces vine cultivation to at least the **Etruscan period**, between the 7th and 5th centuries BC. Roman scholar Cassiodorus documented in the 6th century AD that **Ostrogothic King Theodoric the Great** specifically requested bottles of **Acinatico** — Amarone's predecessor, a rich dried-grape wine — for the royal cellars. The importance accorded to the wine was later enshrined in the **Edict of Rothari**, which established severe penalties for those who damaged vines intended for its production, treating the wine effectively as feudal currency. The method of drying grapes to concentrate their flavours and sugars — **known as appassimento** — is central to Amarone's identity. This ancient technique, shared by the Greek tradition of making straw wines, was practised in the Valpolicella region for over a thousand years primarily to produce Recioto della Valpolicella, a luscious dessert wine. Amarone itself is widely considered a beautiful historical accident: barrels of Recioto left to ferment beyond the usual stopping point, converting all residual sugars into alcohol and yielding a startlingly dry, powerful wine.

Popular tradition holds that in 1936, Adelino Lucchese, director of the Cantina Sociale Valpolicella, discovered a forgotten barrel of Recioto that had undergone complete fermentation. **Upon tasting it, he exclaimed — 'But this is not Amaro, it is Amarone!' —** giving the wine its modern name. The word itself derives from amaro (bitter), combined with the Italian augmentative suffix -one, meaning **'the Great Bitter,'** a distinction designed to set it apart from the sweeter Recioto. While this account is colourful, rival claims exist: Villa Mosconi Bertani in Negrar is also considered a probable cradle of the style, with the Bertani family among those who may have intentionally embraced this dry form as early as the 1930s.

The first Amarones to be commercially marketed under that name were the 1953 vintages released by producers Bolla and Bertani. The wine's prestige, however, took further decades to consolidate. In 1968, Valpolicella earned DOC (Denominazione di Origine Controllata) status, and by December 1990 the Amarone category received its own formal DOC recognition. The ultimate elevation came on 4 December 2009, when Amarone della Valpolicella — alongside Recioto della Valpolicella — was promoted to DOCG (Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita), Italy's highest wine classification, effective from the 2010 harvest onwards.





HISTORICAL LANDSCAPES

A VISUAL JOURNEY

“

"Sī quis vineam alienam ex industria focaverit, damnum in triplum restituat."

(Translation: "If anyone shall have industriously [intentionally] set fire to another's vineyard, he shall restore the damage in triple.")

Theodoric the Great (c. 454–526 AD) was the King of the Ostrogoths and the ruler of the Ostrogothic Kingdom of Italy for over three decades. He is a pivotal figure in European history, often described as a "civilized barbarian" because he successfully blended Germanic military power with Roman administrative tradition. Theodoric's reign was a rare period of peace and prosperity for Italy. For those interested in the history of viticulture, Theodoric's reign was significant for the preservation of Italian wine culture.

- **The "Acinatico" of Valpolicella:** Historical records from his era, specifically letters written by his secretary Cassiodorus, describe a specialized wine from the Verona region made from "shrivelled" grapes.
- This wine, known as **Acinatico**, is widely considered the direct ancestor of modern-day Amarone and Recioto. Theodoric was reportedly a great admirer of these wines, and his demand for them helped maintain the appassimento (grape drying) traditions during the transition from the Roman to the Medieval world.

THE REGION & TERROIR

"True to its purported etymological roots—Vallis-polis-cellae, or the 'Valley of Many Cellars'—Valpolicella remains a landscape where the architecture of the cellar is as vital as the limestone in the soil."

The Valpolicella production zone lies in the province of **Verona**, within Italy's Veneto region in the northeast of the country. The word '**Valpolicella**' itself derives from Latin and means '**Valley of Many Cellars**', a telling testament to the area's ancient winemaking heritage. The zone stretches from the western shores of Lake Garda eastward toward the border of the province of Vicenza, encompassing valleys and slopes that descend from the Lessini Mountains to the Adige River plain below Verona.

The zone divides into three broad sub-areas. The **Classico zone to the west**, considered the historic heartland of Amarone, comprises five municipalities: *Negrar, Marano, Fumane, Sant'Ambrogio, and San Pietro in Cariano*. Its four principal north-south valleys – Val di Negrar, Val di Fumane, Val di Marano, and Val di Sant'Ambrogio – each carry distinct terroir signatures. The moderating proximity of Lake Garda brings mild temperatures and afternoon breezes, particularly to the westernmost vineyards of Sant'Ambrogio (home to Masi), Fumane (Allegrini), and Negrar (Quintarelli). These cooling lake effects help Corvina retain its characteristic acidity even in ripe vintages.





East of the **Classico** zone lies **Valpantena**, a sub-zone directly north of Verona formally recognized in 2010 partly through lobbying by Bertani. Here, elevating breezes from the Lessini Mountains and calcareous marl soils contribute an elegance and floral precision distinct from the Classico style. Further east still are the valleys of Mezzane, Illasi, Tramigna, and Squaranto, collectively known as **the 'extended' or eastern or Orientale Valpolicella zone**. These more continental valleys tend towards warmer conditions and a greater incidence of Corvinone over Corvina, producing darker, more tannic Amarones. The terroir across all sub-zones is diverse: soils range from volcanic basalt and calcareous-dolomitic formations in the Classico hills to limestone-rich clays further east, along with morainic deposits left by ancient glaciers. The Valpolicella microclimate is critically important not just for viticulture but for the appassimento process. Dry autumns with good air circulation in the hillside fruttai (drying rooms) are essential for controlled dehydration without spoilage. The Lessini Mountains to the north shield the region from harsh continental cold while their limestone geology imparts a celebrated minerality to wines from the upper hillside vineyards.

SUBZONES & NOTABLE VALLEYS

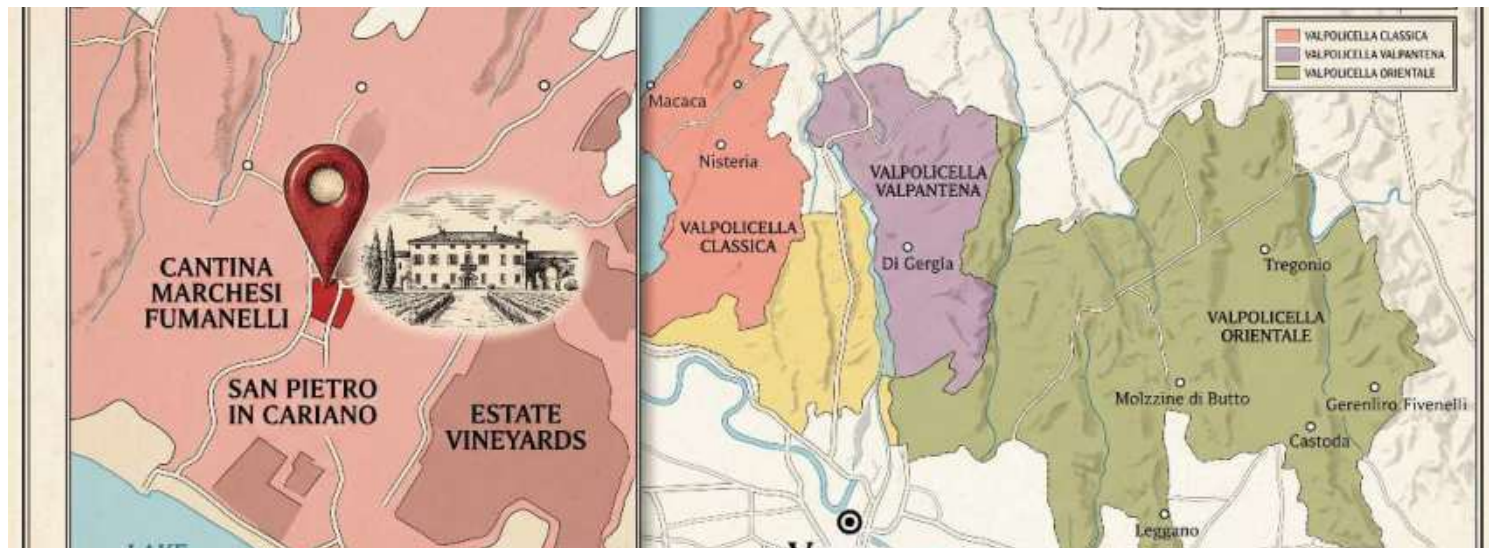
Within the Classico zone, the valley of Fumane — home to Marchesi Fumanelli's Squarano estate — sits at a privileged elevation and benefits from particularly well-drained calcareous and basaltic soils overlying ancient Roman agricultural land. San Pietro in Cariano forms the southern gateway to the Classico zone and, unusually, counts hilltop estates like Fumanelli among its finest producers. The valley of Negrar, further east within Classico, is home to Quintarelli, perhaps the most celebrated Amarone estate in the world.

The Valpolicella DOC is one of Italy's most prestigious wine regions, located in the Veneto region between Lake Garda and the city of Verona. The area is architecturally defined by three distinct "fingers" or valleys that run north to south from the Lessini Mountains.

While all zones grow the same primary grapes—Corvina, Corvinone, and Rondinella—the varying altitudes, soil compositions, and proximity to Lake Garda create distinct flavor profiles in each.



SUBZONES AND THEIR ATTRIBUTES



The Classico Zone (The Historic Heart)

This is the original, traditional production area located in the westernmost part of the DOCG. It consists of five main valleys: Fumane, Marano, Negrar, San Pietro in Cariano, and Sant'Ambrogio.

- **Terroir:** The soil here is a complex mix of limestone, volcanic basalt, and clay. The proximity to Lake Garda provides a mild microclimate, protecting the vines from extreme temperature shifts.
- **Wine Profile:** Classico wines are often considered the most elegant and refined. They typically exhibit:
 - **Aroma:** High-toned floral notes (violet), tart red cherry, and herbal complexity.
 - **Structure:** High acidity and leaner bodies compared to the eastern zones.
 - **Aging:** These wines possess the greatest aging potential due to their balanced acidity and mineral backbone.

Valpantena (The Valley of the Gods)

Situated between the Classico and Eastern zones, this narrow valley acts as a wind corridor, drawing cool air down from the mountains.

- **Terroir:** The soil is predominantly calcareous (chalky limestone) with significant marl. The valley is quite narrow, leading to very uniform ripening.
- **Wine Profile:** Valpantena wines sit in the "golden middle" between the elegance of Classico and the power of the East.
 - **Aroma:** Intense spicy notes (black pepper and licorice) alongside ripe red fruit.
 - **Structure:** They tend to be more fruit-forward and approachable in their youth than Classico wines.

The Eastern Zone / "Extended" Zone (The Powerhouse)

Often referred to as the "Orientale" zone, this area includes the valleys of Illasi, Mezzane, and Tramigna. This region saw significant expansion in the late 20th century.

- **Terroir:** Unlike the limestone-heavy Classico zone, the East is dominated by volcanic soils. The terrain is generally flatter and warmer, though the higher-altitude "hillside" vineyards in Illasi are world-class.
- **Wine Profile:** These wines are characterized by their "muscle" and concentration.
 - **Aroma:** Darker fruit profiles—black plum, blackberry, and often a smoky, flinty minerality from the volcanic earth.
 - **Structure:** They are typically richer, with higher alcohol content and softer acidity. Amarones from this region are often described as "monumental" or "explosive."

Fumanelli is a cornerstone of the Valpolicella Classico subzone. Specifically, the estate is located in San Pietro in Cariano, which is the southernmost of the five historic Classico valleys.

The Fumanelli estate is unique because it sits on the Squarano hill, one of the few elevated sites in an otherwise flatter part of the Classico zone. This provides their wines with the structural acidity typical of hillside fruit, blended with the plushness and warmth of the southern valley.

Understanding the Key Players

The Traditionalists (Classico):

- **Giuseppe Quintarelli:** Widely considered the "Godfather of Amarone." His wines are handcrafted, aged for immense periods in large Slavonian oak, and represent the peak of artisanal Valpolicella.
- **Bertani:** Their Amarone Classico is the gold standard for traditional, dry, long-aged Amarone. While their main technical center is in Valpantena, their top Amarone fruit comes from the Classico hills.

The Innovators:

- **Zymē:** Founded by Celestino Gaspari (the son-in-law of Quintarelli), this winery sits in a sandstone quarry and produces experimental blends that push the boundaries of what Valpolicella can be.

The Modernists (Classico & East):

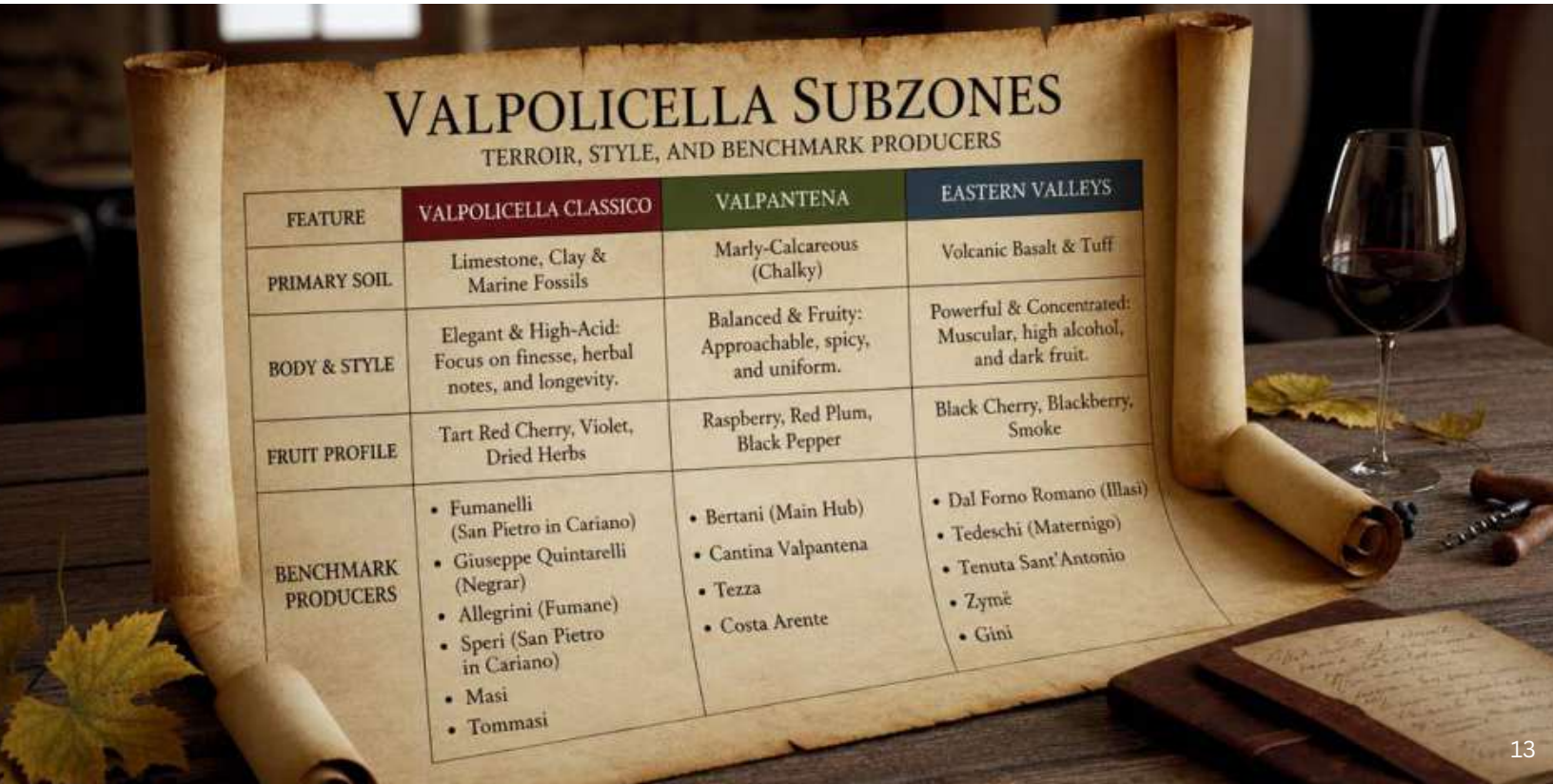
- **Allegrini:** A leader in modern viticulture. They famously moved away from the traditional "Pergola" training to "Guyot" to improve quality and created single-vineyard masterpieces like La Poja.
- **Dal Forno Romano:** Located in the Illasi Valley (East), Dal Forno redefined the region's potential. He uses extremely high-density planting and vacuum-sealed fermentation to create wines of incredible density and power.

Why Fumanelli Defines its Zone

Within the Classico chart, Fumanelli represents the "Historic Aristocracy" of San Pietro in Cariano. While producers like Quintarelli (in Negrar) are known for a very specific, rustic, and artisanal style, Fumanelli is often cited for "Pedigree and Provenance." Their style bridges the gap between the traditional and the modern.

The Squarano Terroir: Being on a hilltop in the southern Classico zone allows for excellent drainage and sun exposure, resulting in the "Squarano" Valpolicella Superiore, which is known for a silkier mouthfeel than the sharper, more "mountainous" reds from the northernmost Classico reaches.

Historical Continuity: As a producer with roots back to 1470, they maintain the appassimento tradition with a level of restraint, ensuring their Amarones (like the Octavius Riserva) remain balanced rather than overly jammy.



GRAPE VARIETIES

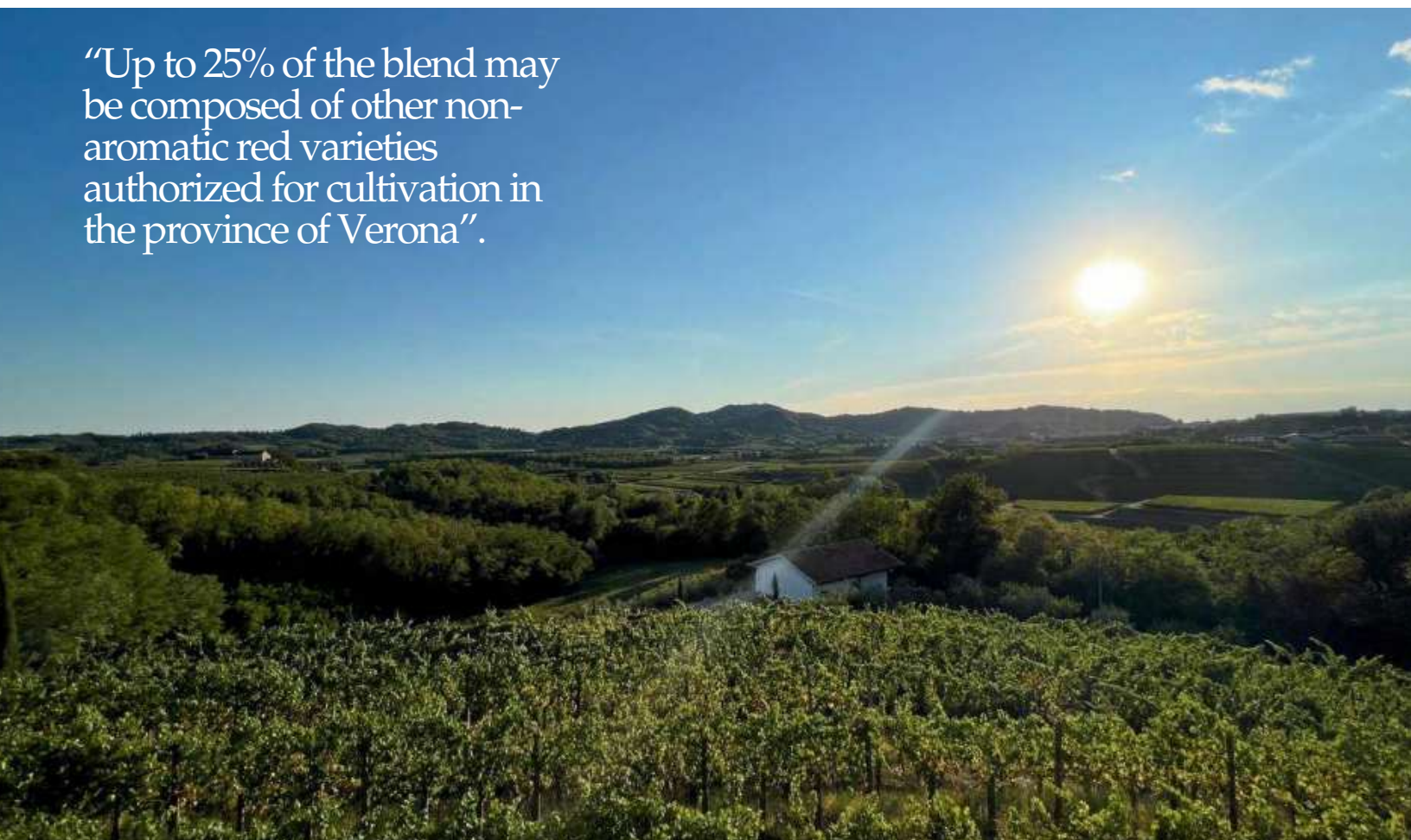
Grapes in Amarone & Their Viticulture

Amarone is built upon a trio of indigenous Veronese red varieties, each contributing distinct character to the blend. **Corvina** Veronese – the backbone of all Valpolicella wines – must constitute between 45% and 95% of any Amarone blend. It is celebrated for its sour cherry aromatics, violet floral lift, high skin-to-juice ratio, and the structural acidity essential for the wine's long ageing. Its oval-shaped berries are well-suited to the appassimento process, losing water evenly without susceptibility to rot.

Corvinone, long considered a clone of Corvina but now recognised as a genetically distinct variety, may substitute for up to 50% of the Corvina component. It produces larger berries with deeper colour, adding body, dark fruit complexity, and spicy tannins to the blend. It is increasingly valued in premium Amarone, particularly in the eastern zones where it dominates.

Rondinella must be present at between 5% and 30% of the total blend. It offers colour intensity, a pleasant bitterness, floral notes, and excellent resilience to drying – making it particularly valuable during the appassimento phase.

“Up to 25% of the blend may be composed of other non-aromatic red varieties authorized for cultivation in the province of Verona”.



Corvina

| *Corvinone*

| *Rondinella*

Viticulture & Training Systems

DOCG Regulations

The DOCG regulations prescribe specific viticultural requirements designed to ensure the quality and concentration necessary for the demanding appassimento process. Vineyards must be registered in the DOCG Vineyard Register and may not be planted on rich valley-floor or flatland soils; hillside and slope cultivation is mandatory to ensure appropriate drainage and exposure. The minimum vine planting density is 3,300 vines per hectare, reducible in the case of terraced slopes.

Harvest

Harvest takes place by hand, strictly within the first two weeks of October. Bunch selection is critical: pickers choose clusters with berries that are not too tightly packed, ensuring that airflow can circulate through the fruit during the subsequent drying phase. Green harvesting — the strategic removal of excess bunches during summer — is widely practised to concentrate quality in the remaining clusters.

Guyot

Guyot training, increasingly adopted by quality-focused estates, allows tighter yield control and is favored by producers emphasizing freshness and site transparency. Maximum permitted grape yields are set at 12 tons per hectare, and grapes selected for Amarone production may not exceed 65% of any vineyard's permitted maximum — the remainder must be used for standard Valpolicella or Ripasso.

Pergola Veronese

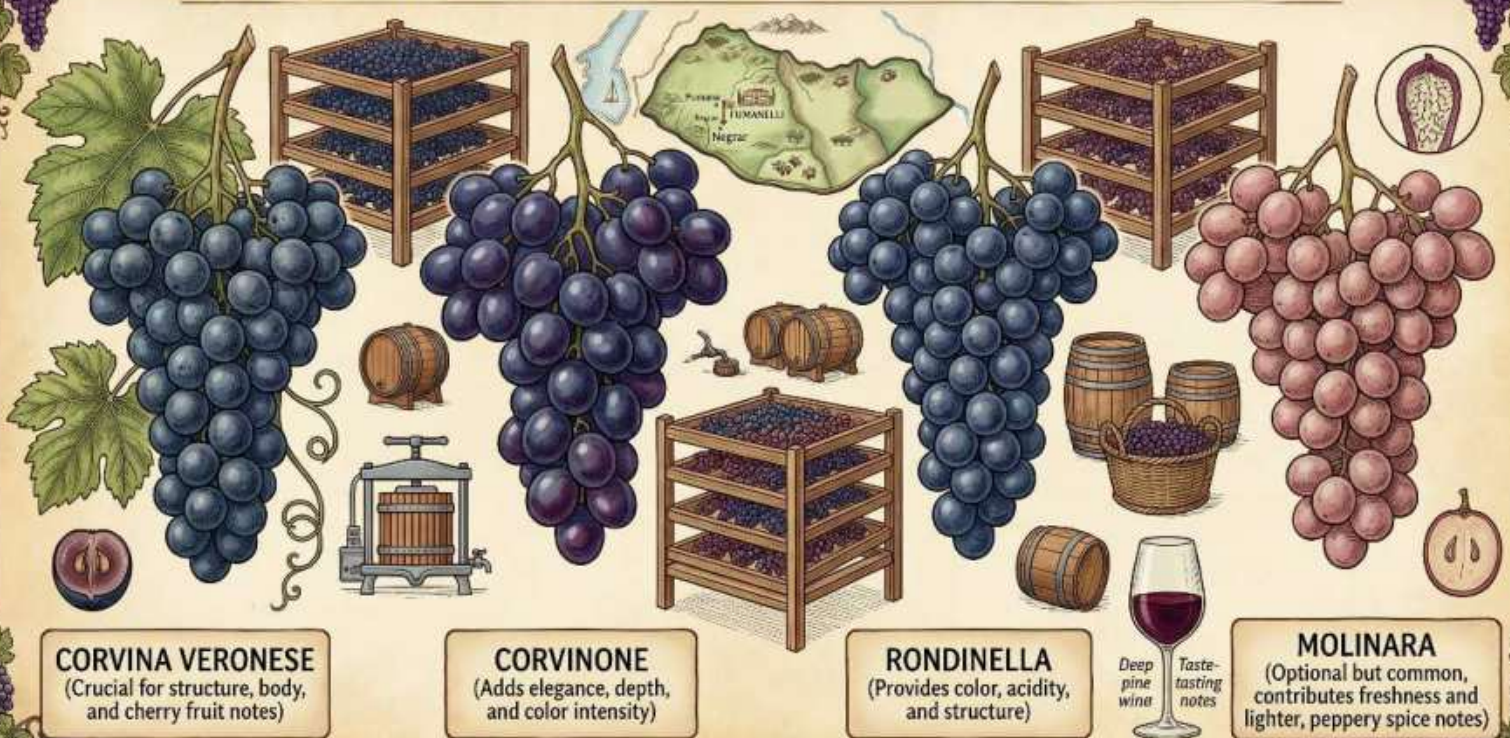
Two training systems are approved: the traditional Pergola Veronese and Guyot. The Pergola Veronese — a characteristic 'big curtain' or canopy system where a tall trunk splits into a wide V-shape — is the historic and iconic system of the region. It creates a natural shading effect that protects bunches from direct afternoon sun while allowing airflow critical to disease prevention and the development of perfectly ripe, evenly exposed bunches well-suited to appassimento. For Pergola Veronese vineyards, both dry (winter) and green (summer) pruning are mandatory to maintain bud loads within prescribed limits.



"The Modern Shift"

While many producers in the Veneto shifted to Guyot in the late 20th century to achieve higher concentrations for "modern" palates, there is a recent resurgence in Pergola. With rising global temperatures, the Pergola's ability to shade fruit and preserve acidity is becoming a vital tool for winemakers looking to avoid "over-jammy" wines.

THE ESSENTIAL GRAPES OF AMARONE DELLA VALPOLICELLA



Valpolicella Training Systems

Pergola Versus Guyot



Pergola Veronese (The Overhead Canopy)

Historically the dominant system in regions like Valpolicella and Soave, the Pergola Veronese is an "inclined" overhead system where the vines are trained high, and the fruit hangs beneath a "roof" of leaves.

- **Structure:** The trunk is tall, and the fruiting canes are trained on a wire structure tilted at an angle, creating a continuous canopy.
- **Sun Protection:** The overhead leaves protect the grapes from direct "sunscauld," which is crucial for maintaining acidity in warming climates.
- **Yield:** Generally supports higher yields and more vigorous growth, as the vine has more "room" to expand.
- **Harvesting:** Traditionally requires manual labor, as the fruit hangs at head height. It is difficult to mechanize.
- **Best For:** Grapes destined for Appassimento (drying for Amarone), as the Pergola keeps the clusters airy and prevents rot by keeping them far from the ground.

Guyot (The Vertical Shoot Position)

Guyot is a "cane-pruned" system that is part of the VSP (Vertical Shoot Position) family. It is the international standard for high-quality, high-density viticulture.

- **Structure:** A short trunk with one (Single Guyot) or two (Double Guyot) horizontal canes tied to a wire. New shoots grow vertically upward.
- **Sun Exposure:** Provides much more direct sunlight to the fruiting zone. This promotes sugar accumulation and anthocyanin (color) development.
- **Yield Control:** Guyot is much easier to manage for "low-yield, high-quality" production. The vine's energy is concentrated into fewer clusters.
- **Mechanization:** Because the vines are in narrow, uniform rows, Guyot is perfectly suited for mechanical harvesting and pruning.
- **Best For:** Modern styles of Valpolicella or high-end red wines where deep color, thick skins, and high tannin concentration are the priority.

GRAPEVINE TRAINING SYSTEMS: PERGOLA VERONESE vs. GUYOT			
A Comparison of Key Features			
 Feature	 Pergola Veronese	Guyot	
 Vigor	High; allows for a large canopy. 	Low to Moderate; restricted growth. 	
 Microclimate	Shaded, cooler fruit zone. 	Exposed, warmer fruit zone. 	
 Disease Risk	Lower (better airflow under canopy). 	Higher (tighter spacing near ground). 	
 Wine Style	Elegant, high acidity, fresh fruit.  ACIDITY FRESHNESS	Powerful, structured, high alcohol.  BODY STRUCTURE	
 Labor 	Highly manual; labor-intensive. 	Highly mechanizable. 	

Appassimento: The Art of Drying

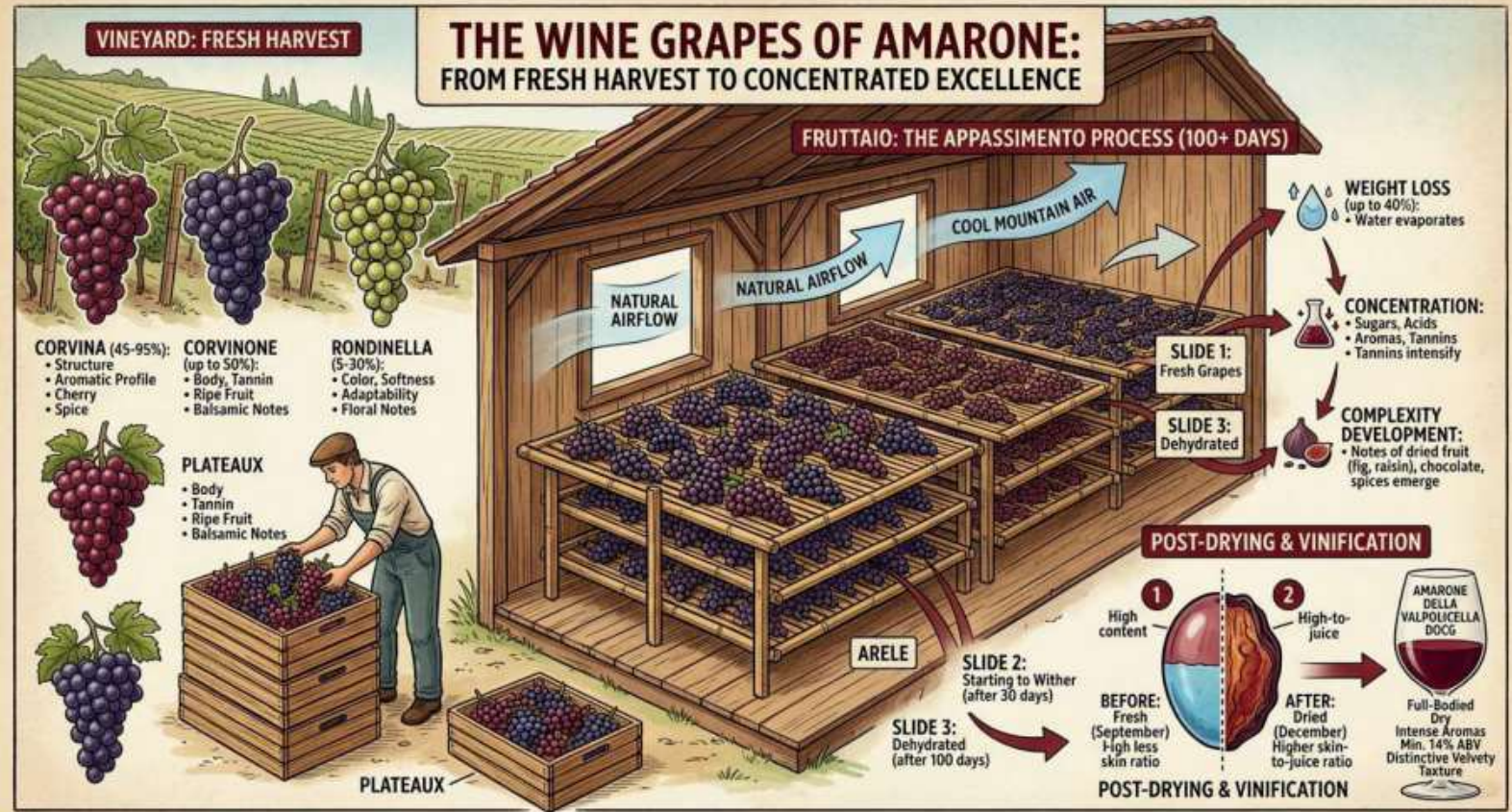
After harvest, selected bunches are laid out in single layers on traditional bamboo racks (arele), wooden slats, or plastic crates in well-ventilated fruttai. The DOCG regulation requires that grapes remain in drying for a minimum effective period that produces the required concentration, but frames this through a timing restriction: no vinification may begin before 1st of December of the harvest year, unless exceptional conditions are authorized by the Consorzio. In practice, most estates dry their grapes for between 90 and 120 days, reducing their weight by 35–50% as water evaporates, concentrating sugars, acids, phenolics, and aromatic compounds. The use of artificial dehumidification is prohibited; any environmental conditioning must operate at temperatures comparable to natural drying. After drying, the must achieve a minimum natural alcoholic potential of at least 14% — among the highest requirements of any appellation in the world.

ONE WINE, FOUR GRAPES

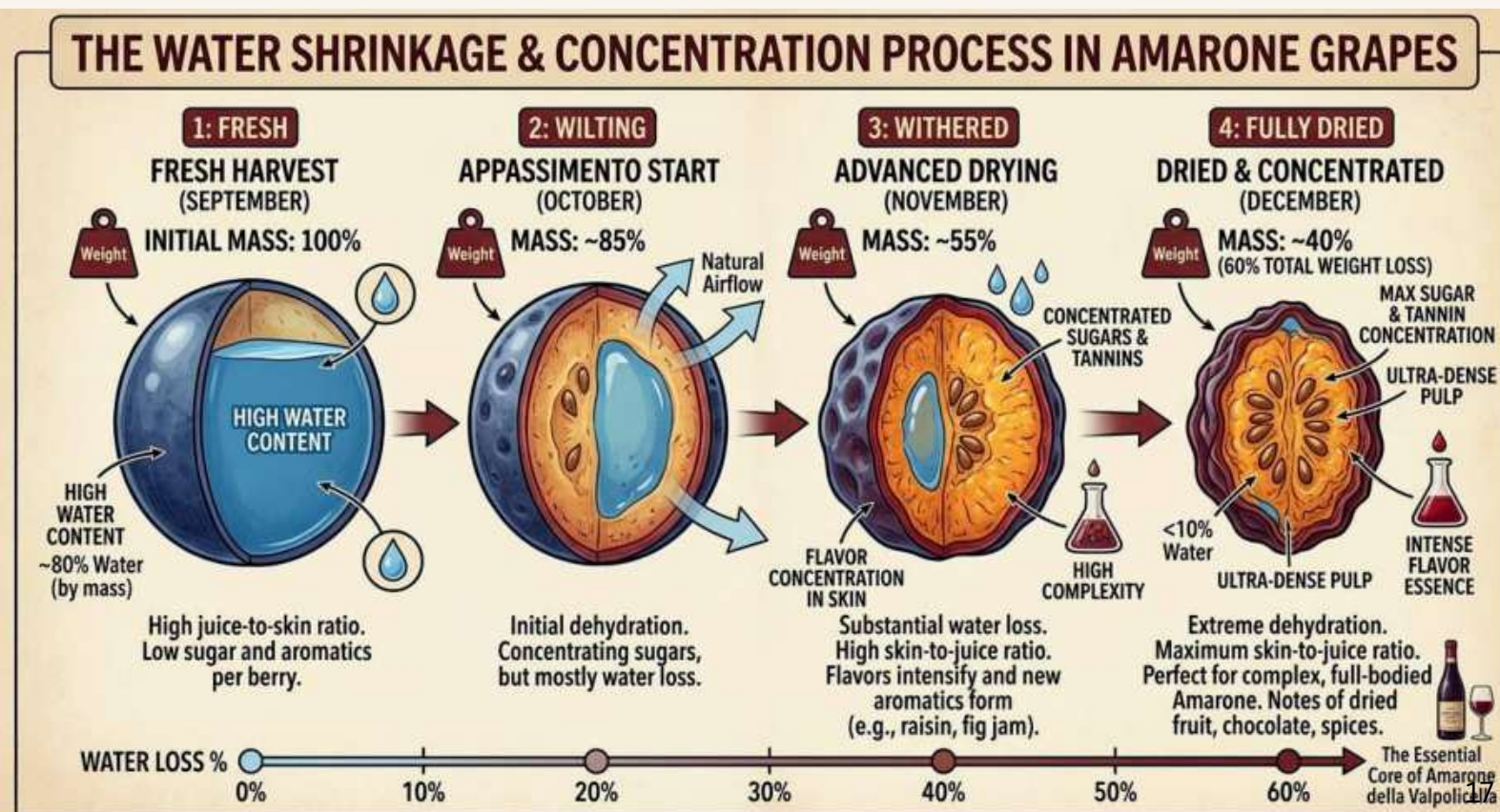
THE BLEND OF AMARONE

FOUR GRAPES. ONE UNIQUE PROCESS. A SINGULAR WINE.





APPASSIMENTO



The Appassimento Process

“The Appassimento process is the defining alchemy of Valpolicella. It is a slow, controlled dehydration that transforms fresh grapes into the high-extract, high-alcohol powerhouse that is Amarone. For a producer like Fumanelli, this process is treated with the same precision as a surgical procedure.”





01.

Phase 1: The Selection (Late September – Early October)

Not every grape is fit for Amarone. The selection process is more rigorous than for standard Valpolicella.

- **The "Loose" Bunch:** Pickers look for spargolo (loose-packed) bunches. If the berries are too tight, air cannot circulate between them, leading to rot during drying.
- **Manual Harvest:** Grapes must be hand-picked and placed in a single layer in small wooden or plastic crates (plateaux). This prevents the weight of the grapes from crushing the skins and releasing juice prematurely.



02.

Phase 2: The Fruttai (The Drying Room)

The crates are transported to the Fruttai, traditionally large, airy lofts in the upper stories of wineries or specialized climate-controlled warehouses.

- **Airflow:** Large windows are kept open to allow the breezes from the Lessini Mountains and Lake Garda to circulate. Modern producers also use "breathing" fans to ensure humidity stays between 60%–70%.
- **The Transformation:** Over the next 90 to 120 days, the water inside the grapes evaporates.

03.

Phase 3: Physical & Chemical Evolution

As the grapes shrivel (resembling large raisins), three critical changes occur:

1. **Concentration:** The grapes lose 30%–40% of their total weight. This concentrates the sugar (Brix), tartaric acid, and minerals.
2. **Flavor Synthesis:** New aromatic compounds are born. The "fresh cherry" profile of Corvina evolves into notes of dried fig, chocolate, tobacco, and prune.
3. **Glycerin Increase:** The levels of glycerol rise significantly, which gives the final wine its signature "velvety," "viscous" mouthfeel—even when fermented completely dry.



04.

Phase 4: The "Noble Rot" (Optional/Variable)

In some years, a tiny amount of *Botrytis cinerea* (Noble Rot) may develop. Unlike in sweet wines, in Amarone, it is carefully managed to add further complexity, contributing notes of honey and spice without compromising the fruit's integrity.



05.

Phase 5: Winter Crushing (January – February)

Once the desired concentration is reached (usually by late January), the "raisins" are finally crushed.

- **Cold Fermentation:** Because it is winter, the grapes are naturally cold. Fermentation starts slowly and can last for 30 to 45 days because the high sugar content makes it difficult for the yeast to work.
- **The Result:** The result is a wine with a massive structure, typically reaching 15% to 17% ABV.

The Fumanelli Nuance

At the Squarano estate, Fumanelli utilizes their ancient stone cellars to maintain a natural thermal inertia. Their Appassimento is often on the longer side (closer to 120 days) for the Octavius, ensuring that the tannins from the thick Corvina skins are fully lignified (polymerized) before they ever touch an oak barrel.

06.



DOCG RULES & WINEMAKING

The DOCG Disciplinary for Amarone della Valpolicella establishes an exhaustive set of production regulations covering the entire journey from vineyard to bottle. The geographic production area encompasses municipalities across the greater Valpolicella zone, with the Classico sub-designation reserved for wines produced in the historic five-commune heartland, and the Valpantena sub-denomination covering the valley of the same name. Wines may also carry a Riserva designation.

Following appassimento, the dried grapes are gently pressed and the must undergoes slow, extended fermentation — often lasting several weeks — to achieve complete dryness (residual sugar below 4 grams per litre in most cases). If fermentation is stopped prematurely, the wine becomes Recioto della Valpolicella, the sweet sibling appellation. The slow conversion of concentrated sugars into alcohol yields Amarone's characteristically high alcohol levels, which regularly reach 15–16% ABV; 17% is not unknown in exceptional vintages.



Minimum ageing requirements are strictly defined. Standard Amarone must be aged for a minimum of two years before release. For the Riserva category, this extends to four years minimum — though in practice, the finest estates hold their Riservas considerably longer, often releasing wines five, six, or even more years post-harvest. The ageing vessel is not mandated — producers may choose large Slavonian oak botti (the traditional choice), French barriques, large French tonneau, or combinations thereof, resulting in considerable stylistic variation between traditional and modern-leaning producers. The pomace remaining after pressing Amarone is not discarded. It forms the foundation of Ripasso della Valpolicella, where partially-aged Valpolicella wine is 're-passed' over the still-active Amarone pomace in

spring, gaining colour, tannin, body, and dried-fruit complexity. This makes economic sense for producers and gives Ripasso its position as the 'bridge wine' between the lighter Valpolicella and the monumental Amarone itself. The Consorzio di Tutela della Valpolicella acts as the regulatory body overseeing compliance with the Disciplinary and has the authority to make decisions on exceptional circumstances — such as permitting earlier vinification in particularly warm years, allowing irrigation during drought, or adjusting yield limits. It also manages international promotion and protection of the denomination.



Amarone della Valpolicella DOCG: Key Rules at a Glance

Grape blend: Corvina/Corvinone 45–95%, Rondinella 5–30%, other authorized varieties up to 25%.

Production zone: Province of Verona; sub-zones Classico and Valpantena.

Yield limit: 12 tons per hectare
Appassimento: Mandatory; no vinification before 1st December; minimum 14% potential alcohol after drying.

Ageing: Minimum 2 years (Amarone); minimum 4 years (Riserva)

Minimum ABV at release: 14% (in practice typically 15–17%)

Style: Dry (residual sugar below 4 g/L); Recioto is the sweet alternative.

Permitted training: Pergola Veronese (unilateral or bilateral) or Guyot on hillside vineyards only.

THE LANDSCAPE OF AMARONE: TRADITIONALISTS & MODERNISTS

PRODUCER	REPRESENTATIVE STYLE	KEY CHARACTERISTICS & WINEMAKING	NOTABLE CONTRIBUTIONS/LABELS
GIUSEPPE QUINTARELLI	ULTRA-TRADITIONALIST	 Extreme Traditionalism, <i>Incredibly Long Aging</i> (e.g., in massive Slavonian Oak casks). 	The late "Godfather of Amarone"; Famous for handwritten labels. 
DAL FORNO ROMANO	MODERNIST LEADER	 *Intensive* New French Oak Barriques; Use of Vacuum-Sealed Tanks. 	Creates massive, opaque, incredibly concentrated wines. 
ALLEGRINI	MODERN PRECISION	 Technical Precision; Focus on <i>Single-Vineyard Expressions</i> (Crus). 	Famous for the Fieramonte and La Poja crus. 
MASI AGRICOLA	TECHNICAL TRADITIONALIST & PIONEER	Pioneers of "Technical <i>Appassimento</i> " (controlled grape drying); Large Slavonian Oak aging. 	Creators of the Costasera label (one of the most recognized Amarones worldwide). 

TOP PRODUCERS

THE AMARONE STYLISTIC SPECTRUM: PRODUCERS & NEW WAVE

SECTION 1: THE ESTABLISHED LANDSCAPE: TRADITIONALISTS & MODERNISTS

PRODUCER	STYLISITIC CHARACTER	KEY WINEMAKING & AGING	NOTABLE CONTRIBUTIONS/LABELS
1.  Giuseppe Quintarelli	Ultra-Traditionalist	Extreme Traditionalism, <i>Incredibly Long Aging</i> in large Slavonian oak casks	The late "Godfather of Amarone"; Amarone"; handwritten labels.
2.  Dal Forno Romano	Modernist Leader	Intensive new French oak barriques; vacuum-sealed tanks	Massive, opaque, incredibly concentrated wines.
3.  Allegrini	Modern Precision	Technical Precision; Single-Vineyard Crus	Fieramonte and La Poja.
4.  Masi Agricola	Technical Pioneer	Technical <i>Appassimento</i> ; large Slavonian oak aging	Costasera, most recognized.

SECTION 2: THE TRANSITIONAL WAVE: PROTÉGÉS & BRIDGE PRODUCERS

PRODUCER	STYLISITIC CHARACTER	KEY WINEMAKING & AGING	NOTABLE CONTRIBUTIONS
1.  Tommaso Bussola	Traditionalist-Modernist Bridge	Concentration, respecting traditional soul; small and large oak	Known for power and texture.
2.  Zymé (Celestino Gaspari)	Innovative & Experimental	High experimentation, innovative shapes, long aging	La Mattonara, Harlequin. (Celestino Gaspari, longtime Quintarelli collaborator)

SECTION 3: THE NEW WAVE: RESHAPING AMARONE

New Wave Producers

-  Le Gualte di Noemi
Wines with significant bottle age, balancing verticality.
-  Ca' La Bionda
Exploring single-valley terroir with renewed rigour.
-  Musella
Fresher Style Red Fruit Pursuing "New Wave" lighter, fresher styles, greater transparency.

NEW WAVE CHARACTERISTICS:
Releases with more bottle age; Lighter, fresher styles; Lower alcohol; Red-fruit transparency; Single-valley terroir exploration.

MOVEMENT RESPONDING TO A YOUNGER CONSUMER: Seeking ELEGANCE OVER SHEER POWER.

Amarone Top Producers

The Amarone firmament is populated by producers of vastly different scales and philosophies, from artisanal micro-estates to large family-owned groups with international distribution. The following profiles cover the most significant names shaping the appellation's identity today.



**GIUSEPPE QUINTARELLI
— THE MAESTRO**

Universally regarded as the spiritual father of modern Amarone, Giuseppe Quintarelli (1927–2012) built one of the world's most revered wine estates from a small family property in the Val di Negrar. Known as 'the Maestro of Valpolicella,' Quintarelli's philosophy centred on extreme selectivity – sometimes sorting grapes cluster by cluster, berry by berry – extended appassimento, and patience: wines were released only when he deemed them ready, often keeping them in large oak casks and bottle for many years beyond regulatory minimums. Production remains deliberately tiny, at approximately 850 cases of Amarone and 2,500 cases of Valpolicella annually. The estate is now managed by his daughter Fiorenza and her family, with grandson Francesco Grigoli leading winemaking with respectful continuity of his grandfather's vision. Quintarelli's handwritten labels have become iconic; his Amarone leads Italian wine investment tables at over €1,100 per bottle average, and he was instrumental in mentoring the next generation of legendary producers, including Romano Dal Forno.

If Quintarelli represents tradition elevated to art, Romano Dal Forno – who began producing wine under his own name in 1983, after being tutored by Quintarelli himself – represents modernist perfectionism taken to extraordinary lengths. Located in Val d'Illasi in eastern Valpolicella (outside the Classico zone), Dal Forno's estate is equipped with state-of-the-art drying chambers featuring proprietary moveable fans that maintain constant airflow and temperature precision during appassimento. Dal Forno ages all wines, not just the Amarone, using the appassimento method – his Valpolicella Superiore grapes dry for six weeks while the Amarone grapes spend three months in the fruttai. Prior to release, all wines are aged two years in new French oak barriques followed by four additional years in bottle, resulting in a total of six or more years from harvest to market. The resulting wines are monumental in concentration and complexity, and Dal Forno is often described as the only Valpolicella producer of equivalent or greater quality than Quintarelli. His son Marco now leads the estate with the same frenetic commitment to innovation, including cutting-edge sensor technology in the drying rooms. Dal Forno wines are status symbols, appearing in the world's most prestigious restaurants, and consistently earn the highest scores from international critics.



**ROMANO DAL FORNO — THE
MODERNIST PERFECTIONIST**



**BERTANI — THE
HISTORIC PIONEER**

Founded in the 19th century, Bertani is perhaps the single institution most responsible for shaping the commercial history of modern Veronese oenology. The winery was among the first to intentionally produce and market a dry Amarone – its 1953 vintage being one of the first two Amarones commercially released. Bertani's Amarone is famous for its extraordinary longevity: bottles from the 1960s remain available at the winery shop, guaranteed drinkable, and the legendary Recioto Acinatico 1928 still commands records at international auction. The estate's cellars in Grezzana (Valpantena) are magnificent underground vaults where Amarone ages for a minimum of six years in large oak casks. Bertani's style has historically leaned silkier and redder-fruited than the blockbuster power of Dal Forno or Quintarelli. Soave Bertani famously appeared on the wine list for the coronation celebrations of King George VI of England in 1937, testament to the brand's early international reach.

Amarone Top Producers

Alongside these legendary estates, a dynamic interplay defines the region today: a vibrant new wave of winemakers pushing stylistic boundaries stands in striking contrast to the venerable guardians of tradition—most notably the legacy estates comprising the Famiglie Storiche, who fiercely champion Amarone's foundational heritage. The following profiles cover the most significant names shaping the appellation's identity today.



MASI — THE AMBASSADOR

Sandro Boscaini, president of the Masi group, has been nicknamed 'Mr Amarone' for his pivotal role in bringing the denomination to global prominence. Headquartered in the Sant'Ambrogio valley, Masi produces iconic bottlings including the Costasera Amarone Classico and a range of single-vineyard crus. The Campofiorin (a ripasso) has become one of Italy's most recognised wine labels internationally. Today Masi is a publicly-listed company and international group encompassing multiple wineries, stores, and restaurants across Italy. The company's extensive research into the science of appassimento — including studies demonstrating the importance of at least three months of drying to achieve key molecular changes — has contributed significantly to shared knowledge across the denomination.

These four family estates form part of the core of Classico production. Allegrini (based in Fumane) has been closely associated with the modern evolution of Amarone and under Marilisa Allegrini's leadership achieved enormous international reach before her recent departure from the family firm. Spéri (San Pietro in Cariano) is a benchmark for single-vineyard Classico Amarone bottlings with traditional botti ageing and exceptional freshness. Tedeschi produces outstanding cru Amarones with notable terroir transparency and offers celebrated vertical tastings through their library collection. Tommasi has skilfully combined quality with the scale necessary to reach the most demanding international markets, and is among the most widely distributed Valpolicella estates globally. Together with Masi and others, these estates formed the Famiglie Storiche and 'Famiglie dell'Amarone d'Arte' consortium, dedicated to quality promotion.



ALLEGRINI, SPERI, TEDESCHI & TOMMASI



QUINTARELLI'S PROTÉGÉS & THE NEW WAVE

Beyond the established names, a new generation of producers is reshaping Amarone's stylistic spectrum. Tommaso Bussola, Zýmē (founded by Celestino Gaspari, himself a longtime collaborator of Quintarelli), Musella, Ca' La Bionda, and Le Guaite di Noemi represent producers who are releasing wines with more bottle age, pursuing 'New Wave' lighter, fresher styles with lower alcohol and greater red-fruit transparency, or exploring single-valley terroir with renewed rigour. This movement responds to a younger global consumer seeking elegance over sheer power and represents an exciting diversification within the denomination.

WINE

MARCHESI FUMANELLI —
A SPECIAL FOCUS ON THE
HISTORIC PRODUCER

ON THE

VINE

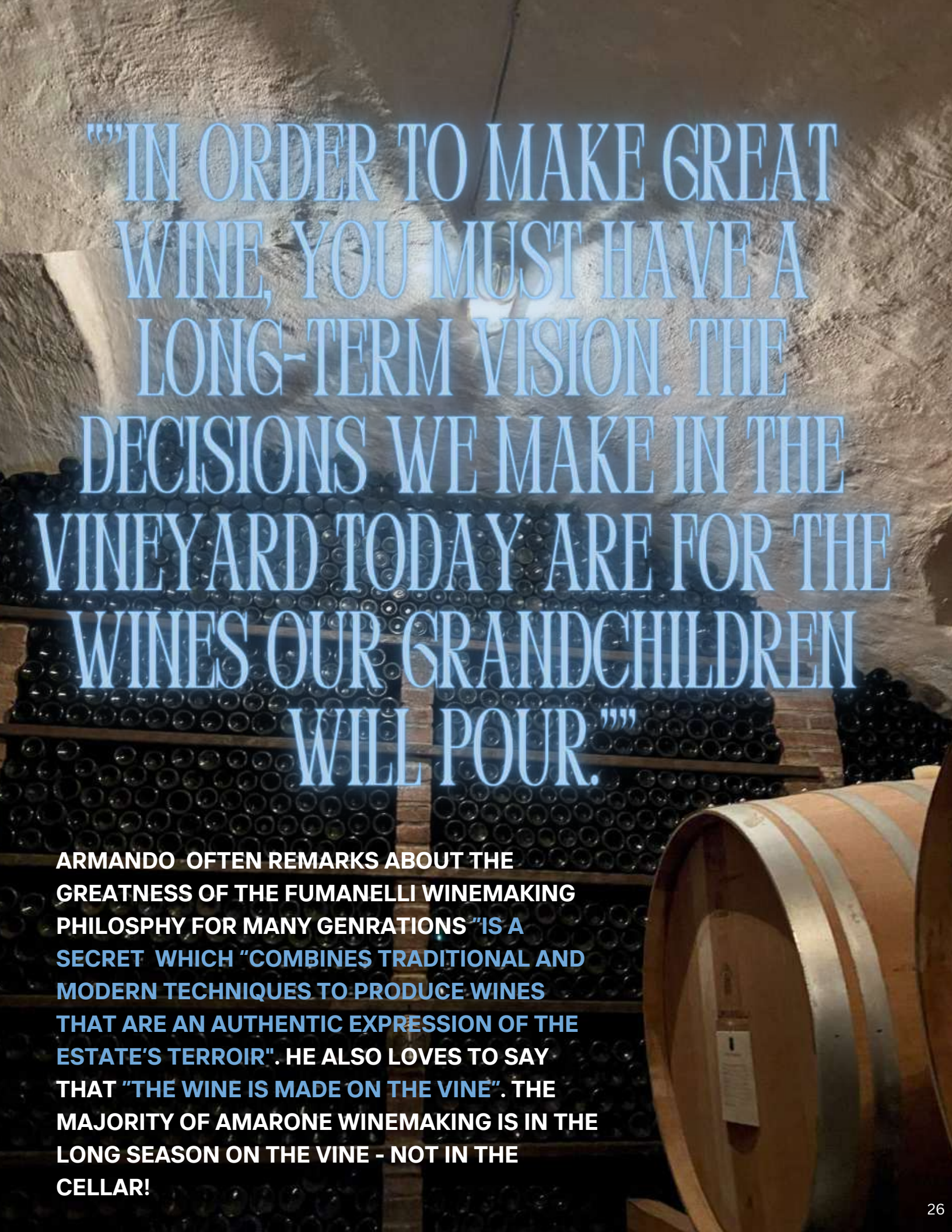
Among the producers of Amarone della Valpolicella, few can claim a lineage as ancient, uninterrupted, or historically significant as Marchesi Fumanelli. With 28 generations of continuous winemaking on the same estate — a history stretching back to 1470 — the Fumanelli family stands as arguably the oldest continuously operating wine estate in all of Valpolicella, and one of the oldest in Italy.



28th and 29th Generations of Amarone producers. Here on the left Federico and Armando Fumanelli show their white Burgundian-style Chardonnay.



The history of Cantina Fumanelli is not merely the story of a winery, but a chronicle of Valpolicella itself, stretching from the ancient Roman era through the Renaissance to the modern day. Known formally as Marchesi Fumanelli, the estate is anchored by the historic Squarano property, located in San Pietro in Cariano, approximately eight miles from the city of Verona.

A photograph of a wine cellar. In the background, there are rows of wine bottles stored on wooden shelves. In the foreground, a large wooden barrel is visible, partially cut off by the right edge of the frame. The walls of the cellar are made of rough, textured stone or plaster.

"IN ORDER TO MAKE GREAT WINE, YOU MUST HAVE A LONG-TERM VISION. THE DECISIONS WE MAKE IN THE VINEYARD TODAY ARE FOR THE WINES OUR GRANDCHILDREN WILL POUR."

ARMANDO OFTEN REMARKS ABOUT THE GREATNESS OF THE FUMANELLI WINEMAKING PHILOSOPHY FOR MANY GENERATIONS "IS A SECRET WHICH "COMBINES TRADITIONAL AND MODERN TECHNIQUES TO PRODUCE WINES THAT ARE AN AUTHENTIC EXPRESSION OF THE ESTATE'S TERROIR". HE ALSO LOVES TO SAY THAT "THE WINE IS MADE ON THE VINE". THE MAJORITY OF AMARONE WINEMAKING IS IN THE LONG SEASON ON THE VINE - NOT IN THE CELLAR!

History & Heritage

The Squarano Estate, seat of the Fumanelli family and the heart of the winery's production, is located in San Pietro in Cariano at the southern gateway of the Valpolicella Classico zone. The estate's villa dates to the 16th and 17th centuries and was constructed over the remains of ancient Roman agricultural structures — including vestiges of a temple dedicated to the goddess Flora, a poetic symbol of the estate's intimate relationship with the natural cycles of vine and harvest. Inscriptions and archaeological artifacts are still visible across the estate grounds today. The limestone cellars beneath the estate, excavated in the 15th century, were painstakingly restored in 1998 and now house the oak barrels in which Fumanelli wines undergo their patient maturation.



Remains of a temple dedicated in honor of the goddess flora and a Plaque to the empror Octavius

For more than five centuries, the Fumanelli family handed down winemaking knowledge from one generation to the next, each enriching the ancestral techniques with contemporary understanding while remaining rooted in the specific terroir of their hillside estate. The family's eight miles from Verona position them at the intersection of convenience and quality - close enough to the city for commerce and cultural exchange, yet elevated on one of the few hills in the otherwise flatter southern reaches of San Pietro in Cariano.

The Squarano Estate and Terroir

The Squarano Estate encompasses 78 acres of exclusively estate-grown vineyards — making Fumanelli one of the largest family-owned estates in the Valpolicella zone. Crucially, every grape used in every Fumanelli wine is grown within the estate walls, ensuring complete traceability and the purest expression of Squarano's distinctive terroir. The estate's hilltop position — unusual in the flatter southern Classico zone — confers significant advantages: extra elevation produces grapes with an excellent balance of acidity, tannin, and fruit complexity, while the hilltop exposure facilitates the air circulation essential for healthy viticulture and the subsequent appassimento process.

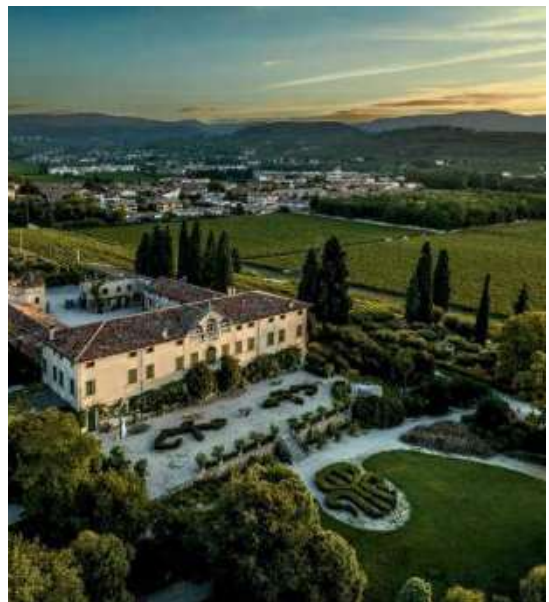


The soils at Squarano are composed primarily of grey Eocene limestone and basaltic tuff, with a combination of clay and calcareous formations. These ochre-coloured, minimally eroded layers follow the direction of the hill and drain freely, preventing excessive moisture retention while contributing the notable minerality characteristic of the finest Classico Amarones. The proximity to Lake Garda moderates temperatures and results in a mild, predominantly continental climate protected from harsh northern weather by the Lessini Mountains.



The Squarano Vineyard: The fruit is sourced from 30–40 year old Pergola Veronese trained vines. This traditional training system provides a canopy that protects the grapes from over-sunlight, preserving acidity.

Fumanelli's viticulture is notable for its attention to sustainability and vineyard health. The estate emphasizes organic and sustainable farming practices, avoids pesticides, uses drip irrigation only when needed, and maintains biodiversity between rows. Its Amarone comes from older vines, with carefully hand-harvested grapes that are selected bunch by bunch, a labor-intensive approach that aligns well with the wine's premium positioning.





The current proprietor and CEO of Marchesi Fumanelli is Armando Fumanelli, the 28th generation of his family to steward the estate. Prior to returning to the family winery in 1998, Armando completed a degree in Political Science in Switzerland and subsequently worked for the Italian Embassy in several East African and Middle Eastern postings — a background that instilled in him a global perspective and an understanding of diverse international markets.

THE 28TH GENERATION: **ARMANDO FUMANELLI**

Since assuming leadership, Armando has overseen a comprehensive program of renovation: the replanting and restructuring of the vineyards, the complete restoration of the historic subterranean cellars, and the modernization of the winery's equipment while preserving its traditional production ethos. Armando manages the estate alongside his wife Roberta and their two sons, ensuring that the Fumanelli legacy passes into a 29th generation.

His stated mission is to represent the authentic voice of Squarano's vineyards — to produce wines that reflect their precise origin with maximum fidelity while meeting the expectations of a sophisticated contemporary audience. While maintaining the traditional appassimento (grape drying) methods essential for Amarone, Armando integrated precision winemaking techniques to ensure consistency and elegance.



PHILOSOPHY & WINEMAKING

Fumanelli's production philosophy rests on three pillars: deep respect for the territory and its native varieties, meticulous grape selection, and patient cellar work. All varieties and individual vineyard plots are vinified separately to preserve their distinct characters, which are then blended with precision to achieve the desired expression of each wine in the range.

For the Amarone wines, the grapes are sourced from the estate's oldest vines — averaging 40 years of age — which provide naturally reduced yields and greater concentration. Valpolicella varieties come from vines around 30 years old. After harvest, grapes are placed by hand into traditional wooden plateaux (trays) and allowed to dry for 120 days. During this period, the fruit loses 35–40% of its volume, concentrating all aromatic and phenolic elements. Mostly new French oak is used in the cellar, with time in barrel carefully tailored to each wine to achieve balance and supple tannins rather than excessive oak imprint. All wines age in the estate's subterranean limestone cellars.



The Fumanelli Wine Range

The estate produces a tightly focused portfolio that progresses naturally from lighter to more concentrated expressions of the Valpolicella terroir. The Valpolicella Classico Superiore serves as an approachable introduction to the estate's style, while a second version — *the Valpolicella Classico Superiore Squarano* — incorporates a touch of appassimento to add depth and complexity. The Ripasso, produced by re-passing Valpolicella over Amarone pomace, offers rich texture and value. The crown of the range is the Amarone della Valpolicella Classico DOCG itself, and above it, the flagship Amarone Riserva 'Octavius.'

The Octavius Amarone Riserva is assembled from the oldest estate vines (averaging 40 years), blending 40% Corvina Veronese, 40% Corvinone, and 20% Rondinella. Following 120 days of appassimento, the wine is aged in 500-litre French oak tonneau for 48 months, followed by a further 12 months in bottle before release — well exceeding the minimum DOCG Riserva requirements. The resulting wine shows a slightly brick-tinged garnet colour from extended age, powerful yet elegant, with wild cherry, sweet vanilla, nutmeg, mocha, and an exceptionally warm, textural finish.

AMARONE

TASTING PROFILE



Octavius Amarone

SQUARANO VALPOLICELLA CLASSICO SUPERIORE

Squarano Valpolicella Classico Superiore from Marchesi Fumanelli is distinguished by its "Silky mouthfeel with tart cherry and 'barnyard' earthy complexity." While the standard Valpolicella profile is typically light, fruity, and dominated by fresh cherry and bright acidity, the Squarano Superiore, which is partially dried in a similar appassimento method like the Amarone but for a shorter period (up to 40 days) and then aged for over 18 months in oak barrels, develops a richer, more complex character. The tasting notes often highlight an aromatic profile that includes not only intense red fruit like tart cherry but also intricate savory notes of leather, tobacco, graphite, and wild herbs. This complexity is balanced by a silky, polished texture and well-integrated tannins that provide structure while allowing a fresh, mineral-driven finish.



The tasting notes for the Amarone Riserva 'Octavius' describe an intense and refined expression of the style. The wine releases complex aromas of cherry in spirit, dried plum, and wild berry, enriched by elegant, savory hints of sweet spices, cinnamon, tobacco, and cocoa. On the palate, it is powerful, full-bodied, and velvety, offering ripe baked red fruits with firm, structured tannins that culminate in a very long, warm finish. The standard Marchesi Fumanelli Amarone mirrors this profile, typically showcasing lush fragrances of mature cherries and spice, backed by rich tobacco and chocolate notes, maintaining a powerful yet elegant, velvety texture with extensive persistence.

Wine Pairing

Because of its high alcohol content (typically around 16.5%), intense fruit concentration, and velvety texture, the Amarone Octavius requires bold flavors that can stand up to its massive structure. It is a "**meditation wine**," but it shines alongside rich, savory, and even slightly sweet-savory dishes.



One bite of Beef,
and One Sip of
Amarone - is
endless
satisfaction

Classic Meat Pairings

- **Braised Beef Short Ribs:** Slow-cooking the meat in a red wine reduction (ideally a Valpolicella) creates a richness that matches the weight of the Octavius.
- **Lamb or Venison:** The "gamey" flavors of forest meats complement the earthy, balsamic undertones often found in aged Amarone.
- **Osso Bucco:** The marrow and fatty texture of the veal shank soften the wine's tannins while the acidity in the wine cuts through the richness.

The "Wildcard" Pairing

- **Duck with Cherry Glaze:** The natural acidity in the Octavius highlights the fruit in the glaze, while the duck fat tames the alcohol.
- **Amarone Risotto:** Using the wine itself as the base for the risotto creates a deep, purple-hued dish that echoes the cherry and chocolate notes of the Octavius.
- **Dark Chocolate** (70%+ Cocoa): For a post-dinner pairing, the cocoa and tobacco notes in the wine harmonize with high-quality dark chocolate.

POSITIONING & GLOBAL RECOGNITION



"Intense, complex... velvet lushness... takes Amarone to the next level."

Marchesi Fumanelli is positioned internationally as the reference point for pedigree and provenance in Valpolicella Classico – a producer whose wines represent an investment in living history. The estate's 78 acres of estate-grown fruit, five centuries of continuous family ownership, and the distinctive terroir of the Squarano hilltop combine to offer a proposition unique in the denomination: **Amarone with roots as deep as the Roman empire, made by a family that has never left.**

The wines are distributed through select importers across Europe, North America, and Asia, appearing in prestigious restaurants and wine lists. Fumanelli's Squarano estate is open to visitors for tastings Monday through Saturday, and the family maintains Il Rusticale Fumanelli – an eight-room agriturismo immersed in the vineyards – as a destination for wine enthusiasts seeking total immersion in the Classico landscape. In an era when Amarone is increasingly competing on the global stage of fine wine investment and collecting, Fumanelli offers something irreplaceable: the longest unbroken thread of Classico winemaking history of any estate in Valpolicella.

The Fumanelli Amarone Classico Riserva "Octavius" is the flagship expression of the Marchesi Fumanelli estate, produced only in exceptional vintages from 40-year-old vines. Critics generally highlight its balance between massive power and an unexpected, bright acidity that prevents it from feeling over-heavy.

Key Labels and Performance		
Wine Label	Typical Critical Consensus	Notable Characteristics
	 93–95 Points	The flagship; intense notes of tobacco, leather, and dark chocolate. 
Wine Label	Typical Critical Consensus	Notable Characteristics
	 90–92 Points	Silky mouthfeel with tart cherry and "barnyard" earthy complexity. 
Wine Label	Typical Critical Consensus	Notable Characteristics
	 89–91 Points	A rare, structured white blend showcasing the estate's versatility. 
Estate Quality & Regional Typicity		

TWO ITALIANS ICONS

Marchesi
Fumanelli and the
Ferrari Owners'
Club Norway



Marchesi Fumanelli and the Ferrari Owners' Club Norway recently collaborated on an exclusive event that brought together **two Italian icons of luxury—fine Amarone and legendary sports cars**—against the dramatic backdrop of the Norwegian landscape.

Highlights of the Event

The collaborative gathering, often a core component of larger Nordic tours like the Ferrari Nordic Meeting, combined scenic drives with curated lifestyle experiences. Through this collaboration, Marchesi Fumanelli and the Ferrari Owners' Club Norway created a cohesive, luxury lifestyle event that honored heritage and performance in equal measure, leaving a lasting impression on all participants.

An Intersection of Icons

This unique partnership leveraged the shared values of both brands: a commitment to traditional craftsmanship, a passion for engineering excellence, and the creation of unforgettable, high-end experiences. The event served as a celebration of **"Made in Italy,"** blending the world of high-performance automotive design with the artistry of Valpolicella's most celebrated wine.



The Legend Car with A Legend Bottle



Ferrari - Amarone Event



Scenic Fjord Drives

Collectors from Norway, as well as Denmark, Sweden, and Finland, navigated their Ferrari models along winding roads through UNESCO-listed Norwegian fjords, including iconic locations like Geiranger. The "roaring engines" and "sea of red" transformed the historic landscape.

Fumanelli Wine Tasting

The event featured masterclasses and private tastings led by Marchesi Fumanelli, providing a detailed sensory exploration of their top labels. Collectors had the opportunity to discover the complex profiles of wines like Amarone Riserva 'Octavius' and Squarano Valpolicella, often cited as the "flagships" of the estate's versatile portfolio.



Gala Dinners and Networking

Evenings were dedicated to refined gala dinners at historic venues, such as the Hotel Union Geiranger, where the sophisticated Fumanelli wines were paired with local and Italian cuisine. These social gatherings offered a unique platform for passionate Ferrari collectors and connoisseurs to connect.



The Business of Amarone

Driving Forces of Modern Amarone Sales Growth

The current economics of Amarone in 2026 reflect a starkly "bifurcated" wine market, where luxury and ultra-premium labels are showing significant resilience despite a broader industry downturn. While total U.S. wine sales have faced a structural slump and a decline in overall volume, the segment for wines priced above \$50—which includes Amarone della Valpolicella—has held its ground, often growing in value even when case counts remain flat. This trend is driven by a **"drinking less but better"** mentality among younger affluent consumers, who are moving away from the struggling "no-man's-land" of \$12–\$15 bottles and instead investing in high-heritage, authentic brands like Fumanelli that offer long-term cellar potential.

Shaping the Future of the Global Amarone Sales

This resilience is particularly vital given the geopolitical headwinds facing the industry, such as the 15% tariffs on Italian wine imports that took full effect in early 2025. These duties have squeezed margins and forced a sharp reduction in total export volumes to the U.S., with red wine shipments notably dipping as importers became more selective. However, Italian fine wines still account for more than half of all non-French sales in the auction and collector markets, confirming that iconic reds like Amarone remain protected "safe haven" assets. Collectors are currently focused on the quality potential of the concentrated 2022 vintage and the structured elegance of 2020, viewing these as essential acquisitions for a high-value portfolio.

In response to the tightening U.S. market, the economics of the region are also shifting toward new global frontiers and direct engagement. Producers are increasingly looking to emerging high-growth markets like India—where tariffs are finally falling—and the Mercosur bloc to offset domestic and U.S. pressures. Furthermore, with wine tourism at the estate level now generating over €3 billion for the Italian economy, the ability for a winery like Fumanelli to leverage its 1470 heritage through direct-to-consumer sales has become a critical economic stabilizer. For a distribution company like M&M Importers which focuses on high-end kosher premium wines, the current environment suggests that success lies in leaning into these "Blue Chip" narratives, as the market for premium, site-driven identity continues to outperform the collapsing middle-tier.

Economic Impact for the Wines of Valpolicella

Amarone della Valpolicella occupies a singular position within the Italian wine economy – a premium-tier denomination with strong international demand and a growing reputation as a collectible investment wine. Production has expanded significantly since the DOCG elevation in 2010: total bottled production in 2008 (including Recioto) stood at approximately 8.57 million bottles, a figure that has grown considerably in the intervening years as global appetite for high-end Italian reds intensified.



The International community believes there is a significant decrease of entry level Valpolicella wines.



Within the broader landscape of the Italian DOCG economy – which the 2025 Ismea-Qualivita DOP Economy Report valued at €20.7 billion in production in 2024 – ***Amarone is among the most prominent red wine denominations.*** However, recent figures reflect some market softening: in 2024, ***Amarone della Valpolicella was among eight major Italian denominations that recorded a decline in annual value, alongside Barolo, Brunello di Montalcino, and Valpolicella Ripasso,*** reflecting broader global pressures on mid-to-premium wine consumption and inventory adjustments following several years of rapid growth.

Italy's overall wine export performance remains robust. In 2024, Italian wine exports grew by 3.2% in volume and 5.6% in value to reach €8.1 billion – one of the highest export totals in history. Veneto alone accounts for approximately 38% of national wine exports, driven principally by Prosecco but supported by premium denominations including Amarone. Within this landscape, experts note that wines like Amarone – with a targeted, price-insensitive luxury consumer base – are well-positioned to weather macroeconomic headwinds and US tariff concerns better than volume-oriented categories.

As of January 2026, there has been a 13.2% reduction in export of Valpolicella wines to The United States.

Today, the economic stability of this historic region is being tested by U.S. trade policy, specifically the 15% tariffs implemented in August 2025 by President Trump. These duties have driven a nearly 12% decline in Italian wine export value to the U.S. as of 2026, forcing a shift in consumer behavior where high-end labels like Fumanelli are increasingly positioned as "**meditation wines**" or high-value assets to justify the increased retail costs. **The US Tariff Impact:** The sharp \$-13.2% decline in US import value reflects the combined pressure of 2025 tariffs and importers becoming extremely selective with their portfolios.

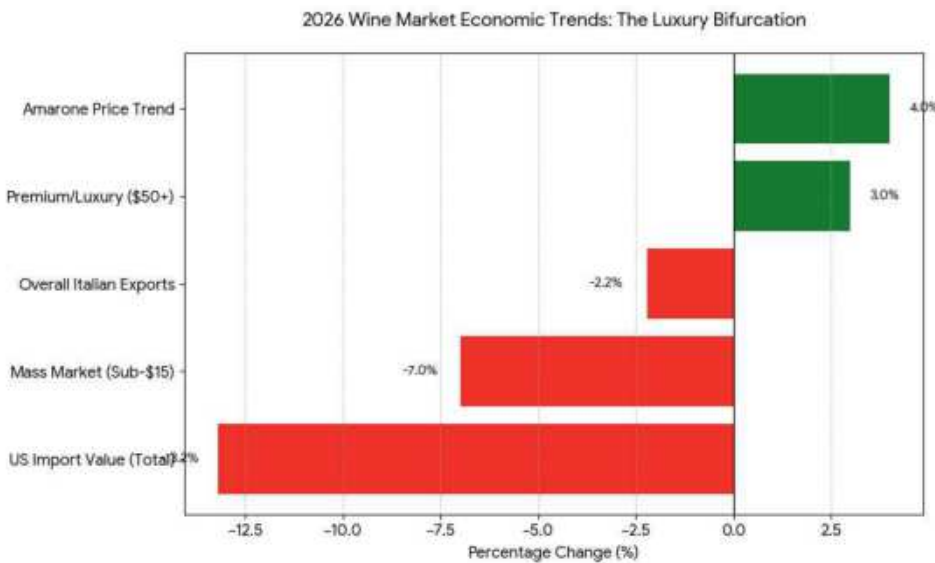


ECONOMICS OF AMARONE

What Changed?

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This graph illustrates the "Luxury Bifurcation" of the wine market as discussed. It highlights how the \$50 premium segment—where Amarone resides—is bucking the negative trends seen in the mass market and general exports.



- Key Economic Insights from the Data:
- **Mass Market Decline:** The -7% drop in the sub-\$15 segment shows a significant retreat by budget-conscious consumers.
 - **The US Tariff Impact:** The sharp -13.2% decline in US import value reflects the combined pressure of 2025 tariffs and importers becoming extremely selective with their portfolios.
 - **Luxury Resilience:** Despite these headwinds, the Premium/Luxury segment (\$50) grew by 3%, and the specific price trend for Amarone remains positive at $+4\%$.
 - **The Stability of Amarone:** While overall Italian exports dipped by -2.2% , the high-end sector (including Fumanelli) acts as a "safe haven" for capital and collector interest.

Chasing The Perfect Amarone

Why Fumanelli ?



In 2026, Cantina Fumanelli remains a reference point for the Valpolicella Classico region. The estate continues to host high-level wine seminars and culinary events at its Il Rusticale farmhouse, which has been converted into luxury accommodations for wine enthusiasts. By balancing the weight of 28 generations of history with the technical demands of the 21st-century global market, Armando Fumanelli has ensured that the "Goddess Flora's" hill remains a premier destination for fine wine.

What makes Fumanelli especially interesting is the blend of antiquity and refinement. The winery's hilltop location helps preserve acidity and complexity, while its long family continuity gives it rare continuity of style and terroir. In a region full of famous names, Fumanelli stands out as a serious heritage producer whose Amarone is anchored in estate fruit, historic identity, and a strong classical Valpolicella setting.





A DAY AT FUMANELLI



EPILOGUE: THE COVENANT OF QUALITY



ULTIMATELY, THE DECISION TO CRAFT OUR KOSHER CUVÉE AT FUMANELLI WAS BORN FROM A SHARED PHILOSOPHY: THAT THE MOST SACRED TRADITIONS DESERVE THE MOST METICULOUS CARE. TO PRODUCE A KOSHER WINE OF THIS CALIBER REQUIRES MORE THAN JUST TECHNICAL COMPLIANCE; IT REQUIRES A PARTNER WHO UNDERSTANDS THAT "TRADITION" IS A LIVING, BREATHING ENTITY.



We chose Armando and the Fumanelli estate because their 28-generation history mirrors the endurance and resilience of the heritage we represent. Just as the Roman stones of the Temple of Flora remain steadfast beneath the soil, our commitment to excellence is unshakeable. **Armando does not simply "make" wine; he protects a lineage.** In his hands, the complex Amarone process—the patient drying of the grapes and the slow, deliberate fermentation—is treated with a level of sanctity that aligns perfectly with the requirements of a premium kosher production. We did not just seek out a world-class facility; we sought a soul that resonates with our own. In the marriage of Fumanelli's historic viticulture and our dedication to the kosher consumer, we have created something truly unique—a wine that honors the ancient past while being crafted for the modern connoisseur. It is an honor to share this journey, and this bottle, with you.

FUMANELLI



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