



DONNAFUGATA

PRESS RELEASE

A year at Donnafugata

From Vinitaly 2008 to 2009, a year of memorable projects and events.

April 2008 - Donnafugata for the Future, wine & music for microcredit.

Donnafugata for the Future is the project with which the Sicilian winery innovatively interprets its social responsibility, betting on **microcredit** (following the example of Muhammed Yunus, Nobel Peace Prize winner in 2006) in collaboration with voluntary, non-profit organizations. This is a formula that has few precedents in Italy and combines wine, music and social-benefit work. The funds raised through sales of the new **“Donnafugata Music & Wine”** CD, featuring Josè Rallo as solo vocalist, will be used entirely to establish a guarantee fund that will enable the Banca Etica to finance micro-enterprises. The CD is sold in Italy’s finest restaurants, wine bars and wine shops and at www.cdbaby.com.

May 2008 - MILLEANNI, the new extra-virgin olive oil.

The commitment of quality and the expression of territorial values that have always distinguished Donnafugata wines gave birth to **Milleanni**, an extra-virgin olive oil blended from three olive varieties – Nocellara del Belice, Biancolilla, Cerasuola – grown in the Belice Valley in the heart of western Sicily.

June 2008 - Open Cellars at Donnafugata and wine tourism, a very positive outcome.

Like every year, the last Sunday in May saw Donnafugata involved in Cantine Aperte (15th edition). Wine tourists, little family groups and lots of young people passed through the gates of the historic Sicilian winery. The Rallo family and winery staff were very busy welcoming their guests with professionalism and warmth. At the close of the event the winery was able to add up the figures for wine tourism, a project directed at aficionados and experts alike, with welcomes tailored to them. Last year the results were once again good. In fact, the winery hosted a total of **approximately 9,000 visitors, about a 30% increase from 2007**, and many of them were foreigners from **34 different nations**, accounting for 25% of the total. Americans were in the lead, followed by Germans and Swedes. **Record visits were made to the Pantelleria vineyards and cellar**, drawing 1,900 people, up 55% from the previous year.

July 2008 - The Donnafugata website now speaks 9 languages.

Since its online publication the Donnafugata website has always been bilingual, in **Italian and English**. As of July much of its content is also being provided in **another 7 foreign languages** (French, German, Japanese, Chinese, Russian, Korean and Spanish) easy to access through as many “landing-pages” from which to “set down” in the polyglot Donnafugata world.



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August 2008 - The nocturnal harvest: ten years of a passion for quality.

The night of August 6 at the Contessa Entellina estate Agriculture Minister Luca Zaia cut the first bunch of 2008 Chardonnay, celebrating the tenth anniversary of an important technical innovation, **nighttime harvesting**. In fact, it was in 1998 when Donnafugata first experimented with moonlight grape picking, a method that the winery definitively adopted in 1999. Thanks to cooler nighttime temperatures the fragrance of the grapes is fully preserved in their move from vineyard to cellar, avoiding undesired fermentations and getting good energy savings in the stages of cooling and pressing. And in honor of the tenth anniversary of the **nighttime harvest** also published online was a mini-site entirely devoted to this milestone in the Extreme Quality project www.donnafugata.it.

September 2008 - The Pantellerian Garden is donated to the FAI.

For the past twenty years involved on Pantelleria in a project pursuing production excellence, whose finest expression is Ben Ryé Passito, Donnafugata also promotes the island's agriculture and has donated a **Pantellerian garden to the FAI** (the Italian National Trust). The circular layout and size of the garden (built in lava-stone drywalls and one of the few exemplars that have been restored and can be visited) guarantee the ideal microclimate for protecting a century-old orange tree, a valuable "vitamin factory", from wind and drought. Self-sufficient from the water-supply standpoint the Donnafugata Giardino Pantesco is an agronomic system that looks to the future.

October 2008 - The grape harvest ends: the 2008 vintage promises excellence.

An excellent harvest for Donnafugata, both at Contessa Entellina and on Pantelleria. The year was somewhat less rainy than average and temperatures were higher than seasonal but without excessive peaks and with broad temperatures changes between day and night. Careful vineyard tending, from winter pruning to pre-harvest thinning, enabled the vines to attain optimal growth/output balance. Also decisive in achieving high quality was the work done to monitor grape ripening and choose the best moments for picking each type in Donnafugata's various vineyards. The 2008 wines will have just the right amount of alcohol, great crispness, aromatic finesse and elegance.

November 2008 - Ben Ryé 2007 Wine of the Year for the D'Agata and Comparini guide

Wine of the Year was the award given to **Ben Ryé 2007** Passito di Pantelleria by the "Guida ai Migliori Vini d'Italia – Italy's Best Wines 2009" written by Ian D'Agata and Massimo Claudio Comparini and published by Guido Tommasi. Ben Ryé thus came in first among the "Best 100" chosen from all the categories competing – whites, reds and sweet wines – and joined the guide's prize roster after Ornellaia's Masseto 2004 (in the 2008 edition of the guide), the Poggio di Sotto Brunello di Montalcino 2001 (in the 2007 edition) and the Barolo Cannubi Boschis 2001 from Luciano Sandrone which tied with the Avignonesi Vin Santo 1994 in the 2006 edition.

December 2008 - Donnafugata gives birth to "Ben Ryé Grappa"

There is a **newborn of excellence at Donnafugata: Ben Ryé Grappa**. This is the outcome of distilling **Zibibbo dried grape pomace** that results from vinifying Ben Ryé



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Passito di Pantelleria. Skillful **maturation in wood** gives it extraordinary complexity. A distillate with golden glints and seductive aromas of apricot and raisin, it has mellow and engrossing taste with hints of dried figs and honey. It is a harmonious and elegant expression of the character of Pantelleria, island of sun and wind.

January 2009 - Winenews survey: Donnafugata among the top 7 in all the Italian guides.

Only seven wineries had all the Italian wine guides in agreement: **Gaja, Braida, Caldaro, Trabucchi, Corte Sant'Alda, Masciarelli and Donnafugata**. This was the result of a survey published by www.winenews.it and conducted by comparing the ratings of the 2009 editions of the five main guides to Italian wines: **Gambero Rosso-Slow Food, L'Espresso, AIS-Bibenda, Veronelli and Maroni**. Donnafugata's fine performance stemmed from the laurels again crowning the winery's top wines: the red Mille e una Notte 2005 was given "Tre Bicchieri" by Gambero Rosso-Slow Food and rated "Super Tre Stelle Blue" by Veronelli, while the Passito Ben Ryè 2007 got top ratings from L'Espresso, Maroni, AIS-Bibenda and Veronelli.

February 2009 - A new photovoltaic installation at Contessa Entellina.

In 2001 Donnafugata was one of the first wineries in Italy to take advantage of solar energy for clean electricity: at **Contessa Entellina** a roof was built with **18-kW photovoltaic panels** to meet the needs of the vinification cellar. In 2009 another, **50-kW, photovoltaic installation** was completed at the Contessa Entellina estate. In January of 2007 a **50-kW system** had also started functioning on the roofs of the historic Marsala cellars. Composed of 270 mono-crystalline panels of the grid-connected type producing an average of 79,000 kW per year, it occupies an area of about 350 sq m. The aim is to have clean energy cover **30% of all winery needs**. Thanks to this philosophy Donnafugata is a member of the **Kyoto Club**, the Italian association committed to implementing policies reducing the emission of carbon dioxide into the air, in respect of "Kyoto Protocol" parameters.

March 2009 - José Rallo's first year as president of the Unicredit Territorial Committee.

The only woman to preside over a Unicredit Territorial Committee, José Rallo celebrates the first anniversary of her appointment and expresses great satisfaction with the projects that the committee is taking ahead. First of all, a commitment to the growth of congress tourism in Sicily, then incentives for exports by the hundred finest Sicilian companies and lastly the financing of five scholarships to as many deserving students for a prestigious Master's in Business Administration in the United States. Concrete projects that, in the intentions of the committee and its president, will help **the growth of an entrepreneurial mentality and spur the island's economic development**.

Marsala: March 30, 2009

Full versions of the press releases can be seen in the "News & Press" section at www.donnafugata.it

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