

# 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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## 2010 Valpolicella Classico Superiore Casalvegri

Color: Red

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Drinking Window: 2024 - 2026

Eric Guido, December 2023

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The 2010 Valpolicella Classico Superiore Casalvegri is spicy and peppery, with crushed chalk and wild herbs accentuating dried black cherries. This is energetic and crisp, marked by ripe wild berry fruits and tantalizing acidity as saline minerals and savory spices swirl throughout. It finishes long and staining, still lightly tannic and wonderfully crunchy. It's amazing to think this is a 13-year-old Valpolicella.