



DONNAFUGATA

PRESS RELEASE

The 2003 Vintage

Donnafugata at Contessa Entellina

CLIMATIC CONDITIONS: After at least two years of drought, 2002-2003 was marked by slightly higher than average rainfall. This permitted the terrain to reintegrate its reserves of water, which are fundamental for the physiological requirements of the vineyards beginning in the initial stages of the cycle of growth (budding and flowering), which occurred in the best of fashions.

RIPENING AND HARVESTING: We collected the Chardonnay—the first variety to ripen—beginning on August 3. The summer heat, especially from August 10 to 20, accelerated the maturation process, which resulted in wines with medium-high alcohol levels. However, those levels are normal for wines produced in a Mediterranean or other sunny environments. In that respect, we need to underline the fact that the substantial variations between night and day temperatures, which are common in these hilly zones, yielded grapes with excellent fragrances.

Harvesting of the Merlot was begun in the third decade of August, followed by the picking of the Cabernet Sauvignon, which continued until the early days of September. September was also the month in which we brought in the native Nero d'Avola and Ansonica.

QUALITY: Better than good; the wines have reached a good equilibrium of body, aroma, freshness and softness. While the wines of the 2002 vintage - it was a dry year - stand out for structure, those of 2003 will be appreciated for their elegance. We had an increase in output of 10%.

QUANTITY: satisfying and proportionate to our qualitative aim; compared to the 2002 vintage which had been scanty, in 2003 we had 10% increasing rate.

Donnafugata at Pantelleria

CLIMATIC CONDITIONS: A mild winter and a spring with little rainfall, which are normal conditions. Temperatures were high during much of the summer but breezes were steady and thermometer readings varied considerably from day to night. Beginning on September 6, an extraordinary amount of rainfall was recorded: 700 mm in only 14 days. That reduced the possibility of drying the Zibibbo (Moscato d'Alessandria) grapes harvested later.

RIPENING AND HARVESTING: The Zibibbo ripened perfectly even before the middle of August with a sugar level a bit higher than in 2002. Slight differences in ripening are usually due to such factors as the age of the vines and, above all, the varying exposures of the vineyards and the winds.

QUALITY: Excellent; the 2003 vintage emphasized the concentration of the Moscato and the Passito. They are structured wines with an imposing sugar/acidity ratio and an extraordinary amount of aromatic qualities.

QUANTITY: Wine production remained fairly stable in respect to the preceding year. In particular, output seemed to be more abundant than it had been in 2002, which was extremely dry, but the September rains failed to permit drying of the grapes in the desired quantities.

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