

Veneto

Bellini

*Location: San Donà di Piave,
Province of Venice*



The story of Bellini begins in Venice, in the legendary setting of a world-famous artists' café. One warm summer evening in 1948, its owner decided to mix

the fruity joy of perfect white peaches, the grapy sparkle of Prosecco spumante, and a whisper of wild raspberries. He called it Bellini as a tribute to the arts and to his city: the Venice-born painter Giovanni Bellini had first incarnated the sensuous colors of the Venetian Renaissance; another Bellini – Vincenzo – composed a few of the masterpieces in Italian opera.

Bellini, the cocktail, soon became a household word in its own right. The celebrities and glitterati who frequented the café literally fell in love with it: fresh, light, fragrant and appealing, the peachy pink concoction looked like a Venetian sunset... And tasted like one!

Among the very first to enjoy it was arguably the greatest American writer of the twentieth century. He liked the Venetian cocktail so much he mentioned it in his books, and the Bellini story gained worldwide resonance.

The original formula became as well known and imitated as apple pie – and just about as wholesome. Two thirds Prosecco sparkling wine from the hills north of Venice; one third white peach juice with fresh fruit pulp; a few drops of raspberry juice.

Yet for many years, the one and only true Bellini was sipped in Venice, where the authentic ingredients could be found and would maintain their pristine freshness...

Until, forty years after it was invented, Italy's award-winning Prosecco grower, Canella (also a Neil Empson Selection), took up the difficult challenge of producing the famous Venetian cocktail to satisfy its numerous

worldwide fans, yet maintain the freshness and delicacy of the original recipe.

After years of research and development, the Canella family accomplished exactly what they had envisioned: capturing a magic Venetian instant in a bottle!

A new and exciting chapter in the world's love story with Bellini was written in the spring of 2003, when "Bellini by Riedel" was born.

What is Bellini by Riedel? It is the result of an in-depth workshop at the home of Austria's master glassmakers, conducted by Georg Riedel with the Canellas, and aimed at tasting Bellini in the best way possible – that is, in the most appropriate glass. Riedel and Canella unanimously chose the winner: an elegant crystal flûte whose distinctive shape indicates the exact pouring level (see photo above) and then closes in on itself, thus concentrating all the aromas of Bellini's bouquet to the utmost – from the fragrance of Canella Prosecco to that of the blend's rare, perfectly ripe white peaches.

An added bonus to Bellini is its lightness and versatility: the low alcohol content and calorie count, amazing balance of scented fruit, soft texture and zesty acidity, make it an ideal apéritif or 'anytime' refreshment.

