

Scots Italian Food Project Wins International Prize

A Scots Italian project to launch a Foundation for Food Excellence has received a major boost from an international award.

The I Ciacca Foundation for Food Excellence received the Best Project For a Better Tomorrow prize in the 2015 URSA Awards celebrating academic excellence.

The award recognises the input of the architects and engineers working on the renovation of the long abandoned medieval property which will be the home of the Foundation.

Already producing olive oil and soon to be supplying wine, the I Ciacca estate is being turned into an international centre for food and learning collaboration linking Scotland and Italy.

It is situated in the picturesque hill town of Picinisco which has long associations with Scotland and celebrates it's Millenium in 2017, when it's hoped the new Foundation will officially open.

The Picinisco project is the brainchild of Scots Italian Cesidio Di Ciacca and his daughter Sofia. Cesidio's grandparents emigrated to Scotland almost a century ago and have played an important role in the country's food culture ever since.

"Our aim is to create a Foundation dedicated to food and learning involving growing, cooking, hospitality and business skills.

We want to support people returning to the land and to give them the skills and confidence to set up small food businesses as a lasting link between Scotland and Italy. This major international award shows we are on the right track when it comes to creating a better tomorrow", said Cesidio.

The Picinisco project already has links with Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh which hosts the first Masters in Gastronomy in the UK. Next year University officials will visit Italy to explore the possibility of establishing a similar course at I Ciacca.

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