

## *Memorable Mille e una Notte*

An unprecedented tasting of all the vintages produced from 1995 to 2011: in the exclusive reportage produced by Ian D'Agata for Vinous, the “remarkable elegance and ageworthiness” of this icon of Italian wine emerges.

An extraordinary vertical of **Mille e una Notte** starting from the debut vintage, 1995, to that of 2011: this was the complete and unprecedented tasting carried out by one of the top Italian wine experts, **Ian D'Agata**, exclusively for the international website **Vinous.com** founded by Antonio Galloni.

A journey through time that recounts the “birth of a modern icon of wine”; desired by **Giacomo Rallo**, founder of Donnafugata together with his wife **Gabriella**, Mille e una Notte, as D'Agata recalls, was born thanks to the indispensable contribution of the enologist **Giacomo Tachis**; Gabriella, however, struck by the evocative grandeur of such an important and special wine, gave it this name.



The protagonists of the tasting were no less than **seventeen vintages**, different from each other, but all exceptionally representative of a noble territory for viticulture, such as that of the hills of the Donnafugata estate, in the heart of western Sicily, in Contessa Entellina.



“I have rarely tasted so many outstanding Nero d'Avola wines at the same time” – Ian D'Agata writes, – “and the fact that many vintages of Mille e una Notte display remarkable **elegance and ageworthiness** will only add to its reputation.”

D'Agata also says he was “genuinely blown away by the quality,” in this vertical that demonstrates “how refined and harmonious truly great Nero d'Avola wines can be.”

On account of the high average level of these 17 consecutive vintages of Mille e una Notte, Donnafugata places itself as the top interpreter of its territory, of **Nero d'Avola** as well as other grape varieties that have contributed to the blend since 2009, such as **Petit Verdot** and **Syrah**.

And judging by the higher scores, Vinous's reviews set Mille e una Notte among the finest reds in absolute terms: **95+/100 pts to 1995 vintage**, “magically mouthcoating tannins. Finishes with terrific length and energy... impeccably balanced, seems much younger than its 21 years would suggest, this gorgeous wine will easily last another ten years”; **96+/100 pts to 2008 vintage**, “fresh, dense, with uncommon precision and cut. An epic wine in the making: I especially love its purity and sense of balance... I am not sure Nero d'Avola can get much better than this. Drinking window:

2016 - 2035"; **95/100 pts to 2011**, "smooth, lush and round. Finishes broad and long, one of the best young Mille e Una Notte wines I have tasted to date... looks to be a classic in the making."

"We have often tasted old vintages of our Mille e una Notte – says **Antonio Rallo**, wine-maker for the family winery – but we had never tried a complete vertical before, and this one carried out for Vinous gave us excellent confirmation but also beautiful surprises such as the extraordinary evolution of 1995."



"With intelligence and rigor, Ian D'Agata recounted – says **José Rallo**, head of Donnafugata together with her brother Antonio – the entire history of Mille e una Notte, from the genesis of my parents' ambitious project, up to the present day, through an evolution of almost 20 years that reveals a qualitative constancy we are deeply proud of."

And while after four years of aging, Mille e una Notte 2012 is going through the gates of Donnafugata's historic cellars right now, the 2013, 2014 and 2015 vintages are still aging and 2016 is about to get bottled: this is how Giacomo and Gabriella's vision continues to bear its precious fruit.

[Read the full version of the article](#)

[Watch the video interview with Ian d'Agata, Antonio and Josè Rallo](#)

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**IAN DOMENICO D'AGATA, BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:** internationally known wine writer and author, Ian D'Agata is one of the leading experts on Italian wine, as well as wines of Alsazia, Bordeaux and Canada. Author of highly successful publications such as "The Ecco Guide to the Best Wines of Italy" (HarperCollins/Ecco), his latest literary work "Native Wine Grapes of Italy" (University of California Press) won the prestigious Louis Roederer International Wine Book of the Year 2015 award, never won before by an Italian. A book that was also in the Top 10 Wine Books of the Year of the NY Times, Financial Times and LA Times.

He is the senior editor of Vinous and Italian correspondent for the Chinese TasteSpirit; in the recent past he was also contributing editor to Decanter and co-author for ten editions of the "D'Agata & Comparini Guide to Italy's Best Wines" for which he won the 2009 International Association of Culinary Professionals Gourmand Award. Ian D'Agata was named Italy's best wine journalist in 2012 by the Comitato Grandi Cru d'Italia, and he has been scientific director of Vinitaly International Academy since 2014. It is not surprising to learn that Ian D'Agata is also a trained medical doctor, specialized in pediatrics, pediatric gastroenterology and nutrition; he studied at Cincinnati, Harvard, Montreal and California Universities; lecturer in Italian food and wine cultural history in the masters program in "Food Sciences" at New York University, he is invited as a guest lecturer all over the world not only on the topic of autochthonous grape varieties, but also the relationship between wine and health.