

"RECIOTO DELLA VALPOLICELLA CLASSICO" DOC



Recioto wine has a tradition of more than 2000 years. *Vitis raetica* derived its name from the toponym Raetia, a region which at that time extended from the Danube to the Canton of Grisons and included Tyrol and northern Lombardy. If it is true that the Rhaetian vine was cultivated in the Veronese area, we can affirm that Valpolicella was also one of the main production areas in the past.

Here is what Pliny (23 - 79 AD) wrote: "...ante eum Raeticis prior mensa erat uvis ex Veronesium agro" (Pliny, Nat. His, XIV, 16). So we know that already 2000 years ago, in Roman times, the Rhaetian grapes from the Veronese countryside were served at the table as an appetizer. We also know that the climate and soils of Valpolicella were not very different from the current ones and that one of the most important characteristics of Veronese viticulture has always been the native origin of its vines.

"liquid or fleshy, edible drink"...pure wine with a regal color and a special flavour; so that you think that the purple is dyed by the wine itself, or that its clear humor is squeezed out of the purple...".

This description is taken from the most famous historical testimony relating to Veronese wine, the letter sent to the Canon of Venice by Flavius the Great Aurelius Cassiodorus (490-583), senator and prefect of the Praetorium at the court of King Theodoric in Ravenna (king of Italy from 493 to 526) to supply the royal warehouses. The appreciation of Veronese wines has been known since ancient times and the excellent wine required was then called *Acinaticum*, produced with the same method of drying the grapes still used today to obtain Recioto, similar in colour, sincerity and sweetness. So with what wine did Senator Cassiodorus intend to supply the royal warehouses? The scrupulous description handed down to us leaves no doubts: the wine was Recioto della Valpolicella, known at the time as "*Acinatico*" wine, which was found only in small quantities due to its particular vinification technique, difficult and selective as it is today. This is how this sweet, unique red wine is born, produced exclusively through the particular process of natural drying of the best grapes. The name "Recioto" will appear only after the middle of the 19th century, while before they called it, "*Acinatico*" or "*Vin Santo*".

As you can see, the history of this wine is so ancient that it dates back to Roman times and to the famous Rhaetian wine praised and appreciated by Latin poets.

Recioto della Valpolicella is produced in the winter season, after the grapes have dried. The fermentation of the must is quite long due to the low ambient temperature and can even last up to 50 days. During this period the must is left in contact with the skins, acquiring colour, aromas and structure. Tenuta Chevalier's Recioto della Valpolicella is obtained by stopping the fermentation when the residual sugars (unfermented) have a concentration of around 12%. The alcohol content is usually around 14-15%.

No type of artificial sugar is added to the musts of the Chevalier estate, but only the one present in the berries. Traditionally, the aging of Recioto della Valpolicella from Tenuta Chevalier takes place in large barrels. Recioto della Valpolicella is a raisin red wine of great structure, it is often subjected to long refinements and permanence in the cellar. As such it should be opened at least one hour before tasting and served quite cool, at a temperature around 13°C. For tasting, use a long-stemmed dessert wine glass. The tasting of Tenuta Chevalier's Recioto della Valpolicella gives particular sensations compared to what is found with other sweet wines. The red grapes, particularly the Corvina, give the wine not only the sensation of sweetness but also the slightly astringent note due to the tannins and polyphenols. The visual aspect of Recioto della Valpolicella is obviously determined by the grapes used (in this case mainly the Corvina) and the particular production technique. In the production of the recioto della valpolicella of the Chevalier Estate, a significant percentage of *Oseleta* is also used and together with the Corvina they characterize a high coloring power, also accentuated by the long periods of maceration of the skins in the must. The transparency of Recioto della Valpolicella is often pretty low, sometimes impenetrable to light. Recioto generally has an intense and dark ruby red colour. With the refinement, which in Recioto della Valpolicella can last even for several years, the ruby gradually changes to garnet, and then reaches the apex of maturation to orange or brick tones.

Given its robust structure, desserts based on delicate creams, whipped cream, mousses, puddings, etc. are not recommended. The perfect combination of Recioto is with sweets based on shortcrust pastry, cakes and almond biscuits such as cantucci or the typical sbrisolona. The Recioto della Valpolicella Classico of Tenuta Chevalier, thanks to its intensity is considered one of the best wines for pairing with chocolate: cakes, dark heart cakes, brownies, sacher cake, but above all dark chocolates with a high percentage of cocoa or spiced chocolates flavoured, with coffee with dried fruit, with hazelnuts, etc. For several years now, the combination of cheeses by contrast has been widely consolidated. It is quite common in a restaurant to be served a selection of cheeses, especially if very aged or blue, accompanied by sweet mustards, honey, fruit jellies. By virtue of this harmonious contrast, Tenuta Chevalier's Recioto della Valpolicella Classico is an excellent match for cheeses with a very intense taste such as goat's and pecorino, Parmigiano, Monte Veronese, Asiago with long aging of 24, 48 months and beyond. But Recioto, precisely because of its intensity, its being sweet and structured at the same time, is a wine with which one can also dare to experiment with unusual combinations. For example with certain sweet and sour dishes of oriental cuisine, certain Indian preparations with meat flavored with sweet and hot spices, all dishes which, surprisingly, could be combined perfectly with Recioto della Valpolicella.



L'ARTIGIANO DEL VINO
PAOLO ZARDINI

NEGRAR DI VALPOLICELLA



"The vintages available will be those present at the time of purchase"