

Alpha Zeta,

`R` Valpolicella Superiore Ripasso 2021

Valpolicella, Veneto, Italy



Grape Varieties	75% Corvina 20% Rondinella/Corvinone 5% Corvinone
Winemaker	Matt Thomson & Michele Peroni
Closure	Natural Cork
ABV	13.5%
Residual Sugar	6g/L
Acidity	5.75g/L
Wine pH	3.4
Bottle Sizes	75cl
Notes	Vegetarian, Vegan

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 realization of the potential inherent in Veronese viticulture.

VINEYARDS

The vineyards are situated at 100-400 metres above sea level in the hills outside Verona in the Valpantena Valley and are south/south-east facing. Cool breezes blow down the valley from the foothills of the Dolomites, which moderate the climate, enabling the grapes to ripen slowly and helping them to retain their aromatic compounds and acidity. The soil is poor and chalky so the vines are put under stress and produce superior quality fruit. The vines are 20-30 years old on average and trained using both the traditional Pergola Veronese and Guyot systems.

VINTAGE

Spring 2021 saw a fair amount of wind and not much sun, which slowed down the ripening process in the grapes. Despite one incidence of hail before the harvest, little damage occurred. The harvest went well, with a good levels of ripeness, sugar content and colour achieved in the grapes. The yield overall was slightly lower than average.

VINIFICATION

This wine was made using a modern variation of the traditional Veronese practice known as "ripasso." Traditionally, the young wine was re-fermented on the skins of the Amarone grapes once they had finished fermenting in March. The modern approach is to ferment the young wine together with dried grapes in the January following the vintage, giving the wine more body and depth. Following temperature controlled fermentation, this Ripasso was aged in oak prior to bottling. This blend of modern and traditional winemaking produces a wine with a combination of freshness, structure and depth that is rare among Ripasso wines.

TASTING NOTES

Ruby red in colour, this Ripasso opens with a concentrated nose full of aromas of red fruits and dried cherries. Full-bodied on the palate, it shows lovely balance between an opulent cherry-pie character and supple structure. The finish is long with a mouthwatering bitter-cherry twist.