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S A N F R A N C I S C O

FEBRUARY 22, 2024

by LAYNE RANDOLPH ([HTTPS://WWW.HAUTELIVINGSF.COM/AUTHOR/LAYNE-RANDOLPH/](https://www.hautelivingsf.com/author/layne-randolph/))

26B%20Gabbana%20and%20Donnaufugata%3A%20Sicily%26%238217%3Bs%20New%20Dream%20Team%20https://www.hautelivingsf.com/2024/02/22/dolce-fugata-sicily-s-new-dream-team/)

fashion house is based around the Mediterranean island of Sicily. The two powerhouses with Sicilian roots joined forces in 2019 to create an even more

powerful collaboration—a wine collection designed with Dolce & Gabbana style and Donnafugata wine expertise.



Photos courtesy of Donnafugata unless otherwise indicated

D&G and Donnafugata’s Sicilian Connection

Sicilian-born Domenico Dolce and Milanese Stefano Gabbana, both avid lovers of Sicily, founded Dolce&Gabbana®. “Sicily and its culture are at the heart of Dolce&Gabbana, which has drawn constant creative inspiration from it,” said Donnafugata’s co-owner and CEO, Josè Rallo.



Photo courtesy of Donnafugata

Rallo explained the genesis of her family's wine business. "My father established Donnafugata along with my mother, who pioneered high quality viticulture in the region. Furthermore, she was the main inspiration behind the female name 'Donnafugata' [which means *fleeing or fugitive woman*] and the signature labels." The Donnafugata labels have always depicted strong, feminine imagery, and Rallo proudly shared that the Donnafugata company, where she is CEO, has filled 50 percent of its leadership positions with women.

Rallo and her brother, Antonio, were introduced to the fashion pair via Dolce&Gabbana's Milan restaurant, DG Martini, where Donnafugata wine is offered. After meeting the brother-sister pair at the restaurant, Dolce&Gabbana began considering a wine collaboration.

"Wine is an extraordinary element of Italian tradition—and they proposed to us that we start a collaboration according to this strategic vision. We were more than happy to accept the proposal because we deeply share common values: unconditional love for Sicily, creativity, and craftsmanship," said Rallo.



Photo credit: Salvo Alibio

Donnafugata-Dolce&Gabbana Collection of Wines

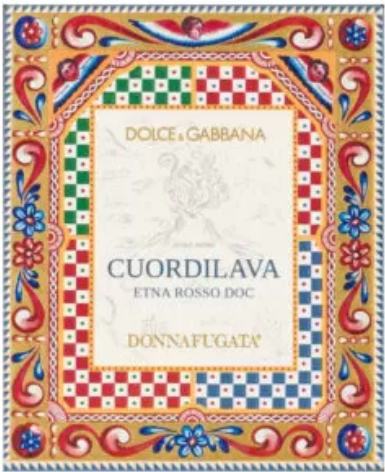
The first wine, Rosa, was released in 2020. It is a rosé wine made from top Sicilian grape varieties, Nerello Mascalese and Nocera. In 2021, they released two Etna Doc wines: the white Isolano made with Carricante and the red Cuordilava, which, as its name suggests, references the heart of lava and is a nod to the island's still active volcano, Mt. Etna. Naturally, Cuordilava is 100 percent Nerello Mascalese. Both show the elegance and minerality that has made Mt. Etna's mountainous and volcanic terroir famous. In 2022, a fourth wine joined the collection, the Nero d'Avola and Cabernet Sauvignon blend Tancredi, a reference to a character from *The Leopard*.

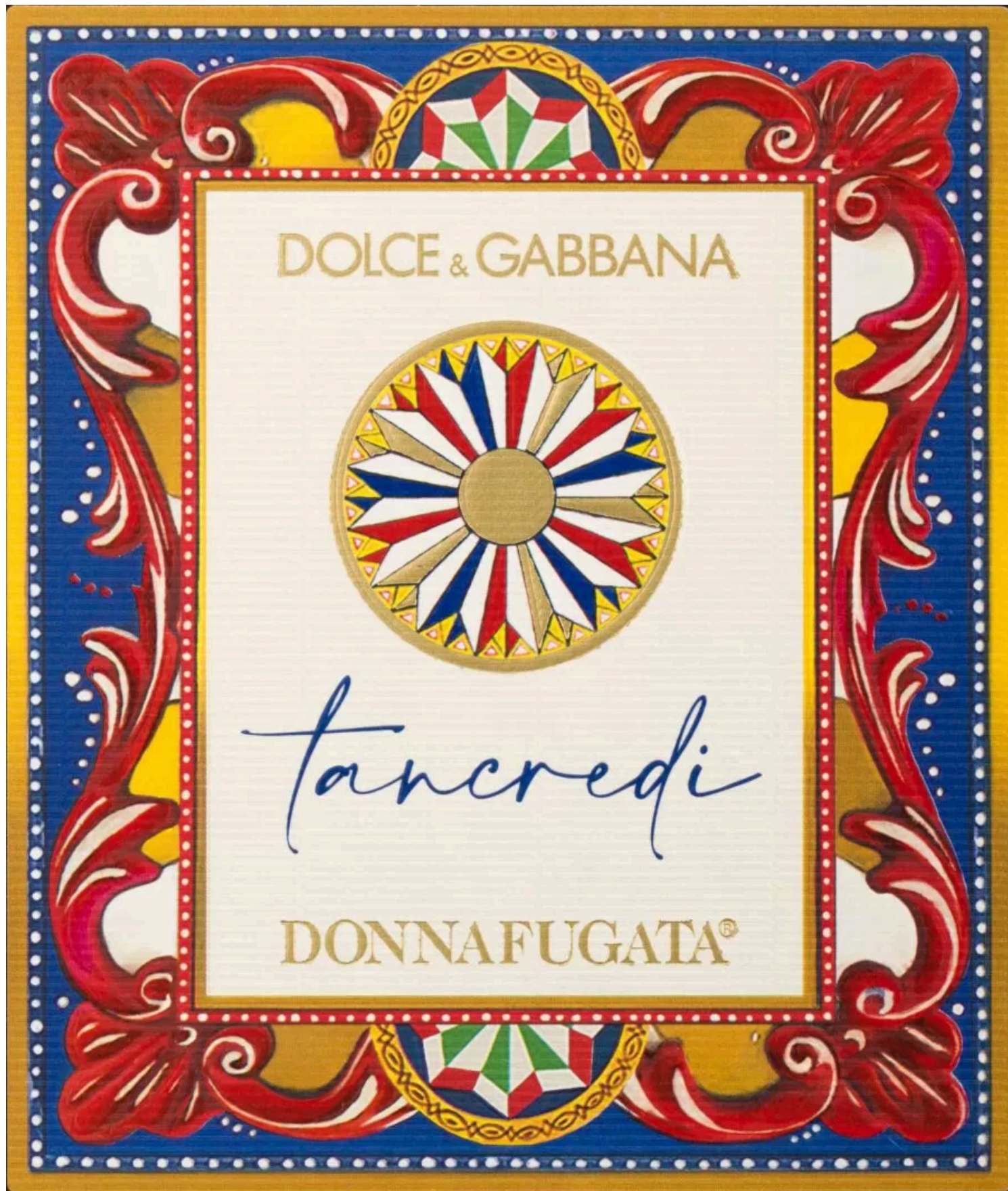


Photo courtesy of Donnafugata

Each side brings its strengths to the partnership. Donnafugata manages production, from the vineyard to the bottle, and Dolce&Gabbana runs the image and communication process. “We all play our part but work together to make every strategic choice. I must point out that this is a wonderful team effort. Their creative projects have always been very appealing to us, and we have always been fond of them.”

Pulling from their shared love of all things Sicilian, Dolce&Gabbana created label imagery that comes directly from Sicilian culture and nature. The iconic, multi-colored Sicilian donkey cart inspired the label colors, the Tancredi label drew Baroque inspiration from *The Leopard*, and the Cuordilava label highlights Mt. Etna lava’s fiery red color.





Photos courtesy of DonnaFugata

The collaboration has expanded DonnaFugata's reach to new segments of premium wine consumers. Rallo said, "This happened especially in foreign markets that did not know DonnaFugata yet or had only limited knowledge of us. Overall, our competitive position in the market was improved as a result of the growth in sales."

For Dolce&Gabbana, DonnaFugata's Sicilian style and image meld well with the Dolce&Gabbana ethos, and Dolce&Gabbana uses the wines at its events and restaurants. "We are already planning special events at the two most important upcoming European wine fairs: Prowein and Vinitaly. We will showcase a stand customized by Dolce&Gabbana's creativity."

Dolce & Gabbana and DonnaFugata: Sicily's New Dream Team



When the collaboration began in 2019, it was set for five years; however, wines will be released several years beyond that, evidencing the partnership's strength. "We are happy that the horizon of our partnership is increasingly broader. Our commercial offer has been diversified and enriched by these wines," Rallo shared.

The Donnafugata/Dolce&Gabbana wines are distributed in 70 countries, primarily in specialized wine shops and quality restaurants. Donnafugata is also available on Wine.com.

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