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José Rallo to headline song-and-wine matching in Athens

How do you get an Italian CEO to visit a small market? Offer her a special gig.



José Rallo, Donnafugata

José Rallo, CEO of Donnafugata winery in Sicily, has a new role: wowing music lovers at the Parthenon in Athens. She will be performing a food and song matching – and proving that wine can take you anywhere.

Ms Rallo says that when she sailed into Athens last summer, she asked her importer for a number of favours, from making restaurant reservations to organising the hotel.

Not surprisingly, the importer wanted something in exchange.

“One day, our importer said ‘can you come and sing and present your wines in Athens’?”

Ms Rallo wondered if it was worth the expense for what is a very small market for Donnafugata. “I thought to give a very smart answer: ‘OK, if you bring me in to sing at the Acropolis, I will come’.”

A week later the importer told her the gig was booked.

Though it's not in the Acropolis, so much as overlooking it. The importer had booked the Acropolis Museum Café and Restaurant, which offers panoramic views of the ancient citadel.

The song-and-food matching begins at 8pm.

“I will be performing a samba for our Grillo,” said Ms Rallo, quickly running through the menu. “I will sing a ballad called ‘An Older Man is Like An Elegant Wine’ dedicated to Mille e una Notte.”

If anybody is interested in attending, they can either try to book through the restaurant's website, or “they can call or write to Jeroboam our importer.”

The performance begins at eight o'clock.

Ms Rallo then offered a short sample of her singing for attendees at Sicilia En Primeur, held last week in Syracuse, before heading to the airport.

Felicity Carter

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