



VINEYARD AND WINE IN CRETE SENESI

Located in the province of Siena, wine region par excellence, the territory of Crete has an unmistakable identity and extends in the higher valley of Ombrone river, and of its affluents Ace and Arbia. The name of Crete, elsewhere in Tuscany also called Mattaione, is traced to the Latin *creta* (clay), or *marga argillacea*. The erosion of water on little permeable clay land gave birth to characteristic hills called "mammelloni" or "biancane", and to the formation of gullies that are unmistakably associated with the landscape of Crete Senesi.

Chiusure rises in the middle of this territory, and since the eighth century has been proved the presence of the church of Saint Angelo in Luco, whose name evokes the probable wide diffusion of wooded areas in the High Middle Ages. During the Middle Ages the increase in population and the extension of farming in the countryside in a land dotted with cities like Tuscany, determined the progressive extension of cultivated land. Early in the 19th century the territory of Chiusure was described as dry and bare, marked by "cliffs" and "cliffs of Mattajone sometimes intersected by horizontal lines of tufaceous Stone"(G. Saints).

From the Middle Ages until the middle of the twentieth century the rows of vines interspersed with olive framed fields cultivated with cereals, the "bread lands", apart from a few isolated small vineyard. Within the farm, crops had to meet the requirements of the farm family first. "Those who drink it do not eat it" said the Tuscan proverb to indicate the connection between cereal crops (bread, basic food) and viticulture (wine, constant element of daily meals).

In the mid-twentieth the historic exodus from the countryside led to the abandonment of traditionally practised crops, until their reduction, if not their disappearance.

The rebirth of a viticulture today in Crete of Siena is an opportunity for agriculture in the area, and yet again one of the traditional tree crops together with olive tree.