



# LA BIONDA

## VALPOLICELLA

**GAMBERO ROSSO:** "Some time ago, Pietro Castellani set himself a challenge - to establish himself among the top Valpolicella wineries. He seems to be closer to achieving this each year, thanks to the increasingly important contribution of his sons Alessandro and Nicola. In recent years their energy has focused on the splendid new cellar, which aims to provide modern winemaking facilities while incorporating the experience of tradition as positively as possible. Also planned is the gradual reconfiguration and extension of the vineyards, and re-organization of the part of the property not yet planted with vines. The wines are all of a high standard, beginning with the two Amarones..."



### VALPOLICELLA *Classico*

La Bionda's name recalls the local legend of a Templar Knight who chased and eventually married a beautiful blonde from Marano. Although the Castellani family has owned La Bionda since 1950, they sold their grapes to neighboring wineries until very recently. Twenty-something Alessandro attended oenology school in Bordeaux, apprenticed at Isole e Olena and produced the family's first vintage in 1997. His brother Nicola just finished enology school and will concentrate on the estate's viticulture. *Alessandro's vision of Valpolicella is one of aromatically driven wines, filled with lively fruit and powerful acidity with little oak influence and an acknowledgement that the strength of all wines are in the vineyard. La Bionda's exceptional wines are the future of all great Valpolicella.*

### VALPOLICELLA *Classico Superiore* RAVAZZOL

Located in the steep hills of Valpolicella's Marano Valley, Ravazzol has long been considered an important viticultural parcel. Under low yields, the vineyard's rich calcareous soils impart great complexity and clarity to the region's traditional varietals. Fermentation takes place in stainless steel and the wine is left to mature in oak. *The result is a ruby red, medium-bodied wine with clean flavors and aromas of red cherry and spice.*

### VALPOLICELLA *Classico Superiore* CASALVEGRI

Within steeply pitched hills of well-drained limestone soils, Casalvegri dominates the heart of Valpolicella's Marano Valley. This bottling is declassified Amarone, vinified in stainless steel and left to age in smaller oak barrels to flesh it out. *Casalvegri has a dark ruby and garnet color, fuller body, and concentrated pure flavors of red cherry, licorice, bitter almond and spice.*

### RECIOTO della VALPOLICELLA RAVAZZOL

#### AMARONE della VALPOLICELLA DOC

Stylish, exceptionally pure Amarone: the graceful nose and persistent palate of fresh and dried red fruits combine with sublime balance and power... *"amongst the best expressions of the type"* (Gambero Rosso 2007). Exceptional Amarone.

*#4 in Oz Clarke's book, 250 best wines for 2008!*

#### AMARONE della VALPOLICELLA RAVAZZOL

La Bionda produces this Amarone from the very oldest vines of the Ravazzol vineyard. Corvina, Rondinella, and Molinara grapes are grown on pergola for optimal ventilation, picked late into the harvest season and placed in wood left to semi-dry on trellis racks from October to January. *The semi-dried grapes are vinified partly in small oak barrels resulting in a full-bodied wine with a deep ruby core, intense and complex flavors of black cherry, licorice, bitter almond, and spice that persist on the palate with uncommon clarity. A spectacular accompaniment to aged cheeses, slow-roasted flavorful meats and game. Outstanding!*

*Thank you for your time and for your interest in Connoisseur Wines.*