Winemaker: Giuseppe and Silvia Lonardi
Generation: 4th

GIUSEPPE LONARDI

Valpolicella Ripasso Classico Superiore D.O.C.

"Ripasso" refers to the re-passing of Valpolicella Classico through the pressed, raisined skins used for making Amarone. These skins are aromatic, high in alcohol and flavor, and are very valuable; that's why true Ripasso is a small production wine. Some brands attempt to short-cut the process by adding residual sugar – but not Giuseppe. This offering from Lonardi has tiers of lush cherry, cranberry, and chocolate, along with the streamlined structure that epitomizes the native Corvina.

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	Deep ruby red
Nose	Dried, dark cherry and fig with earthy undertones
Palate	Medium-full bodied, with soft layers of earth, cherry, chocolate and spice
Finish	Delightful, long finish

VINEYARD & VINIFICATION

Vineyard Location	Valpolicella Ripasso 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 neutral barrels for 12-18 months and bottled for 6 months
Alcohol	13.5 %
Acidity	5.5 g/liter
Residual Sugar	3.5 g/liter
Annual Production	21,600 bottles

AUGUSTIMPORTS
WINES · SPIRITS · INNOVATIONS

Giuseppe Lonardi

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.

VALPOLICELLA RIPASSO DOC

As the varietal makeup of Ripasso is identical to its little brother, Valpolicella, one might well ask what sets the pair apart. Per se, Ripasso isn’t a different wine at its core, but it involves a highly unique production process. With medium-full body and pronounced aromatics, it’s ultimately a middle ground between the lighter, more affordable Valpolicella and a far costlier, decadent Amarone. To summarize, the Ripasso method combines finished, unoaked wine from Valpolicella with the spent skins just used to make Amarone. Fresh, young wine is macerated for a minimum of 3 days (and an average of 10) on the lees of the dried grapes – which are then rehydrated and able to pass on some of their rich aromatics and fuller character to the new wine. Hence the name “Ripasso”, or re-passage/re-use of the skins. As a result of this extended fermentation, Ripasso will be a little higher in alcohol, showcase more complexity, and enjoy a longer shelf life than a basic red from Valpolicella. Wines from this DOC must contain 45–95% Corvina (and/or up to 50% Corvinone), along with 5-30% Rondinella. A maximum 25% of other approved grapes such as Molinara and Croatina is also permitted. In addition, Ripasso must age for 1 year before release. All 3 tiers of Valpolicella may be labeled "Classico" if produced in the historic municipalities of Fumane, Marano, Negrar, San Pietro in Cariano and Sant'Ambrogio. In addition, Ripasso may add the "Superiore" designation if it spends a minimum of 12 months in the barrel and contains at least 12% alcohol by volume.