



## PRESS RELEASE

### **An Agri-cultural park in the heart of Palermo. "Villa Tasca Park" project is born**

***A large green lung in the city, 6 hectares of ancient citrus groves, rare palms and centuries-old trees in which to rediscover the link with nature. Inside, the first edible labyrinth in the world, composed of native botanical varieties that will form the inscription "Save Diversity". A place of well-being in which to walk, relax and participate in numerous cultural activities. Opening on Tuesday 14th July, free open day on Sunday 12th July.***



An oasis in the heart of Palermo, a new green space open to the city where you can immerse yourself in the beauty of nature. From Tuesday 14th July the 6 hectares surrounding Villa Tasca, the historic residence of the Tasca d'Almerita Counts, will open its doors to the public with the "Villa Tasca Park" project to offer everyone a new place to spend time in the open air, in a corner of the still uncontaminated Conca d'Oro.

It will be a large space open to the public, which will be built and realised also with the active contribution of citizens.

After the long lockdown period, the aim of the "Parco di Villa Tasca" project is to convey a message of **growth of collective wellbeing**, offering everyone the chance to find their own space outside the home, dedicating themselves to active volunteering or activities organized inside the park at a very low cost.

Ancient citrus groves, rare palms, secular trees, lawns, paths and footpaths, adjacent to Villa Tasca and its famous romantic garden. A park that stands in an area used for centuries for agriculture, which then became a nursery and now sees new light thanks to the project wanted by Giuseppe Tasca and Luisa Mainardi, created by landscape architect Patrizia Pozzi with the collaboration of Stefano Dentice.

The Park of Villa Tasca is located in an area of Palermo halfway between Palazzo dei Normanni and Monreale, precisely in Viale Regione siciliana sud est 397. It is a densely populated area but currently has no other parks or green spaces open to the public.



The opening is scheduled for Tuesday 14th July, but on Sunday 12th it will be possible to preview the big park thanks to the **Open Day** that will take place for the whole day, with free entrance (Opening hours: from 9 am to 8 pm the whole park, until 11 pm the refreshment area).

"We have been working on the project for about a year and a half - say Giuseppe Tasca and Luisa Mainardi, founders and creators of the Villa Tasca Park - but the events of the last months related to the health emergency have accelerated the work for the opening. We have chosen to share this oasis of beauty with the city at the very moment when Palermo needs it most, although there are still some aspects to be completed, which will see the light in the coming months. We want to convey a message of positivity, with a spirit of constructive relaunch in the economy of the area, giving new job opportunities through a project of "European civilization" that looks at the welfare accessible to all and the protection of the environment. We want to "cultivate beauty and culture", because this is what we all need right now".

### **Save Diversity: the first edible maze in the world**

Peculiarity of the Park will be the edible Labyrinth, which will rise in an area of 5 thousand meters east of the historic avenue of palm trees of Villa Tasca. The first and only edible labyrinth in the world, it will host a vast collection of plants, all linked to food history, with particular attention to the ancient native Sicilian varieties that are disappearing. Once completed, the flowerbeds will form the imposing inscription "Save Diversity", to remind us of the importance of biodiversity and push us to protect the precious agri-cultural heritage.

Strongly desired and conceived by Luisa Mainardi, designed, like the rest of the park, by landscape architect Patrizia Pozzi in collaboration with Stefano Dentice, it is an inclusive project: visitors to the park will be able to actively contribute to its realization by laying one or more stones each, and then helping in the care, cultivation and dissemination of the plants that will be grown there. The seeds of the cultivated plants will be donated every year to those who want to cultivate them, thus actively contributing to preserve them from extinction.

### **Our philosophy: Eco-sustainability**

The park will be managed using all suitable practices to minimize the environmental impact referring to modern principles of sustainability, circular economy. The park is built entirely at Km 0, recovering the 1200 residual plants of the nursery that stood in the area until the early 2000s. An ancient citrus grove, half a hectare made up of about 300 secular trees, has also been recovered.

To make all the furnishings, fences and buildings in the park, priority was given to the use of waste materials recovered from the Villa Tasca, with a view to reuse and minimizing environmental impact. Finally, only recyclable materials will be used in the refreshment area and a digital ticketing system will reduce the consumption of paper for entrance tickets to zero.



## The services of Villa Tasca Park

You can go to the Villa Tasca Park for walking, jogging, yoga and other fitness activities, or simply relax in the shade of the large trees or in the equipped **solarium** on one of the lawns. A refreshment point with **kitchen and coffe bar** will make the days not only more comfortable but also more tasty, with the possibility to have breakfast, lunch or an aperitif in the green of the estate. Once finished and put into production the edible Labyrinth, the dishes will be cooked using mainly vegetables and fruit produced within the Park, with a view to circular consumption.

An important role will be played by the **activities for children** thanks to the collaboration with **Palma nana**, historical cooperative of Palermo that since 1983 has been working to spread environmental education among children. Space will also be given to **services for dogs and their families** thanks to the collaboration with the **Doggy Park** association, which carries out a method of "gentle education" of four-legged friends based on the experience gained in over twenty years. It will also be possible to discover the historic **Garden of Villa Tasca**, a jewel of romantic Sicilian architecture that has hosted famous visitors over the centuries. With a skilful interweaving of natural and artificial elements, it allows you to stroll through its exotic nature, as Jacqueline Kennedy and the Queen of Belgium Paola of Liège did, or Richard Wagner, who was inspired at Villa Tasca for the third act of Parsifal. Guided tours are by reservation, with a fee, and last 45 minutes.

In the coming months further activities open to the public will be developed: the **Culture Space**, the **Open Air Cinema** and the **Circus School**.

## Annual tickets

Access to the park takes place after the purchase of an annual ticket, which can be purchased online at [www.parco.villatasca.com](http://www.parco.villatasca.com) (online from 13 July) or on site at the park ticket office (for a small fee). The season ticket is valid for a whole year from the date of issue and allows you to walk in the Villa Tasca Park. Registration for individual activities can be made directly on the site.

## To download photos, plans and presentation:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/z1ff0no07xuszbu/AABiIPisCtjWMmE7NPrnlsgHa?dl=0>

*Press Office Parco Villa Tasca*

Geraldine Pedrotti  
geraldinepedrotti@gmail.com  
+39 349 1066102

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