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Amarone della Valpolicella Valpantena 2018 by Costa Arènte

The first vintage entirely produced within the Grezzana estate

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Grezzana – This year, Costa Arènte proudly presents Amarone della Valpolicella Valpantena 2018, the first label to be fully produced within the estate, also thanks to the drying loft inaugurated in 2018 and the new barrel cellar. An icon of its territory, Amarone is a renowned noble wine, one of the greatest Italian reds. Costa Arènte's philosophy starts from the attentive care of the vineyards that promotes respect for nature through integrated viticulture and preserves the area's centuries-old traditions, such as the use of the pergola Veronese and the loft for drying. All vineyard operations are carried out manually, favoring native varieties and maintaining low yields in order to fully transfer the characteristics of the grapes and the terroir of Valpantena in the

bottle. Wood is used wisely, exclusively during wine aging, and without exaggerating.

"The release of Amarone 2018 is the completion of a journey that is actually a starting point. It led us to know and rediscover the potential of the territory and our vineyards, not only in terms of the entire production cycle but also regarding the authentic style of Costa Arènte, increasingly defining our mission: to produce an elegant and drinkable Amarone that does not forgo complexity, structure and potential for aging." Says Giovanni Casati, Head Enologist and Agronomist for the Group and Estate Manager at Costa Arènte. "This label fills me with joy and pride because it has been a bit like taking care of your first child. We saw the bunches grow, we have taken care of them until harvest and then placed them to rest in the new drying loft until vinification, paying attention to each variety in order to obtain the perfect grape blend." Casati adds.

VALPANTENA: noble longevity

The blend for the 2018 vintage is made up of 50% Corvina, 40% Corvinone and 10% Rondinella. "We use local varieties from Verona, especially Corvina and Corvinone, which have noble characteristics in their DNA just like Nebbiolo and Sangiovese and are capable of yielding wines that are suitable for aging." Giovanni Casati explains.

The grapes were grown in Valpantena, in Costa di Romagnano in Grezzana, on hilly slopes that rise up to 600 m, but are mainly located at the height of 100-250 m asl. The substrate is made up of calcareous marl, it is clayey-loamy with sub-alkaline reaction and rich in minerals like potassium, manganese, calcium, iron, zinc; fossils can also be frequently found. This type of soil guarantees elevated acidity that endows the wine with elegance and aging capacity, given the same alcohol content and structure. The vine training method used is the traditional pergola Veronese – both simple and double – with vines ranging from 10 to 25 years of age.

2018 HARVEST AND VINIFICATION NOTES

New drying loft and skillful use of wood in a surprising vintage



The 2018 vintage turned out to be a surprising one given the critical nature of the previous year: characterized by frosts, strong heat and a hailstorm that destroyed about 70% of the harvest. The plants fully regained their health, recovering from the stress suffered and completely resuming an optimal vegetative cycle. 2018 has been a regular year that did not experience particular drought or stress; maturation and vegetative development proceeded in normal conditions. The pergola vine training protected the health of the vines from the heavy rains in late August, which caused severe flood in the valley of Negrar. Nevertheless, the bunches reached perfect maturation, acquiring the right sugar concentration, color and aging of tannins.

Following a careful manual harvest, with selection of the bunches, the grapes were brought to rest in the drying loft – which was inaugurated in 2018 – where they dried on the plateau for at least 3 months, losing 40% of their weight on average. Enzymatic processes and the development of noble rot completed the drying process; this was then followed by de-stemming around December, selection on the sorting table and pressing. A short cold maceration preceded alcoholic fermentation, which lasted for approximately two weeks, with frequent pumping over. This was then followed by racking, malolactic fermentation and aging for two years in tonneaux and then for at least one year in Slavonian oak barrels. This ensured a slow and constant but not invasive micro-oxygenation, thus avoiding that the work done in the vineyard be covered by hints of spice and wood, risking hiding the characteristics of the grapes used.

"This vintage enabled us to use the new drying loft as well as the barrel cellar. It also allowed us to observe a careful use of wood that – according to our philosophy – must only accompany the aging process and not alter the wine itself." says Giovanni Casati. "We only use 500-liter tonneaux made with French oak from the forests of Allier. Thanks to its characteristic compact and non-porous grain, this wood is perfect to support the wine's natural aromas and its tannic power."

Aging in the bottle lasted for a year, prior launch on the market.

TASTING NOTES

the lively agility of a ruby red

Intense ruby red, tending to garnet, dense and deep with a lively garnet nail. High alcohol content that can also be observed in the thick and narrow tears of wine. Complex nose with immediate fruity hints of dark cherry. Grape drying reveals notes of marasca cherry and candied dried fig, followed by tertiary notes of roasting, black pepper, cinnamon, licorice and cocoa.
Amarone 2018 has a full but not tiring mouthfeel, thanks to its lively acidity. The delicate tannin is essentially given by the skins, appearing mellow and velvety, and capable of enhancing the different aromas present. The characteristic acidity of Costa

Arènte ensures a refreshing sip, hinting to a remarkable potential for aging, also thanks to an extremely low pH for an Amarone: proof of the absence of Brettanomyces contamination. An incredible aftertaste: extreme freshness, black cherry and marasca cherry, followed by roasted notes. The wine entices for another sip, proving its importance.

"Our goal is to make important wines like this Amarone easier to match with dishes and therefore easier to consume" comments Giovanni Casati. Amarone 2018 goes well with simple dishes, such as grilled meat, pasta with meat sauce or goulash. An unexpected pairing is with candied orange covered with dark chocolate.