The latest rage in winery design is highly symbolic constructions foregrounding the relationship between structure and surrounds, while expressing the values of the winery and the wine. The work to extend the Zymē winery, in Valpolicella Classica land, saw Moreno Zurlo dream up a building to fuse place and function, past and future, tradition and innovation.

The site is an old sedimentary rock quarry and the stone that was cut out to create the basement level was reused to clad the bottom of the new volume, forging a visible connection between past and future. The solidity of this stone contrasts with the lightness of the office storey above. Here, a glazed volume has a second Cor-ten steel layer styled to resemble the veins of a vine leaf.

The building is spread across three levels: the basement section has a display area and space for maturing and storing wine; the ground floor is a processing and sales zone; and the first floor is for offices and meetings.

The lighting design by Zumtobel ran hand-in-hand with the architectural design, helping to enhance the use of space and materials, while guaranteeing flexibility of use. The entire system uses LED lighting with Bus control. Differing lighting scenarios can be selected via a device connected to the network or Wi-Fi, or using the control panel on each floor.

Light helps the design grow, telling the story of wine production, with different choices adopted for each space.

Access to the basement level is via a ramp lit with bright red, continuous floor lighting. Here, sidelighting is used for the rock walls, with accentuation lighting on the bases. The wine storage and handling areas are lit with adjustable linear track lights. A lift in a space frame structure - lit by tiny narrow-beam spots - connects the basement to the ground floor, where the winery’s products are visible in moveable display cases illuminated with spot and wideflood lighting. In the offices, tasting area and meeting rooms on the first floor, the lighting project focused on user wellbeing and visual comfort. In the offices, the light from a floor lamp is supplemented by recessed lights in the false ceiling, while in the tasting area, two large suspended lights hang above the tables, with round recessed lights inset to them. The same system is used in the meeting room, with carefully chosen LED optics to reduce glare.