

Meet Fabio Zenato of Le Morette wines

Fabio and his brother, Paolo, are the third generation of a family business that excels at winemaking and considers environmental stewardship a top priority for their success.

LESS THAN A MILE from the beautiful southern shoreline of Lake Garda, winemaker Fabio Zenato, and his brother Paolo, serve as faithful stewards of the land that produces the best estate fruit for their highly valued wines.

Not to be confused with their cousins at the Zenato bottling company, this branch of the family tree has been grafting vines, studying indigenous varieties, and farming for three generations. The winery derives its name from a local duck, sacred to the ancient Etruscans, still protected and highly regarded today.

The family's expertise with the unique glacial soils around Lake Garda helps amplify the flavor and character of their native varieties: the historic white grape, Turbiana (related to Verdicchio), and the classic red grapes in Bardolino, Corvina, Rondinella and Molinara.

Fabio and his brother Paolo are creating some of the most compelling examples of these native grapes with organic practices, earning them affiliation with the World Biodiversity Association.

Fabio studied Agricultural Sciences at the state University of Milan, earning a Master's degree in Viticulture. A subsequent PhD included genetic studies on DNA of the vine-plant in correlation with plant physiology. After his degree, he continued research on vine DNA, as an outside consultant for the University and in cooperation with the Consorzio di Tutela Lugana DO.

After 3 years of studies, the project was enlarged to a clonal selection team, including genetic specialists, and plant virologists. The result of this long



Paolo and Fabio Zenato

study is now available and will soon be certified by the National Minister of Agriculture of Italy.

Because of his specific knowledge, Fabio was invited as member of the DOC selection board, the youngest member to join, for all the DOC wines produced in the area of Verona: Lugana, Chiaretto, Valpolicella, Amarone, Ripasso, Soave.

He is frequently invited to participate in numerous DOC wine panels, that control organoleptic standards of quality for wines produced in Veneto, Lombardy and Trentino-Alto Adige.

But his knowledge and commitment to the environment does not stop with the grapes. The energy production in the winery is guaranteed by the solar panels on the roof, the processing area of the winery is totally underground (-9 meters) to obtain a natural cooling effect thanks to the soil with no energy consumption.

In the vineyards, there is no use of

chemicals, as pesticides and insecticides, to protect the vineyard ecosystem. Plant nutrition relies on natural organic based fertilizers.

For three generations the Zenato family have been caretakers of this pristine ecosystem. It is nature that motivates and inspires them, that guides their wine-making practices and philosophy, and it is nature that works in unison with them to create such masterfully crafted examples of art in the bottle.

With their help, the little black mallard, "Le Morette," is protected under European Union Regulation. The name "Le Morette" refers to the most popular and protected species of mallard that nests in the Lugana area. The Zenato family chose this name to further demonstrate the importance that they place on the harmony of their winery with its territory and the ongoing maintenance of the delicate environmental balance.



CORTE VOLPON