



## Amarone: Patriarch of Valpolicella

Tuesday, October 18, 2016

Reception Wine: 6:00 PM, Formal Tasting: 6:20 PM

Faculty Club, Univ of Toronto, 41 Willcocks Street, Toronto

Members' Fee: \$82; Guests'/Non-Members' Fee: \$107

Although the Valpolicella region of Veneto Italy in the North Eastern part of the country is the home of numerous fine wines, **Amarone della Valpolicella** is considered the patriarch. It's an intensely flavored dry red wine made from dried grapes and is arguably the region's most prestigious red wine. Valpolicella has been known since Greek times as a great wine producing region, and has continued as such through Etruscan, Roman and mediaeval times into the modern era. The name Valpolicella derives from the Greek for "valley of many cellars". While resinated grapes, without doubt, have been used since antiquity, it was not until the 1930's that the method for producing modern Amarone, a name derived from the Italian word *amaro*, meaning "bitter", was developed. In fact, it was only in 1950 that the first bottle with the label "Amarone" appeared. In 2009, it was awarded the coveted designation DOCG. The Bascaini family of the Masi vineyards was among the first to produce Amarone.

A blend of several grapes, consisting of Corvina, Rondinella, Molinara, Corvinone and Oselata, where at least 50% must be Corvina, is used in the production of Amarone. These grapes are particularly well suited for the *appassimento* method because of their large berry size, more robust skins and dark colour. The fruit destined to become Amarone takes quite a different journey than most grapes before reaching the bottle. Firstly, grapes from older, more mature vines are selected. Secondly, the grapes dry for about four months into raisins which intensifies the concentration of flavours, sugars and alcohol. If fermentation is stopped before all the sugar is converted to alcohol, the result is the sweet Recioto wine, the forerunner of Amarone. The higher cost of Amarone is at least partly attributable to the complex and prolonged process which exposes the wine to increased risks of spoilage "faults".

Amarone is a robust red wine with high alcohol content, often 15+% with aromas of red ripe fruit, prune, spice, licorice and grilled herb. The palate is characterized by thick consistency, soft tannins, finely tuned acids, dark fruit and dried cherry. It is good with rich foods and can be aged for 10 to 15 years.

Although the years 2008 to 2011 in the north of Italy produced vintages of mixed quality overall due to wet weather, the Amarones were generally rated excellent. As you'll see from the ratings, our wines exceed 90+ points in evaluation by the experts.

**Note:** All ticket sales are FINAL!!! No refunds are available unless we are oversold and have a wait list. Dress is business casual. Please refrain from wearing scented products. We will be serving a reception wine to begin the evening and light appetizers to accompany the wines.

**REGISTER/BUY TICKETS.** You must [register online](#) and pay by credit card or cheque. **NOTE: ALL ticket sales/reservations are final.** Cheques must be received by Friday, October 14<sup>th</sup>. The cheque-payment option will be disabled at midnight Tuesday, October 11<sup>th</sup> after which only credit card sales will be accepted until Monday October 17<sup>th</sup> or earlier if the event sells out. You will be sent an email confirmation after completing your registration. If you tried to register but did not receive your confirmation, please contact [chris@torontovintners.org](mailto:chris@torontovintners.org) before trying to register again.



## Tasting Notes and Information

### **2009 Masi - Amarone Della Valpolicella Classico Campolongo Di Torbe \$102**

"A very youthful and intense, massively structured Campolongo Amarone, crafted with that hard-to-achieve balance between full ripeness and lack of green or excessive volatility - there are few who have mastered dried grape wines as well as Raffaele Boscaini of Masi and his family predecessors. This barely hints at its full potential, at least a decade away and surely more. This should reach into the '40s without a stretch.

Monumental wine. " WineAlign.com, Oct 2015, John Szabo, 95/100

### **2011 Quintarelli Primofiore \$65**

"Quintarelli is renowned for the length of time the wines are allowed to mature before being released for sale.

The Primofiore is all about pedigree. It's sourced from vines in excess of 30 years of age and is the first wine from any given vintage released by Quintarelli. This is a blend of Corvina, Corvinone, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc, with some Amarone providing additional depth and character. This wine will be complex and layered with impressive fruit and spice notes. An exciting first glimpse into Quintarelli's offerings from the 2011 vintage. LCBO VINTAGES review.

### **2010 Masi - Amarone della Valpolicella Classico Costasera \$37**

"A classic interpretation, the 2010 Amarone della Valpolicella Classico Costasera offers power and personality. The bouquet shows your standard Amarone aromas of sweet spice and overripe fruit. But Costasera adds class and finesse thanks to the slow way in which the wine evolves in the glass. The mouthfeel also treads with a delicate pace. Its silky texture never feels too heavy or overburdened." Drink: 2015-2025.

eRobertParker.com Wine Advocate#216, Dec 2014, Monica Lamer 91/100

### **2010 I Castei Campo Casalin - Amarone della Valpolicella Classico \$49**

"The 2010 Amarone della Valpolicella Classico I Castei Campo Casalin offers tasty intensity and extra doses of ripe fruit and spice. The 2010 vintage shows steady balance and harmony. Although there's no doubting the bold personality of this Amarone, it is also a wine of beauty and elegance. In the mouth, it offers thick layers of ripe fruit and soft tannins." Drink: 2015-2025.

eRobertParker.com Wine Advocate#217, Feb 2015, Monica Lamer 91/100

### **2008 Montecariano- Amarone della Valpolicella Classico \$63**

"The 2008 . . . is a beautiful wine that is laced with delicate mineral notes of crushed granite and polished river stone. Behind those aromas are more substantial tones of ripe fruit, prune, dried cherry and concentrated dark spice. This is a reasonably dry and mineral-driven Amarone that shows a good level of austerity and tightness." Drink: 2015-2025 eRobertParker.com Wine Advocate#209, Oct 2013 Monica Lamer 92/100

### **2008 Masi - Amarone della Valpolicella Classico Serego Alighieri Vaio Armaron \$70**

The 2008 . . . opens to tight aromas of dried fruit and spice with characteristic background notes of grilled herb, tobacco, leather and Spanish cedar. The wine also shows beautiful intensity in the mouth where its thick consistency leaves lasting flavors of dark fruit and smoke: Drink now or hold up to ten years. Drink: 2015-2025. eRobertParker.com Wine Advocate #216, Dec 2014, Monica Lamer 92+/100

### **2008 Sergio Zenato - Amarone della Valpolicella Classico Riserva \$99**

"The 2008 Amarone della Valpolicella Classico Riserva Sergio Zenato is 80% Corvina, 10% Rondinella, 10% Oseleta and Croatina. The wine ages in traditional botte grande for four years. This is regularly my highest scoring wine from Zenato, but the 2008 vintage doesn't show the same level of purity and intensity that we saw in 2007. The wine wraps over the palate with textured tannins and ripe fruit flavors." Drink: 2015-2025. eRobertParker.com Wine Advocate #216, Dec. 2014, Monica Lamer 91/100

### **2010 Speri - Amarone della Valpolicella Classico Vigneto Monte Sant'Urbano \$75**

"Speri's gorgeous 2010 Amarone della Valpolicella Classico Vigneto Monte Sant'Urbano is what many red wines of Valpolicella aspire to be. The balance here is close to impeccable and given the unpredictable nature of appassimento (air-drying of fruit) this is no small feat. Amarone Classico Sant'Urbano shows outstanding depth and character, with beautifully preserved aromas of red fruit, prune, spice, licorice and grilled herb. I'd suggest opening this bottle three to five years from now. "Drink: 2015-2025 eRobertParker.com Wine Advocate #217, Feb 2015, Monica Lamer 93/100