

San Rustico: an authentic winery with a strong international vocation

scritto da Agnese Ceschi | 20 Luglio 2015



The commercial strength of a winery is its identity. San Rustico, historic winery of Marano di Valpolicella (Verona), cares its identity since the origins. The first evidence of the existence of a cellar belonging to the Campagnola family in Valgatara, current owner of San Rustico winery, dates back to 1870: cellar logbooks and international awards. We met Marco Campagnola, owner of San Rustico winery with his brother Enrico, in his beautiful tasting room in Valgatara, in the heart of Valpolicella. For him wine was a destiny; since when he was 10 years, he has lived the cellar life. With him we explored the history of the company with a strong international vocation, inherited from the great-grandfather

Luigi. "Already my great-grandfather was a wine producer who sold in Venice to famous restaurants such as the Danieli, moving with a 19th century carriage, that we still have," says Marco. This is the story of a winery which made the relationship with tradition a strong, identity element, connoting San Rustico in the world.

San Rustico. Your brand name has an international imprint...

"The original name of the winery was Luigi Campagnola, that was my great grandfather's name. But, in the '70s, when my father and my uncle broke with the old society, the company took the name San Rustico. The name was affected by an international imprint because then we worked a lot with Germany and with the German canton of Switzerland. Our local partners suggested us to choose this name because it sounded good abroad, especially in that area".

How and when started your first commercial contacts with foreign countries?

"Very soon. Initially we sold large quantities of bulk and wholesale wine. Then we entered in contact with an importer from Piemonte who worked on the Swiss border. I remember it was in 1975, I was a young boy and in the cellar I helped to prepare the tanks of wine for Switzerland".

Then, in the 80s you intensified international relations

"In 1981 I started to go to international fairs to promote my wines. For a period we joined a winery's association from Tuscany, which reunited sale agents for 20 companies with the purpose to sell abroad, especially in Northern Europe. In that period we began to sell in Denmark and in other countries. It was our official entrance in the international markets".

What are the foreign countries where you export your wines?

"Switzerland remains our first country of export. United

States have always been a good market for us, since the Eighties. We have had a small inflection in recent years because our importer, with whom we had had a solid relationship for years, died. China is a new and unexplored market. We're studying it, because we have a very big order, but we want to be cautious".

Which are your best seller wines?

"We specialized in elite wines, in fact we have only 750ml bottles. The Ripasso Gaso is our top wine and the best seller. In Italy we sell more Valpolicella Classico, abroad Valpolicella Superiore, Ripasso and Amarone give us the best performance".

Have you ever had to adapt your wines to consumers' taste?

"I am an "archaic" wine producer, my roots are set in the tradition. But sometimes I have to give reason to the market. For example, our choice was to have the Ripasso 13 degrees, but the logics of the market forced me to rise to 13.5. I do not want to compete with Amarone. They are two different wines".

What is the secret of success of Valpolicella wines in the international markets ?

"Definitely Valpolicella wines are the fashion of the moment. In any case we have refined and elegant wine, with a certain structure, tannins and longevity. The tradition has brought the Veronese wine to remain in vogue, because of its versatile oenology. This allows us to have young and fragrant wines but also structured wines, which are suitable for any meal and any age, helping the approach to different international markets".