

## **The beauties of the Casa del Parco**

Situated outside the old Masseria Marina farmstead, like an open-air museum, the botanical gardens house 210 native fruit trees as well as numerous endangered varieties of wine and table grapes. Designed to conserve and protect heritage crops and re-evaluate them as renewed symbols of local culture and tradition, the botanical gardens play a fundamental role in promoting agricultural biodiversity and transmitting this message to future generations.

Also of great interest is the pergola, which extends for more than 100 metres along the fence that marks the area belonging to the Masseria Marina. A grapevine trained on a pergola allows for its foliage to extend over a horizontal roof, rather than vertically along an espalier. This is the most widely used training system in the world for table grape cultivation, and allows for larger, more complete and uniform bunches. The technique is suited to hot climates since it protects the grapes from the hot summer sun.

No gold or marble, yet the queen of Masseria Marina is Cleopatra the pig! The area that has been dedicated to her preserves its original ruggedness and allows her to take advantage of natural beds as well as facilitating the formation of pools of water. As do all mammals, pigs need a lot of hydration – especially in summer and an adult domestic pig may consume more than four litres of water a day.



