

20 years of the Città del Vino. Recognition for Giacomo Rallo of Donnafugata.

Enological Italy gathered on the Campidoglio [Rome's Capitoline Hill] last February 8 to celebrate the **20th anniversary** of the founding of the **Associazione Nazionale delle Città del Vino** [National Association of Wine Towns]. The ceremony, staged in the extremely crowded Protomoteca Hall, with the city's mayor, Walter Valtroni, in the lead, was a brilliant affair with the participation of the best names in the Italian wine sector.

Valentino Valentini, the organization's newly elected president, assembled producers, journalists, researchers and enologists as well as politicians and local administrators to share in a new **manifesto in defense of quality viticulture**. It is a statement by producers and local administrators that refers to what they are working toward and commits them to a type of development that safeguards the identity of our products and Italian wine culture.

The most moving moment of the event was that of the **presentation of awards to 68 persons** who have contributed through their professional or institutional actions to the growth of Italian culture and the economic development of the territories of production.

"With this recognition, we wish to celebrate the anniversary of the Wine Towns organization," **Valentini** declared, "and pay tribute to those who have played leading roles in assuring Italian wines' place worldwide and affirming the success they have secured in their different fields of activity."

Giacomo Rallo, founder of Donnafugata, was among the producers honored. It was a recognition, according to the citation, that honors "one of the historic figures of the island's premium wines." "Italian wine producers owe a great deal to the Associazione delle Città del Vino," Giacomo Rallo observed when talking with journalists covering the ceremony. "The association has been an important point of reference for all those who in these years have believed that the territory constitutes an important factor of productive identity. Donnafugata arises from our passion for the land, for those who live and work on it and for the culture that it expresses. What would Pantelleria be without the Zibibbo vineyard and the farmers who cultivate it? Or, still, what would the Belice Valley at Contessa Entellina be without Nero d'Avola and Ansonica growing on its hills? Identity, history and landscape are indivisible from the idea itself of wine. That is the added value that renders Italian wines unique and inimitable in the world."

*The complete list of persons honored by the association can be downloaded by accessing the Website www.cittadelvino.it.

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