

Hidden Stories

The history, inspiration, and people behind our properties.



DONNA CARMELA
RESORT & LODGES

The history of the Faro family, the creators of Donna Carmela, goes back more than 55 years. Begun by Carmela and Venerado Faro, their shared ideals were driven by a love of beauty, a passion for nature, and a dedication to authentic hospitality. What began as a small business is now an expansive enterprise. Donna Carmela, Radicepura, and Pietradolce Winery, all part of the Pianta Faro legacy, are still driven by the same passion, respect for nature, and this incredible, tightly - knit family.



A RICH HISTORY

In 1970, Vivai Piante Faro, a small botanical business, was founded by Venerado and Carmela. In the following years, joined by their sons, Mario and Michele, this passionate, family-run business grew to beautiful heights, expanding into first the Pietradolce Winery (2006) followed by the Donna Carmela Resort & Lodges in 2008 and Radicepura Botanical Park in 2010.



But the journey was far from over! In 2013 the President of the Republic appointed Venerado as Knight of Labor, an honorific title awarded to individuals who have made significant contributions to the Italian economy, particularly in agriculture, industry, commerce, and services. In 2015, Carmela was awarded the “Donna Fidapa” award from the Italian Federation of Women, Arts, Professions, and Business for promoting an image of quintessentially Sicilian

beauty worldwide, followed by additional awards for her amazing work in 2018 and 2019. In 2022, Venerado was awarded an Honorary Degree in Agricultural Sciences and Technologies from the University of Catania. The couple’s two sons, Mario and Michele, carry on their parent’s legacy and have helped build the company into a now internationally recognized entity and a paragon of knowledge and expertise in the world of Mediterranean botanicals and hospitality.

DRIVEN BY A PASSION FOR SUSTAINABILITY

The Faro Group of companies were early adopters to sustainable business practices. Since 1995, all sectors of the company have been committed to recovering and recycling organic waste. The first electric cars were introduced to the properties in 1998. Since 2000, water consumption has been reduced by 60%. And in 2003, photovoltaic systems have achieved reduced CO2 emissions and produced clean, self-sufficient energy sources.



A BEAUTIFUL ANECDOTE

As told by Venerado Faro



A stately carob tree stands in Radicepura Garden, towering over the grounds.



"I want to tell you a story of this carob tree," begins Venerado. "It is estimated that it is more or less 400 years old. Nobody knows exactly when it was born, we weren't there.

While I was heading to Syracuse to visit a friend who owns a company, I saw a woodcutter cutting down these carob trees to make firewood and burn them in a fireplace. So I said to him 'Listen, what if I wanted to take it instead?' There are 4 or 5 trees. He replied. 'I get 1,000 Euro worth of firewood from each tree.' So I said, 'If you don't touch it, I'll give you 2000 Euro.' It was so long and wide that we needed a truck for exceptional transport. Then I got an excavator, called the workers, had it dug up, and brought this tree here to the park."



The beautiful tree now stands in Radicepura park to be enjoyed by countless more generations.

DONNA CARMELA RESORT & LODGES

For Carmela Faro, Donna Carmela is not just a resort, it is her story as well as her namesake. Opened in 2009, Donna Carmela is a transformed 19th-century residence that encompasses 18 suites and 8 lodges, all immersed in the lush, local foliage curated by Carmela herself. The passion for Sicilian culture and horticulture that ignited the business over 55 years ago continues every day. Carmela insists on



welcoming each and every guest to the resort, and infuses each stay with her warmth, knowledge, and passion.

*Learn more about Donna Carmela Resort & Lodges, view pics, and
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