



A Queen in Flight

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Maria Carolina ~ Queen of Naples and Sicily

The name of the winery is Donnafugata and it comes from a book that tells the story of Queen Maria Carolina who found refuge in the part of Sicily where the company's vineyards are located today. "Donna in fuga" means woman in flight. The image of a woman's head with wind-blown hair dominates every bottle and the labels are created or inspired by Gabriella Rallo as homage to art and literature.

I cannot understand why I never get much sympathy when I share what I have to go through; for instance last year in Verona I attended Vinitaly and had to contend with 4,100 wineries that displayed their wares on over one million square feet of exhibition floor space. I was not alone as 130,000 wine professionals from 140 countries attended as well. It is the world's largest wine fair and it goes on for four days.



Vinitaly 2016 – 50th Anniversary

Of course it was wonderful to see so many old friends and meet new people and I can honestly say that amongst the top five in my mind was the tasting at Donnafugata. Their labels are beautiful, the wines lovely and the people so very accommodating. I must warn you though that you may not be familiar with the traditional grape names of their island.



Donnafugata Sur Sur

Donnafugata Sur Sur 2015 is a white wine produced from the Grillo grape and it received a 91/100 score and “editors’ choice” from the Wine Enthusiast magazine. They had this to say; “Vibrant and savory, this opens with lovely aromas of spring flowers, citrus, herb and white stone fruit. The round, juicy palate offers ripe white peach (hence stone fruit), juicy grapefruit, pineapple and mineral alongside fresh acidity. A saline note backs up the finish”. We could add cut grass, lemon and a hint of almond. \$22.90. Sounds like a summer treat to me.



Donnafugata Lighea

As I look at the label on **Donnafugata “Lighea” 2016** that is made from Zibibbo (Muscat of Alexandria) grapes I think that you should buy a bottle of each of their wines so that you can line up these amazing works of art on your side-board. “It was not easy to print this label” says co-founder Gabriella “and preserve the thousand shadings of colours of Pantelleria Island painted in the original drawing”. The nose of this white wine offers a rich and fragrant bouquet with classic notes of orange blossom combined with scents of Saturn peaches – even a mineral vein. \$24.25



Donnafugata Sherazade Nero d'Avola 2015 lets us move on to the reds and a grape that I have always very much appreciated. Others must as well as Decanter, James Suckling and Vinous all rated it 91/100. Those of you that can see colours (not me) will detect a brilliant ruby red with purple hues. There are strawberries and blackberries and even a scent of violets in the fruity bouquet. Mulberry, sour cherry and soft tannins make it a perfect sipper. \$21.75.



Donnafugata Tancredi

If you are in the mood for Cabernet Sauvignon, Nero d'Avola, Tannat or even a few others, all you have to do is remove the cork from a bottle of **Donnafugata Tancredi 2012** and also give us \$36.85. We are getting serious here with scents of liquorice and sweet tobacco. It is very well integrated with dark fruits and soft tannins. This wine has been called the jewel of this 150 year old family winery and it is noted for its pairing with beef steaks and game.



DONNAFUGATA®

We end today with **Donnafugata Mille e una Notte 2011** that has to be one of the finest wines I tasted during three weeks of travel from Milan to Piedmont, to Verona and Florence and then down to explore Tuscany. This blend of Nero d'Avola, Syrah and Petit Verdot was reviewed this way by Antonio Galloni "95/100 Captivating floral lift to the aromas of plum, blackcurrant, star anise, cocoa and cinnamon. Smooth, lush and round with a fresh, juicy quality lending precision to the suave flavours of dark berries and cocoa. I love the combination of texture and focus here. Finishes broad and long with ripe, polished tannins and a repeating violet nuance". Parker rates it 94/100. \$66.30.

Michael Robinson is Director of Wine at Burrows, Lightbourn Ltd. He can be contacted at mrobinson@bll.bm or on 295-0176. Burrows, Lightbourn have stores in Hamilton (Front Street East, 295-1554), Paget (Harbour Road, 236-0355) and St George's (York Street, 297-0409). A selection of their wines, beers and spirits are available on line at



