



NEW GOLF MANAGEMENT TEAM TAKES CHARGE AT VERDURA RESORT

[Verdura Resort](#) has moved to further enhance its position at the forefront of Italian golf after the appointment of a new golf management team at the award-winning luxury Sicilian venue.

Donato Di Ponziano, a leading figure in Italian, European and Asian golf for more than three decades, has been named as the resort's new golf development manager while experienced industry professional Alessandro Maria Cardini has taken over as the new golf manager for Verdura and Rocco Forte Hotels.

Di Ponziano has established a vast working knowledge of the industry since taking up his first role in the game in the 1980s, as a highly respected golf coach, a respected television commentator and as a golf tournament organiser and administrator.

In addition to working over two decades as the technical director of the Italian Golf Federation National School for golf professionals, the golf veteran is well-known to Italian golf fans as a commentator, covering PGA Tour and DP World Tour events for Sky Sports.

Overseeing the Italian operations of the BMW Golf Cup International for two decades, Di Ponziano has also worked with prestigious venues such as Turin's Royal Park I Roveri and served as president of the PGAs of Europe (now the Confederation of Professional Golf), while he founded the Indian National Golf Academy in 2000.

Across his career, Di Ponziano has been heavily involved in growing the sport across Italy and beyond, including as a member of the Ryder Cup Development Trust and as president and CEO of the youth-focused Alps Tour, and is an honorary member of the PGA Associations of France, India, Pakistan and Switzerland as well as Italy.

Cardini's life in golf is equally as varied and just as impressive. Having spent more than 20 years as an Italian PGA golf professional teaching at home and abroad, the 56-year-old took his career path in a different direction in 2008 when he broadened his golf education and retrained to work in the management sector. Since then, he has been employed in a number of wide-ranging golf management roles for leading names in golf and travel including Borgo Egnazia-San Domenico Golf, Costa Cruises ships and, most recently, in Spain as a consultant for the Hilton Doubletree hotel group developing a golf tourism project aimed at the Italian market.

Di Ponziano said: "It's a real privilege for me to be working for one of the biggest names in European golf. Verdura Resort has a reputation across Italy and beyond for the high standards that it sets, and I'm looking forward to working with Alessandro and the rest of the team to keep it at the pinnacle of the golf travel industry in the years to come."

Cardini, who has worked as a TV commentator for Sky Sports and took up his role at the start of the summer, said: "I am so happy to have been given such an important position and to be a part of the big Rocco Forte family."

"Verdura is regularly ranked as the number one golf resort in Italy and it's easy to see why. The facilities on and off the golf courses are exceptional and I'm honoured to have been given the chance to play a part in creating the next exciting chapter for the resort."

Home of the European Tour's Rocco Forte Sicilian Open, Verdura Resort is nestled in 230 hectares of stunning Mediterranean landscape on Sicily's southern coast and features two 18-hole links-style championship golf courses – the West Course and remodelled East Course – a nine-hole executive course also designed by acclaimed golf architect Kyle Phillips and outstanding practice facilities including Italy's only European Tour-approved Performance Institute. The courses and facilities combined have established Verdura as one of the world's elite golf and lifestyle destinations.

A member of the exclusive European Tour Destinations network, the resort offers a choice of 203 elegant rooms and suites as well as 20 new Rocco Forte private villas, and is famous for offering members and guests an unforgettable five-star golf experience in one of the most beautiful settings in world.

Away from golf, guests can enjoy an extensive array of other luxury sports and lifestyle facilities including the awarding-winning Irene Forte Spa, as well as the opportunity to sample wide variety of gastronomy, wine, history, and culture.

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Information for journalists

Press release written and distributed by Azalea.

- High-resolution images of Verdura Resort may be downloaded for editorial purposes from [Verdura Resort](#)

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About Verdura Resort

Part of Rocco Forte Hotels and member of The Leading Hotels of the World, Verdura Resort overlooks the

crystal-clear waters of the Mediterranean from the southern coast of Sicily. Immersed in a 230-hectare park, it has 203 elegant rooms and suites as well as 20 new Rocco Forte Private Villas, nestled on the hillside that gently slopes towards the resort's private coast, which is over 1.8 km long. The resort's restaurants and bars celebrate Mediterranean cuisine using seasonal ingredients typical of the island, accompanied by an extensive wine list. The Verdura Spa is an exclusive refuge with a holistic approach to health and well-being: 4,000 m2 with four thalassotherapy pools, two saunas, a hammam and a wide range of personalised treatments and programmes. The resort also has a 4,000 m2 convention centre. On site there are championship golf courses, designed by Kyle Phillips and leading figures of the Rocco Forte Sicilian Open in 2017 and 2018 (European Tour stage), making Verdura the golf destination par excellence in the Mediterranean. The sporting offer is further enriched with six tennis courts, a 60-metre infinity pool, a football pitch, an equipped gym offering a full programme of fitness and meditation activities, as well as jogging paths that wind through the estate's olive and citrus groves.

Rocco Forte Hotels

Established by Sir Rocco Forte and his sister, Olga Polizzi in 1996, Rocco Forte Hotels is a collection of 14 individual hotels and resorts. All of the hotels are landmarks, both old and new, occupying magnificent buildings in exceptional locations. Led by a family who has been in hospitality for four generations, the hotels are united by their distinctive approach to service ensuring guests experience the best of the cities and surrounding areas. Rocco Forte Hotels comprises: Hotel de la Ville, Hotel de Russie and Rocco Forte House, Rome; Hotel Savoy, Florence; Verdura Resort, Rocco Forte Private Villas and Villa Igiea, Sicily; Masseria Torre Maizza, Puglia; The Balmoral, Edinburgh; Brown's Hotel, London; The Charles Hotel, Munich; Hotel de Rome, Berlin; Hotel Amigo, Brussels and Hotel Astoria, St Petersburg. Opening in 2024: The Carlton and Rocco Forte House, Milan and Sardinia.

www.roccofortehotels.com