

VAONA

The Vaona estate produces the entire range of wines of the classic part of the Valpolicella appellation. It is located in the township of Marano, at Paterno of Valgatara, in the very heart of the most historic part of the production zone.

This is a family which has cultivated grapes for generations and has owned its estate since 1931, when it was purchased by Francesco Vaona. The property consists of 25 acres (10 hectares), 20 planted to vines and the remaining acreage to olives and to cherry trees. Located in an excellent position between the hills of Masua and Perez at an altitude which ranges from 600 to 825 feet (180 to 250 meters) above sea level, the vineyards fall under the administrative jurisdiction of three different townships: 50% of the surface area, plus the cellars and offices are situated in Marano, 30% at Castelrotto in the township of San Pietro in Cariano, and the remaining 20% in Negrar. The training systems are the traditional pergola of Verona and the more modern Guyot, the latter with an overall vine density of 3500 vines per hectare (1400 per acre).

The re-organization of the spaces for fermenting and aging the wines has been carried out according to functional necessities of the work and utilizes the force of gravity for the various phases of the operations, thus avoiding an excessive amount of pumping and thereby conserving to the maximum possible extent the integrity of the grapes, must, and wine.

In addition to the carefully studied working methods in the cellar, the estate is also active in the vineyards during the entire year with a winter pruning based on short canes, canopy management during the summer in order to maximize the circulation of air around the grapes and give them a full exposure to the sun, and cover crops which enrich the soil and help avoid the use of chemical fertilizer. All techniques which assist in keeping the grapes as healthy as possible and completely respect the ecological integrity of the vineyard.

Ample spaces, dry and well ventilated, have obviously been created for the drying of the grapes, a procedure which varies from wine to wine and lasts until the spring after the harvest. The grapes are dried on "arele", tray-like wooden structures which are lined with bamboo canes. A stack of *arele* forms, to use the local dialect word, a "peagnà", the name which has been given to the estate's Recioto.

Alberto Vaona and his four children after a hard work day in the vineyards. They are from left, Gior-
gia, Matteo, Matilde & Marco. Mara is the name of the wife of Alberto. Odino & Pia his parents.

