

# Ca' La Bionda

There's a lot to like about the new releases from Ca' La Bionda. The traditional Amarone and single vineyard Ravazzol continue to impress with a combination of energy, depth and savory character. The same is true of the Ripasso. However, what Ca' La Bionda is really about is Valpolicella. Winemaker Alessandro Castellani firmly believes that Valpolicella could be the Burgundy of Italy.

While most of the world thinks of Valpolicella as a fruity wine with near-term appeal, Ca' La Bionda aims to deliver a wine with a ten-to-twenty-year lifespan. There's no *appassimento* used in the Valpolicella lineup; residual sugars all finish below one gram per liter, while maturation takes place entirely in neutral 30-hectoliter barrels.

The winery and vineyards are all located in Marano di Valpolicella within the Classico zone, with elevations spanning 150 to 300 meters and most on steep inclines. As I drove along the restored stone walls and terraced vineyards, Nicola Castellani (Alberto's brother and partner) pointed out how the stones used in each section show the difference in soil types from one parcel to the next. This, in many ways, is the inspiration behind their single-vineyard wines. Ca' La Bionda, along with a handful of other estates, represents the future of Valpolicella.

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## 2018 Amarone della Valpolicella Classico

Color: Red

94

Drinking Window: 2026 - 2038

Eric Guido, December 2023



Impossible to ignore and decidedly savory, the 2018 Amarone della Valpolicella Classico impresses with a smoky blend of peppery spices, wild herbs, seared meats and dried black cherries. This is energetic yet intense, with a silken wave of ripe wild berry fruits and sour orange tones propelled by zesty acidity. The 2018 doesn't miss a beat, finishing classically dry and gently tannic, with rosy inner florals and a cranberry crunch. Hints of lavender slowly fade. This shows the elegance and pretty nature of the vintage while maintaining perfect balance.