



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

The vineyards at Donnafugata's Contessa Entellina estate are located in south-west Sicily at elevations ranging from 200 to 400 metres above sea level. The soils are clay-based and rich in mineral elements, including potassium, magnesium, calcium, iron and zinc. The vines for this wine are trained using Vertical Shoot Positioning and spur-cordon pruning, with planting densities of 4,500 to 6,000 vines per hectare and average yields of around five tonnes per hectare. In 2008, the blend was updated to include Tannat, a Mediterranean variety first planted experimentally by Donnafugata in 2002. Since 2004, Tannat has been grown in the hilly Predicatore area, where soil conditions are particularly well suited to the variety.

VINTAGE

The 2021 vintage was marked by slightly below-average rainfall, with most precipitation occurring during winter and a dry spring that allowed flowering and fruit set to proceed smoothly. Careful vineyard management supported a regular vegetative cycle throughout the season. Yields were in line with the estate average, and the harvest delivered fruit that fully met the estate's quality objectives.

VINIFICATION

The grapes were carefully selected in the vineyard and underwent further sorting upon arrival at the winery, first on a vibrating table and then through precise berry selection using a next-generation destemmer to eliminate green and overripe fruit. Fermentation took place in temperature-controlled stainless steel with extended skin maceration. The wine was then aged for 14 months in oak, followed by a minimum of 22 months of bottle ageing prior to release.

TASTING NOTES

The wine displays an intense ruby-red colour, with aromas of ripe plum and blueberry layered with spice, balsamic notes and liquorice, complemented by sweet, toasted nuances of vanilla and tobacco. The palate is enveloping and well balanced, with fine, integrated tannins and a long, persistent finish.