

POGGIO DI GUARDIA 2015

Red Blend, Tuscany, Italy

\$59.95



John Szabo, MS



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Poggio di Guardia is a small, seven-hectare estate at 600-700 meters above sea level in particularly rocky soil near Radda in Chianti, in the heart of the Chianti Classico area. The land was fallow until planted to vines in 2006, has has been farmed organically fro the start. Poggio di Guardia's top red, made by Castello di Gabbiano winemaker Federico Cerelli, is a blend of half merlot with 30% cabernet Franc and Sauvignon, and 20% of an unusual grape called Rebo, which, unlike the rest of the varieties, is aged in terra cotta (as opposed to wood barrels). The nose here is very pretty, lifted, floral, perfumed, like a meadow of wild flowers and wild herbs, especially fennel, thyme and oregano, while fruit spans the spectrum of fresh red and black berry, into very ripe dark plum fruit, with supremely well integrated oak influence. The palate is nicely perfumed and polished, still firm and tightly wound, several years away from prime drinking. Terrific length, and an excellent new addition to the Tuscan wine offering in Canada. Best after 2020. Tasted November 2017.



Michael Godel



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The flagship red from Poggio di Guardia turns on two Albarello and Candelabro angles away from its baby Super Toscana sibling Ser Primo by using a slight bit more merlot (50 per cent) to meld with two cabernets, franc and sauvignon (30 per cent). The amphora (Terracotta Orcio) raised ace in the hole variety rebo (20 per cent) really sets this apart. Poggio di Guardia was Siena's enemy finding vantage point during the Florentine wars of the Middle Ages. The winemaking team of Stefano di Blasi and Gabbiano winemaker Federico Cerelli turn vineyards near the village of Radda in Chianti into magic but once again it is the inclusion of rebo that talks the talk. Rebo was created in 1948 by an Italian agricultural geneticist named Rebo Rigotti at the San Michele all'Adige research center in Trentino. Most of the Rebo grown in Italy is in the province of Trentino, where Rebo Rigatti lived and worked. That it was planted in Chianti Classico is one thing but what is does for this blend is another thing altogether. Rebo is often dried appassimento style like Amarone but here in amphora it does for texture and structure just what the soft, dusty, berry, currant and Cassis notes really need. It also lends a mellow funk and an earthy grip. All in all this changes pace, redirects the IGT norm and finishes with great grip and spice. Drink 2019-2026. Tasted November 2017.