

Wine Producer Profile: Donnafugata

In just 30 years since its foundation in 1983, Donnafugata has become one of the pre-eminent winemakers in Sicily. Having previously focussed on the production of Marsala for almost 150 years, the Rallo family behind Donnafugata, began Donnafugata as their dry wine business as global demand for Marsala declined. Occupying three estates to the West of Sicily (two on the main island of Sicily and one on Pantelleria) 30 years of dedication to high quality has yielded increasing recognition both within Italy and internationally, for the high quality dry styles of wine that Sicily (and Donnafugata specifically) can produce.

Production at Donnafugata relies heavily upon local grape varieties, such as Catarratto, Ansonica and Moscato (d'Alessandria clone) for the Donnafugata range of white wines and Nero D'Avola for the Donnafugata range of reds. This is not to say that "international" varieties are not also cultivated, with Chardonnay used to create a varietal white, with Cabernet Sauvignon used to add structure in the Donna Fugata "Tancredi" red as well as being blended with Merlot to create a Sicilian take on the traditional Bordeaux blend in the form of the Donnafugata "Angheli".

Sweet wines are still made at Donnafugata (although not in the Marsala style of before). The Donnafugata "Kabir" is a sweet, dessert-style Moscato that retains a good level of acidity, with the Donnafugata "Ben Ryè" a passito Moscato that sees the grapes dried in the hot Sicilian sun before they are pressed to release their unctuous nectar.

