

In the beginning was the house.

And the idea of creating a **healthy oasis** for the family.

Ladies and gentlemen, dear Meininger family, I will now tell you how this became a **company that operates all over Europe** and how the success of the **Lo Franco** family came about.

For many years the **La Vialla brand** has been synonymous with a sense of family, high-quality organic products, **pioneering spirit**, climate protection, sustainability and – last but not least – **astute entrepreneurship**.

The foundation stone was laid when **textile entrepreneur** Piero Lo Franco and his wife fell in love with a dilapidated stone house and decided to start farming self-sufficiently **for their family** there.

They wanted their sons to spend their **holidays surrounded by nature**.

The idea of organic concept was always in the foreground. **A healthy diet** was important for the Lo Francos.

Their **great-grandmother** already cultivated the land using solely natural fertiliser and following the lunar calendar for pruning and sowing.

Without thinking much about it – **purely intuitively**.

Today, Fattoria La Vialla is the **largest biodynamic farm in Europe**:

1,600 hectares of **land**, 30,000 **olive trees**, **vineyards**, over 1,000 **sheep**, goats, chickens and 200 bee colonies...

What was initially done purely for the family soon became a vocation.

One after another, a series of derelict farmhouses were bought and lovingly restored. The first **guests** arrived.

All of a sudden, as if out of nowhere, La Vialla's products were the talk of the town. And **the Lo Francos had to think bigger**.

With painstaking care and attention to detail, production was expanded, and they began selling their products outside the borders of Italy.

To say nothing of **the family's marketing skills**.

I can assure you that anyone who has received one of the lovingly packaged parcels has definitely ordered from the Fattoria **again and again**.

In the meanwhile, La Vialla has become a **complex agricultural business** that has been run for years now by the **brothers Gianni, Antonio and Bandino Lo Franco**, and some of their children are going to join the company.

So, nothing can go wrong in the next generation either.

Right from the start, the family has considered it a **challenge** to embark on **new pioneering paths**, both in agriculture and marketing.

Researching ancient grape varieties is as important to them as collaborating with universities such as Pisa or Florence in order to always be abreast of the times.

The Lo Francos **think dynamically** and have received countless awards over the years:

for their wines, their sustainable approach, nature conservation, but also, for example, for their **innovative range of cosmetics**, for which they recently received a prize at the **Sustainable Beauty Awards** in Paris.

Successful at all levels.

When I visited the Fattoria last summer, the **word you heard most frequently** was “**pollen**”. The team at La Vialla has extracted yeasts from bee pollen to use to ferment their wine...

It took **five years** of research before the pollen yeasts were suitable to be used for the wine. Today, the difference is fundamental.

For the Lo Francos, idleness is **impossible**.

Here **quality is always being perfected** and the family's commitment to the environment is immense.

What they take from nature they give back to it.

Everything is **regenerative**, closely connected and functions like a **closed cycle**.

I think this is **highly professional**, from all points of view **positive for society**, in **keeping with the times** and **exemplary**.

La Vialla – 8 letters that make you happy.

Ladies and gentlemen, this – **in a nutshell** – is the story of the success of a **flourishing family business**.

Essentially the accomplishment of Gianni, Antonio and Bandino Lo Franco, who I would now like to present with the Meininger Award for **Wine Family of the Year** in **recognition of their achievement**.

Now I would like to invite the family on to the stage:

Antonio and Sabina Lo Franco with their daughter Caterina, Tommaso Lo Franco and Bandino Lo Franco with his sons Piero and Lucio...