Harvests 2026 – Bronzato – Valpolicella

Bronzato: a warm, dry season and the best harvest in three years

At Bronzato, the 2026 harvest is considered the best of the past three years, in both quality and quantity. After a rainy start to autumn, conditions became drier as spring approached. Budbreak began in the first week of April. There was no frost damage: the vines here generally start growing later than those on the plain, which helps reduce the risk. June hail caused minor damage to a few plots without protective netting, but the bunches were largely unaffected.

Flowering took place between late May and early June and was even, thanks to favourable temperatures and low rainfall. The potential crop was so abundant that bunch thinning was necessary, particularly for Corvinone.

The season was very dry and warmer than the previous year, although vineyard temperatures never exceeded 32°C. This is a very important point, because at this level the temperatures, are high but not too high, thus, vines don't suffer and maturity process isn't blocked.

The soils helped the vines withstand prolonged drought without significant problems. The estate removes leaves around the bunches early, just after flowering — a practice that, according to Massimo, improves their tolerance to sun exposure.

The operation is carried out immediately after flowering, i.e. in late May or early June. It mustn't be done too late, so that the vines aren't at risk of sunscald. Massimo also knows that Corvina is sensitive to the sun, so he takes care to thin the leaves according to the plots' aspect:

- In east-west facing plots, he will remove the leaves facing north and leave those facing south to protect against strong sunlight.

- Similarly, in north-south-facing plots, it is the vines facing east that will be thinned.This is a delicate operation that needs precision but that he has been doing for some years now and can see the result in the maturity reached and fruity expression of the corvina.

Harvest began in the first ten days of September, 10–15 days earlier than usual. Looser bunches destined for appassimento were selected first. Massimo says : „*We are very lucky to have vineyard on the top of hills, there, a light wind is always blowing and humidity is kept low across the vineyards. There was no stress and we were able to wait for the desired ripeness, both for grapes intended for drying and those to be crushed immediately.“*