# Passito di Pantelleria

**1** **Use the words below to complete the following passage.**

consortium • dessert wine • fermented • flavour • glass • grapes • island • picked • processes • sun • sweet • vines • work

Pantelleria is a small, remote and windswept black volcanic **1.** ....., which is part of Sicily, but closer to Africa – only about 70 km from the African coast. The Arabs, who once ruled this lump of rock between Italy and Africa, called it "Daughter of the Wind". This tiny island is perhaps most famous for its world-class **2.** ....., Passito di Pantelleria: a velvety wine with deep amber colour and intense scents of dried figs, apricot and date. In the mouth, it is warm and round, honeyed and intensely **3.** .....

This wine belongs to the category of straw wines, or raisin wines, made from **4.** ..... that have been dried to concentrate their juice. The classic method dries clusters of grapes on mats of straw in the **5.** ....., but some regions dry them under cover, some hang up the grapes and the straw may be replaced by modern racks.

The island looks like paradise but growing **6.** ..... here is an arduous, heroic enterprise. It is a miracle that this wine still survives. Picking the grapes in the blowing gales is hard **7.** ..... and young islanders tend to go elsewhere to find their fortunes. Production has been slowly decreasing in recent years but there is yet hope for the future, in the form of investment from big Sicilian winemakers and the recent creation of a **8.** ..... to save local vineyards.

The origins of Passito are wrapped in the mist of time, but legend has it that the goddess Tanit won Apollo's love by serving him a cup of Pantelleria wine. Perhaps inspired by the story, one of the



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world's greatest womanisers, Giacomo Casanova, used to offer a **9.** ..... of Passito to the ladies he intended to seduce.

The grapes are usually **10.** ..... in August, placed onto mats of dried herbs to dry in the hot sun and wind, but are now more likely to be dried indoors in drying tunnels or chambers. When the grapes have been dried sufficiently,



they are pressed, often together with newly harvested grapes, and **11.** ..... for a long time into stainless steel vats. Some winemakers also add raisins at a later stage for a more intense **12.** .....

There are endless variations depending on the percentage of dried grapes used, the timing of their introduction and the duration of the drying and fermentation **13.** .....

Passito is generally a complex wine and highly prized. It is fresh, light and delicate; sweet, but not too sweet; fruity, but not cloying. Served chilled, perhaps with a piece of chocolate or a slice of fresh peach, it would be the perfect end to a meal.

**2** **In the passage above, there are some wine tasting terms used to describe wine aromas and flavours. Match each term to the correct definition.**

1. Velvety ☐
2. Warm ☐
3. Round ☐
4. Honeyed ☐
5. Sweet ☐
6. Fresh ☐
7. Light ☐
8. Complex ☐
9. Fruity ☐
10. Cloying ☐

**a.** Having too much sweetness and too little acidity.
**b.** Having satisfying flavours with no surprises or sudden sharpness.
**c.** Appealing with the taste and aroma of fruit like apples, berries, citrus, currants and pears.
**d.** Having a smell or taste reminiscent of honey.
**e.** Having low acidity, not much body, colour or alcohol but with an agreeable taste.
**f.** Having either plenty of sugar or plenty of rich and ripe fruit flavours.
**g.** Leaving no acidity on the palate.
**h.** Leaving a crisp and pleasant impression.
**i.** Wines with a full body, tangy flavour and deep, velvety colour.
**j.** Having many kinds of aromas and flavours – possibly several fruity flavours and hints of other traits such as vanilla, mushrooms or other elements.

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