

## Quick Guide

### Chapter 11.

*History. How it all began.*

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## AS OLD AS THE CIVILIZATION

*"Anyone who knows his history... must surely know his wines"* Arnold J. Toynbee, historian (1852-1883).

- Wine was already being made of wild grapes by nomadic people 6000 or 7000 years ago. When they became settled, the vine was, along with olive and fig trees, one of the first plants to be cultivated and exploited by man.
- It is a widespread opinion among many historians that the foundations of the modern economy, money, contracts, modes of payment, accounting and even numbers, emerged from the needs of the wine trade during the time of the Pharaohs.
- The Greeks perfected the amphora, and added products to the wine to aid its conservation, such as, for example, pitch, resin and spices. Resin wine, or retsina, is still popular in modern Greece.
- It was the Etruscans who planted the first vines in Italy, even when Rome was yet to be built.
- It was when Julius Caesar conquered Gaul that the Romans first came across wooden barrels, an invention of the Gallic tribes. The Celts used these barrels for beer. The Romans soon understood that they were ideal for transporting wine.
- Between 500 and 1400 A.D., Europe became the prime region for the cultivation of the vine in the world. The literature, poetry and art of the period well reflect the profound influence that wine exerted on that culture. Wine had by then become the universal accompaniment for meals – a development that was no doubt helped by the dubious and insanitary water supply system of the period.
- In America, the vine preceded the Europeans. When Leif Erikson and Columbus visited the American continent found in the wild vines. Erickson called the region Vinland, as the Nordic sagas have been transmitted through the centuries.