

SERRA FERDINANDEA

TERROIR

Serra Ferdinandea's terrains are the result of the crumbling and alteration of calcareous rock that still appears as outcrops covered with unusual vegetation along its edges. These are quite ancient marine deposits dating to the Jurassic and mainly Cretaceous periods (from 200 to 65 million years ago circa). These periods are characterized by a tropical climate and the formation of coral reefs. The land emerged from the sea more recently due to folding when the African plate collided with the European one in the Pliocene (seven million years ago). This is also true of most of Sicily and the entire Sicilian Mountain Range. Serra Ferdinandea's terrains have been transformed over the course of millennia by the elements, but also by human activities, mainly shepherding. It is impossible to say how long they have been shepherding, most likely thousands of years. The climate is cooler than the coastal areas and has slowed down the degradation of organic substances, made of vegetable residues and partially sheep dung from the extensive shepherding (which comprises vegetable residues as well). This can

be noticed in the terrains' profile, where a dark layer appears under the surface, remaining rather light and easy to work even during summer drought. Geopedologically, this layer is called the mollisol horizon, a fertile layer rich in stable humus. It varies from roughly two to ten inches deep. Moving down along the profile, you encounter other horizons that are calcareous with a certain presence of stones and a well-balanced percentage of sand, silt and clay. These are mainly beige turning red in some points and turning darker brown wherever the soil holds more water.

These are practically virgin terrains and they have certainly not felt the plough in centuries; the microbial life and terrestrial organisms in the root zone have never been disturbed. We disturbed them as little as possible while planting the vineyards.

SERRA FERDINANDEA