



33° salone internazionale del biologico e del naturale
33rd international exhibition of organic and natural products

“FIRE” IS THE THEME OF THE SECOND EDITION OF THE INITIATIVE “LA VIA DELLE ERBE” AT SANA 2021

Bologna, 9 – 12 September 2021

After decades in which “synthetic chemistry” has been dominant, research into natural substances, in particular those of plant origin, represents the most advanced and innovative challenge for industry across all sectors and types of production.

For today’s consumers, who are now more discerning and sensitive to environmental issues, “natural” products are the responsible choice, a way for consumers to re-establish a relationship with nature, rediscover a personal equilibrium and harmony with the environment they live in and express their respect for the value of environmental resources and sustainability.

For the political world the transition to a green economy has become a necessity: it means ensuring health and wellbeing for humans, animals and the environment, enabling us to “hand on a healthy planet to the future generations”¹.

SANA, the international exhibition of natural and organic products that, beginning with food, has always been concerned with these issues, has experienced all the phases of this evolution including its excesses and its contradictions and is, to all intents and purposes, the event that best represents the interests of those involved in the sector of “natural health and wellbeing”.

Plants are an almost inexhaustible reservoir of resources: the responsible harvesting of their properties, based both on traditional knowledge and in light of more recent scientific discoveries, offers a wealth of opportunities for research also in terms of sustainability and the transition to a green economy.

La Via delle erbe, an initiative launched by SISTE (the Italian Society of Applied Sciences to Botanicals and health products), in collaboration with the association of herbalist technicians of the University of Turin (ALTEA) and SANA, intends to boost awareness of the world of plants, through an illustrated exhibition pathway of images and documents about their history, origins, traditional uses and the bonds with the areas in which they are grown, and the presentation of scientific research and the properties of some more significant plant species used in products for health and wellbeing.

¹ Frans Timmermans, vice president of the European Commission at the presentation of the European Green Deal programme



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The plants selected for the second edition of the initiative launched at SANA Restart 2020 are linked by the common theme of **FIRE**.

But what could be the connection between **plants** and **fire**?

The answer lies in the multiplicity of their functions, their power to engage all of our senses, stimulating intense sensations that range from pleasure to discomfort, extremes of an ambivalence that expresses positivity and negativity within a holistic unicum.

In this other phase of **La Via delle erbe**, the pathway focused on knowledge of the magical world of plants, the in-depth section is dedicated to some specific plant species that are able to assertively engage our senses, performing, at the same time, functions to optimize our state of wellbeing. Plants represent precious and irreplaceable ingredients for some of our sensual pleasures and moments of personal care: from the kitchen to high-end perfumes, the plant world is seen as the principle source of supply.

Searching the world's pathways for plants that meet these criteria, has led us to the discovery of, and the desire to share, the knowledge of their properties, traditional uses and current applications: ***Piper nigrum L.*** (Black pepper) the "King of the spices", rich in bioactive components with numerous organic properties, used also in perfumes; ***Capsicum annuum***, the fruit of which (chilli peppers) has been used in medicines since antiquity but also as a natural aroma and dye; ***Zanthoxylum Bungeanum*** (Sichuan peppers), plants employed for millennia in traditional Chinese medicine and now also in cosmetics because of their soothing properties on the skin; ***Zingiber officinale Roscoe*** (ginger) a traditional ingredient used all over the world, and in Ayurvedic and Tibb-Unani medicine; ***Boswellia serrata Roxb. ex Colebr.***, the oily resin of which, known as Frankincense, is used in medicine, for religious rituals, in cosmetics and dietary supplements; ***Paullinia cupana Kunth***, known as **guaranà**, a plant from the Brazilian Amazon used for various functions because of its interesting organic effects; ***Ilex paraguariensis A.St.-Hil.***, the leaves of which (Yerba mate) have been used for centuries by indigenous populations of South America as a medicinal drink and are becoming increasingly widespread in foods and dietary supplements; ***Camellia sinensis (L.) Kuntze***, the leaves of which are used to make the world's most popular beverage, **Tea**, the active ingredients of which are commonly used in dietary supplements and cosmetics, and finally, ***Theobroma cacao***, **chocolate** "the food of the Gods", according to the Maya people, with physiological effects and benefits for the mind and body that are yet to be fully discovered.

Also this year's edition of the initiative "La Via delle erbe" will conclude with an important in-depth conference.

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