

Fashion in Matera, the European Culture Capital of 2019



In the ninth edition of Città dei Sassi Fashion Awards, an international competition for high fashion stylists, Sardinian designer Mara Piras came out on top in Matera.

The stunning town of [Matera](#) [2] lies in the heart of the [Basilicata](#) [3] region and has been celebrated by the intellectuals of the 60s by names such as [Pier Paolo Pasolini](#) [4] and [Carlo Levi](#) [5]. Americans might recognize its particular cavernous structures as the stage for bold films including [The Passion of the Christ](#) [6] by [Mel Gibson](#) [7]. Matera is not only a [UNESCO](#) [8] World Heritage Site but it already has been awarded the title for the European Capital of Culture 2019. Recently, the charming Piazza San Pietro Caveoso also hosted the runway that introduced the [Città dei Sassi Fashion Awards](#) [9].

The Message Behind the Show

The fashion show plus award show all in one is where sensuality, passion, originality, and internationality come together. The aim of the contest is to identify, valorize, and reward creative artists to discover emerging designers and professionals in the field of women's fashion and to enhance their talent in the splendid setting of the "Sassi" of Matera.



This year, the message of the show revolved around peace, equality, and integration among peoples without the distinction of race, color, and culture. The Città dei Sassi Fashion Awards teamed up with the [Matera Cultural Workshop](#) [10] and the [African Fashion Gate Association](#) [11] (AFG) which supports a social and cultural development program designed by [Nicola Paparusso](#) [12] and sponsored by the [Ministry of Culture and Communication of Senegal](#) [13]. The goal is to foster the social and cultural development of Africa through fashion and art. On Matera's special catwalk, AFG models were depicted as a symbolic bridge over to promote African models in the world and export their beauty while promoting intercultural dialogue, osmosis, and exchange of culture.

The Competitors

The seven competitors in the race included Dalila Palumbo, Dimitar Dradi, Ilenia Barone, Ilenia Donati, Iole Trombetta, Mara Piras, Simone La Bella. It was Sardinian designer Mara Piras who came out on top, chosen by a jury composed of top people in the fashion world like stylists Lorenzo Riva, Gianni Molaro, Michele Miglionico, Paolo Fumarulo, historical critic of fashion, Paola Cacianti, and many more. Piras was chosen for her ingenuity and potential and was given the award by [Mayor Raffaello De Ruggieri](#) [14].

Overall, the show presented elegant Italian craftsmanship as well as a different Matera, a town full of intrigue, beauty, and solidarity.

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