

Pietro Zanoni, an authentic winemaker

written by Lavinia Furlani | 6 Febbraio 2015



In the last years many wine producers have invested money and resources for this extraordinary, but complex job: the wine-making. But not everybody like Pietro Zanoni has used in the field, or better in the vineyard, passion and absolute dedication.

We meet Pietro Zanoni in his small, but beautiful winery on the hills of Quinzano, nearby Verona, one of the best Italian art cities. Pietro doesn't produce simply wine, but he tries

to be a daily interpreter of his land, studying, respecting and loving it. He thinks that his land is just a loan of nature. "I am not the owner of my land," Pietro explains us "I inherited the land in order to care for and preserve it. I will try to leave it to my future generations in a better way". This is the philosophy of the brave winemaker, who began his adventure only in 1998 and in few years has become one of the most authentic and, for us, authoritative wine producers in the Valpolicella area, today one of the most successful Italian wine denominations.

"For me" Zanoni says "the Valpolicella wines are a wonderful mix of elegance and drinkability. Few years ago some winemakers tried to give the wines of our land a more complex structure following the critique. But I think we should respect the real vocation of the territory". Reality for Pietro Zanoni is the Vineyard, with all its necessities in the different seasons. "This year, for example, has been demanding for me. But I have had an extraordinary fellow: the grass, that I left growing to protect the vineyard from the humidity caused by the copious rains. The challenge for me is a balanced use of nature".

Zanoni's vineyard of 6,5 hectares is made by three different plots, with different grounds and sun orientations, for these reasons each plot produces wines with peculiar characteristics.

The ground is chalky (the typical Galina stone) and lava, which give that typical salinity to the wines.

Pietro Zanoni's path has been traced by a precise decision, an eco-friendly winemaking.

"I understood that only by the land I would have received the balance I searched. So, I embraced the concept of land identity. My wines are linked to the land, to the characteristic of the original vineyard". This choice was not simple and it has obliged Zanoni to select each production phase, starting from the vineyard. "In the Valpolicella area

in the last 20 years it has been used only one type of Corvina (number 48), in this way the land identity has been impoverished. In cooperation with a nurseryman, I am trying to recover the old plants of my vineyards, some of the different soul of the Corvina, to give more authentic wines. The huge daily job of Pietro Zanoni demonstrates what it means to be a real winemaker. The result of this big effort is proved by the 20.000 bottles of Valpolicella, Valpolicella Superiore, Recioto and Amarone.

Another interesting and brave project is a type of Amarone, that Pietro Zanoni wants to sell 10 years after the harvest. I want to embottle all the wine in the same moment, but I will keep a part of the bottles in my winery and I will sell them after 10 years. It is a way to demonstrate the evolution and longevity of this extraordinary wine. All these projects have been realised also thanks to his wife Luisa without her I wouldn't succeed in this complex job.

Meeting Pietro and his wife, conversing with them in front of a glass of sweet Recioto year 2009 was an unique experience. We leave feeling richer and with the awareness that, until there will be such winemaker, the Italian wine can be rather optimistic.