



DONNAFUGATA®

PRESS RELEASE

The Pantellerian Garden at Khamma donated to the FAI

Donnafugata thereby intends to protect and promote Pantelleria agriculture

There are places that forcefully embody the meaning of a civilization. **Pantelleria** is one of them. Its landscape is one of rare beauty: lava-stone drywalls, vineyards of Zibibbo cultivated as shrubs and the *dammusi*, whitewashed and lava-black farmhouses that seem created by an ancient volcano.

Farming is queen on this island, it's what has modeled the contours of that *desertus et asperimus locus*, that arid, harsh place as described by Seneca, covering it with **terraced plots** wrenched from the mountainside where through the centuries grapes, olives and capers have ensured a human presence and livelihood.

Donnafugata, committed to wine excellence for more than twenty years and whose **Ben Ryé** Passito di Pantelleria is its pride, has now found a further way to protect and promote the island's agriculture.

The Sicilian winery has decided to donate the **Donnafugata Giardino Pantesco** at Khamma to the **FAI – Italy's National Trust** – in virtue of its great interest and authoritative role in protecting environmental heritage.

An extraordinary example of agrarian technology and architecture, the Pantellerian garden is able to grow and make fruitful a citrus tree, often grafted to bear three different varieties, in an "extreme" context where humans have always had to struggle against wind and drought.

The Donnafugata Pantellerian Garden, which holds a century-old orange tree of the Portugal variety, is an ingenious "**vitamin factory**" testifying to how ancient methods were able to deal with problems such as scarcity of food and water.

Amidst the Khamma vineyards the Donnafugata Pantellerian Garden is – together with the *dammusi* and drywalls – a characteristic feature of the landscape that both fascinates and demonstrates the labor and dedication of the island's farming community.

On **September 12** there was a ceremony **consigning the garden** from the "hands" of Giacomo Rallo, owner of the Sicilian winery, to those of Marco Magnifico, Director General of the FAI.



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“This is a decision in line with our corporate philosophy of valorizing production districts”, explains **Giacomo Rallo**. “The donation testifies to our ties to the island of Pantelleria, which offers one of the most fascinating examples of ‘heroic’ grape-growing in the Mediterranean.

“The FAI”, he continues, “is the ideal organization for managing a unique feature like the Pantellerian garden. Ours is located in a natural amphitheater formed by terraced vineyards with Zibibbo vines over a hundred years old, in the Khamma area, the heart of Donnafugata production”.

The Pantellerian garden is in fact part of a full itinerary also enabling visitors to get acquainted with the entire production process – vineyard to cellar - for **Ben Ryé** raisin wine. **Tours** can be arranged daily at 9:30 a.m. in July, August and September, contacting the Donnafugata Khamma winery at (+39) 0923 915649.

“On Pantelleria”, concludes Giacomo Rallo, “a few hundred of these gardens have managed to survive, but many are in a state of abandon. Also abandoned in recent decades have been large portions of vineyard, once covering nearly 10,000 acres. Today not more than **1,250** acres are still being cultivated and at risk is not only a pillar of the island’s farming economy but also the landscape, which we would like to see restored to the splendor of 50 years ago. Protecting and maintaining this ecosystem, so fragile and complex, must become a commitment felt by all”.

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