

## **Soave, Province of Verona**

*Established: 1890*

*Owners: Pieropan family*

*Winemakers: Leonildo, Andrea & Dario Pieropan*

*Production: 400,000 bottles*

*Hectares of vines: 45*

*Viticulture: Organic*



Soave, in Italian, means gentle, soft, suave – an appropriate name for this small town east of Verona, encircled by the original enclosures of the town and dominated by a 13th century fortress. At the heart of the Classico zone is the Pieropan property, which dates back to 1890. The present owner is Leonildo (Nino) Pieropan whose grandfather, Leonildo Senior, founded the estate and also invented Recioto di Soave. Today, the estate has expanded into neighbouring Valpolicella and Nino and Teresita have been joined by sons Andrea and Dario, both with degrees in viticulture and oenology.

When Nino took over his grandfather's winery in 1970, he expanded the family's crus of Calvarino and La Rocca and set about purchasing some of the finest terroir in the appellation, including Pigno, Becco, Boiolo, Tondo, Palestrello, La Santa. To all these, Nino devoted painstakingly innovative vineyard management and the strictest - and most organic - quality criteria. Such dedication has enabled the Pieropan estate to become the appellation leader in Soave, further enhanced by the wine's cellaring ability.

### **Soave DOC**

In 2008, the Pieropans were the first in the region to declassify their Soave Classico in order to bottle the wine under screwcap. The resulting wine is the best Soave we've seen from Pieropan, classico or not. Mostly Garganega with about 10-15% Trebbiano di Soave, this is wonderfully aromatic - not a common feature of Soave - with floral notes (cherry blossom), citrus, stone fruit and almond. The palate is delicate and focussed, with excellent depth and lovely overall balance.

### **Soave Classico DOC 'Calvarino'**

The Calvarino vineyard, purchased in 1901, was the historical nucleus of the estate. This cru, made from 70% Garganega and 30% Trebbiano grown on volcanic soil, produces a refined and elegant Soave with mineral driven fruit and a chalkiness reminiscent of fine Chablis. The crisp fruit (green apple, citrus and stone fruit) preludes a fine and complex palate with piercing clarity and a long finish. First made in 1971, Calvarino has a track record of a long cellar life, up to 15 years, in the finest vintages.

### **Soave Classico DOC 'La Rocca'**

La Rocca, first made in 1978, is named after the medieval castle and fortress overlooking the town. Made from 100% Garganega, grown on calcareous soil (the only soil of its type in Soave) and harvested quite late. Following a brief skin maceration, fermentation takes place in tonneaux before transfer to 20hl barrels, where it is aged on fine lees for one year. Intense, sunny yellow in colour, the nose recalls ripe exotic fruit and roasted nuts, the multi-layered palate is complex with beautifully balanced richness and outstanding length. Cellar life is 15 plus years and the wine is great with rich seafood dishes, white meats such as rabbit, pork and chicken and mature cheese.

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**Recioto di Soave DOCG 'Le Colombare'**

The top parts (*recie*, meaning ears) of each select Garganega bunch, with the ripest and best exposed grapes, are dried for about 5 months on bamboo canes in the traditional method, the natural environment allowing the grapes to dehydrate and concentrate and encourage the development of botrytis. The shrivelled grapes are then pressed and the wine is aged for 2 years in oak. Ripe tropical fruit with candied peel, the palate is round and generous with a long finish.

**Pieropan in Valpolicella**

In 1999 the Pieropan family bought a property in Val d'Illasi in Valpolicella zone. The property, situated on Monte Garzon at 300-500m above sea level, was previously uncultivated and required an enormous amount of work before planting. The soil here is particularly rich in limestone and clay and the vineyards, farmed organically, were planted with indigenous red varieties; Corvina, Corvinone, Rondinella and Croatina Veronese. The yield is about 1 kg per plant.

**Ruberpan IGT**

Ruberpan is made mostly from Corvina, with smaller amounts of Corvinone, Rondinella and Croatina Veronese. In keeping with the Pieropan style, it is elegant and perfumed with cherry and blackberry fruit, the palate complex and elegant with lively fruit and silky tannins.

**Amarone dell Valpolicella DOC 'Vigna Garzon'**

The 2006 vintage was the inaugural release of Pieropan's Amarone and just 120 bottles were shipped to Australia. It is made from 60% Corvina, 25% Corvinone and 15% Rondinella. The grapes are placed in trays and dried in the cellar using fans to avoid disease and botrytis and, after drying, the yield is a miniscule 300 grams per vine! The grapes are pressed and the must is fermented for approximately 30 days with daily punching down of the cap. It is then aged for three years in tonneaux and a further year in the bottle prior to release. The wine has a heady perfume of black cherries, blackberries and plums, the palate round and complex with a powerful structure and a lovely freshness on the finish. The alcohol is 16% but the wine carries it beautifully. Total acidity is 5.5-6.5 g/l and residual sugar is 8-12 g/l.

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