



DONNAFUGATA

PRESS RELEASE

The 2006 harvest: perfect maturation of the grapes, aromatic white wines, fruity and elegant reds

Chiarandà and Ben Ryé 2005 vintage released in November

Marsala, October 23, 2006. Donnafugata began the 2006 grape harvest on the island of Pantelleria on August 17 and at Contessa Entellina on August 22, more or less as in the past two years however later than the average. At Contessa Entellina the Chardonnay grapes were the first to be picked—at night to retain their aromatic elements and to guarantee energy savings in the grape cooling stage. On Pantelleria, vineyards are located in 11 different areas and this year Donnafugata inaugurated a new vinification cellar in the Khamma *contrada*. Harvesting began in the Punta Karace, Arco dell'Elefante and Martingana vineyards. These areas are typically mature earlier than those in other parts of the island.

This summer in Sicily was not excessively hot. Grape harvesting at the Contessa Entellina estate began after the four hottest days of the summer, that accelerated grape ripening.

The Spring was characterized by heavy rain in comparison to the average season which was concentrated between late April and early May: from April 29 to May 5 rainfall reached 50 mm, a significant amount for the island.

Grape production was more abundant than usual and so the yield was reduced with repeated thinning-out to ensure a better productive equilibrium and the ideal aromatic ripening.

The technical team, guided by Antonio Rallo—"Donnafugata family" agronomist and head of production—is expecting to secure from the 2006 harvest white wines that are highly aromatic and red wines with good body and fruity flavors. Among the indigenous varieties, Nero d'Avola enjoyed outstanding weather conditions this year, highlighting the fruit. Thanks to big differences in day and night temperatures on the island of Pantelleria, Zibibbo possesses an exceptional aromatic charge.

And Nero d'Avola and Zibibbo di Pantelleria are precisely the wines for which Donnafugata is being praised once again in Italian wine guides. Its Mille e una Notte 2003—already honored with the "Super Tre Stelle Blu" ("Super Three Stars Blue") in *I Vini di Veronelli 2006*—was awarded "Tre Bicchieri" ("Three Glasses") by *Vini d'Italia Gambero Rosso Slow Food*. The 2005 Ben Ryé Passito di Pantelleria was judged one of the three best Italian sweet wines in Luca Maroni's Guide and also rated five "Grappoli" ("Bunches") in the Bibenda and A.I.S. (Italian Sommeliers Association) *Duemilavini Guide*.



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The 2005 Chiarandà and Ben Ryé will be distributed in restaurants, wine shops and wine bars, in Italy and abroad, from the beginning of November.

Chiarandà 2005 - Alcohol: 14,16 % vol.; Total Acidity: 5,63 g/l.; pH: 3,41.

Also for the 2005, Chiarandà (which first vintage was 1992) offers its own traditional blend of Ansonica and Chardonnay, 50/50. The Chardonnay was harvested from the twentieth of August until the eighth of September, the Ansonica from the eighth to the sixtieth of September.

The maturation period of the grapes was monitored with a high number of sampling and tasting to determine the best moment to pick the grape in each small part of every vineyards. After the fermentation, the wine is matured "sur lies", half in small cement vats and half in 22 different types of French oak barrels in order to respect characteristics of the varieties of grapes. The barriques used, differ by producer, provenance of the wood, method and intensity of the toasting of the wood.

For the area of Contessa Entellina, the vintage is one of the best of its history and Chiarandà 2005 will be a testament to this exceptional year: a wine with a good acidity, with a strong personality and extremely refined. The marriage between the fleshiness of the Chardonnay and the elegance of the Ansonica, gives life to a rare complexity. This wine has a long life on the horizon.

Ben Ryé 2005 - Alcohol: 14,11% vol.; Total acidity: 7,61 g/l.; Residual sugars: 192 g/l.

2005 was cool and rainy. In Pantelleria, the harvesting of Zibbo began on the sixtieth of August in the precocious areas like "Martingana" and "Dietro L'isola".

Very intense perfumes and fleshy, Ben Ryé 2005 offers a triumph of citrus fruits, apricot and honey scents. An ideal equilibrium between sugars, alcohol and acidity makes the wine a pleasurable drink and its strong personality renders it unique: Ben Ryé 2005 has depth and a memorable fullness. A long life is expected.

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