

[Kevin Day Tasting Reports](#) April 17, 2026

Chianti Classico Riserva: Don't Sleep On This Category

10 Wines to Buy and Drink Now (Or Cellar For the Years Ahead)

Most Old School: 2021 Badia a Coltibuono Chianti Classico Riserva



The spirit of a wine is an elusive thing to describe, which is partly what makes calling a wine “old school” problematic. But you know it when you feel it in a lineup like this. Imagine an audition where every actor coming through the door is eager and energetic, and then in walks someone with experience, command and wisdom. How do you know its wisdom? It’s not a look or an action. It’s a feeling. You give them the part.

That’s a rather round-about way of describing what [this Chianti Classico Riserva](#) from [Badia a Coltibuono](#) conveyed to me. The leathery-savory aromas could only come from Sangiovese grown in Tuscany. Not only that, the wine’s profile on the palate suggested it could only come from an experienced hand, given how patient yet nuanced the interplay of acidity, tannin and flavor was.

Roberto Stucchi has been in charge of the winemaking at Badia a Coltibuono since 1985. For a winery of this size (up to 350,000 bottles per year) he remains a rare holdout from the Gran Selezione category. Instead he makes two Riserva: one in oak casks, and another called “Cultus” in barriques. The latter could never be a Gran Selezione because 20% of the blend is indigenous local red grapes, whose legacy Roberto is passionate about preserving. This Riserva is comprised of a 10% mix of Colorino, Canaiolo and Ciliegiolo, which seem to counter Sangiovese’s cherry-orange-savory notes with a seedy raspberry note that lends freshness.