

Italian wine veteran Giacomo Rallo dies



Chris Mercer May 12, 2016

Giacomo Rallo, who founded the Donnafugata winery and is considered a pioneer of a new generation of Sicilian wines, has died.



Giacomo Rallo 1937 - 2016. Credit: Fabio Gambina / Donnafugata

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Giacomo Rallo died suddenly in the morning of Monday 10 May, the Rallo family said in a statement released this week.

He will be remembered as one of the pioneers of modern winemaking in Sicily, which has seen its wine reputation rise considerably in recent decades – particularly due to growing popularity of the Nero d'Avola grape variety.

After founding Donnafugata in 1983 with his wife, Gabriella Anca, Rallo was an instrumental figure in calling for a quality-based approach to winemaking in Sicily, as well as promoting the island's cultural heritage, his family said.

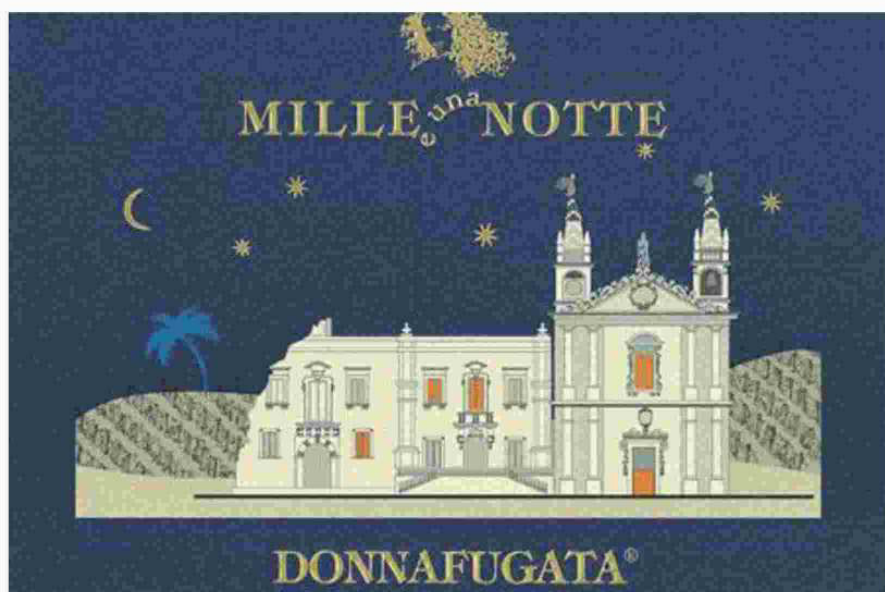
Rallo became a Cavaliere del Lavoro in 2006 – an honour achieved by him being awarded the order of merit for Labour, a chivalric status originally introduced by Italy's King Vittorio Emanuele III in 1923.

Rallo was born in Marsala in 1937 and originally gained a law degree, but ended up joining the family wine business. His family has been in wine for five generations.

Funeral rites were held yesterday (11 May) in the town of Marsala. Rallo is survived by his wife, Gabriella, and his children, Josè and Antonio.

Today, Donnafugata produces a wide range of wines, including top red wine **Mille e una Notte** – a blend of Nero d'Avola with other non-specified varieties.

image: <https://keyassets.timeincuk.net/inspirewp/live/wp-content/uploads/sites/34/2016/05/Mille-Notte-Donnafugata.jpg>



Mille e una Notte, one of Donnafugata's top wines from Sicily.

Donnafugata is also one of the only wine companies to have vineyards on the remote island of Pantelleria, 85km off the Italian mainland's southern coast.

Pantelleria's specific method of vine growing was added to the UNESCO World Heritage list in 2014.