



# « Stagnone » natural park



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# ABSTRACT



The Stagnone nature reserve created in 1984 in Marsala is a natural landscape of rare beauty for its colors, its scents, the emotions aroused by the sunsets, for its white "saline" and its windmills.

The reserve takes its name from the "Stagnone", a lagoon that extends from Punta Alga to San Teodoro which also includes four islands:

Santa Maria is an island north of the lagoon. Its name comes from the shrine of Santa Maria Valleverde.

Mozia is the most important island of the lagoon Stagnone from the point of view of landscape and archeology. Former Phoenician colony, it has a circular shape.



Isola Lunga is the largest island of Stagnone, around which the sea is shallow. It was formed of the union of two rocky islets, probably because of the expansion of salt marshes heavily exploited by the Phoenicians

Schola Island is the smallest island in Stagnone. In Roman times, there was a school of rhetoric, the origin of the place name. There are currently three buildings from the 1930s and a cistern.

The salt marshes called "saline" are still one of the particularities of the Stagnone reserve and can be visited, as well as the impressive windmills used for pumping water and grinding salt.



Among the features making the reserve unique, there is also the presence of many fish species (bream, sea bass, mullet, eel, shells, etc.). Water warmth of the lagoon and the shallow depth of its funds sailors make Stagnone an ideal habitat for restocking fish, which is protected by the rules of the reserve which forbids hunting and underwater fishing and networks. Even sport fishing (through lines and traps), although permitted, is properly regulated.



But Stagnone is also a small paradise for ornithology amateurs. At different times of the year, several species of migratory birds, wild ducks, herons and flamingos or whites nest here or stop during their migration.

The Riserva dello Stagnone is also home to a lush vegetation typical of the brackish marshes of the Mediterranean: saw palmetto, rushes and salicornia.

The nutritional properties of Salicornia are valuable; high is the content of mineral salts, vitamins of group B and Vitamin C. These characteristics give it properties purifying and ant absorbing marked, already known in Antiquity by the Vikings who used it during long journeys. The juice extracted from the plant, particularly rich in iodine, is used in the treatment of hypothyroidism. Similar to a wild asparagus, to deserve the name "sea asparagus", it becomes the protagonist of many preparations; the easiest one is to boil it and season it with extra virgin olive oil, salt and pepper, to use as an aperitif, possibly enriched with Parmesan cheese flakes and lemon juice. Its slightly bitter taste makes it an excellent ingredient for the preparation of soups and sauces to accompany appetizers and main course dishes fish and seafood. It has a surprising taste when used in omelets or golden in a dough.

Finally the Stagnone lagoon hosted the world championships of kitesurfing and lovers of this sport never miss an opportunity to sail on these beautiful waters. The shallow waters are very important for beginners..

