



DONNAFUGATA

PRESS RELEASE

## *Wine tourism is growing at Donnafugata*

**In 2007 visits to sites at Marsala, Contessa Entellina and Pantelleria set a record. In addition more than 1,200 wine lovers have admired Donnafugata's new winery at Khamma on Pantelleria. It is an example of production and architectural excellence that is respectful of the countryside. José Rallo: "Interest in quality wines is growing and Donnafugata is opening its doors with great enthusiasm."**

**Marsala: October 11, 2007** – The wine tourism numbers for 2007 at Donnafugata are already at record levels in comparison with the preceding year. Altogether the estate has registered an increase of 20% in the number of visitors. In particular, the number of foreigners rose from 27% to 39% of the total (with North Americans in the lead, followed by Germans and Swiss. On Pantelleria, the number of visitors doubled.

The wine tourism project at Donnafugata is aimed at both amateur and expert wine lovers, who receive a personalized welcome to a tour of the entire estate from the vineyard to the winery. The visitor is offered the opportunity to learn about the Donnafugata world, its wines and its territory.

In addition to offering daily visits, Donnafugata has always taken part in two nationwide events promoted by the Association of Wine Tourism: Cantine Aperte (Open Wineries) and Calici di Stelle (Goblets of Stars). Also on the occasion of those events, staged at **Contessa Entellina** in 2007, the estate registered an increase in participation whether by residents of Sicily or visitors coming from all parts of Italy and from abroad.

"They are always more numerous," said José Rallo, the estate's owner, referring to Italian and foreign tourists who include in their itinerary of the discovery of Sicily a visit to a wine estate and a tasting of wines and other typical products. "They are motivated by passion for wine and curiosity about the places where it is produced. That's without forgetting the capacity of the territory to arouse interest. It is able to welcome visitors with a good level of services and it, too, is a source of attraction.

"As far as we are concerned," she added, "our objective is that of getting them to live an experience that leaves a mark in their memories and hearts. At Donnafugata we offer the visitor the possibility of experimenting with a 'full immersion' formative and informative survey of the entire production process and ending with a professionally guided tasting."

In 2006, Donnafugata opened the doors of its new winery, Khamma, on **Pantelleria** to the public for the summer season. And it was there that Donnafugata scored its finest success in 2007 with visits by more than 1,200 persons in July, August and September. The tour at Khamma is truly special. The century-old Zibibbo vineyard is an extraordinary example of biodiversity. It is surrounded by low, dry-stone walls and the stocks are curved by the wind so that they scrape the ground. And when the harvest begins, the tasting of grapes taken directly from the vine is a rite in which everyone wants to participate.

The new Khamma winery is perfectly installed in the landscape, a natural amphitheater of terraces that gently embrace the vinification cellar. Sheathed with hand-cut lava stone, it is a place where silence and harmony reign. At the center of the courtyard a farmhouse plays host to a wine shop where it is possible to taste the estate's production. The tasting of Kabir Moscato and Ben Ryé Passito di Pantelleria, two naturally sweet wines, is essential. The two are known and appreciated throughout the world for their extraordinary personalities.

However, there are the Historic Wineries in **Marsala**, which can be visited throughout the year, a response to the greater influx of Italian and foreign tourists. It is an uninterrupted flow that in most cases has planned its stop at Donnafugata far in advance, making reservations by e-mail, at [enoturismo@donnafugata.it](mailto:enoturismo@donnafugata.it). The guided tour of the wineries is completed with a tasting and in many cases with an exclusive meal at which elegant combinations of foods and wines give rise to memorable culinary experiences. In addition, a welcome extended in four foreign languages (English, German, Spanish and French) are among the services offered by Donnafugata.

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