



History



Giacomo did not imagine that his decision to give up the cultivation of olives on his family's farm at Airole and to join the team led by the German Ludwig Winter would have such an influence on the lives and pursuits of his descendants. He was certainly able to recognise Winter's original and pioneering inspiration and his understanding of the period when the love of plants went hand in hand with garden design. This inspiration expressed itself in the wonderful gardens of the Riviera and Côte d'Azur, culminating in the supreme gardens of the Villa Hanbury.

Giacomo worked at Winter's side for twenty years and was later joined by his son Bartolomeo. During his period of apprenticeship Bartolomeo learned to love and cultivate tropical plants, and in 1910 founded the nursery that is named after him. For five years from 1910 Bartolomeo grew and sold ornamental plants and flowers until he was called away to serve in the first world war. When he came back to his business he reorganised it, adding to the propagation of ornamental plants a collection of cacti. This was a daring decision, because at that time nurseries propagating and selling succulent plants were few and far between.

Bartolomeo did not only sell succulents, he also collected rare specimens, which he grew on in the mild coastal climate of the bay of Monte Nero near Bordighera. Bartolomeo was in his turn later joined by his son Giacomo: The combination of Bartolomeo's experience and Giacomo's enthusiasm resulted in a great expansion of the business. By now they were specialising exclusively in cacti and the B. Pallanca nursery of Bordighera developed a national and then an international reputation owing to their professionalism and to the uniqueness of their product. This reputation was underlined by thirty two first prizes and thirty six gold medals awarded at the most prestigious international shows in Europe (London, Paris, Hamburg, Ghent, Liege, Frankfurt, Rome and Turin).

During this period the garden at Monte Nero was being enriched with the rarest and most beautiful specimens, and at the same time it has contributed to the establishment of some of the greatest botanical gardens in Europe, particularly to the Montjuich gardens in Barcelona. Today the garden is a compulsory stopping point for students and lovers of succulents. In 1989 Giacomo's son, Barth, arranged the collection scientifically and opened the garden to the public, expanding it so that it could be enjoyed to the full. Now everybody can visit the garden and enjoy its beauty. where imposing specimens and minute rarities make up a unique garden framed by the sea.



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