

La Biancara-Angiolino Maule

Profile

What force of nature brought Angiolino Maule to the vines? On meeting him, you would swear he was born to it, that he breathes it, that the vineyard is deeply a part of his soul. A man of true conviction in viticulture and viniculture, Angiolino actually started his working life as a *pizzaiolo*, or pizza maker, of some renown in Italy. But the earth and the vines were calling him all the while. Through his hard work and sterling reputation, Angiolino was able to save enough money to start his winery. He chose Gambellara and, principally, the Garganega grape to make his magical music in a glass.

Gambellara is ostensibly the extension of the Soave foothills in Veneto into the adjoining province of Vicenza where the wine changes its name, but not its general composition. The principal white grape is Garganega backed up with small amounts of Trebbiano. These hills are volcanic in origin, and have rich, dark mineral soils with good amounts of fine clay. They are south facing slopes that are protected from the blasts of Alpine northern winds by the southern Dolomites. The altitude here is between 150 to 250 meters.

Angiolino's estate, in the hamlet of Biancara, now covers about 9 HA. For more than 16 years now, he has plowed in his vines and not used any soil treatments, chemical or otherwise. Using biodynamic viticultural practices, Angiolino has created an organic, living soil and ecosystem for benefiting the health of the vines and their resistance to any form of malady. He is unwavering in his belief that great wines are the result of healthy, beautiful, handpicked fruit, and the only way to achieve this is through natural processes.

Furthermore, he believes that the work in the cellar -- vinification, aging and bottling -- must be consistent with the work in the vines and involve no additives that compromise the natural fruit material, for better or worse. The vinifications are conducted without temperature control, the addition of sulfur, enzymes or yeast and without the use of fining or filtration. Annually the production is between 35 to 45K bottles.

"The wine is the fruit of the earth transformed by mankind; it is the oldest natural beverage known to us. The quality of a wine is that which is imparted by the vineyard; it is indispensable to return to a viticulture and viniculture without chemicals in order to make wines that are expressive of their origins, unique and inimitable and that rise above the standardization and homogeneity that defines the majority of wines commercially available today."

-Angiolino Maule.