



CHIANTI
RUFINA
dal 1716

TERRÆLECTAE

Rufina: Lofty passion in the vineyard

THE PROJECT

The ancient Romans set great store by the concept of *genius loci*, an individual place's complex of characteristics that were embodied in a creative symbiosis with those who lived in that spot, regarded as a divinity who protected the authenticity of an area and ensured a serene existence and prosperous work.

Centuries later, in the context of viticulture, the French created the term *terroir*, or the unique, literally one-of-a-kind complex of elements such as soil, climate, microclimate, the grapevine, and, in particular, the experience and wisdom of man, all of which combine together to yield a product of inestimable quality that must reflect, and solely conveys, that and only that locus. This concept led to the formation of winegrowing areas such as Bordeaux, Burgundy, Champagne, and the Rhine, and in Italy of Barolo and Chianti.

But part of the essence of man is never to be fully content, and to strive to plumb reality around us in ever more detail. Thus, the French created the concept of *cru* as well, an outstanding vineyard within a particular zone, a micro-zone endowed with even more "special powers," a kind of super *genius loci* whose qualities generate an extraordinary wine, absolutely without peer and irreplicable elsewhere.

Chianti Rufina is a very distinctive environment, lying between the valley of the Arno river and the Mugello. It is traversed by the Sieve river, but it is mainly impacted by the **Tuscan-Romagna Apennine mountain chain**, the true *genius loci* for this district, which exercises its influence in a significant manner in terms of the climate. The mountains act as shields and barriers that in some areas channel the air currents, trap excessive rainfall, moderate high temperatures, and redistribute everything over time and through the seasons. Soil composition is fairly uniform on the two banks of the Sieve, while elevations vary, ranging from low-hillslope terrain up to vineyards at 700 metres, the highest level permitted by the Production Code. The most predominant and influential element of the area, however, is exposure, which creates microclimates for each vineyard. Whereas the Flemish Giusto Utens created ingenious birds-eye views of all the Medici villas, including Il Trebbio, today's aerial drones can offer precise photos of the vine-carpeted vineyards, which clearly show their sun-kissed,

well-ventilated, airy character, just as refined and elegant as the wines they yield. The uniqueness of these wines lies, too, in their ability to age and develop over significant periods of time, effectively demonstrated in a recent tasting of 1980 vintage Chianti Rufinas. Longevity is a quality one closely associates with wines for collections and for investment—in a word, with wines that are fully world-class.

All of this explains how Chianti Rufina is part of the overall Chianti zone, but with particular characteristics that merit examination and appreciation, in-depth and specifically-designed, metre by metre.

WHAT IS TERRAELECTAE

This is the reason for creating the **TERRAELECTAE** mark: on joining this collective production entity, each producer identifies his “iconic vineyard,” that exceptional parcel within his estate vineyards in which Sangiovese expresses its classic characteristics in the most eloquent manner possible, to the highest degree, and in the most consistent fashion, year after year. Those grapes are vinified as a Chianti Rufina Riserva, in full respect of the Production Code, and the resultant wine is then granted the distinctive Terraelectae mark.

The attention paid to the growing area is thus total and uncompromised. What counts is the vineyard, with its unique site and its grapes, the object of near-obsessive care. The project envisions a precise and distinctive style for the Terraelectae wines, one that over time, vintage after vintage, with the winegrowers’ expertise and experience deepening with each harvest, will mirror ever more compellingly their source vineyards and ever less their process of vinification.

The objective of Terraelectae is that it become a mark with a strongly-expressed identity and recognised seal of assured quality, one that clearly showcases the nonpareil quality of the Rufina Apennine winegrowing zone, proud to have produced for so many centuries such elegant, long-lived wines.