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## An Italian Must-Try: 2010 Donnafugata – Ben Rye – Passito di Pantelleria DOC

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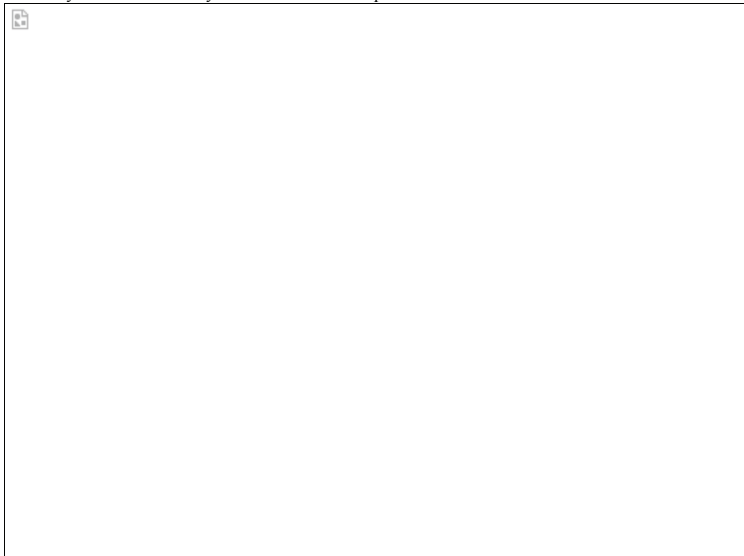
[Italy, Sicily](#)

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*I decided to post some tasting notes for wines that I have tried at the Slow Wine Munich 2013 wine fair. This means I will not write a detailed Slow Wine 2013 report. Many wines disappointed me and are not worth mentioning. Maybe I will summarise all the Slow Wine 2013 flops in a separate post. If you are not familiar with [Slow Food and the Slow Movement](#) then read this post first.*

### An Italian Must-Try

Today's wine review will focus on Donnafugata's Ben Rye, which I consider one of Italy's most well-known and best sweet wines. [Donnafugata](#) produces wine on the Mediterranean islands Sicily and Pantelleria as well as on a few other small, volcanic islands. Furthermore, Donnafugata manufactures olive oil extra vergine and grappa. Let me share some interesting stats about the winery with you. They cultivate 14 different grape varieties and their wines are available in 61 foreign markets. Almost 15.000 people visit Donnafugata each year. Below you see a map that shows the locations where Donnafugata makes wine.



Mille e una Notte and Ben Rye are their most well-known wines. At the 2013 Slow Wine trade fair in Munich I had the chance to try both of them. Today's tasting notes are for the 2010 Ben Rye.

## Pantelleria and Passito di Pantelleria



[Pantelleria](#) is a tiny island with an area of 83 km<sup>2</sup>. The island is located only 60 km from the Tunisian coast and 100 km from Sicily. Pantelleria is part of the Sicilian province of Trapani. The island is of volcanic origin and very fertile. Furthermore, Pantelleria counts less than 8000 inhabitants.

Wine-wise the island is famous for its world class passito. Passito di Pantelleria DOC is produced with [Zibibbo](#) grapes. Grapes get sundried on straw mats for around 30-40 days where they lose most of their weight. During maceration, the grapes release their incredible sweetness.

## Tasting notes 2010 Ben Rye



Ben Rye from Donnafugata has an intense amber color. Just by looking at the color I could already tell that this was the real deal. The bouquet consists mostly of candid oranges, peach, wild herbs and honey. Alcohol by volume was label listed at 14.5%. On the palate, Ben Rye was extremely soft with a delicious sweetness. I tasted some candid fruits and minerals. A very complex wine with a lingering finish.

4.5 / 5 stars

The wine is classified as Passito di Pantelleria DOC. Ben Rye is among the best sweet wines that I have tried so far. Almost as good as the legendary [Recioto di Soave from Trabucchi d'Illasi](#).

## Parting words

A 0.375 liters bottle of Ben Rye retails for around 20€. The wine is also available in 0.75 liters bottles. Use [wine searcher](#) to find a store near you. It is worth knowing that the wine won the [prestigious 3 bicchieri award from the Gambero Rosso](#).

I already mentioned that I also tried the Mille e una Notte from Donnafugata. *Mille e una Notte* literally translates to *One Thousand and One Nights*. Tasting notes for the Mille e una Notte are coming in the next days.

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Have you tried Ben Rye? What is your opinion on sweet wines like Passito di Pantelleria? Looking forward to your comments!

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