

# PORTOVINO

## LUIGI TECCE 'POLIPHEMO VITI VECCHIE R20' CAMPANIA AGLIANICO 2020

The Poliphemo Riserva bottling is Luigi Tecce's most archaic expression of a Taurasi, from centenarian vines (really vine-trees!). It is not only one of the great wines of Taurasi, but one of the great wines of Italy.

Italian wine lovers know Mastrobernardino's 1968 Taurasi bottling as one of Italy's greatest wines. Tecce may take that honor in the future: fine wine critic John Gilliam has compared Tecce to famous Bruno Giacosa.\* And, Italy's Espresso wine guide, long considered the most searching and aesthetically rigorous of the Italian guides, rated Tecce's 2012 Poliphemo 1st on their listing of wine to cellar, followed by Giuseppe Mascarello's Barolo Monprivato and Roagna's Barbaresco. \*\*

Yet, for all the fanfare of late, Luigi Tecce leads a simple life, surrounded by his dogs, vines, and books. He is enamored with the study of ancient history, especially Greco-Roman and medieval monastic, thus his label with Polyphemus, the one-eyed giant. In Homer's epic poem, the protagonist Odysseus, trapped in a cave, offers Poliphemo wine. Now a bit drunk, he pleads for help from his fellow giants, saying "Nobody" has hurt him, since Odysseus has given his name as 'Nobody' when asked by the giant.

This is Luigi flagship wine, and the one we have the least stock of. All I can say is the direction of Supreme Elegance is in full force. The spring rain allowed the vines to produce a fairly high yield. A hot summer and a mild autumn brought the fruit to a perfect maturation. An elegant and fine vintage, like a car from the 60s. The 2020 vintage wines are indeed elegant and fine, and rich in fruit aromatics of crispy red fruit aromas. 2020 was the first time that I produced the rose 'Calipso', not by chance.

**REGION:** Campania **GROWING AREA:** Taurasi; Paternopoli cru subzone

**FARMING:** practicing organic. Natural

**VINEYARD:** grapes are from Paternopoli

**ALTITUDE:** 550 m / 1,800 ft **SOILS:** sandy and clay limestone, enriched by pyroclastics (from Vesuvius's ancient volcanic eruptions)

**VARIETIES:** 100% Aglianico **VINE AGE:** 100+ years old

**VINE TRAINING:** Vines here are more like vine-trees, with a trunk in the middle, and numerous radiating (cf. *raggiera*) outward shoots; they



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look like bush vines on a *pergola*. The local name of this vine training is called *raggiera avellinese*. **HARVEST DATE:** between end of October and beginning of November **YEASTS:** native yeast with spontaneous fermentation

**FERMENTATION & ÉLEVAGE:** hand-picked grapes are crushed and then lightly pressed by hand in a small basket press. Fermentation takes place in open chestnut *tini* for 40 days. Élevage for 12 months in large 500 Liter puncheons, then 24 months in large wooden *botti grandi* (50HL). Finally, a minimum of 24 months in bottle before release

**SULPHUR:** None added **ALCOHOL:** 15% **ANNUAL PRODUCTION:** 7,296 bottles

\* "...Luigi Tecce in Taurasi, whose wines stand above his neighbors in much the same way that Bruno Giacosa's did over most of his contemporaries in Barbaresco back in the day."

\*\* "Whoever chooses and purchases this wine will have before him or her a glass of one of the better Taurasi ever produced. This is a wine born from the earth, meaty, sanguine, spherical and multi-faceted, with a surgical finish. Put on your 3-D glasses because this is going to be a crazy good wine in the future."

*"Chi lo sceglierà e lo acquisterà, avrà davanti a sé, nel bicchiere, uno dei migliori Taurasi mai prodotti...Un vino figlio della sua terra, carnoso, sanguigno, sferico e poi sfaccettato, e dal finale chirurgico. Inforcate gli occhiali 3D, perché sarà pazzesco in futuro."* Espresso 2017.