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CONVERSATION WITH LUCA GIANNINI

contributed by **Léonard Lièvre** *photographs by* **Leonard Lievre**

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"Giardino Mediterraneo was a ruin. The first time I came here there were old stones everywhere, old walls with beautiful antique details, and old trees and plants in the sunny garden!"

From the ruins of a medieval house in Modica, an atypical construction, both modern and ancient, is born. Hidden behind the closed doors and walls, an aromatic garden of oranges and mandarins shimmers in the sun. This is the last but not the least of **Giardino Mediterraneo** (<https://www.boutique-homes.com/vacation-rentals/europe/italy/residenza-giardino-mediterraneo-modica-italy/>), a very elegant house made of stone and fantasy. It reflects the creative spirit of Luca Giannini (<http://www.lucagiannini.it>), a 44 year old Italian artist with multiple talents. Conversation.

LUCA, WHAT IS THE STORY OF THIS INCREDIBLY PARTICULAR HOUSE?

"Giardino Mediterraneo (<https://www.boutique-homes.com/vacation-rentals/europe/italy/residenza-giardino-mediterraneo-modica-italy/>) was a ruin. The first time I came here there were old stones everywhere, old walls with beautiful antique details, and old trees and plants in the sunny garden! A fabulous little garden in fact, with mandarin and lemon trees, with water in a fountain, with light and shade. I fell in love with this place. History and peace were everywhere and I said to myself: there is something to be done here".

SO WHAT DID YOU DO?

"First of all, I tried to imagine how previous people lived here. For me it was a matter of respect for them like for a brilliant past. I wanted to keep the spirit of this house which is maybe one of the most ancient in town. As you can see, some architectural details come from the medieval period, like this arch, this troglodyte room or old water tank which is now a fantastic cellar for good wines. I wanted to keep and reveal all this particularities. All this details were a source of inspiration for me. For example, I reproduced this tiny piece of ancient arch in an elegant ceiling. Here, like everywhere, the past inspires modernity".

WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF IN THIS REHABILITATION?

“One year after I bought this house, one of its former owners came here and showed me some very old pictures of the house. She told me where the kitchen used to be in the past and other things. She was so happy to discover a new house and to recognize the old one at the same time. The job was done”!

LUCA YOU'RE AN ARTIST. TELL US HOW YOUR WORK HAS INSPIRED YOU HERE.

“I used grained stones, especially, in bathrooms with bathtubs designed like ancient basins. I designed most of them with different patterns. Some of them are inspired by ancient drawings, some of them I created myself. I love to mix element and to use different materials. Here I used iron for a very special staircase. I love iron and the way it evolves in time”.

LUCA, YOU'RE FROM ROME. WHY DO YOU LIKE MODICA?

“This part of Sicily is fantastic. The quality of life is great here. It's a paradise for food, wine, good products and good people. They are relaxed and very creative at the same time. Many young artists and creative people live here, in this area. Modica is more than a beautiful and quiet town, it's a moving town. Small towns like this one with a high standard of quality of life are our future.”

Picture: Luca Giannini, Iolanda Buonomo and Paolo Smurra.

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