

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 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.

From *Veneto: A Constant State of Evolution (Feb 2024)* by Eric Guido

2022 Bianco del Casal

Color: White

92+

Drinking Window: **2025 - 2030** ^
Eric Guido, December 2023

Spicy to the core, the 2022 Bianco del Casal slowly awakens in the glass, with hints of curry leaf and crushed stone giving way to young peach and lemon zest. This is round and opulent in feel yet energetic, with depths of ripe orchard fruits and green melon complemented by notes of candied citrus. It finishes remarkably fresh and crisp, with a mineral tinge and sweet inner florals that slowly fade. While riper in style than the previous vintage (mostly the result of the conditions of the year), the 2022 finds a lovely balance.