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Wine, Art, And Music Create Harmony At Donnafugata Winery In Sicily

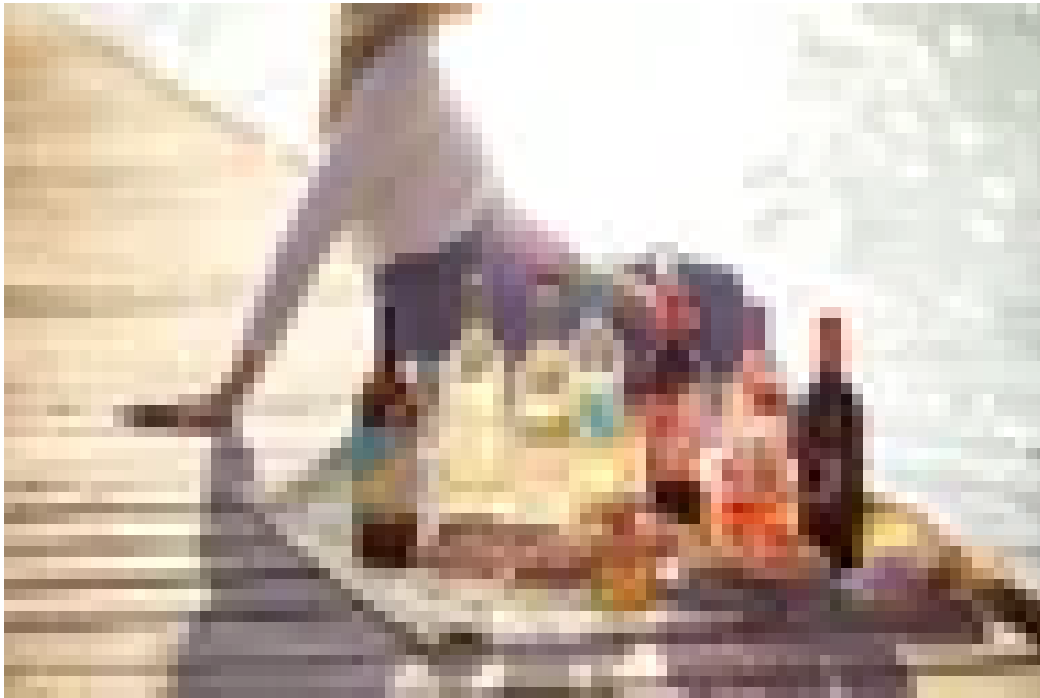
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I write about wine business and wine lifestyle

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Relaxing by the Sea in Sicily with Donnafugata Wines DONNAFUGATA

If you have visited the island of Sicily, then you will recall the brilliant colors of the sea, tantalizing music, and delectable cuisine and wine. If you have not, then the wines of Donnafugata attempt to bring all of these elements of Sicily to you, according to Owner and CEO, José Rallo.

“My desire is to bring [Donnafugata](#) wine to wine lovers around the world, and to enchant them with all of the sensations we can express. We try to present the Sicilian flavors, colors and music of

our culture through our wine,” she stated in a recent Zoom interview.

Donnafugata has accomplished the artistic connection by partnering with local artist, Stefano Vitale, who created the distinctive and very colorful labels that adorn the wine bottles. Many depict a woman with long hair blowing in the wind, as well as the sea, flowers, and landscape of Sicily.

“The name of our winery – Donnafugata – was based on the book, the *Leopard*, which tells the story of a fleeing queen,” explained Rallo. “Donnafugata means ‘escaping woman’, and her long hair is filled with the colors of Sicily.”

The woman was Queen Maria Carolina, who fled Naples in the 1700’s to escape from French troops and hid in the vineyards on Sicily where the main winery is located. The actual winery was established in 1983 by Rallo’s [parents](#), who came from a Sicilian wine dynasty started in the 1850’s.

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José Rallo, CEO and Owner of Donnafugata Wines in Sicily, Italy DONNAFUGATA

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Over the years Donnafugata winery has grown in size, and now has five locations in Sicily and produces around 3 million bottles of wine per year, which they export to 60 countries. Part of their success stems from the distinctive wine labels, but is also because of the large portfolio of Sicilian wine styles and prices they offer.

Examples include: 1) an affordable \$14 *Grillo* – the signature white grape of Sicily, which tastes of citrus, white peach, and a hint of sea salt and local herbs; and 2) a mid-priced \$26 red *Nerello Mascalese*, called ‘Sul Volcano’, because the grapes come from a vineyard on Mt. Etna. This wine has notes of mixed berries and spices with a hint of volcanic soil.

Donnafugata's high-end wines include '*Mille e Una Notte*' and the famous '*Ben Rye Passito di Pantelleria*,' which both retail for around \$75 per bottle and are highly rated by the critics. The first is a complex red blend focused on the local *Nero'd'Avola* grape, with notes of black cherry, nutmeg, tobacco, and a hint of olive and mocha. The second is a sweet dessert wine made from dried *Zibibbo* grapes, and tastes of orange blossom, apricot, and figs.

Donnafugata Collaborates with Dolce&Gabana on 4 New Wine Labels

Recently Donnafugata has expanded their wine portfolio to include four new wines in collaboration with [Dolce&Gabana](#). Each wine comes with a specially designed box, and is a fusion of the bright Sicilian colors always portrayed in Donnafugata labels, but with the artistic touch and inspiration of Dolce&Gabana designers.

"It is an interesting and stimulating collaboration," stated Rollo. "Dolce&Gabana focus on quality, detail and excellence, and they showcase our wines at their events, in their shops, and online. We have created four wines for them - two reds, a white, and a rosé. We also provide staff training so they can describe the wine to their customers."

Rallo commented that the collaboration has resulted in many new customers for Donnafugata, especially younger consumers that they are hoping to introduce to the wines of Sicily.



Specially Designed Donnafugata Wines Made in Collaboration with Dolce&Gabana
DONNAFUGATA

The Music Connection at Donnafugata Winery

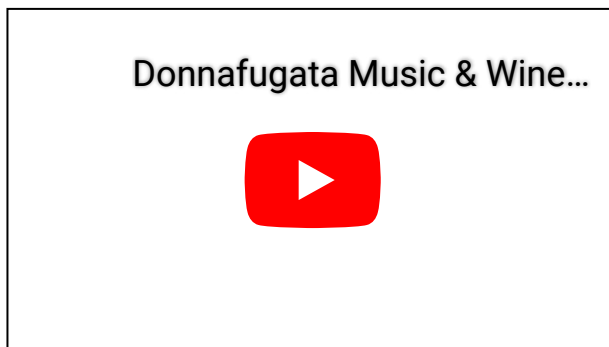
In addition to a focus on the synergy of wine and art, Donnafugata also celebrates the beauty of [wine and music](#). It all started when Rallo, also a singer, met a Sicilian musician, who played Brazilian and jazz music. She not only fell in love with the music, but ended up marrying the musician, Vincenzo Favara.

“I started wondering how we can match Donnafugata to wine,” remembered Rallo. “Then one day I had the idea to make pairings between a single wine and a single piece of music – to have a multi-sensory experience.”

That was in 2001, and since that time Rallo has presented wine and music events around the world, including at the Blue Note in New York, the Parthenon in Athens, and clubs ranging from Stockholm to Shanghai. She introduces the wine, and then sings a special song matched to the wine, while her husband and other band members play jazz, samba, bossa nova, or Sicilian music.

“One of my favorites is the ballad I sing matched to our flagship wine, *Mille e Una Notte*,” she said. “It is called ‘An Older Man is Like an Elegant Wine,’ and the song works perfectly with the complexity and elegance of our wine.”

To date, Donnafugata has release three different music CD’s, which can be found on Spotify and other locations. A video of her song devoted to the famous wine, *Ben Rye Passito di Pantelleria*, and filmed in Athens at the Parthenon, can be found at the Youtube link below.



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