

## Mostra d'Oltremare urban park and its botanical heritage

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The aim of this study is to investigate and retrace the stages of the significant and progressive transformations of the botanical heritage in Naples' Mostra d'Oltremare. In 1940 the "I Mostra Triennale delle Terre Italiane d'Oltremare" was inaugurated, for the will of the fascist government. The exhibition grounds, an urbanism and architectural pride, represent today an excellent union of architecture, urbanism and biodiversity protection, and it was built according to the city plan written by architect Marcello Canino (1895 - 1970). The Exposition represent one of the most significant green interventions of the twentieth century in Naples was made. The executive design of the green spaces was entrusted to the architects L. Piccinato (1899 - 1983) and C. Cocchia (1903 - 1993). The executive design of the green spaces was entrusted to the architects L. Piccinato (1899 - 1983) and C. Cocchia (1903 - 1993). In the 600000 sq.mt. ground, which were originally allocated for the exhibition complex, more than 30000 tall trees were planted and about one million shrubs and herbaceous plants. The main green mass was made of a varied and massive collection of palm trees which gave to the environment the mediterranean tropical appearance, with several specimens of eucalyptus, acacia, pine and magnolia. There's a suggestive presence of individually planted ornamental trees, such as citrus and olive trees, and numerous flourishing bushes and exotic and rare species such as rhizomatous, bulbous, tuberous, creepers etc. The executive design of the green areas, developed by L. Piccinato and C. Cocchia, was made in order to assure that the green area could have a major connecting role for the whole architectural and urban complex. The numerous exposition pavilions resulted to be immersed in suggestive green areas filled with exotic plants and that were often imported by their original lands, and which reposed habitat and flor of the whole overseas colonies. The conspicuous green heritage, in spite of its modifications and decay over the years, is still one of the few green resources on the urban scale of Naples' wester area. It is fundamental today to work on the knowledge, enhancement and preservation this important environmental and cultural heritage.



**Figure 1.** Mostra d'Oltremare, identification of the main clusters of trees.