



DONNAFUGATA®

PRESS RELEASE

Vintage 2014 a Donnafugata

The grape harvest at Contessa Entellina

A successful vintage: from fresh and perfumed whites to reds for long aging



Climatic trends

The 2014 vintage was characterized by a fairly balanced **climatic trend**, with a relatively **mild winter** and a **cool, rainy spring**. Overall, from 1 October 2013 to 31 August 2014, 620.8 mm of rainfall was recorded: **a slightly lower figure compared to the average** of the last 10 years (656.1 mm, data recorded at the Contessa Entellina S.I.A.S. station www.sias.regione.sicilia.it), with rainfall concentrated in the spring months. July and August passed without excesses of heat and, according to the tradition of the hilly area of Contessa Entellina, with an excellent temperature range between day and night, thus favoring the production of particularly fresh and balanced wines.

The Donnafugata vineyards in western Sicily

Ten different territories together form Donnafugata's production and ampelographic heritage in western Sicily, between Contessa Entellina, Santa Margherita di Belice, Sambuca di Sicilia and Salemi. Healthy and ripe grapes, harvested at the right stage of ripeness, perfectly intact when they reach the winery: this is the commitment the company renews with itself every year, ensuring a fine raw material.

*"The 2014 vintage - explains **Antonio Rallo**, owner of Donnafugata and the company's production manager - saw a fairly balanced climatic trend. A less productive vintage than 2013 with light cluster thinning and only in some vineyards. The **quality of the grapes is excellent**, with clusters that are particularly healthy and ripe. The optimum aromatic and phenolic ripeness bodes well for **excellent aromas** for the **white wines**, and fruity bouquets and **interesting structures for long aging** for the reds".*

The climatic conditions and the main cultivation practices in the different viticultural contexts of Contessa Entellina.

In **spring** (April-May) there was a **slight delay** in **budburst** and **flowering**.

Topping the vines in **June** encouraged the growth of new leaves physiologically active in the last stages of ripening.

Veraison happened in **July** and the **temperatures were within the seasonal values**, always characterized by **extreme temperature variations** between day and night (even greater than 22°C).

On **August 10** the **nighttime harvesting of the Chardonnay** began, the first variety to reach full ripeness in the **territories of Duchessa and Mazzaporro**, among the earliest due to their location down in the valley. Harvesting at night is a technical choice that allows to preserve the grape aromas, saving 70% of energy in the cooling before pressing.

The following day, in the higher (470 - 500 m above sea level) and more ventilated vineyards, the harvest of the **Chardonnay** and **Pinot Nero** destined for the preparation of the sparkling wine base for the production of Donnafugata Brut was carried out.

Sauvignon Blanc and **Viognier** followed soon after, with the harvesting that begins in the Mazzaporro district and continues gradually in the other areas. Then the **Merlot** in the **Casale Bianco** district (whose name derives from the typical white color of the terrains), the first of the black grape vineyards to reach full ripeness, thanks also to the phenomenon of the reflectance due to the composition of the terrains, rich in limestone. Successively the **Nero D'Avola**, **Syrah** and **Tannat** destined for the production of the base for the Donnafugata rosé were harvested.

Between **late August** and **early September** the harvest of the **Syrah** in **Casale Bianco** and **Petit Manseng** in the Miccina vineyards took place.

The harvest of the **Ansonica**, **Cataratto**, **Nero D'Avola** and **Fiano** varieties continued during the **first ten days of September**; in the **second ten days** of the month it was time for the **Grillo** cultivated in the hilly area between Marsala and Salemi (Alfaraggio, Baiata and Pioppo districts) that, thanks to the good ventilation and play of temperature differences between day and night, ensure grapes with good acidity and moderate sugar level: excellent characteristics for SurSur, Donnafugata's single variety white. During the same period the harvest of the **Tannat**, **Petit Verdot**, **Alicante Bouchet** and **Cabernet Sauvignon** varieties was carried out.

The harvest concluded on September 27 with the **Catarratto** in Contrada Mazzaporro. A total of about 50 days of harvesting managed with due care and in line with the production tradition universally recognized.