

## **Vintage 2004**

The 2004 vintage started rather late due to difficult climatic conditions.

The early months of 2004 were characterised by abundant rainfall which, when added to that of the previous autumn, allowed the replacement of the surface water reserves, which were significantly reduced during the summer 2003. The spring was regular without late frosts and with an average rainfall. In the following months rainfalls were very limited, brief and spaced out one from the other, this was good for the vines, which showed regular shoots and limited evidence of nutritional imbalance.

The summer temperatures were never too high and there were no periods of insupportable high humidity which had characterised the previous summers. This year the hail pardoned Valpolicella, touching the hill area with the hailstorm of 1<sup>st</sup> July, thereby carrying out a positive thinning of the grapes. The last months preceding the harvest contributed to the increase in quality with large temperature differences between day and night. These conditions contributed to the synthesis of the aromatic substances and the accumulation of sugars in the grapes.

The analysis of the grapes harvested showed them to be healthy with a balanced acid content and slightly lower sugar content compared to the previous year.

The harvest began with grapes for Amarone on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September, whilst for the grapes of Valpolicella on 27<sup>th</sup> September registering a date of maturation similar to that of the last twenty years. During the harvest the grapes gradually recovered the low sugar content due exclusively to the late maturation to the point where the average values of the good vintages were reached.

However, the aspect that most characterises this year is the large accumulation of polyphenolic substances which give a very intense colour and stability over time. Also the tannins were well matured without excessive herbaceous notes, leaving indications of fragrant, delicate wines which have good ageing properties.

The grapes for Recioto and Amarone were harvested under ideal weather conditions. The withering of the grapes was carried out regularly and thanks to the thick skins of the grapes, a condition necessary to render difficult attacks of mould, left them in a good state of health.

Even if the production 2004 was a little larger than foreseen, the organic and the analytical profile is of a high level and suggests a great Valpolicella ripasso and above all Amarone.