



DONNAFUGATA

PRESS RELEASE

## *Grand Gold Medal for Ben Ryé*

**Pantelleria and Donnafugata win top laurels at the “Selezione del Sindaco.”  
Antonio Rallo: “Prestigious recognition conferred on a wine that’s the fullest  
expression of the island’s enological identity.”**

Pantelleria once again proves itself a wine territory par excellence. For the second time in just four years Donnafugata’s Ben Ryé won the Grand Gold Medal at the “Selezione del Sindaco” (“The Mayor’s Choice”) international wine competition promoted by RECEVIN (the European Wine Cities Network) together with the Italian Wine Cities Association, under the scientific aegis of the O.I.V.

The tastings held from May 19 to 21, 2006, in Ortona awarded a Gran Medaglia d’Oro (to Ben Ryé), 31 gold and 159 silver medals. The jury’s rating for Ben Ryé—a stratospheric 96.8 out of 100 points—confirms the qualitative worth of this raisin wine, become an “icon” of the naturally sweet Sicilian wines known throughout the world.



Ph. Anna Pakula

The philosophy behind the competition has remained the same from the beginning. The jury selects wines that it believes best interpret the characteristics of a circumscribed and well-identified district.

“This award is highly significant for us at Donnafugata and for the island of Pantelleria,” said Antonio Rallo, who supervises production in the family business. “Ben Ryé,” he added, “is the unique fruit of this extraordinary volcanic, sun-baked land in the center of the Sicilian Channel [between the island and Tunisia]. Grape cultivation, entirely manual, is an example of ‘heroic grape-growing’ requiring substantial commitment and great experience.

“In the cellar our care for vinification processes is just as scrupulous, enabling us to bring the aromatic potential of Zibibbo grapes to the bottle intact. Every batch of grapes is vinified separately to enhance the features of the individual vineyards, which differ in age, exposure, altitude and grape ripening time. A kaleidoscope of production contexts giving rise to that happy synthesis that’s our Ben Ryé. And this is an award we want to share with the great Donnafugata team, which was able to take up the challenge of productive excellence, bottling all of Pantelleria’s wind and sun.”

The next date for mayors and producers will be September 17 at the Campidoglio [city hall] in Rome, where they will receive their medals and certificates.

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