

Donnafugata,
`Ben Ryé` Passito di Pantelleria 2018
Pantelleria, Sicily, Italy



Grape Varieties	100% Zibibbo
Winemaker	Antonino Santoro & Antonio Rall
Closure	Natural Cork
ABV	14.5%
Residual Sugar	197g/L
Acidity	7.2g/L
Wine pH	3.81
Notes	Vegetarian, Vegan

PRODUCER

The Rallo family has made wine in Marsala since 1851 and their ancient cellars tunnel beneath the city. They were one of the first families to begin making high quality table wine when sales of traditional Marsala started to decline, launching the Donnafugata label in 1983 and championing the potential of the region's native varieties. Today, Donnafugata has four estates in Sicily: a modern winery and 283 hectares at Contessa Entellina in the hills east of Marsala; 36 hectares in Vittoria to the south eastern point of the island; 68 hectares on the island of Pantelleria; and 18 hectares on the slopes of Etna. Donnafugata means 'fleeing woman' and is a reference to Queen Maria Carolina, who escaped the court of Naples in the early 19th century with her husband, Ferdinand IV of Bourbon, when Napoleon's troops arrived. The couple took refuge in Sicily at the Santa Margherita Belice palace, also the favourite residence of celebrated writer Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa and depicted on the 'Mille e una Notte' label.

VINEYARDS

Made from vines planted on the island of Pantelleria (South-Western Sicily), this is a modern take on the classic Moscato Passito. The name Ben Ryé derives from the Arabic 'Son of the Wind', after the wind which sweeps round the island. Vines are planted in hollows in the ground, at altitudes of 20-400 metres above sea level on terraced, sandy slopes of volcanic origin. The low bush vines of Pantelleria have been described on the UNESCO World Heritage List as a 'creative and sustainable practice'. The vines are over 100 years old and are ungrafted.

VINTAGE

2018 was a vintage characterised by substantial rainfall, with 591 mm compared to the average of 460 mm. Yields were slightly higher than those of the last two vintages. Cluster thinning was carried out in some vineyards to optimise the ripening of the grapes for the Moscato di Pantelleria. Harvest began on the 17th of August and ended on the 6th of September.

VINIFICATION

Grapes were hand harvested and carefully selected in the vineyards. Upon reaching the winery, they underwent selection on a vibrating table before soft pressing. Fermentation took place in stainless-steel tanks at controlled temperatures. The dried grapes were destemmed and selected by hand before they were added to the fresh must in several batches. Ageing took place in stainless-steel tanks for eight months with at least a further 12 months in bottle before release.

TASTING NOTES

Brilliant amber in colour, Ben Ryé is wonderfully fresh and complex. The bouquet is intense and rich with aromas of apricots and candied citrus zest combined with notes of Mediterranean thyme and rosemary. The palate is well-defined and intense, with pleasant sweetness balanced perfectly with fresh acidity and great minerality.