



## OVERVIEW

The commune of Cortona lies at the foot of the Apennine mountains in eastern Tuscany near the border with Umbria. It overlooks the Val di Chiana, a long valley that runs from Arezzo to Orvieto in Umbria. The Val di Chiana was once an expanse of marshes, but Cortona, on higher ground, has been an agricultural area and source of wine since Etruscan times. Being farther from the coast than just about any other part of Tuscany, Cortona has a more continental climate, hotter in the summer and colder in the winter than elsewhere. In fact, local growers noted a similarity between their climate and that of the Rhône Valley in France and began experimenting with the Rhône variety Syrah in a big way in the 1960s. Syrah is now the primary grape in Cortona. However, the Cortona DOC rules permit a number of other wines as well. Besides Syrah, varietal wines can be made from Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, or Sangiovese. White wines and Vin Santo round out the Cortona portfolio.