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Wednesday 4 June 2014

the drinks business

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TOP 10 WOMEN IN ITALIAN WINE

3rd June, 2014 by Tom Bruce Gardyne

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JOSÉ RALLO – Donnafugata (Sicily)



Before the name was immortalised by Lampedusa in *The Leopard*, Donnafugata was the Bourbon Queen who fled Naples for Sicily to escape Napoleon's troops. Loosely translated as "woman on the run", José Rallo of the eponymous Sicilian wine sees it differently. "For me it's a woman looking forward who wants to escape and change." In her eyes that defines her mother Gabriella, a teacher married to a wine dynasty from Marsala, who inherited an estate of her own and abruptly quit her job. "I saw my mother change and become a real entrepreneur," says José, who was 11 at the time. Ten years later her parents launched Donnafugata together.

Fleeing Sicily to study economics before working for a US management consultant, José spent quite a few years "on the run" before falling in love with a Sicilian. This dragged her home and in 1990 she asked her father if she could join in. He was delighted, but made her start at the bottom to test her commitment. She describes him as "the world's biggest feminist", and yet "a very rational man" who can only be won over through reasoned debate. Today José and her winemaking brother Antonio are effectively in charge though her parents are still heavily involved. José also does a lot to promote Sicilian culture through art and music.

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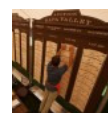
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One Response to "Top 10 women in Italian wine"



Willi Klinger says:
June 3, 2014 at 1:53 pm

I doubt Gaia ever said Angelo was 84, cause he was born in 1940 and thus is 74, looking like 64, having the energy of a youngster...

Time flies, but fortunately not that fast!

Kind regards

Willi Klinger

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