

Alpha Zeta, `A` Amarone della Valpolicella 2016

Valpolicella, Veneto, Italy



PRODUCER

Alpha Zeta was started in 1999 when Liberty Wines set out to produce a range of modern, fruit-driven wines from the hills outside Verona. Working with leading New Zealand winemaker, Matt Thomson, our aim was to work with growers (rather than buy bulk wine, which is standard among most wines from Verona at this price) to obtain ripe grapes (by reducing yields and picking later) and then, using Matt's expertise, preserve these flavours in the finished wines. The result is a realisation of the potential inherent in Veronese viticulture.

VINEYARDS

The vineyards are situated in the hills outside Verona in the Valpantena Valley. Cool currents blow down the valley from the foothills of the Dolomites, which helps to moderate the climate, enabling the grapes to ripen slowly. This helps the grapes to retain their aromatic compounds and acidity. The soil is a mixture of clay and limestone with good drainage. The vineyards are south facing and therefore warmer than other parts of Valpolicella.

VINTAGE

The 2016 harvest was quite similar to 2015, with a cold winter and abundant rainfall. The beginning of the growing season was characterised by the alternation of dry and rainy periods, which allowed for perfect vine development. The following hot and dry summer led to an abundant harvest with healthy grapes.

VINIFICATION

Selected grapes were picked in mid-September and left to dry in specially ventilated rooms until the end of January. During this time, the grapes lost about 40% of their natural weight and the grape sugars and flavours became more concentrated. The grapes were destemmed and crushed at the end of January. Fermentation took place at temperatures of between 18 to 22°C with daily pump overs and lasted for 20 days. This Amarone was matured in oak (a mixture of large 'botti' and French oak barriques) for 18 months before bottling.

TASTING NOTES

This Amarone is deep and intense on the nose with aromas of dried cherries and blueberries and notes of spiced autumn fruit compote. On the palate, it is powerful, with a lovely balance of ripe tannins and spiced, concentrated cherry fruit character. A touch of woodsmoke completes the long finish.

Grape Varieties	85% Corvina/Corvinone 15% Rondinella
Winemaker	Luca Degani & Matt Thomson
Closure	Natural Cork
ABV	15%
Residual Sugar	5.82g/L
Acidity	5.58g/L
Wine pH	3.42
Bottle Sizes	37.5cl, 75cl
Notes	Vegan, Vegetarian