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Andrea Palladio

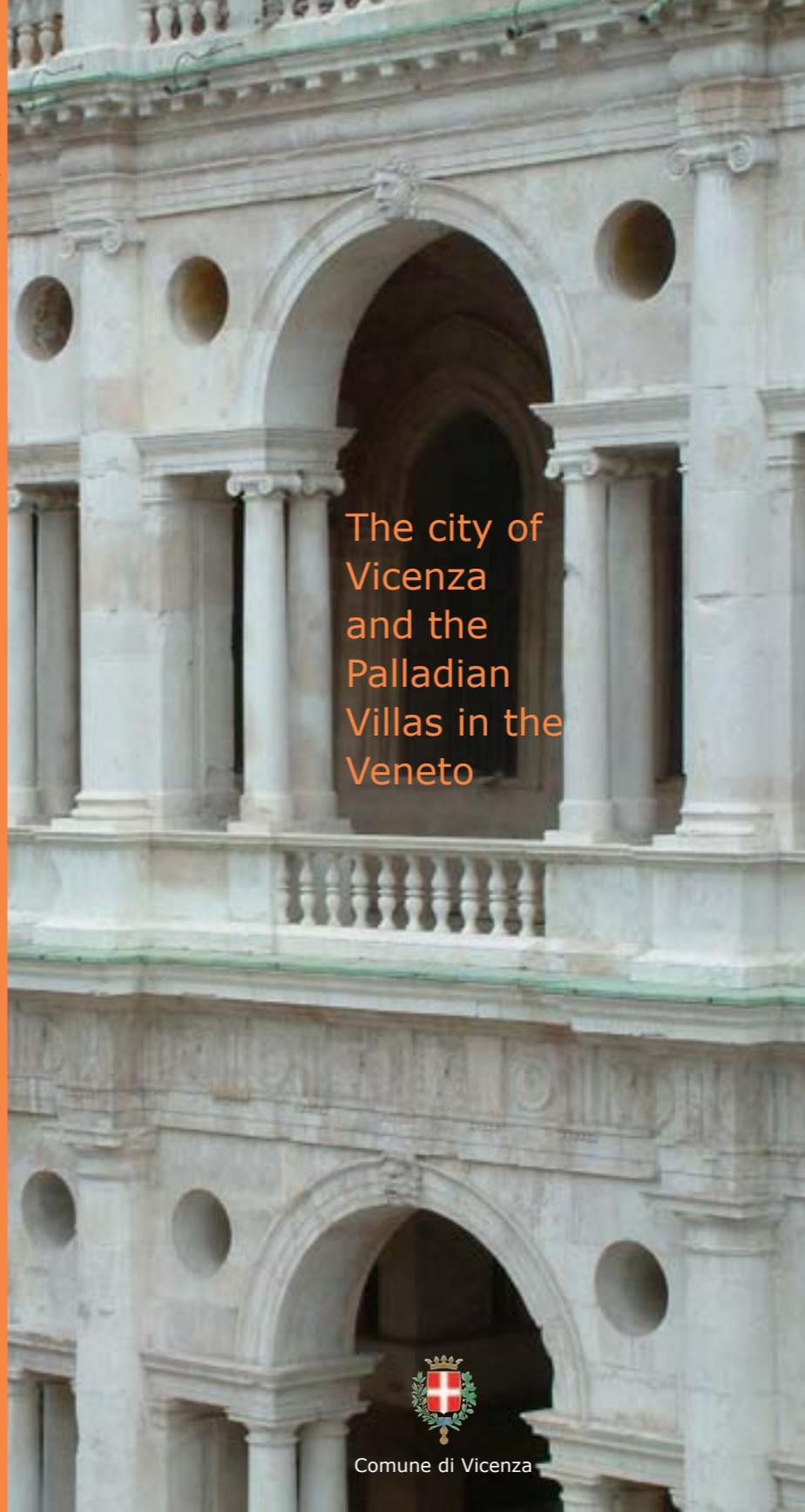
With its 26 Palladian works, 23 monuments in the historical city centre and 3 suburban villas, **Vicenza** was quite rightfully added to the World Heritage List in 1994. On account of their impressive architectural effect and certain relationships established between each work and nearby buildings and structures, the Palladian monuments transformed Vicenza, conferring upon the city and its urban setting a unique quality of its own.

In 1996, UNESCO recognised a further 21 **villas designed by Andrea Palladio** situated in the Veneto region. One can imagine a subtle 'dialogue' existing between these monuments and the landscape of the Veneto; such distinctive and 'emerging' forms of interaction lie behind the recent decision to consider these 16th-century achievements as having an outstanding and universal value.

Palladio's work gradually became a point of reference for architects throughout the world. The villas of the Veneto constitute an asset bearing witness to a culture and civilisation – and not only in the artistic or architectural sense – which quite rightly should be protected, preserved and valorised.



THE CITY OF VICENZA AND THE PALLADIAN VILLAS IN THE VENETO  
A Guide to the UNESCO site



The city of  
Vicenza  
and the  
Palladian  
Villas in the  
Veneto



Comune di Vicenza

An editorial project  
of the Unesco Office



Municipality of Vicenza

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plans, graphics and page layout

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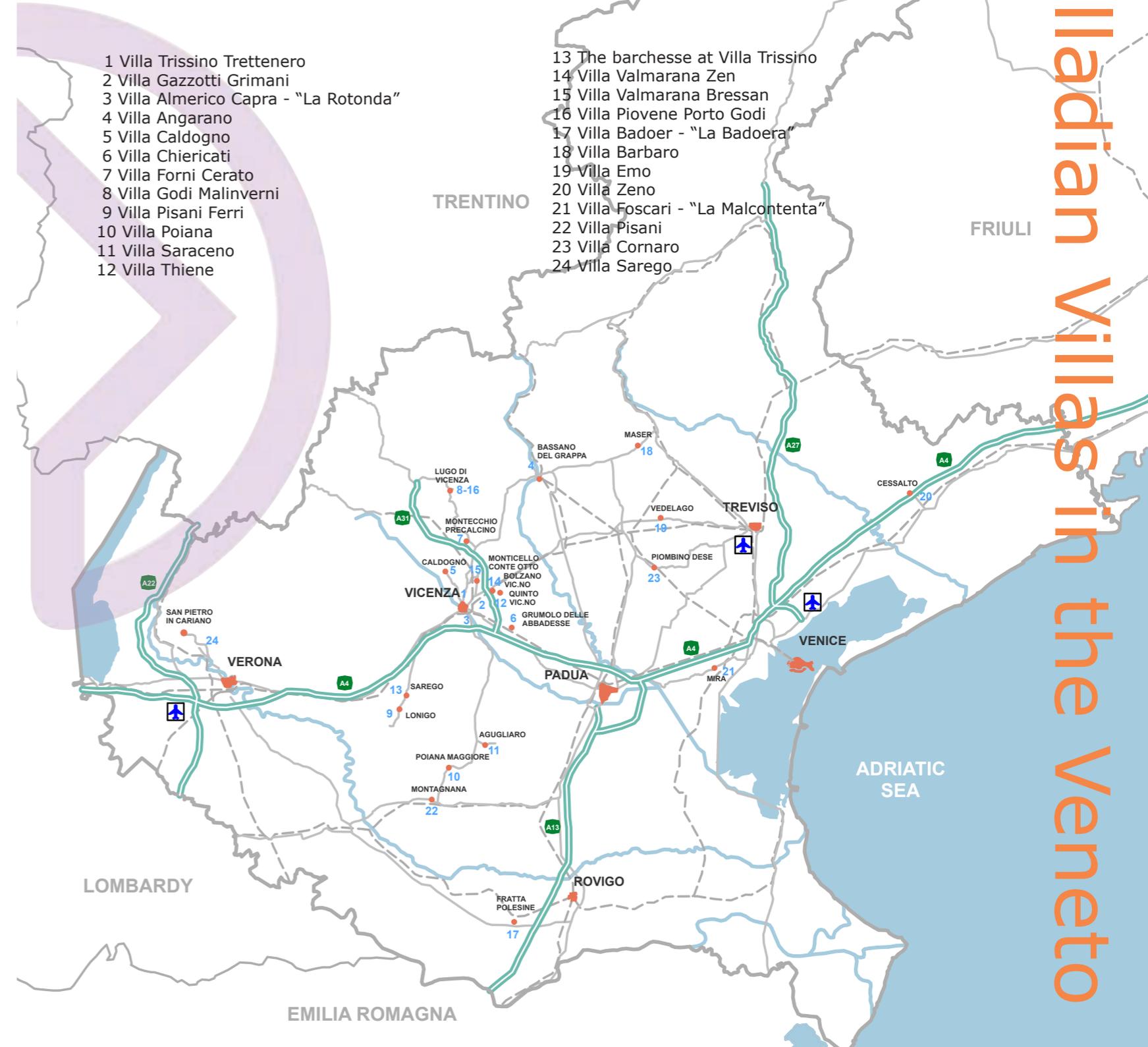
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## The 23 buildings in the historic centre included in the World Heritage List

- 1 Palazzo Barbaran da Porto
- 2 Palazzo Poiana
- 3 Palazzo Civena
- 4 Palazzo Thiene
- 5 Palazzo Porto Festa
- 6 The loggias of the Basilica Palladiana
- 7 Loggia del Capitaniato
- 8 Palazzo Valmarana
- 9 Palazzo Thiene Bonin Longare
- 10 Palazzo Porto Breganze
- 11 Palazzo Chiericati
- 12 The Olympic Theatre
- 13 Arco delle Scalette
- 14 Palazzo da Monte
- 15 Palazzo da Schio
- 16 Casa Cogollo
- 17 The church of S. Maria Nuova
- 18 Loggia Valmarana
- 19 Palazzo Garzadori
- 20 The dome of the Cathedral
- 21 North portal of the Cathedral
- 22 Palazzo Capra
- 23 The Valmarana Chapel

## The 24 villas included in the World Heritage List

- 1 Villa Trissino Trettenero
- 2 Villa Gazzotti Grimani
- 3 Villa Almerico Capra - "La Rotonda"
- 4 Villa Angarano
- 5 Villa Caldogno
- 6 Villa Chiericati
- 7 Villa Forni Cerato
- 8 Villa Godi Malinverni
- 9 Villa Pisani Ferri
- 10 Villa Poiana
- 11 Villa Saraceno
- 12 Villa Thiene
- 13 The barchesse at Villa Trissino
- 14 Villa Valmarana Zen
- 15 Villa Valmarana Bressan
- 16 Villa Piovene Porto Godi
- 17 Villa Badoer - "La Badoera"
- 18 Villa Barbaro
- 19 Villa Emo
- 20 Villa Zeno
- 21 Villa Foscari - "La Malcontenta"
- 22 Villa Pisani
- 23 Villa Cornaro
- 24 Villa Sarego



# THE CITY OF VICENZA AND THE PALLADIAN VILLAS IN THE VENETO



The UNESCO site

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At the 18th Session of the World Heritage Committee, held at Phuket in Thailand in December 1994, it was decided that the city of Vicenza would be included in the World Heritage List. This represented the conclusion of the fervent and patient work that had started at the beginning of 1993 and had involved the participation of a committee formed by eminent

scholars and members of various Administrations and which led to the formulation of careful and in-depth studies, from which the exceptional value of the Palladian architectural heritage of the city emerged very clearly. On that occasion, as Mayor of Vicenza, I intervened on behalf of the entire community, and signed the proposal for its candidature, which, after various subsequent proceedings, would lead to the prestigious recognition of the city as a UNESCO site.

After a period of fifteen years, I had once again been elected as Mayor of Vicenza and during this second period of office I was involved in the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the birth of Andrea Palladio, whose work left a deep and indelible mark on the urban landscape and architectural style of the city, conferring upon it a special balance and extraordinary cultural value that has definitely made it worthy of this important recognition.

Coinciding with the Palladian anniversary, the Unesco Office of the Municipality of Vicenza - thanks to funds made available by the Ministry for Cultural Assets and Activities and appropriated for use by Italian UNESCO sites - has prepared this guide entitled "The City of Vicenza and the Palladian Villas of the Veneto", which, as the name implies, includes not only the city of Vicenza but also twenty-four Palladian villas situated in various provinces of the Veneto region. The idea for the guide stems from a desire to present the site as a unitary system, at the heart of which we find Vicenza and its many Palladian buildings, but which also spreads across the Veneto and includes so many works and masterpieces designed by the great 16th-century stone-mason and designer who was to later inspire architects from all over the world.

Besides its intention to help visitors discover Palladio's monuments in Vicenza, the guide also offers some new itineraries illustrating the villas of the Veneto and thereby providing tourists, scholars and students with an opportunity to appreciate the balance and harmony pervading the extensive and varied work of the great architect and resulting from his rigorous and rational methodology.

The Municipality of Vicenza, the leading administrative body of the site, decided to propose this small guide as a service to all local communities and organisations forming part of this great 'system', and with the aim of raising the interest and awareness of tourists with respect to Palladio's work in its various forms present throughout the territory surrounding our city (including certain places off the beaten track).



One of the reasons for including Vicenza in the world heritage list was that the city is "an exceptional artistic setting owing to the numerous architectural works of Andrea Palladio, which, within their historical context, afford a sense of unity". Such a prestigious recognition does not merely bear a symbolic value but, on the contrary, quite tangibly binds an entire community to its architectural heritage. The architectural language and works of Andrea Palladio are well known throughout the world and have left Vicenza and the Veneto region a legacy of enormous importance. Having fortunately inherited such assets however, the region should not merely sit back and enjoy the advantage of its position; such a legacy is worth exploiting to the full, in a 'virtuous' manner, as a characterisation of its cultural identity.

The region and its landscape were transformed by Palladio's work. His achievements characterised the development of the country villas of the Veneto, which in itself can be seen as a unique phenomenon from the historical, social and also architectural points of view, characterizing the area in a fundamental way. This very particular feature of the region however now risks being jeopardised by the invasive, chaotic and widespread process of increasing urbanisation, which has greatly altered the balance and strong appeal of the landscape, attained over time through the masterful planning of a serene equilibrium between the works of man and the natural environment. It is hoped that, in relation to this complex and rather delicate subject, the various public organisations, associations, the citizens themselves and numerous cultural movements will be able, through serious collaboration, to initiate and promote debate aimed at identifying responsibilities and possible projects regarding the entire city.

The guide to the UNESCO site fulfils such an objective and aims at finally offering a unitary and complete view of the Palladian 'system', divulging knowledge regarding its content and territorial distribution and allowing the reader to more clearly comprehend the strong mark and particular cultural identity conferred by this collection of works upon the entire region.

The aim of the guide is to be as thorough as possible, while presenting the format of a brief compendium. It accompanies the visitor along various routes, which, outside the historic city centre of Vicenza, include a few suggestions for brief excursions beyond the limits of the designated UNESCO area (extending as far as the Friuli region) to visit Palladian works not mentioned in the official certificate of recognition. The guide can also be seen as a stimulus for local communities, which, despite their daily contact with the important heritage left by Palladio, do not always value it sufficiently as an element of social and cultural development.

The architectural 'vocation' of Vicenza and the Veneto region in fact calls for an ideal approach that might link various forms of artistic expression, both past and present, as basic elements of a system comprising the entire territory, its cities and its architectural assets. Such an operation - all the more significant for a site included in the world heritage list - might be seen as an educational point of reference for the Veneto, concentrating attention on matters concerning the territory and the environment by focusing on works of art and architecture and their relationship with the settings in which they were created and other cultural, historical and geographical factors. In our segmented, Post-Modernist age, we need to feel some form of integration with our surroundings and the architectural heritage all around us in part conveys this idea and reminds us of so much of our past.

Francesca Lazzari

Councillor for Territorial Planning and Innovation and for Cultural Activities



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## The City of Vicenza and the Palladian villas of the Veneto

The UNESCO site 'The City of Vicenza and the Palladian villas of the Veneto' is the result of two successive recognitions by UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

The committee appointed in 1993 to promote the inclusion of Vicenza in the UNESCO World Heritage List identified 26 Palladian works (23 monuments inside the historic city itself and 3

local villas) worthy of forming part of the world's cultural heritage. These works transformed Vicenza, providing it with a unique quality, by virtue of their architectural value and the relationship occurring between each building and its surroundings. The committee thus proposed the inclusion of the city of Vicenza in the UNESCO list, supporting its decision with a variety of historical and artistic motivations:

"Vicenza - universally known as the City of Palladio - appears worthy of being added to the World Heritage List, in light of the extraordinary wealth of civil and religious buildings and impressive private residences, which, along with many minor and yet quite 'noble' forms of architecture, make up the fabric of the historic city centre.

Many of the major buildings were designed by Andrea Palladio (1508-1580), the author of the *Quattro Libri dell'Architettura* (The Four Books of Architecture, 1570) and Vincenzo Scamozzi (1556-1616), the author of the famous treatise *L'Idea dell'Architettura Universale* (The Idea of Universal Architecture, 1615).

Within the sphere of the architectural 'culture' determined by the activity of these exceptional artists, it is possible to include the many architects, active during the 1600s and throughout the neo-classical age, who created works that reveal the strength of classical traditions (which acted as a deep and solid substratum).

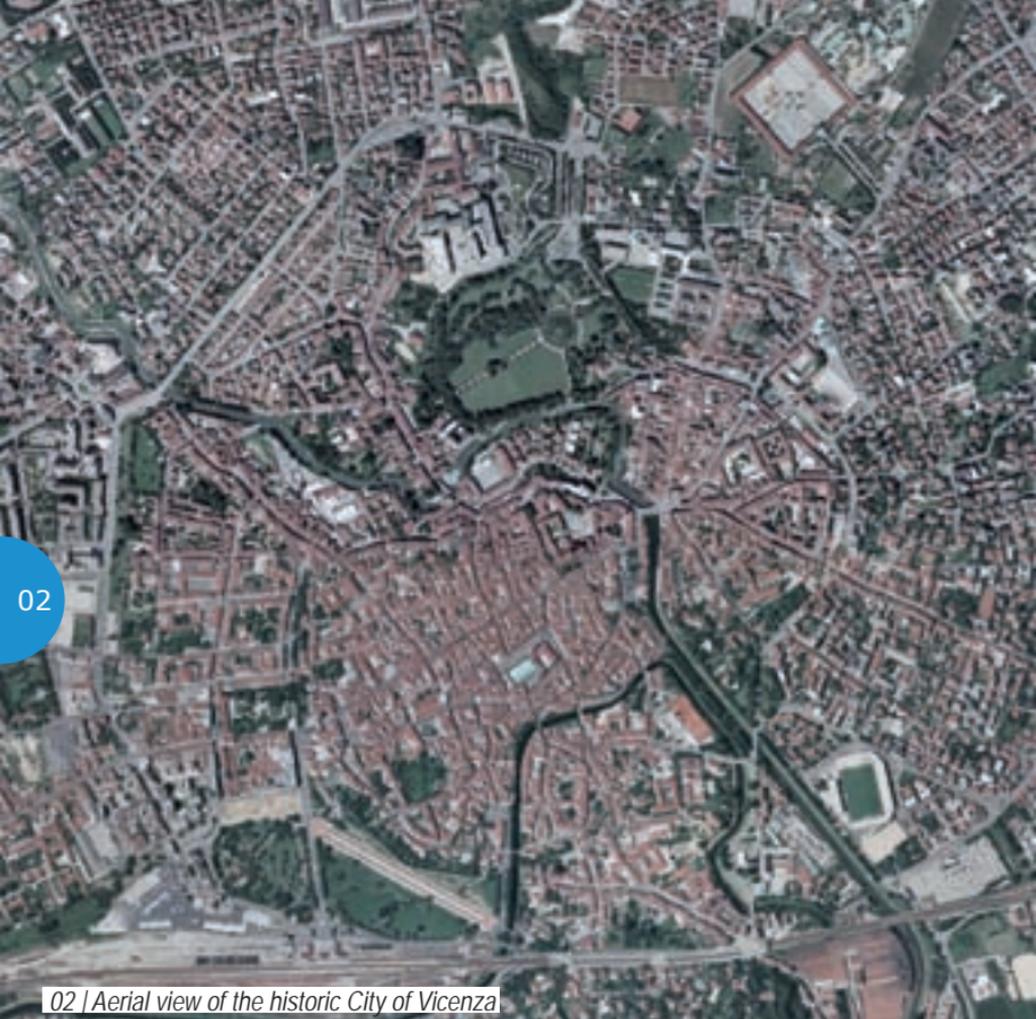
The concentration of buildings of high artistic value – many of which contain fascinating decorative elements, paintings and sculpted works – makes the historic centre of Vicenza an exceptional site, at both the national and international level [...].

One may in any case quite rightly sustain that Vicenza's typical character is due to the now world-famous works of Andrea Palladio.

Besides buildings situated in the historic centre, Palladio also built the 'Rotonda' in the immediate outskirts of the city, where he fulfilled an aspiration to create a building with a central-plan layout: a theme tenaciously pursued by Renaissance architects.

Especially within the province of Vicenza, Palladio also designed many country houses – the universally acknowledged villas – developing architectural paradigms followed by innumerable Italian, English, Russian, American, French, Polish, Czech, Slovak and Irish artists, from the end of the *Cinquecento* to the mid 1990s.

Palladianism, one of the most important phenomena in the history of architecture,



02 | Aerial view of the historic City of Vicenza

began and became consolidated in the city and province of Vicenza. Besides spreading throughout Europe and, much later, in the American Confederate States, the paradigm attained great heights of architectural value, and, in some instances, buildings inspired by the neo-classical approach truly project that sense of poetry found in Palladio's own original works. On this premise, the city of Vicenza, with its 23 Palladian monuments in the historic centre and three villas just beyond the edge of the city, applied for inclusion in the World Heritage List. The committee formulated the following justification (cfr. point 5 of the report requested by UNESCO, pursuant to the Paris Convention of 1972):

"The undeniable value of Palladio's teaching in the history of world architecture is universally acknowledged.

Undisputed proof of this is the spread of Palladianism in many western European countries, the United Kingdom and the Americas, and the many studies that have been undertaken regarding the movement, unprecedented in terms of its global extension.

Specifically, in the work of Andrea Palladio, concentrated in the city of Vicenza and in the 26 monuments listed in this guide (some only partially completed), we find an exceptional quality that this single architect was able to instil in the fabric of the historic centre and outlying areas, characterising these areas so strongly and to the extent that his influence has acquired global recognition.

Besides the intrinsic value of each individual work designed by Palladio, the body

of these works constitutes, within the urban fabric, a strong, 'emerging' nucleus of exceptional value, also by virtue of a unique, formal 'dialogue' occurring between the monuments and the buildings that surround them.

Palladio's inimitable and quite miraculous intervention in Vicenza in fact lies in the universally-acclaimed emerging 'unitary quality' conferred upon the city.

In later centuries, the Palladian influence in the city became an undeniable point of reference for a large part of public and private architecture of a certain importance.

This was moreover the case, without considering the imitations of Palladio's work in many foreign countries, where his work has been regarded as offering a paradigm presenting an absolute value to be followed and perpetuated.

With regards to maintenance, the state of conservation of the various monuments and notes concerning their ownership have been provided in the specific data sheets.

The general state of conservation of the Palladian works in the city should also be referred to. In this respect, recent 'cultural operations' have involved the participation of highly-committed experts and technicians (historians, architects, artisans, experts in restoration methodology), who have pooled and shared their knowledge and skills.

This inter-disciplinary approach has led to the development of interesting operative practices and effective methods internationally recognised for their scientific value.

Promoted by the Centro Internazionale di Studi di Architettura Andrea Palladio (CISA), whose scientific committee brings together leading scholars in this field, research has been developed with the aim of recognising all of the original and authentic works, above all through studies relating to Palladian designs, his use of materials and the execution of extant works.

Great attention has also been dedicated to the later integration and modifications of Palladio's 'fabbriche', which in any case have not altered their original nature or concepts, even though the buildings may not have been completed respecting the architect's original drawings.

The great fame of Palladio's genius and recognition of the value of his works has resulted in the creation of various supervisory bodies and trusts established to preserve his work; these organisations provide their support to other officially appointed institutes.

In this way the permanence and the protection of a heritage that should indeed be preserved for all mankind is guaranteed. Quite rightly moreover, these buildings now also deserve the official recognition of the highest authorities that supervise the conservation of the world's most important artistic assets.

The authorities of Vicenza have adopted in the historic centre of the city various protective measures (pedestrian precincts, building norms, architecture awards) to ensure its treasures are preserved as well as possible and have taken steps to raise the public awareness of such needs."

*(cfr. article 5, "Justification for inclusion in the World Heritage List", forming part of a detailed report on Vicenza submitted to the UNESCO committee on 23rd October 1993)*

During the 18th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, held in Phuket in Thailand on 15th December

1994, Vicenza was included in the World Heritage List on the basis of the following criteria:

- i) Vicenza constitutes an exceptional artistic achievement owing to the numerous architectural contributions of Andrea Palladio, which, integrated into the city's historical fabric, determine its overall character.
- ii) Thanks to its typical architectural structure, the city has exerted a strong influence on the history of architecture, creating rules for urbanisation in most European countries and across the entire world.

Following the inclusion of the City of Vicenza in the Cultural Heritage List, the insertion of a further 21 villas by Palladio present in Veneto was proposed. The extension of the site took place in 1996, during the 20th session of the

UNESCO World Heritage Committee, held in Merida in Mexico. On this occasion the name of the site became **The City of Vicenza and the Palladian villas of the Veneto.**



## 02 The city of Vicenza

Vicenza is located on an alluvial ridge that formed at the point where a tortuous river system converges beneath the Berici Hills. The watercourses descend from the highlands forming part of the nearby pre-alpine formations, which encircle the area in an unbroken line to the north of the city. Along these waterways, stretches of countryside seem to penetrate the city, through broad openings, crossing old fortifications, of which many remain, thus linking the historic centre to the surrounding natural environment.

Following the course of the Astichello tributary, beside the road that leads to Bassano del Grappa, from the Villa Trissino at Cricoli (where Palladio produced some of his earliest work), and then through Parco Querini (by Guarini's Chiesa dell'Araceli) and on to the Olympic Theatre (located at the site of the mediaeval castle), and from the Palazzo Chiericati, continuing along the course of the Bacchiglione River out to the Villa Rotonda on the road to Este, a sort of large axis comprising green areas and watercourses winds its way across the eastern part of the old city.

To the south, the city is bordered by a vast green area, wedged in between the courses of the Retrone and the Seriola, stretching from Campo Marzo to the Giardini Salvi, beneath the Monte Berico hills. To the west of the city, open stretches of land lead out to the Villa Zileri al Biron and beyond, to the point where the slopes of the Lessini hills descend towards the main road to Verona.

With its extremely beautiful architecture remaining from the mediaeval/Gothic, Renaissance and neo-classical periods, lying at the centre of these various conformations of hills and mountains, the city of Vicenza is very much a part of the beautiful surrounding landscape with which it has never severed contact. From within the city itself and from va-

rious vantage points in the hills around it, this fact can be easily appreciated as one enjoys the panoramic views, intense colours and harmony of this small centre steeped in history.

During the Roman era, *Vicetia* developed on the site of an earlier settlement dating back to the second Iron Age, located at a point where various roads and waterways joined. One of these important routes was the *Via Postumia*, which, as it crossed the small *municipium*, formed the internal *decumanus maximus*.

The essential configuration and layout of the Roman settlement are known; it had protective walls, city gates and a few bridges (corresponding approximately with the modern Ponte degli Angeli and Ponte San Paolo). Besides a brief extant portion of a minor *decumanus*, a part of the original paving of the forum, recently discovered at a point corresponding with the original heart of the city, also remains visible. Other remains include the *cryptoporticus* of a large urban dwelling and the remains of an amphitheatre, referred to as the Teatro di Berga. The remains of this structure are now hidden in the buildings situated between the Contrà Santi Apostoli and Piazzetta Gualdi. The former dimensions of the original structure can be deduced from the curving row of houses located at this site. Just beyond the north edge of the city, at Lobia, there are a few arches and pillars of the Roman aqueduct.

However, little is known of the later period of the early Middle Ages, lasting from the gradual deterioration and partial collapse of the Roman city, probably already occurring at the end of the 5th century, to the time when the town was being reorganised in the 11th century. Recent archaeological investigations are nevertheless bringing to light certain facts, concerning the construction and presence of religious buildings in



04 | The Angelica Map - 1580

particular and it has been determined that the configuration of the city had reached an important stage at the beginning of the 13th century.

In the year 1208, Vicenza was subject to a sort of urban planning law introduced by the *Comune*, which regulated building developments in the area contained within the oldest fortified walls.

In the mid 1300s, the Scaligers had new fortified walls erected around the more important, developing suburbs. The mediaeval configuration of the city was established at this time and this would remain unaltered until the second half of the 15th century.

Vicenza's submission to Venice in 1404 gave rise to a long period of peace and prosperity. The *Serenissima* placed limits on the freedom of the municipality but allowed the city to retain its territory.

Within a short time, on account of the variety and richness of the soil, its advantageous geographical position and the proximity of important land and flu-

vial routes, Vicenza became a very rich and industrious city.

The trading centres, allocated in the various squares in accordance with the type of goods that were sold, determined the size of public areas and the street networks that linked them.

In this artistic, historical and natural context, the expansion of the early mediaeval city was enriched in the 14th century by urban developments, to the east and west, while during the 16th century, the elongated central nucleus crossed by the Corso in particular, would soon be embellished by the works of Palladio and his followers, which would rapidly influence the entire urban setting.

The wealthier citizens now competed with each other in their fervent desire to build sumptuous, late Gothic and Renaissance palaces, and Andrea Palladio's ingenious architectural approach and talent were fully expressed in this context.

Aware of the vital forces of the mediaeval and 15th century urban context and

with a vision contemplating future developments, he concentrated his work at certain strategic points, laying down methods and forms of development that would be followed from his own time to the end of the 19th century.

Palladio endowed Vicenza with a highly significant architectural configuration, and after him no important building, whether public or private, would be designed without reference to his teaching.

He built his palazzi in free available spaces, where formerly there were gardens and orchards that extended out into the countryside, although the expansion never entailed a total separation from the built-up areas. In this context his city mansions resembled country villas, and the Palazzo Chiericati and the Rotonda were examples of this curious ambiguity.

Palladio redesigned Vicenza, and the city identified itself with Palladian forms. It would be an arduous task to find any other historic example of such an absolute identification of an architect's language and concepts with the complex reality of a developing city.

On account of the particular bond and sense of merging achieved between the architectural dimension and the configuration of the city, for Europe and indeed for the entire world Vicenza represents the epitome of an architectural language reflecting a suggestive ideal, noted especially in rural Palladian villas. Up until the advent of the Industrial Revolution the approach provided architects and those interested in urban planning with points of reference of universally recognised value.

Now universally known as the City of Palladio, Vicenza fully deserves to be added to the World Heritage List, considering its extraordinary wealth of civic and sacred architecture, as well as impressive private buildings and some very refined minor architecture, forming the setting of the historic centre.

Many of the major buildings were designed by Andrea Palladio (1508-1580), author of the famous *Quattro Libri dell'Architettura* (1570) and by Vincen-

zo Scamozzi (1556-1616), who compiled his own treatise entitled *L'Idée dell'Architettura Universale* (1615).

The architectural 'culture' engendered by the activities of these master craftsmen was absorbed by architects of the 17th century and throughout the neo-classical age, who conceived works revealing the strength of the classical tradition that acted as a solid substratum.

The high concentration of buildings of superior artistic value – many of which were embellished with superb decorative elements, paintings and sculptures – makes the historic centre of Vicenza an exceptional venue at both national and international level.

Within an area of barely 218 hectares visitors will find 15 works of Andrea Palladio, various designs by Scamozzi and churches dating back to the Romanic, Gothic, early Renaissance and neo-classical periods, most of which contain paintings produced by important masters that worked in Vicenza from the 15th to the 18th century (Giovanni Bellini, Palma the Elder, Bartolomeo Montagna, Paolo Veronese etc). But of course the general 'feel' of Vicenza is that which derives from Palladio's architecture.

As well as the buildings in the city centre, he constructed the world-famous 'Rotonda' in the immediate outskirts of the city, thus realising his aspiration to create a building with a central plan: a theme tenaciously pursued by various Renaissance architects.

It should not be forgotten that Palladio also built many country houses, especially in the province of Vicenza. These universally acknowledged villas introduced a new architectural paradigm followed by innumerable Italian, English, Russian, American, French, Polish, Czech, Slovak and Irish artists from the end of the 1500s to the mid 1800s.

Palladianism, one of the most important phenomena in the history of architecture, thus began and was consolidated in the city and province of Vicenza. It was to gradually spread throughout Europe and the United States.

### 03 Palladio in Vicenza

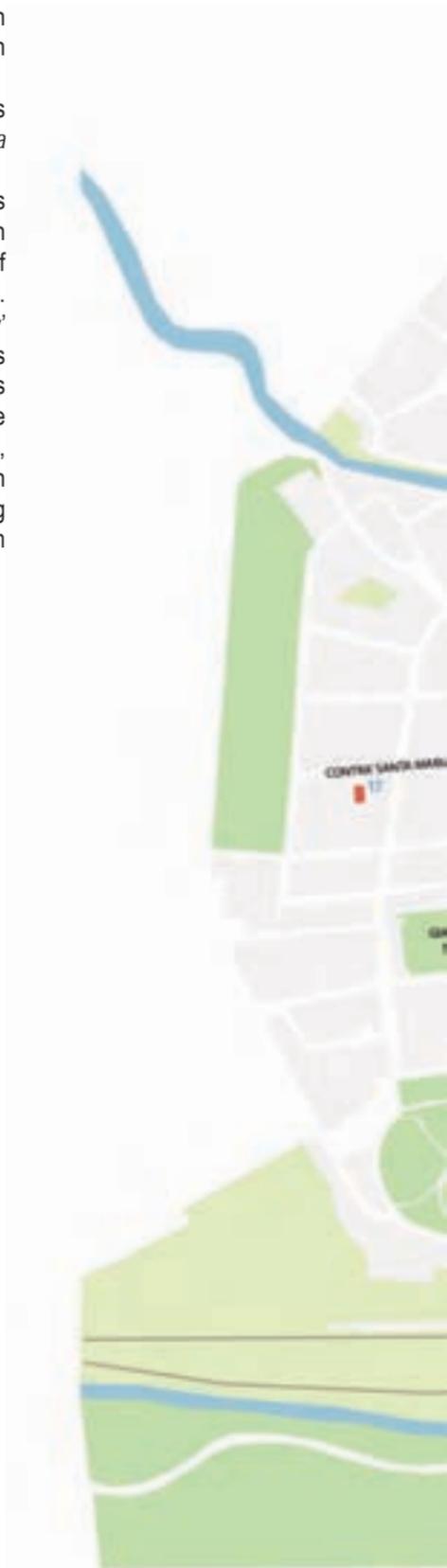
The twenty-three Palladian monuments in Vicenza's historic centre give the city an authentic sense of unity.

Palladio describes some of these buildings in his treatise *I Quattro Libri dell'Architettura* (1570).

In the following brief overviews of the 23 works in Vicenza's city centre, emphasis is placed on the principle values that characterise each of the works conceived or inspired by Palladio. These buildings determine the general 'identity' of the city through a system of relationships that develop between the Palladian structures themselves and between the latter and the surrounding settings in which they are inserted, often redefining and transforming them in accordance with Renaissance ideals relating to urban contexts and Palladio's new paradigm for urban transformation.

The monuments on the WHL:

1. Palazzo Barbaran da Porto
2. Palazzo Poiana
3. Palazzo Civena
4. Palazzo Thiene
5. Palazzo Porto Festa
6. The loggias of the Basilica Palladiana
7. Loggia del Capitaniato
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11. Palazzo Chiericati
12. The Olympic Theatre
13. Arco delle Scalette
14. Palazzo da Monte
15. Palazzo da Schio
16. Casa Cogollo
17. The church of S. Maria Nuova
18. Loggia Valmarana
19. Palazzo Garzadori
20. The dome of the Cathedral
21. North portal of the Cathedral
22. Palazzo Capra
23. The Valmarana Chapel







Palazzo Barbaran da Porto is a two-storey building with an attic. An impressive atrium with four columns leads to a rectangular internal courtyard, with two orders of *logge* on the south side and in the southeast corner.

The main façade on Contrà Porti is articulated by a framework of Ionic semi-columns on the ground floor decorated with an ashlar pattern and Corinthian semi-columns on the piano nobile. The composition is characterised by the non-axial position of the entrance portal, flanked on the left by five spans and on the right by three. Above the rectangular, ground-floor windows and around those of the piano nobile, which have an aedicula form and alternating pediments and small balconies with balustrades, there are stucco decorations, also present along the friezes of the two orders.

The stately reception rooms on the ground floor and *piano nobile* present rich painted and stucco decorations.

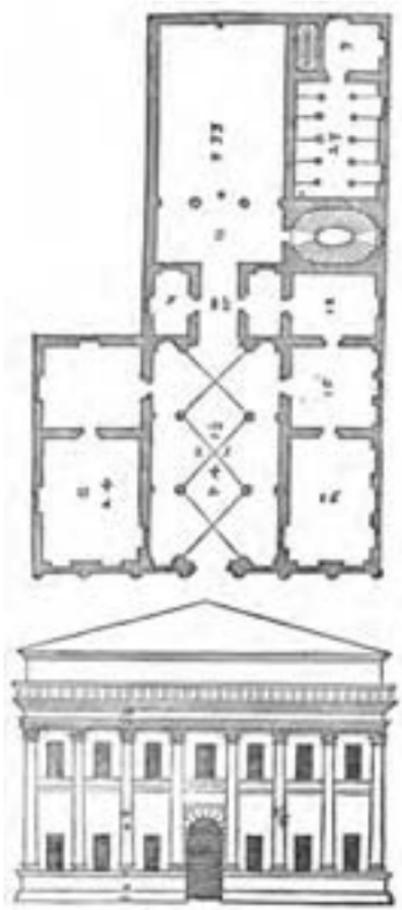
Of particular interest is the hall with a 'nave' and two 'aisles' comprising a succession of three cross-vaults on Ionic columns; the vaults extend transversally across the two lateral aisles, supported on the perimeter walls by Ionic semi-columns, which, linked by entablatures to the central columns, form a succession of Serlian arches. This expedient hides the planimetric irregularity of the entrance with opportune variations in the length of the stretches of entablature, allowing the intercolumniation to remain regular.

The Palladian plans of 1570 aimed at restructuring and recomposing in a monumental form a pre-existing house belonging to Count Montano Barbarano; the purchase of the neighbouring dwelling by the cousins Giulio and Alessandro Barbarano brought about the unbalanced extension of the principal façade towards the left, probably occurring between 1571 and 1574. Palladio himself directed only the building of the façade; work on the internal courtyard was probably directed by a collaborator, but the loggia and back wall are undoubtedly an interesting

Palladian invention. The outside stucco work was produced by Lorenzo Rubini and his workshop at the same time as the Palladian intervention in 1570-1572. The internal decorative stucco work is by Lorenzo Rubini and, above all, his son Agostino. The artistic decoration (frescoes and canvas), carried out at the same time as the architectural renovation of the palace and over the following decade, is attributed to various artists: Anselmo Canera, Giambattista Selotti, Gianantonio Fasolo, Giambattista Maganza the elder and Andrea Michieli known as *Il Vicentino*; some of those on the ground floor, dated at about 1566, date back to the former building, preserved by the Palladian intervention and integrated into the new monumental project.

The room to the southwest of the piano nobile was decorated at the end of the 18th century. The complex restoration of the building has offered a chance to conduct further investigation into various aspects of this architecture (the relationship between the Palladian intervention and pre-existing buildings, the importance of the decorative work, research into the existence of Roman or early mediaeval structures at the site), which confirm its originality within the context of Palladian works and its notable architectonic and artistic value. The mansion offers a significant example of Palladio's ability to recompose in a monumental form pre-existing buildings and the quality of his interventions in terms of urban development, attested in this specific case by his ability to confer new dignity and a greater definition to this section of the street, where Contrà Riale joins Contrà Porti. The architectural composition of the main façade interprets in a language dense with pictorial effects - the result of a close alliance between architecture and decorative work that distinguishes Palladio's later works - the Bramante scheme with ashlar at the ground floor level, already used in the nearby Palazzo Iseppo Porto. From the architectural point of view, the atrium is a particularly significant element of the

FECI al Conte Montano Batbarano per vn fuo fito in Vicenza la prefente inuentione: nella quale per cagion del fito non feruai l'ordine di vna parte, ancho nell'altra. Hora quefto gentil'huomo ha comprato il fito uicino; onde fi ferua l'ifteffo ordine in tutte due le parti; e fi come da una parte ui fono le ftalle, e luoghi per feruitori, (come fi uede nel difegno) cofi dall'altra ui uanno ftanze che feruiranno per cucina, e luoghi da donne, & per altre commodità. Si ha già cominciato à fabricare, & fi fa la facciata fecondo il difegno che fegue in forma grande. Non ho pofto ancho il difegno dellapianta, fecondo che è ftato ultimamente conclufo, e fecondo che fono hormai ftate gettate le fondamenta, per non hauere potuto farlo intagliare à tempo, che fi poteffe ftampare. La entrata di quefta inuentione ha alcune colonne, che tolgono fufo il volto per le cagioni già dette. Dalla deftra, e dalla finiftra parte ui fono due ftanze lunghe un quadro e mezo, & appreffo due altre quadre, & oltra quefte due camerini. Rincontro all'entrata ui è vn'andito, dal quale fi entra in una loggia fopra la corte. Ha quefto andito un camrino per banda, e fopra mezati, à quali ferue la fcala maggiore, e principale della cafa. Di tutti quefti luoghi fono i uolti alti piedi uentiuno e mezo. La sala di fopra, e tutte l'altre ftanze fono in folaro i camerini foli hanno i uolti alti al paro de i folari delle ftanze. Le colonne della facciata hanno fotto i piedeftili, e tolgono fufo vn poggiuolo: nel quale si entra per la foiffitta; non fi fa la facciata a quefto modo (come ho detto) ma fecondo il difegno, che fegue in forma grande.



from the *Quattro libri dell'architettura* di Andrea Palladio, Venezia 1570



05 | Details of the courtyard

whole. In the ingenious architectural solutions elaborated by Palladio to resolve spatial irregularities and sustain the weight of the hall above one may note an articulated spatial configuration reminiscent of the complexity of later Baroque halls.

The value of this building is moreover enhanced by the presence of the *Centro Internazionale di Studi di Architettura Andrea Palladio* (CISA), the activities of which (research, exhibitions, specialised courses) confer even greater prestige to the site. Thanks to recent restoration, the state of conservation of the building - particularly the structure as a whole and the inside spaces - is very good. A slight degree of deterioration is present on the outside façade, especially in the decorative work and window frames.

Restoration work was carried out at different times between 1980 and 1992. The interventions were preceded by the necessary, non-invasive tests on the plaster, masonry and ceiling-beams and joists.

The work carried out has structurally strengthened the building: the decorated outside surfaces have been cleaned and solidified, the roofing has been repaired and the painted and sculptural works inside have been cleaned and restored to their original splendour. The flooring has been restored and improvements made, maintaining the architectural value of the internal spaces. In the near future, the external decorative work will also be restored, along with a partial renovation of some less important rooms to suit the needs of the CISA.



## Corso Palladio, 92-94

Palazzo Poiana is the result of an operation involving the renewal and unification in the classical style of two distinct properties, belonging to the nobleman Vincenzo Poiana, situated to the left and right of Contrà Do Rode. In fact, on 22nd January 1561, Poiana requested permission from the *Maggior Consiglio* of the city to carry out some work on a newly-purchased property situated opposite his own. From the architectural language of the façade it would seem Palladio created the portion on the left for Vincenzo Poiana in the 1540s and then twenty-years later the design was extended to the right-hand side.

The unifying façade on the city's main street was finished according to Palladio's drawings between 1563 and 1566.

The building has two storeys, both of which have an upper partitioned section. The first two levels have ashlar facing, while those above are united by a giant order of Corinthian pilasters with five partitions. The five windows of the piano nobile have an *aedicula* configuration with alternating pediments; the two lateral pairs open onto long balconies and between them there is the central arch of the ground floor, forming

the passageway towards Contrà Do Rode. The base of the building is made up of large stone blocks. In the higher level, stone is used only for the capitals, the bases and the balustrade, while the remaining surfaces are in brickwork.

The attribution to Palladio has not been ascertained in any documents or signed plans but is proven by the evident architectural quality of the piano nobile, with a gigantic order of six composite pilasters articulating the façade in five areas of intercolumniation.

The building in its entirety presents a few incongruent compositional aspects, such as the long balconies and the excessively high central passageway.

These elements are the result of work carried out not by the original designer but, probably, by Domenico Gropino.

Palazzo Poiana reflects an intention and capacity to renew the urban setting on the part of Palladio, while, nevertheless, respecting the complex spatial relations of the mediaeval city, as demonstrated in this case by maintaining access to the side street.

The state of conservation of this building is quite good; the layout of the apertures on the ground floor has been partially altered.

06 | Detail of the façade in the Corso





16

## Viale Eretenio, 12

In 1540, the Civena brothers bought a house near Ponte Furo, at a peripheral site on the southern side of the city, beside the inner fortified wall, along the street beside the Retrone River. The previous building was immediately demolished to make way for a new mansion presenting features of the new Renaissance architecture developing in Rome that had begun to spread to the Veneto.

The mansion does not appear amongst those published in the *Quattro Libri* but most critics have attributed it to Palladio. The Palladian designs were most likely made at some time between the purchase of the property and the laying of the first stone, which occurred during the same year. The building was constructed between 1540 and 1544.

Palazzo Civena is one of Palladio's first works in the city, and comprises the intervention attributed to him in the central portion of the building. Of this side of the palazzo, the remaining parts are the two-storey façade, with a portico of five arches covered in plaster and presenting an ashlar pattern, and a piano nobile, the latter articulated by twin Corinthian pilasters in the same number of spans and containing windows with

alternating pediments. The rectangular atrium is defined at the end by a Serlian arch. The portico is barrel-vaulted, as is the hall; the door and window frames, the bases and capitals of the pilasters, and the tracery of the lower window panelling on the piano nobile are in stone.

The design already reveals the architect's ability to renew urban settings with innovative proposals during the phase prior to his direct contact with Roman architecture. At this time however, the reference to a modern classical language is already present, mediated by the influence of contemporary masters active in the Veneto, such as Sanmicheli.

The building has been subject to many modifications. In 1750, Domenico Cera-to altered the atrium, the interior and the elevation facing the garden. In 1762, the building was extended on the south side, towards Contrà del Pallamaio.

In 1820, Fontana extended the mansion by adding two lateral wings. Very seriously damaged during World War II, Palazzo Civena was rebuilt starting in 1950, and has recently undergone conservation operations. It now houses a modern clinic.



07 | View of viale Eretenio



## Contrà San Gaetano Thiene, 11

In October 1542, the brothers Marcantonio and Adriano Thiene began the restructuring of their 15th-century family mansion on the basis of a grandiose plan, which was to involve an entire block on the Corso where their pre-existing property was located. As Palladio states in his treatise, a single, isolated, four-sided palace, bordered by four streets, was to be erected in the oldest and most central part of the city. The main elevation with the central avant-corps with a portico at the main atrium was to have faced the Corso, while the sides (with two secondary atriums at the centre) were to have developed along the present-day Contrà Porti and Contrà San Gaetano da Thiene and the rear was to have faced the present-day alley of the Banca Popolare. Construction of the building had already begun between 1489 and 1495 according to drawings by Lorenzo di Bologna; the work which aimed at radically redefining this stately home began in 1542. The manner in which the plans originated is still a debated point and recent research advances the hypothesis that Giulio Romano was also involved. In December 1542, the Roman architect did come to Vicenza to offer his opinions concerning the new logge of the Palazzo della Ragione, and Giuliano Romano stayed in the city for a fortnight and it is very likely that he was the guest of the Thiene family and that on this occasion the artist was able to make suggestions for the building of the new palace. It is certain that as Giuliano Romano died in 1546, credit must go to Palladio for the ingenious

idea of adapting the construction of the building to his own stylistic parameters, toning down the often exuberant features of Giuliano Romano's work and conferring a balance and serene sense of 'composure' characterising the entire structure. Even so, there remain clearly identifiable expressions of the Roman artist. The planimetric solution, with numerous rooms aligned in a 'paratactic' fashion around the perimeter of the building, presenting an approach and style different from that adopted by Palladio, the low attic facing the courtyard and the very solid columns with ashlar shafts in the atrium are reminiscent of the Palazzo Te at Mantua. Work began in October 1542, starting from the northeast corner facing Piazzetta Santo Stefano and after various interruptions was resumed in 1546.

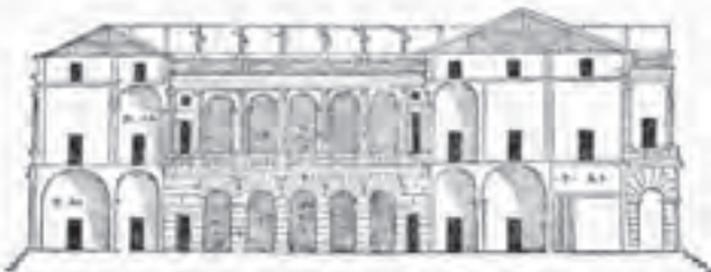
In 1552 and 1553, the interior spaces of the northeast section must have been almost completed as the artists commissioned with the decorative work were already present at the site. The work must have ended between 1556 (the date present on the stringcourse of the first floor on the elevation facing Contrà Gaetano da Thiene) and 1558 (the year indicated on the stringcourse on the northern side of the courtyard). Work was suspended at the death of Marcantonio in 1560. Thus, less than a quarter of the grandiose project described in the *Quattro Libri* was brought to fruition.

Thanks also to a certain Veronese influence, the exceptional decorative work of the interior can be linked to the Mannerist style of Mantua.



08 | Detail of the courtyard

I DISEGNI che feguono fono di una fabrica in Vicenza del Conte Ottauio de' Thieni, fu del Conte Marc'Antonio: il qual le diede principio. E' quefta cafa fituata nel mezo della Città, vicino al la piazza, e però mi è parfo nella parte ch'è uerfo detta Piazza difponervi alcune botteghe: perciò che deve l'Architetto auertire ancho all'vtile del fabricatore, potedofi fare comodamente, doue refta fito grande a fufficienza. Ciacuna bottega ha fopra di fe vn mezato per ufo de' botteghieri; e fopra vi fono le ftanze per il padrone. Quefta cafa è in Ifola, cioè circondata da quattro ftrade. La entrata principale, ò uogliam dire porta mefta ha vna loggia dauanti, & è fopra la ftrada più frequente della Città. Di fopra ui farà la Sala maggiore: la quale vfcirà in fuori al paro della Loggia. Due altre entrate ui fono ne' fianchi, le quali hanno le colonne nel mezo, che ui fono pofto non tanto per ornamento, quanto per rendere il luogo di fopra ficuro, e proportionare la larghezza all'altezza. Da quefte entrate fi entra nel cortile circondato inrorno da loggie di pilaftri nel primo ordine ruftichi, e nel fecondo di ordine Compofito. Ne gli angoli ui fono le ftanze ottangule, che riefcono bene, fi per la forma loro, come per diverfi ufi, à' quali elle fi poftono accomodare. Le ftanze di quefta fabbrica c' hora fono finite; fono ftate ornate di befliffimi ftucchi da Meffer Aleffandro Vittoria, & Meffer Bartolomeo Ridolfi; e di pitture da Meffer Anfelmo Canera, & Meffer Bernardino India Veronefi, non fecondi ad alcuno de' noftri tempi. Le Cantine, e luoghi fimili fono fottoterra: perche quefta fabrica è nella più alta parte della Città, oue non è pericolo, che l'acqua dia impaccio.



from the *Quattro libri dell'architettura* di Andrea Palladio, Venezia 1570





In the mid-1540s, the nobleman Isep-po Porto decided to initiate work on a *palazzo* in Contrà Porti, close to the grandiose construction site of his brothers-in-law Marcantonio and Adriano Thiene. The Palladian paternity of the plans is proven by its inclusion in the *Quattro Libri* and by various drawings in the RIBA collections in London, which historians suggest are preliminary studies and hypotheses concerning the building. From these sources we understand that the *palazzo* was to consist of two symmetric buildings, and between which a large square courtyard with a peristyle of giant columns would be placed. Only the part of the project giving onto Contrà Porti was completed. The chronological development of the construction work has been widely debated, but recently the completion of the plans was dated at around 1546. Work was largely completed by 1549, but the completion of various parts, including the interior decorative work, continued to occur until 1552.

It is a two-storey *palazzo* with an attic. Access to the palace is gained through an impressive entrance hall with four columns covered by a cross-vault. The ground floor decoration, presents on the two sides of the portal three rectangular windows beneath arches, with sculptures in the shape of heads on the keystones; the piano nobile is punctuated by Ionic semi-columns in seven spans,

with the same number of windows with the *aedicula* configuration and alternating pediments, giving onto slightly protruding balconies with balustrades. In the attic there are square windows placed between pillars. On top of the two central pillars and those at the end, there are statues in honour of the Porto family. The attic statues are attributed to Lorenzo Rubini. Paolo Veronese participated in the interior decorative work, although his work was subsequently lost. The frescoes are attributed to Domenico Brusasorci and the stucco work to Ridolfi. In the 18th century, Giambattista Tiepolo also intervened in the decorative work of the main hall. Most of the Tiepolo frescoes were removed and are now held at the National Museum of Stockholm and the Seattle Art Museum. The mansion is one of the first Palladian constructions carried out after his journey to Rome in 1541; it is possible to appreciate the effects of his studies in the influence of Bramante's vision, and in particular his recourse to the so-called 'Casa di Raffaello' scheme, with the architectonic order over the ground floor with its ashlar pattern, and in a more grandiose conception with respect to precedents such as Palazzo Civena, apparent especially in the four columned entrance hall, which Palladio used here for the first time, and in the idea of a courtyard with a portico and a giant order.

10 | Detail of the façade





## Piazza dei Signori

The Basilica Palladiana, undoubtedly the most famous monument in Vicenza, stands on the south side of Piazza dei Signori.

The *palatium vetus*, the original seat of the comune, referred to as such since 1262 and probably built in the second half of the 12th century, extended, with its two towers, from the present Piazzetta Palladio to the passageway beneath the west archivolt of the Basilica.

This site included the seat of the Camera degli Anziani, a chapel and the place where justice was administered.

To the east, it was linked to the *palatium communis*, which contained the Salone dei Quattrocento [the Hall of the Four Hundred]. The salone rose above massive arches, probably corresponding with the first five lower Serlian arches of the present logge, starting from the Torre Bissara. At the point corresponding with the first span it is likely that there was a stairway leading up to the hall, which also led to the Palazzo del Podestà.

In 1236, Frederic II burnt the buildings of this rebellious municipality, damaging the roof and upper storeys. The structures remained in a state of neglect also under the rule of Ezzelino III.

It appears that a roof was again installed over the *palatium vetus* (1262) after the fall of the tyrant, while in the restored *palatium communis* a prison was created in the spaces below ground level (1259-1260) and in 1291 the walls of the salone were decorated with frescoes depicting various *historiae*.

Towards the end of the 14th century, the widened *scala magna* between the *palatium communis* and the quarters of the Podestà was embellished.

In time, the two buildings deteriorated and radical interventions subsidised by the Venetian government were thus undertaken.

The upper level of the building was developed above the lower walls of the *palatium vetus* to create a vast hall with a wooden roof in the shape of an upturned ship's hull.

The *palatium novum communis* or Palazzo della Ragione, which also

provided space for a series of artisans' workshops on the ground floor, was the seat of the court of magistrates of the city. The project is attributed to Domenico da Venezia, who was the municipal engineer at that time (1448).

In 1481 there already existed a plan to surround the building with two sets of logge, and work based on plans produced by Tommaso Formenton were begun at that time. The idea was to swathe the Gothic core, below the enormous hull-shaped roof, with a series of logge; they were in fact constructed but partially collapsed in 1496.

In 1495-96, Pietro Lombardo created the large stairway leading up to the upper hall, and soon after the partial collapse of the outer arches in 1496, mainly involving the southwest corner of the building, Antonio Rizzo was called in to supervise the enterprise, followed, in 1525, by Antonio Scarpagnino.

In 1546, after it had received advice from such authoritative consultants as Sansovino (1535), Serlio (1539), Sanmicheli (1541) and Giulio Romano (1542), the Municipal Council was convinced by Giangiorgio Trissino to accept proposals submitted by his protégé Andrea Palladio (who was thirty-eight at that time) and a collaborator of the latter, Giovanni da Pedemuro.

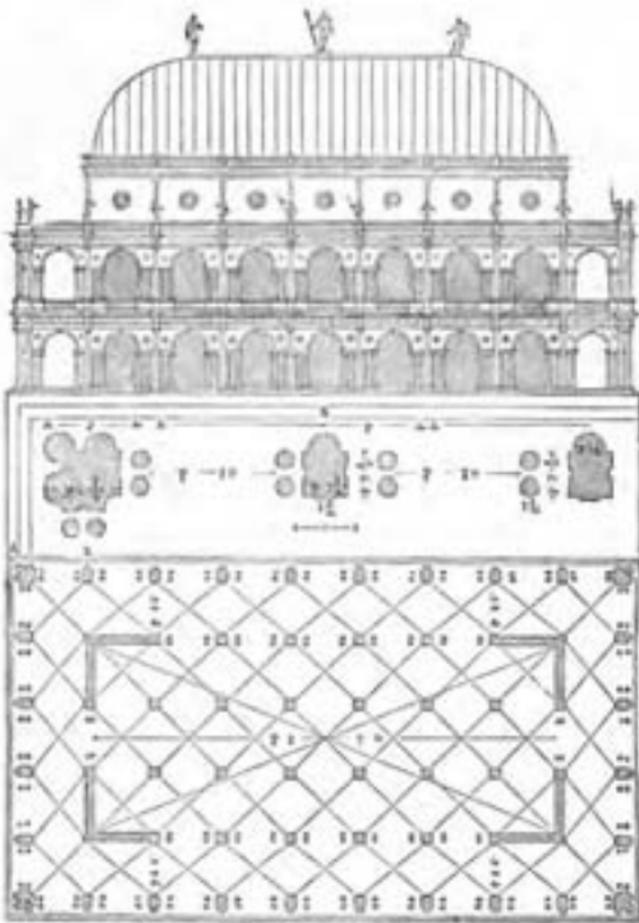
The young architect was asked to prepare drawings and create a wooden model of one of the arches. After three years of heated debate, the Palladian project was approved in 1549; this event marked his professional coming of age and his official initiation as the architect of the city of Vicenza. Nevertheless, the project took over sixty years to complete and was terminated long after the architect's death.

In fact, in 1561 the lower order was still incomplete, although the nine arches that opened onto the main square had been erected. The work on the upper order began in 1564 and continued until 1597.

Girolamo Pittoni, Lorenzo Rubini and Francesco Albanese worked on the sculptures.

The last payments for the execution of

SI come gli Antichi fecero le loro Bafiliche, acciò che'l uerno, e la ftate gl'huomini haueffero oue raunarsi à trattar commodamente le lor caufe, & i lor negocij: cofi à tempi noftri in ciafcuna città d'Italia, e fuori fi fanno alcune Sale pubbliche; lequali fi poffono chiamar meritamente Bafiliehe: percioche lor preffo è l'habitatione del fupremo magiftrato, onde uengono à effer parte di quella; e propriamente quefto nome, Bafilica, fignifica cafa reale: & anco perche ui ftanno i giudici a render ragione al popolo. Quefte Bafiliche de' noftri tempi fono in quefto dall'antiche differenti; che l'antiche erano in terreno, ò uogliam dire à pie piano; e quefte noftre fono fopra i uolti; né quali poi fi ordinano le botteghe per diuerfe arti, e mercantie della città; e ui fi fanno anco le pregioni, & altri luoghi pertinenti à bifogni pubblici. Oltre acciò, quelle haueano i portichi nella parte di dentro, come s'è ueduto ne' difegni di fopra; e quefte per lo contrario, ò non hanno portichi, ò gli hanno nella parte di fuori, fopra la piazza. Di quefte Sale moderne una notabiliffima n'è in Padoua, Città illufre per l'antichità fua, e per lo ftudio celebre in tutto il mondo; nella quale ogni giorno fi raunano i gentil'huomini, e ferue loro per una piazza coperta. Vn'altra per grandezza, e per ornamenti mirabile n'ha fatto nuouamente la Città di Brefcia magnifica in tutte le ation fue. Et un'altra ue n'è in Vicenza, della quale folamente ho pofto i difegni, perche i portichi, ch'el-la hà d'intorno; fono di mia inuentione: e perche non dubito che quefta fabrica non poffa effer comparata à gli edificij antichi; & annouerata tra le maggiori, e le più belle fabriche, che fiano ftate fatte da gli antichi in qua, fi per la grandezza, e per gli ornamenti fuoi: come anco per la materia, che è tutta di pietra uiua duriffima; e fono ftate tuttele pietre commeffe; e legate infieme con fomma diligenza. Non occorre ch'io ponga le mifure di ciafcuna fua parte, perche ne' difegni fono tutte notate à fuoi luoghi.



from the *Quattro libri dell'architettura* di Andrea Palladio, Venezia 1570

the work were recorded in 1617, following completion of the southern loggia facing the Piazza delle Erbe.

Construction of an outer shell around the pre-existing structures according to classical rules was most certainly a difficult challenge given the irregularity of these earlier buildings.

Thus, the main public building of the city of Vicenza consists of the internal 15th century core attributed to Domenico da Venezia, and the double order of loggia designed by Palladio - Tuscan on the ground floor and Ionic above - which surround the building on three sides, allowing the upper part of the internal walls decorated with a lozenge-pattern and the hull-shaped roof to emerge above. The double loggia design, articulated by semi-columns adjoining pillars across nine bays on the long sides and five on the shorter side, is created by a series of repetitions of the Serlian arch design.

The young architect was certainly strongly influenced by Serlio and Sansovino. In fact, the use of the Serlian archway on the higher level is reminiscent of the plans realised in the 1540s for Villa Valmarana at Vigardolo.

The use of the Serlian design with semi-columns also allowed Palladio to conceal the irregularities of the site (also playing with the dimensions of the entablature area), while remaining faithful to classical standards.

The Serlian design thus presents a rhythmic articulation in the impressive front elevation, also creating strong chiaroscuro and three-dimensional effects. The pilasters with an ashlar pattern on the ground floor on the other hand might remind the observer of Sanmicheli's work. The insertion of oculi, accentuating the alternation of solid and empty spaces, the use of an abstract or cylindrical base in the minor order to avoid the difference in size with respect to that of the giant order, the use of corner columns to hide the lack of right angles, are all stratagems that reflect Palladio's desire to achieve the

best possible results.

The building was damaged by bombing in 1945 and was later restored with an improper use of reinforced concrete in the reconstruction of the hull-shaped vault, which was originally entirely made of wood.

A further incomplete conservation project was carried out in the 1970s.

For the first time following the work performed to repair the serious damage caused by the bombing during World War II, a thorough restoration project began in 2007.

The intervention which aimed at conserving the main body of the Basilica was based on a very careful examination and study conducted during the planning stages.

The most important work is undoubtedly the replacement of the arches in reinforced concrete with curved beams in laminated wood.

The second complex intervention is the cleaning, strengthening and protection of all the stone, brickwork, and plaster surfaces, with and without decorative work, both internally and externally. Particular attention will of course be paid to the Palladian loggia.

The fame of the monument is based not only on its unique architectural quality but also on its exceptional urbanistic value, constituted by its symbolic and iconic power.

The building summarises Palladio's incredible skill but also reflects the transformational capacity of his works in terms of visual effect. The serene, aristocratic monumental atmosphere created by the Basilica is striking on account of the coherent simplicity of its architectural language, linked, with no particular trace of 'rhetoric' or abstract idealisation, to the classical style.

In the successful combination of Palladio's work and the pre-existing buildings, these latter were also valorised in the process of transformation as architectural elements that clearly characterise the main public space of the city.



## Piazza dei Signori

The designs of the logge for the Palazzo della Ragione and the Loggia del Capitaniato represent the two fundamental Palladian architectural interventions that visually define Piazza dei Signori, the main public space of the city. Palladio's extraordinary work instils within this space a very strong symbolic essence, defining it as the heart of the city and conveying a strong sense of identity.

The construction and actual design of the Loggia del Capitaniato were however influenced in a singular manner by historical events occurring at the time of its planning and development.

Since their conception, the particular compositional configuration and decorative elements of the vibrant, expressive façades of the Loggia reflect the dramatic historic events of the age when the building was designed.

Over the centuries, the 'linguistic' complexity of the work has attracted the interest of various protagonists within the architectural world, who have been undoubtedly surprised by the blatant fact of its incompleteness. The building has also been recognised as a very singular design within the context of Palladio's work. According to records dating from 1374, the *Capitano* of the city resided at a palace belonging to the Verlato family in the main square. Following demolition of a large part of the palazzo facing the square, the *lodia magna* was erected to provide living quarters for the Venetian *Capitano* after Vicenza's annexation to the Republic in 1404.

Also after the damage caused by the troops of the league of Cambrai in 1509, restoration and embellishments were carried out in the following century on the old loggia by the architect Giovanni da Porlezza (also known as Giovanni da Pedemuro), with the collaboration of Scarpagnino for the paving and various other artists, including Titian and Paris Bordon, for the decoration of the upper hall. A further intervention (the replacement of the wooden staircase with stone steps) is the work of Giovanni da Pedemuro and Girolamo Pittoni.

Realising that the old loggia needed to

be urgently repaired or even rebuilt, in 1571 the *Maggior Consiglio* of the city commissioned two citizens, the cavalier Giuliano Piovene and dottor Giulio Bonifacio, to consult with experts in order to establish what work would have to be done.

The two *Presidenti della Fabbrica* received the first appropriated sum of three hundred ducats and, abandoning the idea of restoration, used it immediately to have the loggia rebuilt.

It is likely that other experts, including Palladio, had already been consulted and, in April 1571, the plan for the new building had probably already been prepared.

On 18th October 1571, the news of the Venetian naval victory at Lepanto in the war fought against the Turks finally reached Vicenza. The occurrence was to influence the design of the Loggia and in particular the configuration of the lateral façade, which was re-elaborated as an arch of triumph.

The funds allotted for the work on the building were increased by a large contribution made by the *Capitano* in office, Giambattista Bernardo, who stayed in Vicenza until May 1572.

The city's gratitude for the aid provided by the praefectus for the realisation of this work is reflected in the inscription on the frieze of the two completed façades: *Io[hanni] Baptistae Bernardo Praefecto Civitas Dicavit* [The city dedicated (this work) to the Governor Giovanni Battista Bernardo]. Palladio's project had already been carried out by 1572 and was interrupted due to a lack of funds after only three arches had been erected.

The Vicentine painter Giovan Antonio Fasolo, an apprentice of Paolo Veronese, painted nine canvases for the coffered ceiling of the upper hall of the Loggia. He died on the 23rd August 1572. If his work had already been carried out at that time, the building would have been practically completed on that date.

In 1760, Francesco Muttoni made an assessment of the completed Palladian building, and hypothesised that the original project should have been extended with seven spans towards the



11 | The front elevation in Piazza dei Signori

Contrà dei Giudei.

Six years later, Ottavio Bertotti Scamozzi confirmed Muttoni's hypothesis, and drew a graphic representation of a seven-arched Loggia. The present staircase, linking the ground-floor portico to the upper hall, was built between 1805 and 1813 and is attributed to Cerato. This work replaced the existing stairs that had been left intact during the 16th century modifications.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the architect Luigi Toniato prepared

plans for the completion of the Loggia (with five modules) and in 1926 the Municipal Council decided that the work should be carried out and dedicated to the memory of citizens who had died in the First World War. However, the idea was opposed by various influential cultural institutions, such as the *Associazione Artistica fra Cultori di Architettura di Milano* and the *Accademia di Belle Arti di Venezia*". In 1928, the Consiglio Superiore delle Belle Arti approved the project but, following their decision, a

heated debate once again broke out between the different factions and a definitive solution was never reached.

In 1932, the Municipal Council provided for the demolition of the houses that stood between the Loggia and Contrà Cavour. From that moment, regardless of the hypothesis concerning the completion of the Loggia, the problem now posed was how to configure the empty space and the exposed elevation of the Loggia that had been 'freed' as a result of this work.

A new project was proposed in 1936 by Orfeo Rossato. This provided for the construction of a building set back a certain distance from the square and extending as far as Via Cavour; the concept would in any case leave an open space beside the Loggia, which would be higher with respect to the paving of Piazza dei Signori. The recently freed lateral opening of the Loggia was to be completed in the style advocated

by the fascist regime. The Loggia del *Capitano* has two levels and a false attic. On the ground floor level it presents three arches facing the square and further openings in Contrà del Monte and facing Contrà Cavour. On the piano nobile there is a single hall illuminated by doorways and the apertures of the false attic aligned with those below.

The main façade in Piazza dei Signori is articulated by a giant order of composite semi-columns, which comprise the three arches and corresponding apertures on the piano nobile, with balconies and balustrades supported by strong modillions. The lateral façade in Contrà del Monte presents a lower level articulated by composite semi-columns and a higher level with the Serliana motif, configured with a central aperture and niches at the sides.

On both sides there are stucco decorations, and sculptures on the two orders of the lateral façade.



12 | Detail of the façade in Contrà del Monte



This palazzo is situated at the beginning of Corso Fogazzaro. Palladio received the commission for the project in 1565 from Isabella Nogarola, the widow of Giovanni Alvisè Valmarana, and the palazzo was built in the following year. It is recorded (1487) that an earlier building owned by the Valmarana family existed at this site. The Valmarana ceded this property but subsequently reacquired it during the 1500s. The intervention therefore aimed at realising a monumental renovation of the family residence.

In the *Quattro Libri*, Palladio published the plan form and vertical perspective of the building, which would indicate a more extensive intervention than that which actually occurred, which is limited to the building facing the street and the elevation overlooking the courtyard.

Palladio's ideas for the project reflect his last experiences in Rome; at this point his enthusiasm for architectural dogmas of the classical period of antiquity and modern forms of the early 16th century were gradually replaced by a tendency to re-elaborate concepts of the Romanesque and Mannerist periods. The Palazzo Valmarana in fact represents a fundamental stage in the works of Palladio as it testifies his desire to move beyond the Bramantesque model and expressions of classical synthesis and equilibrium and reveals a certain preference for a more complex and grandiose vision inspired by Michelangelo (cfr, in particular, his use of a giant order in the palazzi capitolini) and later Roman architecture, with greater adherence to archaeological fact rather than theoretical ideals. The façade is articulated by a giant order of composite pilasters and presents an attic, in

which there are square windows framed by pilaster strips. The two spans at the ends also present apertures at the level corresponding with the mezzanine and a further mezzanine above the piano nobile; the windows of the upper level have an aedicula configuration and triangular pediments. The solution for the outermost section is quite interesting as we find a Corinthian pilaster on the ground floor superimposed by a telamon on the higher level. The panels above the four central windows on the ground floor and the spandrels above the portal are embellished with stucco ornaments. The Ionic order of the portico in the courtyard is also impressive. The frescoes in the ground-floor chamber to the left of the atrium (1567-68) have been attributed to Zelotti. In time, the distribution of the interiors was radically modified owing to the incorporation of neighbouring buildings but also to serious damage which occurred in the bombings in March 1945. The building was very carefully restored but it is now impossible to imagine the original configuration of the interior. The urbanistic significance of the intervention is quite considerable on account of very careful insertion in the real context of this site and the final result definitely exceeds the theoretical concepts illustrated in the drawings published in the *Quattro Libri*. In this regard, there is a universal recognition of the value of the solution adopted for the layout of the elevation facing the street, which creates a link between the albeit monumental character of the giant order and the more modest adjoining façades through apt mediation of the ends of the architectonic framework.



13 - 14 | Details of the façade



## Corso Palladio, 13

Built between 1562 and 1593, Palazzo Bonin Longare is a superb example of the 16th-century architectural paradigm developed in Vicenza through the teachings of Andrea Palladio.

In the overall features and details of the façade facing the Corso, indisputably the work of Palladio, one will note the ability with which Palladio succeeded in creating a work worthy of comparison with the Palazzo Barbaran da Porto and Palazzo Valmarana, revealing his complete mastery of perspective and achieving in its scenic effect a marvelous introduction to the city.

While the design of the building is very definitely Palladian, its completion required the intervention of Vincenzo Scamozzi, and the original initiative is attributed to Francesco Thiene.

Palladio's name is certainly linked to the attractive main façade and the double loggia in the courtyard.

The same cannot be said for the front facing Piazza Castello, with its large windows presenting proportions and shapes clearly indicating the work of Scamozzi; these features are also found in the attic above the double loggia of the courtyard.

It is practically certain that work was begun at this site after Palladio's death.

It is known that in 1572 the palazzo did not exist, while in 1586 work had advanced significantly but had not yet been completed. There is evidence that in 1593 the work was complete and we can be quite certain that the building had been finished in 1608, on the basis of evidence found in a document pro-

duced by Maltese. Monticolo's map of 1611 presents clear proof of its completion at that time. The palazzo consists of two floors and an attic. The main façade presents two orders of semi-columns: the first Corinthian and the second composite. Both orders have retracted entablature above the half columns and include seven bays of intercolumniation, in which appear, on the ground floor, the main arched doorway, and, at the sides, three windows, and, on the first floor, seven doors/windows with triangular and curvilinear pediments alternatively. In harmony with the main façade, the logge in the courtyard are also adorned with two orders of eight columns: Corinthian and composite, respectively. In the façade facing Piazza Castello, there are five windows on each floor, and, in particular, those on the piano nobile present proportions and shapes different from those on the front elevation in the Corso. With regard to building technique, as often occurs in Palladio's work, the walls are made of brickwork, while the decorative parts of the order are in stone. The lower part of the façade is covered with stone. Bertotti Scamozzi claimed that Palladio intervened in the designing of this palazzo and his name can be very definitely linked to the sumptuous façade and double logge in the courtyard. Graphic evidence relating to the planning stage includes a document produced by one of Palladio's assistants indicating a few corrections made by the architect and a drawing signed by Palladio referring to the rear of the building.

15 | *View of the façade and the tower in Piazza Castello*





36

## Piazza Castello, 6

This imposing architectural fragment, a Palladian project that was interrupted, creates a curious scenic backdrop in the Piazza Castello. To the left of this building there is still an old house of the Porto family that would have been demolished if the project been fully carried out. Three very solemn, composite semi-columns rising from tall pedestals and lower bases, support the advanced portions of the entablature, which is mainly set back to the plane of the wall above the columns and frame two orders of windows. The apertures have no cornices at the ground-floor level and are set in a partition of light, smooth ashlar; on the first floor they are framed by shaped profiles and surmounted by a triangular and rounded pediment and have protruding balconies on raised corbels. From these extant elements, it seems the building had two important elevations: one facing the square and one towards the courtyard and that these were connected. The frames flanking the tops of the windows on the ground floor of the main façade are repeated in the ground floor windows facing the courtyard, while the elements of the entablature of the first Corinthian order towards the courtyard are reproduced under the large windows of the main façade, halfway up the giant columns; the final entablature of the second order towards the courtyard was linked with the other entablature at the end

of the giant order of the main façade. The structure as we see it forms the first partitions of intercolumniation of a wide, grandiose façade that was to have extended towards the east with a further five partitions, dominating the southern side of the square. We have very little information regarding this incomplete work, which is nothing more than a mere fragment of a façade, completed by a section of wall constructed much later. Palladio's name was suggested by Muttoni in relation to this work in the 18th century. Palladio's drawing for the building dates back to 1570-71. It is possible to say that in 1571 the building had not been yet started as in the Angelica map there is a densely built-up area at this spot. After Palladio's death, Vincenzo Scamozzi carried on the work. Both Muttoni and Bertotti Scamozzi came to the conclusion that the Palladian design was to have provided for a seven-span façade. The interiors have been modified over time. This building is one of the most surprising in the Palladian repertoire, with its very high base, large semi-columns protruding beyond their diameter, the carefully articulated and retracted entablature and the exedra form of the courtyard (which was never built) and, although incomplete, represents one of the most eloquent testimonies of the more 'dramatic' concepts proposed by Andrea Palladio in this phase of his work.



16 || Detail of the façade



## Piazza Matteotti

Palazzo Chiericati is situated on the west side of the present-day Piazza Matteotti (former Piazza dell'Isola), to which it confers a special physiognomy and identity, as it is the building presenting the most distinct monumental quality and urbanistic relevance at this site. The imposing palace, presenting two orders rising above an immense podium, has a tripartite horizontal configuration in the façade and is crowned by pinnacles and statues. The lower Tuscan order presents a continuous portico with architraves, which can be accessed from the square by climbing the central steps that interrupt the podium. The central part of the lower order protrudes slightly. Along the front portico, the edges of the central portion of the façade are marked by pairs of free columns. The upper Ionic order presents a solid central section, articulated by semi-columns in five spans, with full-height windows with an aedicula design and alternating triangular and curvilinear pediments, surmounted by decorative elements; the apertures of the attic are immediately above this level. The lateral parts of the higher order consist of loggias with architraves of the same depth as the portico underneath, and bordered at the sides by walls with arched apertures as on the lower level. The logge and full-height windows are designed with balustrades.

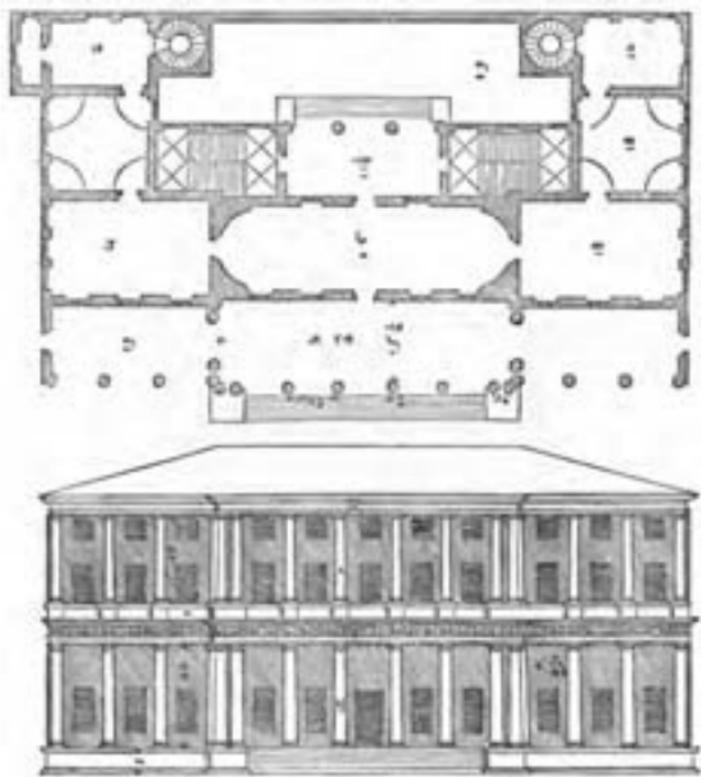
The lateral elevation in Corso Palladio presents four axes of rectangular windows with rectilinear upper cornices on the two levels and small apertures in the attic; at the far right, two similar windows were created in the blind arches that symmetrically correspond with the open arches at the ends of the two superimposed logge in the main façade. At the rear, the building faces a rectangular courtyard and presenting, in the middle of the elevation, a loggia with a Tuscan order on the ground floor and Ionic order on the piano nobile, flanked on the sides by full wall sections with small apertures. On the opposite side of the courtyard it faces an 18th-century building, which repeats some of the architectural features of that side of the

building.

On account of the narrow dimensions of the site, the planimetric configuration is centred on a transversal bi-apsidal atrium, from the ends of which access is gained to two symmetrical groups of consecutive rooms, proportioned in the plan form according to specific harmonic relations, and ending with spiral staircases. At the sides of the rear loggia there are the monumental staircases, which respect the symmetry of the layout. The design for Girolamo Chiericati's palace was prepared in 1550 (though some scholars suggest this occurred two years earlier) by Andrea Palladio, who had been gratified by the support of his noble patron in the Maggior Consiglio when a commission for the logge of the Palazzo della Ragione was being contemplated.

Work began at this site at the end of 1550 and in 1551 council permission was granted for the use of municipal space for the portico. In 1557, the year Girolamo Chiericati died, the construction operations were interrupted. Up until that time, the first four intercolumniation spaces (starting from the left) had been finished, thus only the first partition of the central section had been completed. In the years that immediately followed, at the behest of Girolamo Chiericati's son, Valerio, only decorative interventions were carried out in the interiors by the artist Bartolomeo Ridolfi, who worked on the stucco elements, and the painters Zelotti, Brusacorci and Forbicini. Work on the building was interrupted for over a century (as confirmed by various maps of the late 16th century and 17th century) and was only resumed at the end of the 1600s, during a revival of interest in Palladian architecture, perhaps by Carlo and Giacomo Borella who closely adhered to the Palladian drawings, which they had seen in the plates of the *Quattro Libri* and other preparatory plans, now conserved in the RIBA collection in London. Palladio did not contemplate the presence of the sculptures and pinnacles crowning the façade. In 1838, after decades of neglect, the building

IN VICENZA fopra la piazza, che uolgarmete fi dice l'Isola; ha fabricato fecondo la inuentione, che fegue, il Conte Valerio Chiericato, cauallier & gentil'huomo honorato di quella città. Hà quefta fabrica nella parte di fotto una loggia dauanti, che piglia tutta la facciata: il pauimento del primo ordine s'alza da terra cinque piedi: il che è ftato fatto fi per ponerui fotto le cantine, & altri luoghi appartenenti al commodo della cafa, i quali non fariano riufciti fe foffero ftati fatti del tutto fotterra; percioche il fiume non è molto difcofto; fi ancho accioche gli ordini di fopra meglio godefferò del bel fito dinanzi. Le ftanze maggiori hanno i uolti loro alti fecondo il primo modo dell'altezze de' uolti: le mediocri fono inuoltate à lunette; & hanno i uolti tanto alti quanto fono quelli delle maggiori. I camerini fono ancor esfi in uolto, e fono amezati. Sono tutti quefti uolti ornati di compartimenti di ftucco eccellentiffimi di mano di Meffer Bartolomeo Ridolfi Scultore Vronefe; & di pittue di mano di Meffer Domenico Rizzo; & di Meffer Battista Venetiano, huomini fingolari in quefte profefioni. La fala è di fopra nel mezo della facciata: & occupa della loggia di fotto la parte di mezo. La fua altezza è fin fotto il tetto; e perche efce alquanto in fuori; ha fotto gli Angoli le colonne doppie, dall'una e l'altra parte di quefta fala ui sono due loggie, cioè una per banda; le quali hanno i foffitti loro, ouer lacunari ornati di belliffimi quadri di pittura, e fanno belliffima uifta. Il primo ordine della facciata è Dorico, & il fecondo è Ionico.



from the *Quattro libri dell'architettura* di Andrea Palladio, Venezia 1570

17 | *View of the façade from Piazza Matteotti*



was bought by the Municipal Council. In 1855, it was decided that the building would be used to house the collections of the civic museum. On that occasion the transformation project supervised by Giovanni Miglioranza 'corrected' some features of the work done in the 17th century considered to be non-compliant with Palladio's designs, such as the vaults of the portico and the logge (replaced by the caissons now visible), the elimination of the sculptures in the atrium and the late 17th-century decorations in some of

the rooms. The apertures in the podium that ventilated the basement were also closed, with serious consequences for the protection of the building against rising damp. In 1866-67, Giovanni Bellio extended the depth of the courtyard and created the western part of the building. In 1910, this part was connected on the south side to the original building with a saletta pensile, widened in 1948, when the museum was partially restructured. Partial restoration was carried out in the 1960s. Since 1998, conservation operations have been a work in progress.

18 | *View of the portico*





19 | Room of the Council of the Gods - ceiling decorations

#### DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

Above the main portal, at the centre of the portico facing the square, there is a plaque commemorating the hospitality offered by the Chiericati family to Pope Pius VI in 1782. Turning left after entering the building, one enters the south wing; the area was built in the 16th century and its rooms still contain decorations added in 1557-58, clearly inspired by the decorations produced in the Palazzo Tè at Mantua by Giulio Romano. The white/golden stuccowork on the vaults of all of the chambers in this wing is by Bartolomeo Ridolfi.

The first, large, rectangular room, called the Hall of the Firmament, contains frescoes by Domenico Brusasorci. The central panel, presenting a depiction of *Phaeton driving the Chariot of the Sun* and *Diana on the Chariot of the Moon* is framed by a complex series of frescoed polygonal partitions with surrounding grotesques by Eliodoro Forbicini. The main, polychrome panels contain the constellations known in the 16th century (copied from engravings by Dürer). The minor, monochrome panels enclose classical figures copied from ancient coins. The south door of the room is flanked by two bearded telamones in stone, dating back to about 1572, which are attributed to Lorenzo Rubini and were probably transferred from the ruined and abandoned Palladian Palazzo Piovene all'Isola. In the adjoining, square Hall of the Gods, decorated with fresco paintings by Battista Zelotti, the *Council of the Gods* is easily identified at the centre. The oval, monochrome sections on the vault and the polychrome, corner lunettes show mythological scenes and the probable personifications of the city's rivers: the Bacchiglione, Retrone and Astico. Farther on, there is the smaller rectangular Room of Hercules, with partially deteriorated frescoes depicting the *Tales of Hercules* (unknown artist) framed by grotesques by Eliodoro Forbicini.

The corresponding rooms of the south wing on the piano nobile also present 16th-century decorations. The square, middle room, known as the Hall of the Virtues, has a frieze, which, in the surviving section, shows nine female figures - allegories of civil virtues - against a dark background. It is not known who painted the fresco, nor do we know who produced those appearing in the larger, adjoining Hall of the Triumphs, where we find scenes of war and triumph, copied from the relief work on Trajan's Column at the behest of Girolamo Chiericati's son, Valerio, who was fascinated by military art. Passing through the adjacent hall, created in the late 17th century (deprived in the 1800s of many decorations produced in the Baroque period), there is the late 17th-century, northern wing, where a few contemporary decorations remain.

Palazzo Chiericati was conceived by Palladio with an architectural style rather unusual for an urban palace. It is in fact characterised by the predominating empty spaces of the portico and the loggia, which offer a contrast with the central solid area of the piano nobile, this being a feature that creates an open, 'airy' atmosphere, reminiscent of certain villas of antiquity built close to the sea. The configuration reflects a masterful interpretation of the surrounding environment. In the past, the square in front of the palazzo was called the *isola* [the island] on account of the presence of two watercourses on the south side; the river-port of the city was located at this point, where, until the end of the 19th century, the Retrone flowed into the Bacchiglione.

Thus, on account of its position, the palazzo acquired significance in urbanistic terms as a scenic backdrop close to the main fluvial mooring area; it could even be considered a 'manifesto' of the urban renewal project initiated in the city with Palladio's activities. It was of course necessary to raise the building on a high podium-like base, also to protect it from ground humidity in this position close to the rivers, but this also greatly contributed towards its prestigious ap-

pearance and monumental effect.

Historians have identified many historical points of reference that may have inspired Palladio, who at the time of designing the palace in 1547 had just returned from his second trip to Rome. One of these is the *Settizonio*, a building with superimposed orders situated beneath the Palatine, the ruins of which remained standing until the end of the 1500s. Palladio may have been inspired by the configuration of such an edifice when he planned the façade with two logge, an idea also found in the villa-palaces at Piombino Dese and Montagnana. The *porticus octaviae*, which ends laterally with a wall section opened by an arch, may also have inspired the architect; this solution did in fact become a recurrent concept in his porticos, such as that created at Vancimuglio for Girolamo Chiericati's brother.

Finally, it is worth noting that this building - largely completed more than a century after the death of the architect, yet remaining faithful to the original plan - constitutes an important early testimony of the consolidation - also in Italy - of the phenomenon of Palladianism, which for at least three centuries spread continually in other countries.

20 | *Main façade in Piazza Matteotti*





The Teatro Olimpico is situated in the northwest portion of the Palazzo del Territorio. On the outside, the famous theatrical complex is seen as a bare and irregular building at the end of the large courtyard of the former castle; its true value and beauty can only be appreciated from the inside.

With its very complex and yet unitary configuration, the theatre is composed of a semi-elliptic auditorium inscribed within a compressed rectangular area and a very impressive yet slightly narrower frons scenae, from which seven, scenic trompe-l'oeil city streets extend back into the distance.

The wooden cavea, formed by a steep succession of thirteen steps, is surrounded at the top by a Corinthian loggia with twenty-nine spaces of intercolumniation, which, at the points of contact with the perimeter wall, at the centre and ends of the auditorium, are blind and embellished with alternating rectangular and arched niches. Statues appear inside these niches and those on the upper balustrade above the loggia are aligned with the Corinthian columns and semi-columns below. The two corner spaces behind the loggia contain the staircases. A flat ceiling, with a painted representation of the sky, covers the entire auditorium.

The grandiose frons scenae presents seven partitions, two Corinthian orders and an 'attic' level with pilasters; at the centre there is the wide porta regia, the arch of which penetrates the second order, and then, at the sides, two narrower portals (the 'hospitalia') within the lower order. In the wings the apertures are aligned with the windows in the upper levels.

The lower order presents free columns connected to the plane of the wall by plinths and the protruding entablature above. The second order is set back slightly and not quite so tall. Apart from its striking architectonic configuration, the entire surface of the frons scenae is enhanced by the plastic effect of the aedicula niches and the beautiful sculpted ornaments. The proscenium arch presents a wooden ceiling with caissons,

with a central octagonal panel and two other rectangular partitions at the ends with semicircular terminations.

Through the five apertures in the frons scenae, we see the 'seven streets of Thebes' (three at the centre beyond the main portal and four other streets inside the smaller arches), which, with their trompe-l'oeil effect, accentuate the depth of the classical scenery. Behind this scenery a painted sky completes the fascinating visual illusion.

The work was commissioned by the Accademia Olimpica, a cultural coterie of nobles and artists established in Vicenza in 1555 under the aegis of Giangiorgio Trissino, who discovered Palladio's talent in the 1530s.

Palladio had already created temporary theatrical scenery for the Academy, which was probably influenced by his studies of ancient Roman theatres. The wooden theatre erected in 1561 inside the hall of the Basilica and extended in 1562 is one of the best examples of this work. The chance to finally build a permanent theatre however did not arrive until 1580.

The only remaining drawing representing Palladio's plan (RIBA, sheet XIII, 5) may belong to a set of autograph designs entrusted to his son Silla for inclusion in a work that was never published or may represent another person's transcription of Palladio's concepts. The document shows a sectional drawing of the cavea and two versions of the frons scenae, one of which resembles very closely the final solution. Work on the theatre began in February 1580, when the Accademia obtained from the municipality the area within the Palazzo del Territorio formerly occupied by the prisons. However, Palladio died just six months later.

Already in 1581, work continued under the supervision of Silla and by 1583 the cavea, proscenium arch and frons scenae had been completed. Meanwhile, in 1582, the Comune conceded another piece of land to the Accademia where the trompe-l'oeil scenery could be built. After the decision in 1583 to inaugurate the theatre with a performance of

Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*, the planning was entrusted to the architect Vincenzo Scamozzi in May 1584. Scamozzi completed the theatre at the beginning of 1585, just in time for the inaugural performance on the 3rd March.

It would appear that the question concerning the covering of the various parts of the theatre gave rise to considerable controversy, also considering the fact that in antiquity the theatres were open-air structures. It is certain that the first covering of the proscenium was made between 1588 and 1600, perhaps by Giambattista Albanese and Alessandro Maganza. In some 15th-century prints the stage appears to be covered by a

coffered ceiling with painted panels, while over the cavea and the central portion of the stage a 'false sky' is shown. After further 17th-century interventions, in 1734 the ceiling of the proscenium, now very decayed, was boarded over with simple wooden panels.

Later on, there was a heated debate between two opposing factions regarding the covering of the cavea which lasted until 1828-29, when Giovanni Picutti painted a 'velarium' across the ceiling. Then, in 1838, a false sky was painted above the stage. In 1866, the ceiling above the cavea was covered with fabric drapes by Luigi Dalla Vecchia. In 1914, after further debate,



plans by Marco Dondi Dall'Orologio were used to create the present coffered ceiling of the proscenium arch, decorated by Umberto Brambilla and painted by Ludovico Pogliaghi. The false sky was painted on the ceiling of the auditorium by Ferdinando Bialelli in the same period. During World War II the scenery designed by Scamozzi was dismantled and stored in a safe place; it was replaced in 1948.

During restoration operations in 1959-60, a gallery was built below the cavea and two new entrances were created at the lower sides of the auditorium. Further conservation work was carried out in the 1990s.

#### BUILDING TECHNIQUES

The walls of the theatre are in brickwork. Stone is used for the bases and capitals of the columns and semi-columns and also for the mouldings. The tiers of the cavea are made of wood.

The trompe-l'oeil scenery is made of wood and has stucco embellishments.

The sculptures and statues of the frons scenae and loggia above the auditorium are made from poor materials, such as wood, tow, iron, metal, mortar and stucco. The statues on the balustrade crowning the loggia are made of stone.

21 | *View of the stage and auditorium*





22 | Detail of the *frons scenae*

#### DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

The statues that decorate the *frons scenae* and the loggia above the cavea are effigies of members of the Accademia Olimpica (in the guise of classical heroes) who founded the theatre. In May 1580, the Accademia decided to have symbolic male and female statues installed in the theatre but in April 1582 it was decided that the statues would be effigies of the members of the elite circle, who would also bear the costs of the work. The decorations were completed in 1585, also using the female figures that had been created in accordance with the former decision, but replacing their heads with those of male subjects. The names of the persons portrayed were inscribed however on only eleven statues. Several sculptors worked on the decorative elements; these were initially local artists, but then expert and well-known craftsmen were called in. It is certain that Ruggero Bascapè from Lombardy produced the high-relief work on the attic level of the *frons scenae* and the side walls, composed of eleven panels representing the *Labours of Hercules*, the mythological patron and protector of the Accademia Olimpica. In the central panel of the attic there is a relief representation of a stadium and chariot race, which became the emblem of the Accademia. The artist's name appears at the base of the obelisk, while higher up, we find the Sybilline "*hoc opus, hic labor est*" [this is the work, and here lies the difficulty]. The black panel below bears the dedication of the theatre: *Virtuti ac genio / olimpicor[um] academia theatrum hoc / a fundamentis erexit / ann[o] MDLXXXVIII Palladio archit[ecto]* [To virtue and genius. The members of the olympic academy raised this theatre (of which Palladio was the architect) from its foundations in the year 1584]. The panel is surmounted by the crest of the city supported by two putti. The two *Victories* flanking the arch of the *porta regia* have also been attributed to Bascapè, as have two of the statues on the *frons scenae*. Critics compare the style and high quality of the relief work on the stage wall with those of the statues in the central recesses of the loggia above the cavea, which however appear to have been produced by other artists. Another two statues show the initials of the sculptor Agostino Rubini; these portray Pompeo Trissino (*frons scenae*: first order, second aedicula from the right) and Vincenzo Garzadori (loggia above the cavea: first niche from the right). Some studies also suggest an intervention of the then very young sculptor Camillo Mariani, who may have created the figurines and stucco ornaments of Scamozzi's scenery. The original twenty-eight statues placed on the balustrade at the top of the cavea had deteriorated by the mid 1700s and were replaced by the present works in stone by Giacomo Casseti in the period 1751-54. Amongst those portrayed appeared at last Andrea Palladio himself beside his patron Giangiorgio Trissino at the centre of the balustrade. The monochrome frescoes at the sides of the cavea have been attributed to Giambattista Maganza the Elder and his son Alessandro, but Antonio Fasolo has also been cited.

The building of the Olympic Theatre fulfilled a humanist ideal - nurtured for so long though never realised - of creating a permanent theatre inspired by the great theatrical works of classical antiquity. Palladio, who had already created temporary scenery for theatrical performances, had studied the ancient Roman theatres in depth, starting with the amphitheatre in Vicenza itself, the ruins of which were much more visible in his day than now; he also visited the Roman theatres in Verona and Pula and the Theatre of Marcellus in Rome. His knowledge of Roman theatrical architecture and the teachings of Vitruvius were Palladio's points of reference in this work, which may even be seen as a kind of cultural testament.

Further references to Roman architecture are in any case found in the work, such as the articulation of the *frons scenae*, the organisation of which is associated by scholars to the scheme of the triumphal arches with three archways; examples might be the Arch of Constantine or the Arch of Septimius Severus, from which the architect apparently also copied the motif of free columns separated from the wall of the lower order. The portals of the *frons scenae* conceived by Palladio were moreover smaller than those actually created. As

noted in records of the *Accademia Olimpica*, he had only provided for painted scenes behind the doorways, also because at the time of his death the extra space which made it possible to create the elaborate present scenery had not yet been purchased.

The concept of the 'Seven Streets of Thebes' can be thus entirely attributed to Vincenzo Scamozzi, who was also responsible for the larger apertures within the stage wall.

The architectonic backdrop designed by Scamozzi reproduces façades of buildings, fully corresponding with the classical tastes of the time, in a close and homogeneous succession which instils the setting with the quality of an ideal city of the Renaissance. In this way, Scamozzi's scenery - created specifically for the inaugural performance at the theatre - becomes an emblematic and coherent expression of humanist ideals, within the framework of which the idea for the theatre gradually developed, and thus clearly identifies and becomes a fully-integrated part of the architectural space.

Scamozzi also designed the Olympic Odeon (finished around 1584) adjoining the theatre, which was planned as a minor theatrical space or foyer for musical concerts and meetings.

23 | *View of the frons scenae*





50

13 Arco delle Scalette

## Piazzale Fraccon

As stated in the inscription carved on the upper section of the monument, this arch was commissioned in 1595 by the Venetian *capitano* Giacopo Bragadin fifteen years after Palladio's death. Probably based on drawings produced by Palladio, it was erected at the beginning of the road which, from just outside the city gate, led up to the Sanctuary at Monte Berico. Many scholars believe that the structure is based on a drawing produced by the architect in 1576 within the framework of a general plan formulated for the area leading up to the sanctuary, also as a response to increasing emphasis placed on the Marian cult. It is possible that the project would have included a portico (in fact, later designed by Muttoni in the 1700s) that would be used for religious processions. The arch apparently thus bears witness to Palladio's activity as a creator of routes suitable for triumphal processions. It does in fact stand at the beginning of a set of steps, which, until the 1700s, provided the main route of access to the popular Sanctuary of the Holy Virgin at Monte Berico. Andrea Palladio's plan was faithfully carried out in 1596, probably by the Albanese brothers. The struc-

ture is an arch of triumph with a single aperture between two pairs of Corinthian semi-columns set on high bases and an 'attic' section with three portions divided by pilasters. The two statues of the saints Leontius and Carpophorus and the Venetian lion were sculpted by Francesco and Giambattista Albanese. At the end of the 17th century, two niches that appeared in the lateral intercolumniation were closed and two new ones were created in the intrados of the arch, in which were placed statues of the Angel of the Annunciation and the Holy Virgin sculpted by Orazio Marinali. The structure was built in stone brought from quarries close to Vicenza.

The steps in front of the arch were modified on various occasions. Originally, there were 12-13 steps, of the same width as the arch and set between parapet walls. The width was later reduced to correspond with that of the opening of the archway and the stairway was shortened when the level of the road was raised. The arch suffered great damage during an air raid in World War II and has in fact been almost entirely rebuilt, using the original materials as far as possible.



24 | The stairway of Monte Berico



52

The date of construction and the Palladian paternity of this palazzo remain uncertain. It is suggested the building dates back to the early 1540s, although it may have been built much later in accordance with earlier plans. The building is situated opposite the Chiesa di Santa Corona, on the corner between Contrà Santa Corona and Contrà Santo Stefano, where the Da Monte family owned various properties. The inscription on the string-course above the portal bears the name of Battista da Monte and the date 1581.

The style and composition of the façade reveal many analogies with characteristics found in Palladio's early drawings. It could thus be a project carried out in the 1540s, when the architect was experimenting with the Serlian theme and was strongly influenced by the architecture of Bramante and Raphael after his first Roman tour in 1541. The compositional model is that adopted during that period for the Palazzo Civica.

The building has two floors. The ground floor has a rounded portal and is separated by a string-course from the floor above, which presents four pairs of Tuscan-Doric pilasters that frame the two full-height doors at the sides and the central Serlian arch. Beneath the eaves there is a Doric frieze, with undecorated metopes and a cornice.

Recent archival studies have revealed that the palazzo was built by 1550-54. The work necessary to complete the house must have continued in any case until the date indicated on the façade. Nevertheless, some scholars suggest that the date may refer to the time when the interior decorations were completed or to some event that might have been significant for the patron. Direct involvement of Palladio in the realisation of this work is highly unlikely on account of various faults in the composition and execution of the work, such as the irregular spacing of the triglyphs and metopes, a discordance between the bases of the narrow pillars of the Serlian arch and those of the pilaster strips, the lack of moulding in the pedestals, the lack of correspondence between the cornices of the Serlian arch and those of the other windows. In the 19th century the building underwent alterations under the direction of Tommaso Becega, who modified the distribution of the floors and created new apertures. Application of the rusticated ashlar plaster at the ground-floor level (no longer visible) and the removal of the window cornices may date back to this period. During restoration work in the 1970s, some frescoes were found on the ground floor, in the room on the right, and in some rooms on the upper floor.

25 | *Detail of the Serlian arch*





Palladio designed the facade of the home of Bernardo Schio, a Vicentine nobleman, jurist and highly-esteemed magistrate, around 1560. After the latter's death, work at the site was probably suspended for some time and it seems it was resumed by his brother Fabrizio in 1574-75. The building stands in a 'peripheral' location in the Borgo di Pusterla. The property extended outwards from the rear of the buildings, stretching as far as the Bacchiglione. No mention is made of the palazzo in the *Quattro Libri* nor have any original drawings ever been found, however attribution to Palladio is accepted by most scholars and supported by a "*deseigno del Paladio della casa de Pusterla*" [Palladio's drawing for the house in the Pusterla ward] found in the Schio family archives. It appears that the attribution of the entire building was moreover accepted by Muttoni and Temanza and also confirmed by Bertotti Scamozzi. Examination of the building reveals that the front elevation is entirely independent with respect to the plans. Palladio adopted the compositional scheme of Bramante's Palazzo Caprini, superimposing an order above the lower ashlar. The front has limited dimensions but conveys great monumental appeal. The two-storey building presents robust ashlar on the ground-floor, elegant decorative, fan-like elements above the

small windows of the lower ground-floor level and above the portal, lintels with three interlocking blocks above the windows of the mezzanines and flat strips under the window sills linked to the panels of the archway of the doorway. The first floor presents Corinthian semi-columns, tall windows with balconies and strips extending across the wall, connecting the bases and sills intersecting the column shafts, and also elaborate Corinthian capitals with a trussed upper trabeation. As the facade adapts to a pre-existing structure, the elements appear to be rather compressed and if the elements of the Corinthian order follow Palladian rules, the bases of the semi-columns are forced to invade the lower ashlar section. Originally, the trabeation must have been interrupted by three windows illuminating the attic. In the early 1800s, these apertures were closed and some critics believe the modifications caused a distortion of interior spaces. The palazzo is an interesting example of restructuring occurring with typical forms of Palladian classicism in a pre-existing building. Signs of Palladio's work can be recognized not only in the Corinthian capitals and in the balustrades but also in the general layout, the modulation of relations between ground floor and first floor, the arrangement of the rusticated level and in the layout of the entablature.





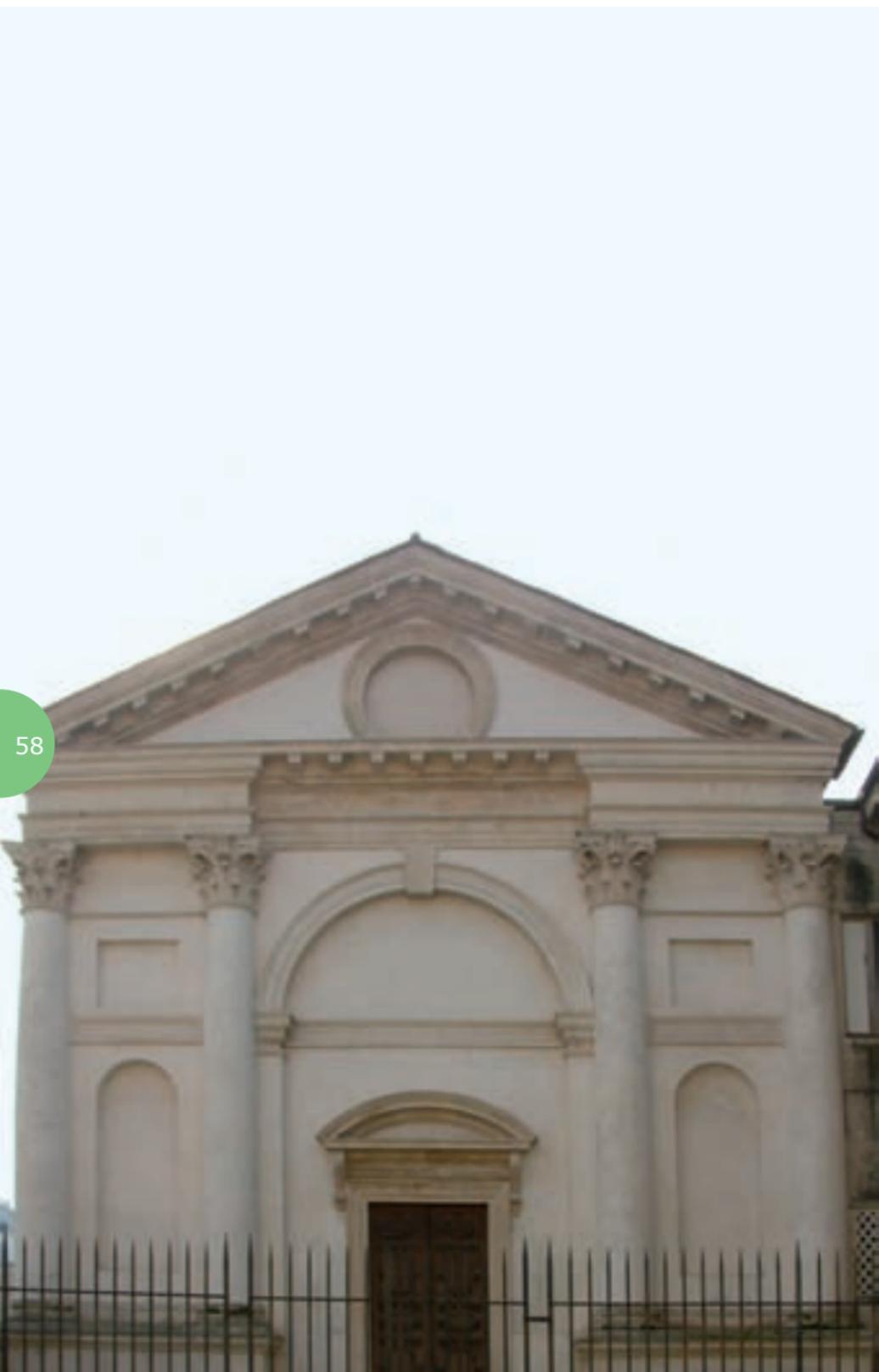
56

'Palladio's house' stands at the eastern end of the Corso at the lower end of the slope leading up to Santa Corona. According to a local tradition the house belonged to Andrea Palladio but it has been ascertained that it was in fact the property of the public notary Pietro Cogollo. Following his application for Vicentine citizenship, submitted to the *Consiglio dei Cinquecento* in 1559, the notary, who originally came from the village of Cogollo in the upper area of the province, was obliged to restore the front of his new home in a dignified manner within three years. The established date of construction is 1566. Critics believe that Palladio would have been responsible only for the design of the 'very pure' facade. The wall between Corinthian pilaster strips and the 'gabbia' and plastic relief of the shafts are elements easily associated with the stylistic 'language' of the last Palladian phase. Although no autograph drawings by Palladio have ever been identified, it is unlikely such ingenious solutions would have been produced by other local architects. Casa Cogollo was renovated in a manner typical of sixteenth-century classicism and it seamlessly merges into the pre-existing urban context and surroundings. The building presents a narrow facade of two floors and an attic. At ground

level, the elevation includes an arch decorated with two Ionic half-columns flanked by two bare apertures with an upper cornice, in turn surmounted by recessed square sections. The piano nobile presents two fluted, Corinthian semi-pilasters, enclosing a large blind, square section originally intended to contain a large fresco. At the sides, two tall windows with balustrades are 'linked' to the central square by window-sill mouldings. The high attic area presents two windows and a prominent dentil-effect cornice. The free surfaces of the facade were once covered by frescoes, probably produced by Gian Antonio Fasolo in 1567. The decoration had already decayed however at the end of the 1700s. Some of Fasolo's work remains in the frieze below the ceiling of the hall on the first floor on the side of the road. Radical restructuring of the north wing occurred in the second half of the 1700s and was carried out by the Facioli brothers, probably under the supervision of Enea Arnaldi. Modifications of this period include the installation of the base and three steps below the portico, added when the surface of the road was lowered, the oval oculus, the door with an architrave in the rear wall of the porch, the two arches on either side of the main arch of the courtyard and the trachyte paving.



27 | Detail of the façade



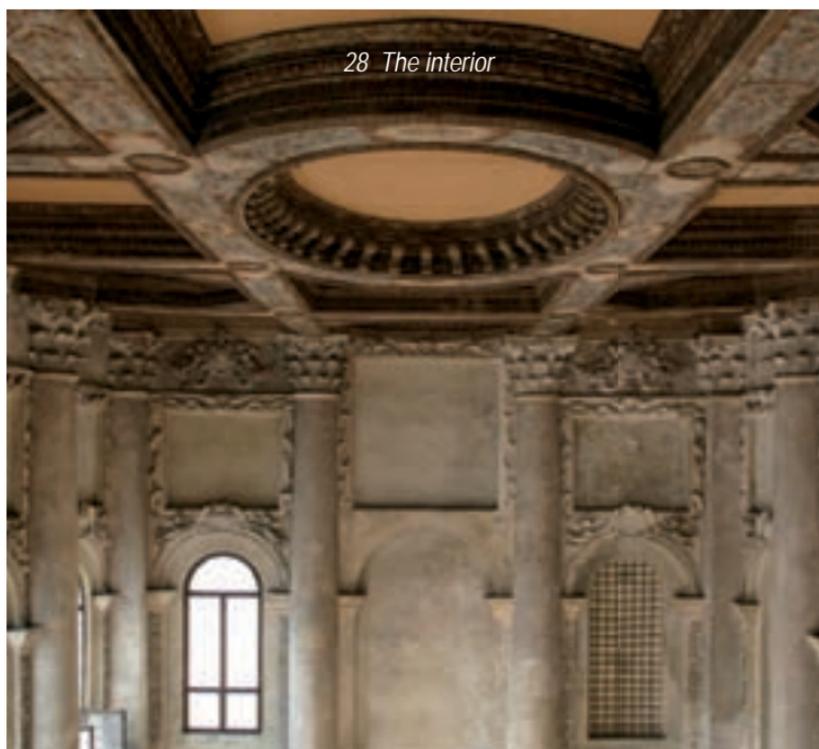
58

17 The church of Santa Maria Nuova

## Contrà Santa Maria Nuova

In 1578, Ludovico Trento made provisions in his will for the construction of a church beside the convent of the Augustinian nuns of Santa Maria Nuova founded in 1539. The church was probably built according to Palladian plans produced around 1578 and executed, following Palladio's death in 1580, by the master-mason Domenico Gropino, whose name appears in various related documents. The hypothesis is supported by the fact that in 1583 Montano Barbarano, who commissioned the Palladian palazzo in Contrà Porti, allotted a considerable sum of money for the construction of the church of the monastery his two daughters had entered and Gropino appears to have been the builder chosen by Barbarano. It was certainly already completed in 1600, although there is evidence indicating structural fragility. Morphological examinations of the work would confirm the hypothesis of Palladian paternity during the architect's last phase. Unmistakeable signs can be detected of the approach adopted by Palladio, who would have worked on this building only two years before his death: the facade

presents the scheme of the Church of San Francesco della Vigna in Venice, while internal Corinthian colonnades are reminiscent of the Loggia del Capitaniato. The single-nave church presents a giant order of Corinthian semi-columns, a coffered ceiling and stucco cornices above the arches between the semi-columns. No trace remains of the paintings that once adorned the wooden caissons. The church has a tetrastyle facade with Corinthian columns and a triangular pediment. Besides the Valmarana chapel, this is the only religious building in Vicenza designed by Palladio. The plan of the facade is moreover typically Palladian with its very 'particular' but successful interruption of the entablature above the arch. The interior may remind the observer of the inner cell of an ancient temple; there is in fact a clear similarity with a drawing of the temple at Nîmes in the *Quattro Libri*. The church was originally embellished with paintings by the Maganzas, Andrea Vicentino, Palma the Younger, Maffei and Carpioni, works partially lost following deconsecration of the church in the Napoleonic age.



28 The interior



## The Valmarana-Salvi Garden

This charming loggia situated in the north-east corner of the Giardini Salvi was commissioned by Leonardo Valmarana, whose name appears in the inscription on the architrave of the construction.

It is attributed to Palladio, but no documents prove its paternity and we have no precise idea of how long it took to build or under what circumstances this occurred. It has been recently ascertained that work had begun on the Valmarana-Salvi gardens in 1556 and the house behind the loggia was recorded in 1563. It has thus been proposed that, rather than the 1590s, the loggia would probably have been built in the 1570s; it is now also attributed to Paolo

Antonio Valmarana himself, who may have been inspired by drawings produced by his friend Andrea Palladio. The date 1592 inscribed on the entablature may refer to the date when Valmarana opened the gardens to the public. The loggia stands at the point where the course of the Seriola turns southwards. Inside the loggia, the three rooms are built against the pre-existing wall of the Scaliger period.

The hexastyle front, resting on arches supported by strong pillars, presents a row of Doric columns, creating an intercolumniation of five spaces crowned by a triangular pediment. The loggia bears witness to the early cultural influence of the Palladian style.

29 | *View from the Roggia Seriola*





## Contrà Piancoli, 10-12

Plans for this building were commissioned by Giambattista Garzadori, who wished to renovate and raise the height of a pre-existing building. Construction at the site had already begun in 1545 and work on the roof had been initiated in 1554-55. Contractual relations ceased when Garzadori died in 1567 although large portions of the house had been finished by 1564. The construction of the house was later terminated by Gerolamo Garzadori. The Angelica Map (1580) clearly shows the completed building with two storeys and an attic. The ground floor, featuring smooth ashlar as far as the string-course, presents two central, round-headed portals with protruding, smooth-surfaced capitals and slim, rectangular windows with a lowered arch. The upper floors present sections created by composite pilasters of a giant order. Within

the central intercolumniation, two full-height windows flank a central niche containing a commemorative statue of Garzadori placed beneath two ends of a triangular pediment, which once provided space for the Garzadori arms decorated with the imperial eagle. The latter was removed during the 1800s. Within the outer intercolumniations, two full-height windows are surmounted by curved pediments. A robust entablature above the pilasters contains a frieze bearing the inscription "HIERONIMUS GRATIANUS INSTAURAVIT AETATIS SUAE LXXI" [Constructed by Geronimo Graziano when he was 71 years old]. With palazzo Poiana, this building offers a typical example of Palladian solutions for town houses, with an ashlar front at ground-floor level and an upper giant order including the first and second floors.

30 | Detail of the façade





## Via Cesare Battisti

The cupola is positioned above the apse of the cathedral. The old *cappella maggiore* of the cathedral had been demolished in 1482 to provide space for a new structure designed by Lorenzo da Bologna. Work on the dome was initiated after 1501 but was interrupted for a long period. In 1538 the tribune was still incomplete and a temporary covering was installed in 1540.

It was not until 1557 that the task was entrusted to Palladio, whose project was executed in two phases: the cornice and cupola drum were built in the period 1558-59 and the dome and upper lantern in 1564-1565.

No references to the drawings exist but we know that for the work on the substructure and the dome itself payments were made from 1558 onwards to Palladio and his son Marcantonio, who often represented him owing to his numerous commitments.

Palladio's work on the apse includes the cornice, the tall, sixteen-sided structure articulated by simple pilaster strips, the hemispherical dome and the curvilinear lantern with its hemispherical cupoletta. There are evident similarities with other religious buildings designed by Palladio such as the Venetian churches of San Giorgio Maggiore and the Redentore and the Villa Barbaro temple at Maser. Initially, a simple metal cross was placed at the top of the structure; this was later replaced by a gilt angel with outstretched wings, struck by lightning in 1620.

The twin-shell cupola is in masonry with the extrados, lantern and cupolino covered by copper plating. The work exemplifies the Palladian concept for the design of a cupola, inspired by the dome of the Pantheon or his idea for a suitable covering for the Roman temple dedicated to Divus Romulus.

31 The cupola seen from Piazza Duomo





## Contrà Lampertico

The northern entrance of the cathedral was opened around 1563 at the request of the canon Paolo Almerico, for whom Palladio designed the Rotonda. The portal was created at the point corresponding with the chapel of St. John the Evangelist (erected in 1482), whose statue was transferred to the nearby chapel dedicated to the Saints Simon and Judas. It is built with an aedicular configuration with Corinthian pilaster strips crowned by an entablature containing an inscription.

The entrance with the architrave is surmounted by a cornice supported by two volute-style modillions. The portal and capitals are in Vicenza stone and the pilasters in masonry. The concept of a doorway with an architrave framed by yet another structure with an archi-

trave can be related to other Palladian solutions, appearing, in particular, in the facade of the Church of S. Pietro in Castello in Venice.

The attribution to Palladio has been debated by critics, although Barbieri, one of the most skeptical, also admits this may be the execution of autograph drawings by masons such as Pietro da Nanto or Gropino; in this case, however, the work would have to be dated at around 1570.

The rather inappropriate decorative elements placed between the two capitals can certainly be attributed to the builder. In the nineteenth century, the dimensions of the door were altered and the lower part of the structure was extended on account of the lowering of the street level.



32 | View of the portal on the northern side of the Cathedral



68

## Western end of Corso Palladio (Piazza Castello)

This building, commissioned by Count Giovanni Almerico Capra, is dated between the years 1540 and 1545. It would appear that its construction was nevertheless completed in 1567, when, as stated in the frieze, its owner was the jurist Antonio Capra.

The three-storey building has a simple facade, with no columns, at the centre of which a portal is framed by Ionic pilasters. Above the entrance, an entablature is surmounted directly by a balcony with a balustrade in front of a three-light window.

The fluted Corinthian pilasters of the

window are set beneath a triangular pediment. On either side of the central portion there are two rectangular windows at ground level, two with triangular pediments on the first floor and two square windows in the smaller top floor. In the 1600s, the Piovini family raised the height of the building on the basis of a design by Anthony Pizzocaro, which resulted in a drastic internal reorganization, destroying the original layout. With palazzo da Monte, the building represents a typical example of Palladio's earlier works and his solutions relating to the town-house theme.

33 | *View from Corso Palladio*





## Contrà Santa Corona

Palladio designed this chapel for Antonio Valmarana in 1576. The wish that a chapel might be created for the Giardino branch of his family, the head of which was Giovanni Alvise, a supporter and patron of Palladio, is clearly stated in the testament drawn up by the nobleman in 1575, the year before his death.

The structure was built in 1597 by his brother Leonardo, who declared in 1613 that he wished to be buried here, dedicating the chapel to Saint Hyacinth.

Leonardo's role as material executor of his brother's will is proven by inscriptions, bearing the date 1597, in the frieze of the entablature and in the funerary paving stone set in the floor. The Valmarana family had been awarded a concession granting them the use of the crypt in 1482, when it was constructed and naturally rendered all the more prestigious by the presence of a reliquary containing a relic from the Crown of Thorns [Santa Corona] worn by Christ.

Despite the limited space at his disposal, Palladio created a monumental

work. In this cross-vaulted chapel with two apses, four 'book-folded' Corinthian pilasters at the corners of the central space support a moulded cornice. Decorative 'binding' stonework strips are placed at different levels, with the lowest appearing at the height of the bases, the second corresponding with the top of the altar and the highest at the level of the collarino of the altar columns. The walls and pilasters are in brickwork, while the bases and capitals are in stone. The altar was probably also designed by Palladio and perhaps executed by the Albanesi, the Vicentine sculptors. Light enters the chapel from four oculi and two windows.

The 16th-c., two-coloured, terracotta flooring is original. Inspired by Roman funerary monuments, the structure presents many analogies with chapels of the church of the Redeemer in Venice. The Palladian style is also evident in the articulation of space, enhanced and expanded by the apses, in a rigorous geometrical configuration and in the elegance of the aedicule with its splendid triangular pediment.



34 | Interior of the chapel

TRENTINO

72

LOMBARDY

EMILIA ROMAGNA



**Itinerary 4**

A22

SAN PIETRO IN CARIANO

VERONA

A4

**Itinerary 1**

BASSANO DEL GRAPPA

LUGO DI VICENZA

A31

MONTICCHIO PRECALCINO

CALDOGNO

VICENZA

MONTICELLO CONTE OTTO ROZZANO

VIC.NO

QUINTO VIC.NO

GRUMOLO DELLE ABATEDESSE

PADOVA

**Itinerary 2**

SAREGO

AGUGLIARO

POIANA MAGGIORE

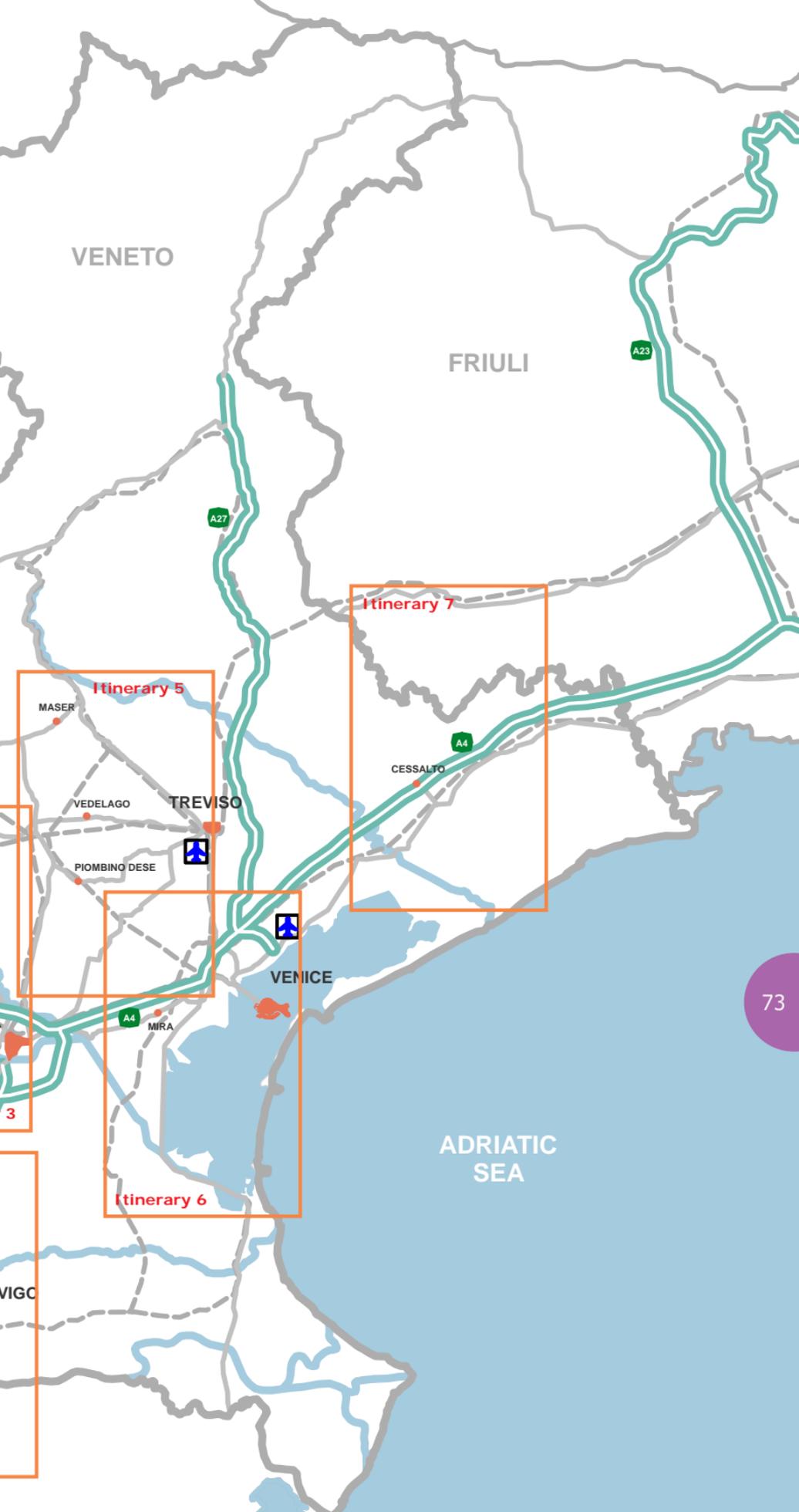
MONTAGNANA

A13

**Itinerary 8**

FRATTA POLESINE

ROVERETO



VENETO

FRIULI

Itinerary 7

Itinerary 5

MASER

VEDELAGO

TREVISO

PIOMBINO DESE

CESSALTO

VENICE

MIRA

ADRIATIC  
SEA

73

Itinerary 6

VIGO



Our first suggested excursion begins just to the north of Vicenza (Cricoli) at **Villa Trissino** (1537), where the aristocratic intellectual Giangiorgio Trissino 'discovered' the young stone-mason Andrea della Gondola, later known as Palladio, who worked on the construction of this stately home.

From Cricoli, the route continues northwards along the Marosticana provincial road (248). Turn left at the junction with the road leading to Caldogno. **Villa Caldogno** (1542), now owned by the municipality and used for cultural events and exhibitions, is close to the village centre.



Return to the main 'Marosticana' road and continue travelling northwards. Farther on, turn left again and drive towards Montecchio Precalcino. Just before the small town, you will find **Villa Forni Cerato** (post 1564), an ingenious adaptation of a small pre-existing building carried out for a wealthy landowner. From here, you may wish to visit Molina di Malo to view a set of ten colossal brickwork columns with stone bases (1572); these are the only part ever completed of the grandiose Villa Porto (not included in the World Heritage List). The building was planned in 1570 for Iseppo Porto but work was interrupted after the patron's death a few years later.



From Molina, continue northwards - passing Montecchio Precalcino and Breganze - as far as Colle di Lonedo, close to Lugo di Vicenza. Here, in a high, panoramic position, you will find **Villa Godi** (1537), Palladio's first important country home, and **Villa Piovene** (from 1539) at the top of a monumental stairway rising from a beautiful portal constructed in the 1700s.



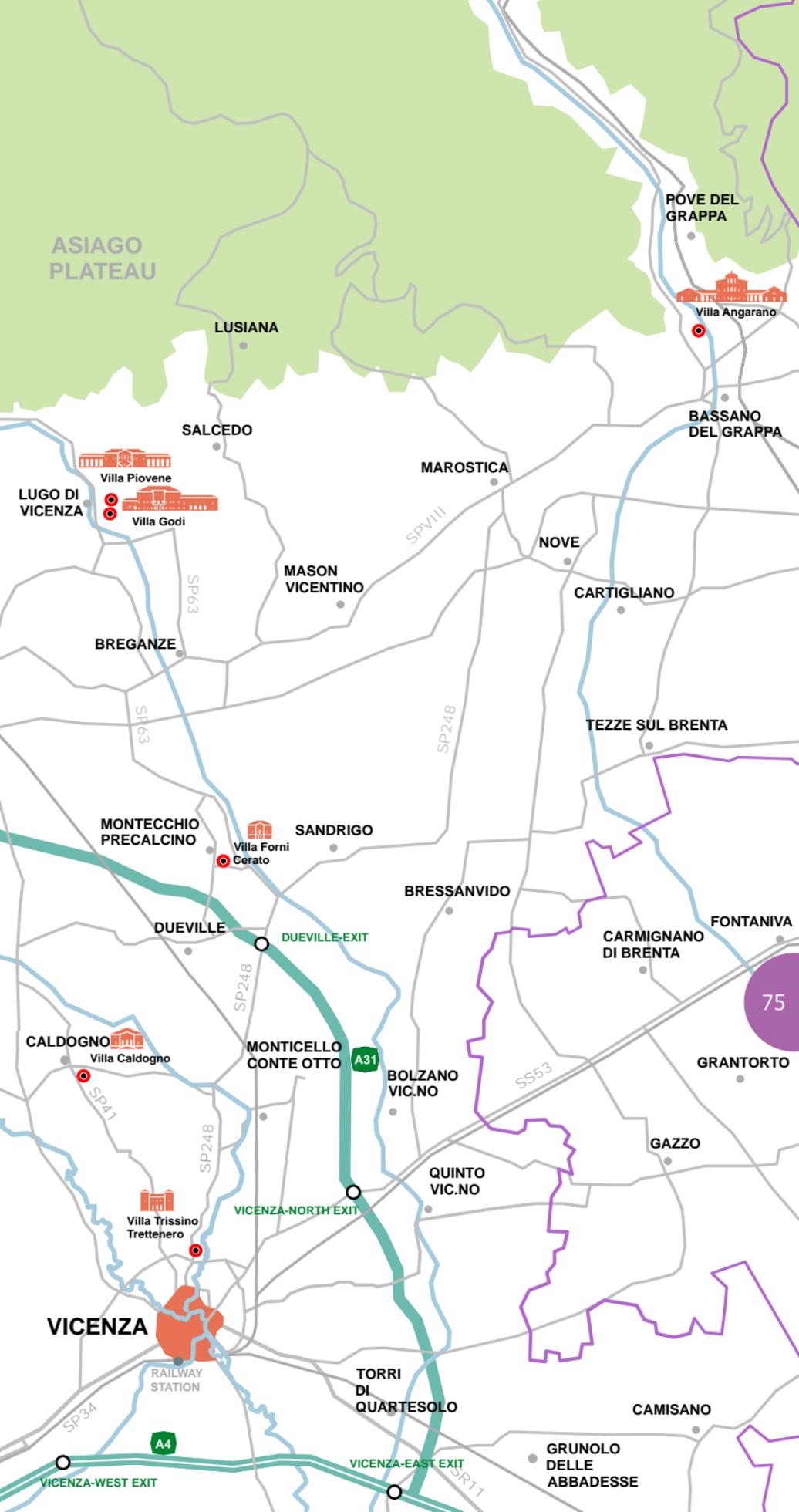
From Lonedo, return to Breganze and carry on towards Bassano del Grappa. **Villa Angarano** (1548) is situated just to the left of the main road at the edge of the city. This is one of the first works based on the concept of a farm-villa, conceived by Palladio as a single architectural unit.



Worthy of note at Bassano del Grappa is the *wooden bridge over the Brenta River* (not included in the World Heritage List), also known as the *Ponte degli Alpini*.

A former bridge was destroyed in 1567 during a severe flood and then rebuilt according to drawings produced by Palladio in 1569. It has been restored on two other occasions, the last being the reconstruction in accordance with the original Palladian plan following its destruction by order of the German army in WWII.





ASIAGO  
PLATEAU

POVE DEL  
GRAPPA

LUSIANA



Villa Angarano

BASSANO  
DEL GRAPPA

SALCEDO

MAROSTICA



Villa Piovene

Villa Godi

LUGO DI  
VICENZA

MASON  
VICENTINO

NOVE

CARTIGLIANO

BREGANZE

TEZZE SUL BRENTA

MONTECCHIO  
PRECALCINO



SANDRIGO

Villa Fornì  
Cerato

BRESSANVIDO

DUEVILLE

DUEVILLE-EXIT

CARMIGNANO  
DI BRENTA

FONTANIVA

75

CALDOGNO

Villa Caldogno

MONTICELLO  
CONTE OTTO



BOLZANO  
VIC.NO

SS53

GRANTORTO

SP41

SP248

SP248

SPVIII

SP63

SP63

GAZZO

QUINTO  
VIC.NO

VICENZA-NORTH EXIT

VICENZA



RAILWAY  
STATION

TORRI  
DI  
QUARTESOLO

CAMISANO

GRUNOLO  
DELLE  
ABBADESSE

VICENZA-WEST EXIT

VICENZA-EAST EXIT



SPR1

SP34



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The villa stands at the northern edge of the city within a vast agricultural area close to the River Astichello with adjoining farm buildings. Following various transformations, the building is formed by a two-level parallelepipedon flanked by higher, rectangular, corner towers, rising above a scarped base, with three, vertically-aligned rectangular windows. Facing south-west, the main façade presents a central section with two orders punctuated by pilasters creating five internal areas.

The lower, Ionic order encloses a portico with three open arches in the central subdivisions and ending at each side with two small, arched windows and circular oculi. The fluted pilasters of this level rise from tall plinths and support an entablature with a smooth frieze. The upper, Corinthian order contains windows aligned with the lower arches, while the two outer partitions contain niches with statues. The cornice of the trabeation presents a strip of dentil decoration and lion-head *protomai* aligned with the pilasters positioned beneath the eaves.

Heraldic motifs are visible on the towers. The central section of the rear elevation presents three axes of rectangular windows on three levels, however the windows of the lateral elevations are arranged asymmetrically.

Unlike the façade, the other three fronts present no form of architectural articulation. The layout of the façade corresponds with the planimetric configuration defined centrally by the succession of the loggia, the *vestibolo* (flanked by minor rooms) and a transverse rectangular space, from which access is provided to two lateral apartments formed by a sequence of three rooms of equal width and differing depths (rectangular and long – square - rectangular and short).

Villa Trissino is the only building at the UNESCO site in which Andrea della Gondola did not intervene as an architect, however it is deemed particularly relevant on account of the person who commissioned its restoration.

Trissino was a leading humanist and

it was thanks to suggestions made by him that Andrea della Gondola acquired such familiarity with the works of Vitruvius and classical architecture.

Trissino is apparently also responsible for the refined Roman *nom d'art* adopted by the young master-mason and his having obtained the protection and support he needed to emerge as a talented and culturally-refined architect.

The villa had been built, in the late-Gothic style and with its two front towers, shortly before it was purchased in 1482 by Gasparo Trissino, the father of Giangiorgio. After inheriting the property, Giangiorgio decided in 1537 that it should be renovated in accordance with the classical themes and style and with a double order across the façade. Some believe it may have been Trissino himself who developed this concept, however an attribution to Sebastiano Serlio would be more plausible on account of the distinctly classical character of the configuration.

A layout inspired by the Raphaelesque Villa Madama would have been beyond the capacity of Trissino, who was really just a talented amateur, and at that time Palladio himself had not yet attained a mature knowledge of and experience with the classical language of architecture.

A print in Serlio's *Quarto Libro* however presents a layout similar to that found in Villa Trissino, not only in the architectural elements adopted but also in terms of proportion, with the two outer bays narrower than the three central sections. It is likely that Serlio, who was indeed present in the Veneto at that time, produced the plans that were later implemented, with a number of discrepancies, by local builders.

Work on the building, which was quite limited, was terminated in 1538. In the period 1798-1804, the architect Ottone Calderari, a leading promoter of a neo-Palladian movement in Vicenza, eliminated the Gothic windows of the rear elevation and reorganised the layout and distribution of the various apertures.

Starting in 1898, Count Sforza della

Torre removed a fireplace, painted decorations and door-jambes that were the last reminders of the original Gothic building. The corners of the rear elevation were also raised so as to create two towers similar to those at the front of

the building.

During recent restoration work, a few remains (a small, late-Gothic column and capital) were found inside a blocked-off doorway which may have formed part of the original fireplace.

#### BUILDING TECHNIQUES

The walls are in brickwork. The loggia is also produced in brickwork with plaster finishing. The heraldic motifs on the façade and the window cornices modified in the 19th century are in stone.

35 | *Detail of the loggia*



36 | *Front view*



37 | *View of the northern side*





The villa, owned by the Municipality of Caldogno, stands close to a surrounding wall beside the road leading into the nearby village centre. The building has the form of a square block, on the faces of which string-courses and other surface strips coinciding with the window-sills, emphasize the vertical division into a raised piano nobile, a lower ground-floor level and an attic. In the main façade, facing south, the central area is highlighted by its slight protrusion.

The loggia with its three arches bordered by rusticated ashlar opens above a polygonal-plan stairway and is crowned, above the attic section, by a pediment with a lozenge-shape aperture. In the two lateral sections, the doors of the lower ground-level section align with the rectangular windows and ornamental cornices of the piano nobile and square apertures below the eaves. Similar sets of windows are repeated five times along the sides of the building. In its central portion, the northern elevation presents a configuration similar to that of the façade, though here the three arches merely enclose a central doorway and two lateral windows surmounted by oculi; no ashlar decoration appears at the rear. The rear elevation was altered by the later addition of a broad terrace and two square towers containing staircases.

The interior, accessed from the loggia, is dominated by a spacious central hall. Two apartments are located at the sides of this chamber. These areas, accessed through doorways decorated with bullnose cornices, present three consecutive rooms, of which the intermediate room, shorter than the two rectangular corner chambers, is quite different in size. The room on the east side also contains a staircase. Although it does not appear in the *Quattro Libri* and despite a certain divergence justified by differences in the dimensions and proportions of the planimetry, critics attribute this villa to Palladio on account of similarities in the configuration of the façade with other Palladian buildings, and especially Villa Saraceno at Finale

di Agugliaro, differing only on account of the absence of an ashlar section, but also Villa Zeno at Cessalto and Villa Pisani at Bagnolo.

Similarities have moreover been identified with a preparatory drawing for Villa Poiana, in which details of the façade, such as emphasis on the central portion, the side window cornices of both levels, the articulation of the base section and even the form of the main entrance stairway are reminiscent of forms adopted at Caldogno.

The history of the villa and identification of the patron have long been the subject of debate. Historical research eventually identified Losco Caldogno as the person who originally planned its construction after he became the owner of the estate in 1542, following complex inheritance proceedings.

The absence of an adequate 'manorial' residence on the estate, where certain pre-existing buildings may have influenced the execution of this villa, suggests that the plans would have been produced from 1542 onwards, although analogies with Villa Saraceno may imply that the work was carried out around 1548. Additions to cadastral survey records between 1554 and 1564 would indicate that the building was completed during that ten-year period. The villa was certainly habitable in 1567. Finally, after his father's death in 1564, Angelo, the son and heir of Losco Caldogno, had the interior of the villa frescoed (1569-1570) by Giovan Antonio Fasolo and, in part, by Giovan Battista Zelotti. The inscription 'ANGELUS CALIDONIUS LUSCHI FILIUS MDLXX' [Angelo Caldogno, the son of Losco, 1570] appearing on the string-course above the loggia refers to these events.

The internal decorations were extended in the mid 1600s and early 1700s. External frescoes, of which very few traces remain, were also produced in the 18th century. In the mid 1600s, the workrooms and servant's quarters (existing before Palladio worked at the site) situated along the enclosure wall by the road were demolished and rebuilt at the other side of the estate; alterations of



38 | Main view

the rear elevation, already indicated in a map dated 1685, were apparently made in the same period. After its acquisition by the Municipality in 1986, Villa Caldogno underwent complex restoration work, completed a few years ago. This intervention also involved

the barchesse and the garden, where traces of a fish-pond were found. Since the year 2000, the municipal library has been housed in the lower ground-floor level, while the piano nobile and the barchesse are used for exhibitions, conferences and cultural activities.



39 | Rear view

#### BUILDING TECHNIQUES

The walls are in brickwork but stone was used for the columns, capitals and cornices of the windows and also for the columns and semi-columns of the atrium. The entablatures of the external fronts are in wood with a stucco finish. The horizontal structures at ground-floor level include the cross vault of the main hall, the cloister vault of the two larger rooms, the calotte vault with smoothed corners in the two, small, square rooms at the rear and a barrel vault in the servants' area beside the corridor. All spaces on the first level have flat ceilings with visible beams.

## DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

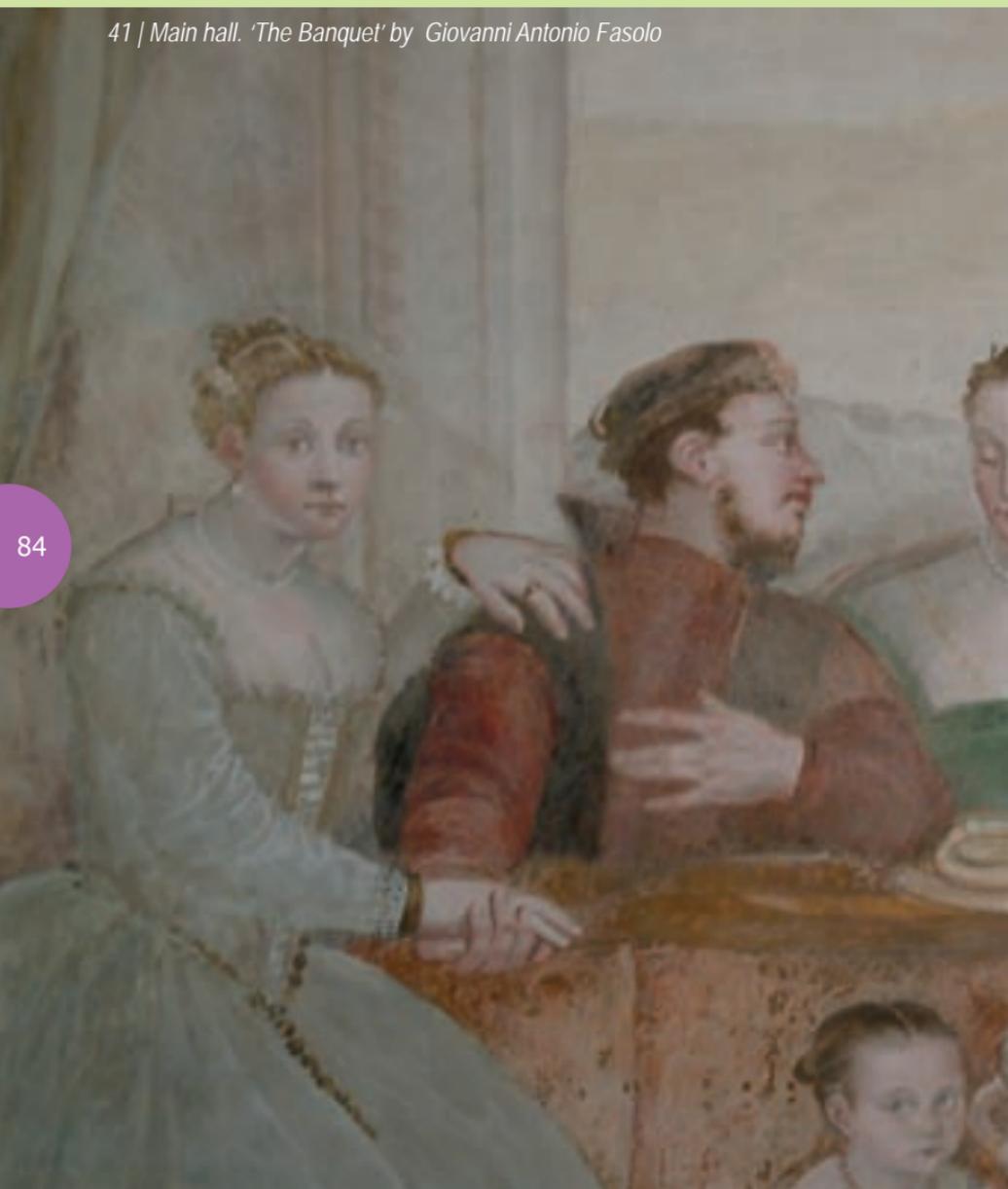
Traces of the external, 18th-c. monochrome frescoes that decorated the façade, depicting four female figures set in a series of niches appearing between the windows of the piano nobile can still be detected. Other faded remains of more complex, contemporary monochrome scenes exist on the east side of the villa. The interior is decorated with a fascinating cycle of frescoes, starting from the loggia, the side walls of which are entirely covered by a Concert scene on the right and a Banquet scene on the left; a *Council of the Gods* is depicted on the vault. These works are attributed to Giovan Antonio Fasolo (especially the lateral scenes) and his bottega and thus date back to the decorative phase of the Cinquecento. Fasolo is also believed to have produced the complex frescoes of the main hall set within the framework of a trompe-l'oeil structure supported by gigantic chiaroscuro telamons (on square bases, in turn decorated by other figures) holding up a projecting frieze embellished by putti, 'erme' [busts], festoons and monochrome scenes. Between false arches on the walls between the doorways of the main hall we find scenes of leisure activities with background landscapes, in which the realism of the depicted characters in *The Concerto* and *The Banquet* on the west wall and *The Card Game* and *The Invitation to a Dance* on the east wall might induce the observer to believe that these are members of the family that lived here. On the two ornamental doorway panels, female figures present the armorial bearings of the family, while prisoners appear in the four panels above the end doors. In the two outer, larger rectangular rooms, the west apartment contains frescoes attributed to Giovan Battista Zelotti, also produced before 1570. In both rooms the scenes are set within arches in an illusory architectural structure of Corinthian columns supporting a frieze with putti, festoons, animals and various figures. The two rooms are also fitted with sculpted fireplaces made by Lorenzo Rubini in the same period. The north room - or Scipio's Room - depicts scenes from the life of the Roman general, as described by Livy, emphasizing his magnanimous character. The south wall shows *The prisoners' Invocation* and *Roman soldiers freeing the Prisoners*. The east wall, towards the main hall,

40 | Main hall. 'The Concert' by Giovanni Antonio Fasolo



shows a scene in which *Scipio* returns the girl promised in marriage to *Allucius*. On the north wall, two scenes depict a *Horseman with Armour* and *Scipio talking to the Wise Men and Philosophers*. Allegorical figures decorate the ornamental panels above the doors, while *Virtue* chastising *Vice* appears on the hood of the fireplace. Here, two caryatids support an entablature and frieze decorated with plant-like motifs. In the small room between the two halls, called the room of the 'Pastor fido' [faithful shepherd], frescoes painted on the left-hand side by an unknown artist at the end of the 16th century depict episodes from *Aminta*, the pastoral fable by Tasso. In the right-hand section, which became available following the elimination of a staircase, towards the mid 1600s the Venetian painter Giulio Carpioni painted episodes from another bucolic fable - *The Faithful Shepherd* by Guarini - including *The Incoronation of the Nymph Amarilli* on the wall by the main hall, *Corisca followed by a Satyr* to the left of the south wall and, on the right of the north wall, *Silvio and Dorinda*. The north hall, called Sophonisba's room, reveals the story of the unfortunate Carthaginian noblewoman, starting with *Sophonisba*

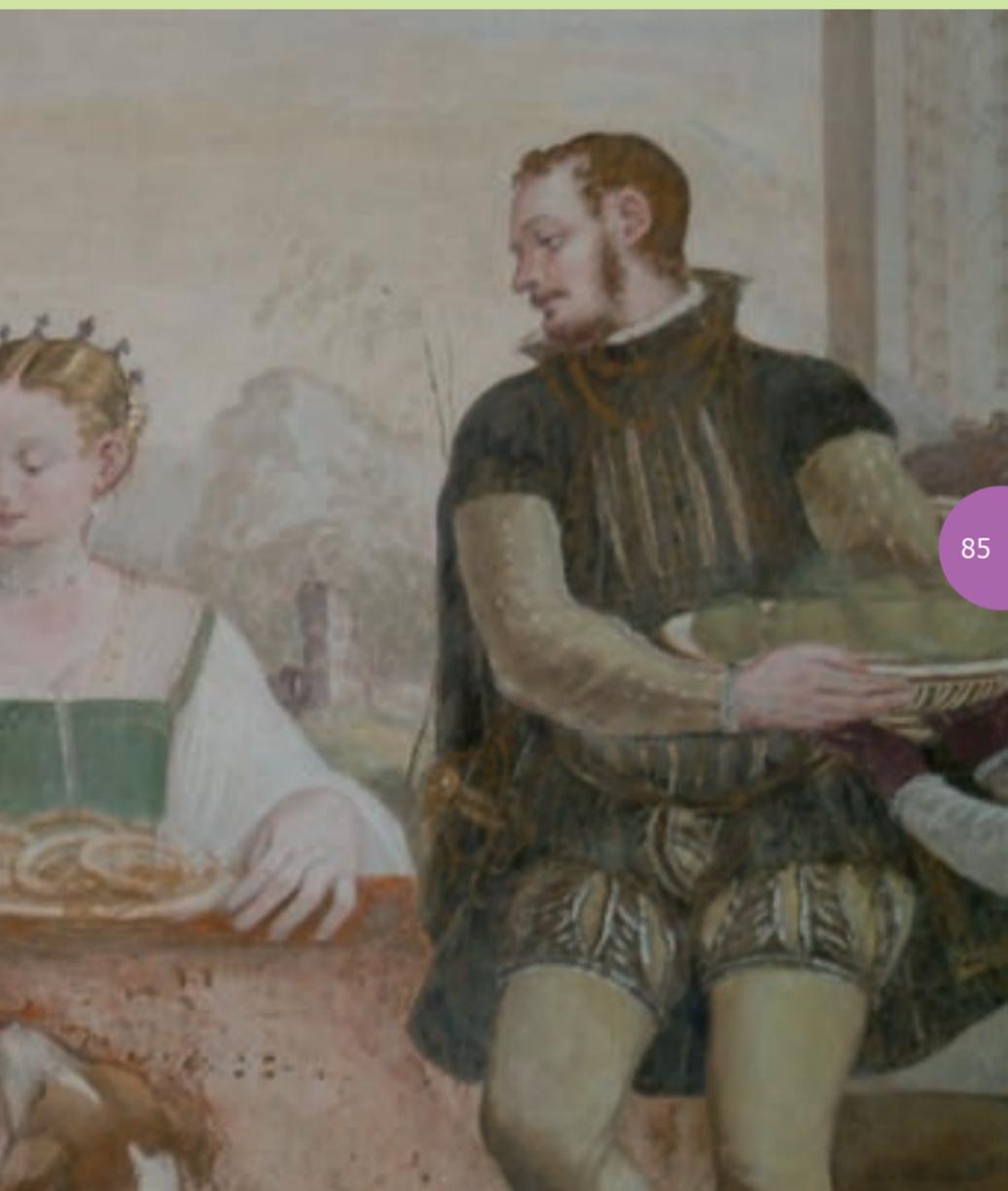
41 | Main hall. 'The Banquet' by Giovanni Antonio Fasolo

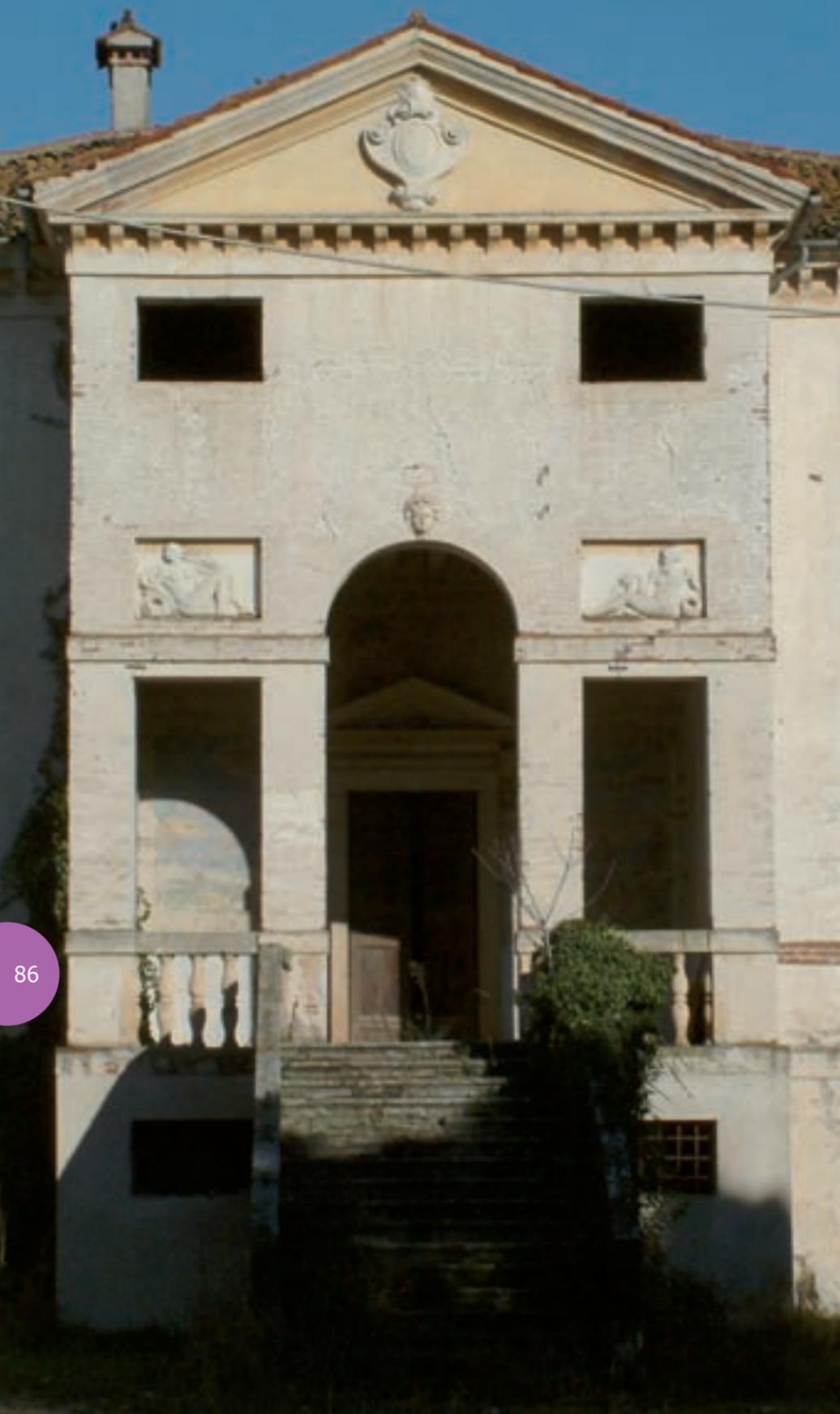


crying, followed by a Procession on the left of the north wall, flanked by the partly ruined *Sophonisba with the Soldiers*. At the centre of the wall by the main hall, we find *Sophonisba beseeching Massinissa*. Finally, on the south wall, the story reaches its tragic conclusion with *Scipio orders Massinissa to deliver Sophonisba* and *Sophonisba receives the Vase of Poison*.

In the same room, on the wall by the main hall, a Seduction scene represents a horseman attempting to embrace a gentlewoman observed by a servant girl.

The fireplace, with *Vulcan* and *Venus* depicted on the hood, is composed of two telamons holding up an entablature with a Doric frieze with arms. In the east apartment, the friezes in the two larger rooms are decorated with frescoes. In the south room, the decoration consists of a monochrome strip with nude figures, putti and fighters alternated by scroll-work with monochrome scenes. In 1674, the decoration of the north room was entrusted to Giovanni Massari, who depicted *Juno on a Carriage drawn by Peacocks*, *the Rape of Europa*, *the Seduction of Callisto* and *allegorical female figures*.





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## Via Venezia, 4 - Montecchio Precalcino (VI)

Situated in the countryside close to Montecchio Precalcino, this villa is formed by a rather small rectangular structure articulated on three levels, comprising the lower ground floor, the piano nobile and the attic section. It is flanked by a barchessa and other outbuildings now poorly preserved.

The main façade, facing south, has a protruding central portion containing a simple, Serlian-style loggia at the level of the piano nobile with bare pillars presenting no architectural order; the main entrance is accessed from a long, single-ramp stairway.

The lateral windows of the Serlian arch and those at the side of the loggia are enclosed by balustrades and surmounted by blind square recesses, containing, at the front, non-original relief decorations. At the attic level, two open, rectangular windows align with the latter. Above the central portion of the façade the tympanum is decorated with armorial bearings added at a later date.

Each of the two lateral sections of the front elevation presents three vertically-aligned windows. The lower two are rough-edged, those of the first floor have a cornice and pulvinar frieze and protruding sections below the sills and those just beneath the roof are framed by a cornice.

On the first floor, the rear elevation is opened up by a balcony (a Serlian arch may have been envisaged also for this front) and four axes of windows on the three different floors. The entire building presents two horizontal strips, surrounding it without interruption at the flooring and window-sill levels of the piano nobile, and a decorative dentil cornice beneath the eaves. At the farther ends of the walls of the long main hall, traversing from the façade to the rear elevation, a set of doorways with pulvinar friezes allow access to the four side rooms, of which the two at the front are rather longer than those at the back.

The rear north-east room is further divided to provide space for the staircase, accessed from the main

hall through an arched doorway facing another identical (false) opening on the opposite side. Although supported by most scholars, in the absence of any definite documentary evidence concerning the construction of the building, attribution to Palladio is a debated point, as is the chronological sequence of interventions.

Recent research has indicated that in 1541-42 the property was owned by the children of the Del Grana family, at the time orphans and minors, who later took the surname of their uncles Iseppo and Giampiero Forni, whose wards they had become. Among the brothers, Girolamo, who was successful as a timber merchant in the early 1550s, gradually improved his financial position, also becoming a painter and collector of antiques. He later became a member of the *Accademia Olimpica* and supplier for various Palladian construction sites. He thus met Palladio, whom he commissioned to build the villino at Montecchio Precalcino, presumably shortly after 1564, considering that before that time cadastral records show no significant increase in value.

The Palladian intervention consisted in the transformation of a modest, pre-existing building, the structure of which determined the limited width of the loggia and conditioned the proportions of the entire work, which do not respect customary dimensional relations adopted by the architect. Such restrictions in any case constitute further proof of the technical capacity of Palladio, who was capable of conferring order and a form of functional harmony to an insignificant rural construction, while also instilling the sense of decorum and dignity appropriate for a stately residence.

The result was achieved by a well-balanced combination of minimal lexical elements (the simplified Serlian arch without an architectural order, the small pediment, the orderly distribution of the window apertures and certain other architectural details), which ensure a sober, elegant result that might reflect the rank of a patron who

was wealthy and yet could not aspire to noble status.

In compliance with the will and testament (1610) of Girolamo Forni, following his death the villa was transferred to the children of his nephew Giovanni Cerato. The façade presented sculpted decorations on the tympanum (a coat of arms supported by two *putti* and female figures at the sides) and in the square recesses above the openings of

the loggia (*The Seasons*), documented in drawings of the 1700/1800s. It is believed these works - removed and replaced in 1924 by the present mediocre relief decorations - may have been produced by Girolamo Forni's friend, the sculptor Alessandro Vittoria from Trent.

In recent decades, the general state of abandon of the villa has worsened its condition.

#### BUILDING TECHNIQUES

The walls of the house are in plastered brickwork. Stone was used for the window and door cornices, also externally, and for the upper cornice beneath the eaves. The building presents no vaulted ceilings (also on the ground floor) and the horizontal structures are all formed by flat wooden flooring elements.

43 | Main façade





#### DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

The armorial bearings and two relief decorations in the recesses above the outer apertures of the Serliana have little artistic value; these elements were installed in the 1900s in the place of previous sculptures, removed and sold by the owner.

However, the keystone decoration with a female head at the centre of the Serliana is original.

The internal walls of the loggia reveal traces of poorly-preserved frescoes that simulate an architectural structure of tapered, fluted Corinthian pilasters, between which one can see a variety of landscapes.

In the interior, a series of busts was once installed above the doorways of the central hall.

The villa still has two 16th-century fireplaces; one of these is in the south-east corner room on the piano nobile and the other was removed to the lower level at a later date.



The architectural complex of Villa Godi, located on a lower slope of the Colle di Lonedo, can be reached following the road leading up from Lugo. The villa is composed of a central residential section, flanked by two wings set back from the main corpus of the villa and a group of separate rural buildings, including a barchessa, on the northern side. The house is surrounded by gardens, with a semi-circular border at the front of the main building, expanding into a rectangular area in front of the right wing. The hanging garden at the rear of the complex also has a semi-circular section.

The main building has a rectangular form and is composed of a higher middle block and two symmetrical side structures. At the front, the central sector is set back at the level of the piano nobile and opens with a three-arched loggia accessed from a sole-ramp stairway leading to two small lateral terraces with balustrades, beneath which, at ground-floor level, there is a portico. Each of the two lateral blocks presents four axes of apertures, set close together at the centre and isolated at the far ends. The wall spaces between the windows contain the chimney flues, which emerge on the roof.

Inversely, the rear elevation presents a situation in which the central body protrudes from the main corpus, with a simple Serlian arch on the first floor.

Within the central portion, the plan of the villa hinges on the succeeding loggia and transverse hall, flanked by two identical apartments of four rooms each. The wings beside the villa have different lengths. The left, three-arched structure corresponds with the original drawings, while the longer right-hand building is opened at the centre by five arches. The group of rural buildings on the north side includes a low building, a barchessa with a Doric portico and a dovecot tower.

This villa is the first country residence definitely designed by Palladio. It was illustrated in his *Quattro Libri*, where the drawings reveal minor divergences in the planimetric configuration of the complex and modifications in the composition of volumes and the façade.

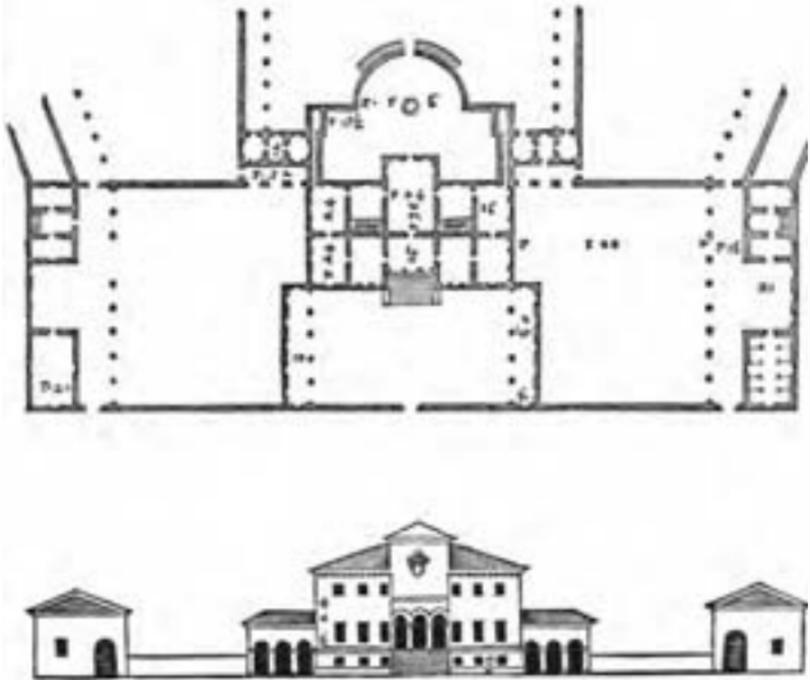
The restructuring of the property - and, probably, of a number of pre-existing buildings - had already begun in 1533 at the behest of Enrico Antonio Godi, when the north barchessa (the date is inscribed in the portico) was erected. The commission was awarded to the bottega of Gerolamo Pittoni and Giacomo da Porlezza, where the young Palladio worked as a specialist in architecture. It is however certain that the design of the main residence was entrusted directly and autonomously to Palladio around 1537 by Girolamo Godi, the son of Enrico Antonio, who had died in 1536. The building was completed in 1542, as confirmed by the inscription above the loggia and revealed by a property assessment report submitted that year.

The villa thus represents the first stage of Palladio's quest to define a new format for country houses that would combine functionality and an overall rational layout with innovative architectural concepts in terms of image, for the elaboration of which he had, at that time, very few points of reference (hence the rather sombre character of the building) as his training and professional growth, supervised and encouraged by Trissino, had only just begun.

In any case, in this building there is an evident link to the castle-villa formula with a fortified appearance inherited from local traditions of the 1400s, which Palladio adapts and enhances, opening it up to the pleasant surrounding landscape, also following literary descriptions of the Roman villas of antiquity.

In the period 1549-52, Palladio was still completing his work at the Villa Godi site and was charged with the task of arranging the decorative elements of the interior, for which he defined the architectural layout and divisions as proven by an autograph drawing held at Chatsworth in England (Devonshire Collections, Chiswick 37) dating back to around 1550. The Serliana at the end of the main hall which replaced the originally-planned Diocletian window may have been created at that time. Moreover, immediately afterwards, Palladio intervened in the rear garden, where he

IN LONEDO luogo del Vicentino è la fequente fabrica del Signor Girolamo de' Godi pofta fopra vn colle di bellifsima uifta, & a canto un fiume, che ferue per Pefchiera. Per rendere quefto fito commodo per l'vfo di Villa ui fono ftati fatti cortili, & ftrade fopra uolti con non picciola fpefa. La fabrica di mezo è per l'habitatione del padrone, & della famiglia. Le ftanze del padrone hanno il piano loro alto da terra tredici piedi, e fono in folaro, fopra quefte ui fono i granari, & nella parte di fotto, cioè nell'altezza dei tredici piedi ui fono difpofte le cantine, i luoghi da fare i uini, la cucina, & altri luoghi simili. La sala giugne con la sua altezza fin sotto il tetto, & ha due ordini di feneftre. Dall'vno e l'altro lato di quefto corpo di fabrica ui fono i cortili, & i coperti per le cofe di Villa. E' ftata quefta fabrica ornata di pitture di bellifsima inuentione da Meffer Gualtiero Padouano, da Meffer Battifta del Moro Veronefe, & da Meffer Battifta Venetiano; perche quefto Gentil'huomo, il quale è giudiciofifsimo, per redurla a quella eccellenza & perfettione, che fia pofsibile; non ha guardato a fpefa alcuna, & ha fcelfo i più fingolari, & eccellenti Pittori de' noftri tempi.



from the *Quattro libri dell'architettura* di Andrea Palladio, Venezia 1570

created a semi-circular section inspired by Bramante's work in the courtyard of the Belvedere in the Vatican and at the centre of which he placed the elegant well-head bearing the date 1555. The decorative work, which Palladio describes in his treatise, mentioning also the artisans involved, was initiated by Gualtiero Padovano, who painted the frescoes in the loggia and rooms on the right-hand side, leaving incomplete the scene of the Triumphs, owing to his death in 1552. The work was continued

between 1561 and 1565 by Giovan Battista Zelotti, who intervened in the main hall and in the left wing with the assistance of Battista Moro.

The long right-hand structure annexed to the villa was added in the last quarter of the *Cinquecento*, and the space in front of the building was extended and the front garden created in the 1600s. Significant conservation work has been done over the last few decades, thanks to which the villa can now be considered well-preserved.

44 | Main view



45 | View from the loggia





## BUILDING TECHNIQUES

The building is constructed in plastered brickwork. Stone was used for the window and door cornices, also externally, and the upper cornice beneath the eaves. The building presents no vaulted ceilings (also on the ground floor) and the horizontal structures are all formed by flat wooden flooring elements.

## DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

The only frescoed room on the ground floor is the sala delle Stagioni [the Hall of the Seasons], attributed to Giovan Battista Zelotti. An oval form is situated at the centre of the vault, with the allegory of *Virtue* repelling *Vice*, while across the walls there is a painted architectural structure supported by caryatids, along which a false arched window reveals a view of an outer landscape.

The conspicuous cycle of frescoes adorning the piano nobile is pre-announced by the decorations of the loggia itself, painted by Gualtiero Padovano, including monochrome grotesque figures and busts and culminating in the octagonal panel of the vault with Mercury and Spring.

In the interior, Zelotti's rich decorations in the main hall are worthy of note; these paintings are framed within an elegant architectural partitioning created by Palladio, composed of pilasters and Corinthian columns with arches and tympana.

On the wall of the entrance we find, set amongst the Triumphs, Hercules in Bivio [Hercules at the Crossroads], while the two scenes depicted on the long walls are from the *Battle between Alexander the Great and Darius*. Set in false window apertures, these same surfaces contain the *Rape of Europa* and the *Rape of Ganymede*. The rear wall is decorated with *Fame* in a setting containing monochrome figures and *Prisoners*. Gualtiero Padovano also painted the frescoes in the rooms of the right-hand apartment, starting from the Putto room, so called on account of the presence of a child, in the central scene, in front of a window opening onto a river scene and embellished by a frieze with divinities.

The next room, dedicated to the Caesars, shows pleasant landscapes between archways punctuated by columns, while the third space is called the room of the Triumphs as it proposes this theme in the frieze below the ceiling and includes on the wall a Landscape with the *Colossus of Rhodes*; the ceiling decoration, with a *Virtue capturing Vice*, was painted by Zelotti.

The last room on the right, which underwent considerable redecoration in the 1800s, contains a landscape set between architectural cornices and monochrome figures.

The left wing of the villa, with frescoes mainly by Zelotti, contains, beside the main hall, a room dedicated to the Arts, with monochrome representation, set within false niches, of the *Spring* and *Summer*, together with allegorical figures, busts of emperors and a landscape.

In the next room the hood of the fireplace is frescoed with a *Venus listening to Cupid* with Vulcan in the background, while the Euryalus and Nisus scene is attributed to Battista Moro. The north-west room, the Olympus room, presents walls covered in images of ruins of Greek temples, with a broad view of the sky filled with the Gods of Olympus, amongst whom a nude Venus clearly stands out.

Finally, the room to the left of the loggia, painted by Battista Moro, presents Muses and Poets inside an architectural framework supported by caryatids.

It is believed that for the design of the very interesting fireplaces contained in these rooms Palladio may have intervened himself.



Visitors may enter this villa, standing on the lower slopes of the Colle di Lonedo, not far beyond Villa Godi, passing through the splendid eighteenth-century gate and climbing the steps of a long monumental stairway rising towards the house across a sloping terraced garden. The 'manorial' residence, rectangular and arranged on three levels (ground floor, piano nobile and attic), is flanked by two long barchesse with a Doric portico and elliptical oculi in the frieze of the entablature.

The impressive Ionic hexastyle pronaos, which dominates the front of the building, is raised on a base as high as the whole ground floor and crowned by a pediment decorated with statues and the armorial bearings of the owner within the tympanum. The villa is accessed by climbing the steps of the twin-ramp stairway leading into the central intercolumniation (the spaces between the lateral columns are protected by balustrades). The trussed cornice extending around the entire perimeter of the building continues above the 'voltatesta' [side sections] of the pronaos, opened by arches, and is interrupted only by the trabeation above the columns at the front.

The lateral sectors of the façade are punctuated by three axes of windows on each side: two close together beside the loggia and a third at the far ends.

The austere rear elevation is configured with an orderly series of axes of simple, symmetrically-arranged, rectangular apertures. The plan of the piano nobile hinges on a long transverse hall, to the sides of which are situated two symmetrical apartments with three rooms each. Close to the enclosure wall of the villa there is a small late-Gothic church dedicated to St. Jerome bearing the date 1496.

Attribution of the villa to Palladio (it was not illustrated in his treatise) remains a topic of debate and scholars are divided also with respect to the chronological sequence of the phases of its construction, which would help us determine whether Palladio did in fact intervene at the site. It is ascertained that in the

1530s the Piovene family possessed a pre-existing residence on the Lonedo estate, which had perhaps been built at the same time as the nearby church. Some researchers believe that, as they intended to emulate the achievements of the Godi family, the Piovene family commissioned Palladio to design a new country home for them or to renovate their pre-existing property in the period 1539-40. This hypothesis is based on various similarities with the nearby Palladian building, such as the distribution of the window apertures, the trussed cornice and the layout of the plans, with two apartments at the sides of a transverse hall.

In taxation assessments recorded not before 1554, the villa is reported as having quite a low value and thus it was probably a building presenting dimensions much smaller than those of the current structure. It is difficult to identify the patron behind the work as until 1539 the owner was Battista Piovene, who died in that year and left the property, undivided, to his children, who did not take individual possession of their father's assets until 1554, finally assigning the Lonedo villa to Tommaso Piovene.

The latter determined that the internal arrangement of pathways and routes within the estate should be modified around 1575, the year when extension and development of the villa may have begun. This new phase would have certainly continued after the death of Tommaso in 1578 and was completed by his children in 1587 as proven by an inscription on the trabeation of the pronaos. The possible involvement of Palladio in this operation appears unlikely on account of the inappropriate attachment of the Ionic colonnade with the cornice and incongruent features of the plan. As suggested by some, a posthumous execution of Palladian drawings may have been implemented by builders with little experience.

Significant transformations were made during the 1700s, with the decisive intervention of the architect Francesco Muttoni. The gate was installed in 1703,

when the stairway was completed and the arrangement of the garden finally decided. The barchesse with porticos and perhaps the double-ramp stairway were added in 1740. Finally, in the early 1800s, the architect Antonio Piovone

designed a romantic park behind the villa with natural grottoes, water springs and enormous trees, which greatly valorise the landscaping of the property in this already very prestigious panoramic position.

#### BUILDING TECHNIQUES

The building is constructed in brickwork. Stone is used in the cornice, the bases and capitals of the columns of the pronaos and in the cornices of the doors and windows. The main central hall on the ground-floor level presents a low vault, while the piano nobile is covered with wooden horizontal sections

#### DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

The external, eighteenth-century sculptures produced by sculptors from the bottega of Orazio Marinali are most certainly worthy of note. Besides the pediment, these works embellish the upper garden enclosure wall, the stairway and wall sections at the sides of the monumental entrance.

47 | *View of the villa*



48 | *The eighteenth-century gate*





100

The Villa Angarano complex develops around two large, rectangular courtyard areas. The west courtyard is entirely surrounded by buildings fitted for various types of agricultural work, while the east courtyard, enclosed by buildings on three sides and an enclosure wall on the south side, provides access to the mansion. The barchesse extend outwards from the side of the house.

The main body of the villa, with its three levels, is an elegant palazzetto built in the 17th-century style, with a number of architectural features quite different from those of customary Palladian configurations. At the front, the central partition presents Tuscan and Ionic pilasters on the three levels, with 'erme' [busts] and volute terminations, framing three close-set apertures on each floor, and is crowned by a curvilinear broken pediment. In each of the two lateral sections of the front elevation, the apertures are surmounted at the first two levels by blind, recessed, rectangular and lunette-type, upper window panels. The entire façade is graced by statues. At the two sides of the house, the raised central portions are also surmounted by triangular pediments. The scheme of the façade is repeated at the rear but in a rather subdued format.

The villa develops around a large central transverse hall with four corner rooms; the stairs and the corridors leading into the adjacent structures are located in the middle chambers at the sides. The barchesse, with long Doric porticos and entablatures with triglyphs and metopes, face the courtyard directly; the portico to the right of the villa also includes an inscribed elliptical-plan chapel dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen, distinguished by the particular configuration of its façade, articulated at the centre by means of two giant semi-columns supporting a triangular pediment crowned by three statues on pedestals. To the north of the complex there is a spacious, 18th-century garden.

Palladio was asked to plan this particular farm-villa by Count Giacomo Angarano, to whom reference is made in the *Quattro Libri*, and where it would

appear that the original intention was to construct the villa in a more advanced position, extending outwards into the courtyard.

It is assumed that the drawings were produced around 1548 as contemporary documentary evidence reveals that during that year Palladio actually spent quite some time on the vast agricultural estate of the Vicentine nobleman.

The pre-existing architectural configuration of the buildings at the site determined the choice of initiating the project by working on the barchesse but subsequent financial issues, also relating to construction projects on other properties, brought the Angarano commission to a halt before the new mansion was even begun and induced Giacomo Angarano to sell the complex to the Venetian Formenti in 1588.

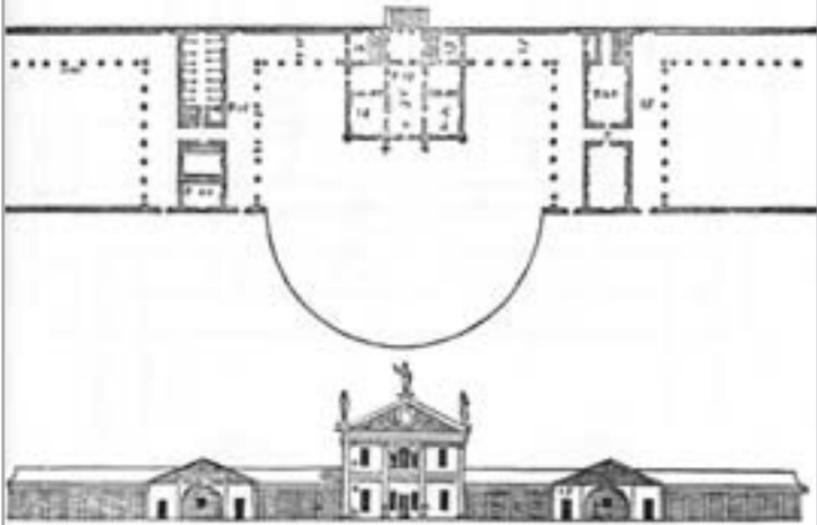
At that time the former Angarano residence still existed and appears in a map dated 1641, in which the two Palladian barchesse can be recognised; only the rectilinear sections defining the sides of the courtyard can be identified however in this document.

A new phase of development is referred to in the last will and testament of Maria Molin Gradenigo (1669), who had taken possession of the villa following various preceding transfers of the property by testament. During this more recent work, not otherwise defined or documented, the sections of the barchesse completing the L-shaped porticos were created; the main structure of the mansion was built in a position set back some way with respect to that shown in the original Palladian designs and the chapel was inserted at the end of the east portico.

These modifications appear in a map dated 1713 and thus construction activities had been concluded at that time. On account of his ongoing contact with the Gradenigo family in the capital, some historians believe that the work may have been completed by the Venetian architect Domenico Margutti.

The current owners of the Angarano estate are principally involved in agricultural activities and winegrowing.

LA SEGVENTE fabrica è del Conte Giacomo Angarano da lui fabricata nella fua Villa di Angarano nel Vicentino. Nei fianchi del Cortile vi fono Cantine, Granari, luoghi da fare i uini, luoghi da Gaftaldo: ftalle, colombara, e più oltre da una parte il cortile per le cofe di Villa , e dall'altra vn giardino: La cafa del padrone pofta nel mezo è nella parte di fotto in uolto, & in quella di fopra in folaro: i camerini cofi di fotto come di fopra fono amezati: corre appreffo quefta fabrica la Brenta fiume copiofo di buonifsimi pefci. E' questo luogo celebre per i preciofi uini, che ui fi fanno, e per li frutti che ui vengono, e molto più per la cortefia del padrone.



from the *Quattro libri dell'architettura* di Andrea Palladio, Venezia 1570

#### DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW FARM-VILLA CONCEPT

The drawings for Villa Angarano were produced after those for the Villa Thiene at Quinto, where the architect had begun to develop a new concept for his villas. At the latter site he envisaged the organisation, within a single architectural complex, of the diverse, interrelated functions of properties, however his ambitious plans in fact came to nothing and involved only a small part of the manorial residence. On the other hand, at Villa Angarano - despite the fact the residence was actually not constructed strictly in accordance with Palladio's drawings - the concept of a rural home as a complex architectural and productive unit, was convincingly proposed for the first time in terms of an ideal reproduction of the Roman villa. The idea was entirely accepted by the patron Giacomo Angarano, a learned member of the local nobility, in whom, on account of shared intellec-

tual interests, Palladio had found a kindred spirit. The latter even went so far as to dedicate the first two books of his treatise to this particular client. Palladio's concept is well exemplified by the barchesse, which were built according to his plans. The purpose of these wings or 'barns' was to provide space for storage and a variety of rural activities (animal pens, hay storage lofts, cellars), water-distribution points for irrigation and milling equipment. They are not separate farmyard buildings but dignified structures fully integrated in the architectural system as a whole. The plan of the villa, with the two porticos surrounding the manorial residence, which in the Palladian drawings appears to project outwards, was clearly inspired by the monumental Roman forum, which Palladio had carefully studied in 1545 and 1546-47, shortly before he started work on the Angarano project.

49 | Barchessa on the right-hand side



#### BUILDING TECHNIQUES

Referring only to the Palladian elements and structures, the columns of the barchesse are in brick covered with lime plaster. The frieze and cornice of the entablature are also in plastered brick, while the architrave below is in bare wood.

#### DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

The statues that decorate the manorial residence and the sculptures in the chapel are attributed to the 18th-century artisan Giacomo Cassetti and the school of Orazio Marinali.

50 | View of the villa







This itinerary starts within the municipal area of Vicenza at the most famous of all of Palladio's villas, **Villa Almerico Capra** (1566), more frequently referred to as the Rotonda. The building is situated at the top of a gently sloping portion of land, perfectly visible from the provincial road that leads out of Vicenza towards the Riviera Berica. On the other side of the Rotonda, the Valletta del Silenzio is a particularly charming area.



Leaving this site and travelling out along the provincial road, on the right-hand side one will notice an extensive range of hills, where local quarries provide the various types of stone [pietra di Vicenza] that Palladio often used for the bases and capitals of columns and mouldings. The road later veers in quite close to the slopes of the Euganean hills, passing Agugliaro and, after the junction with the road leading into the centre of the village, carried on towards **Villa Saraceno** (1548), situated in the midst of some flat countryside at Finale.



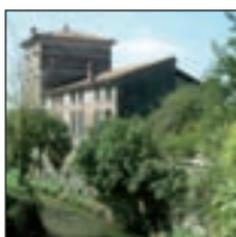
The third place of interest of this second itinerary is **Villa Poiana** (1546), currently owned by the Regional Institute for the Villas of the Veneto. This site can be reached by driving south to Noventa Vicentina and then on to Poiana Maggiore, where the mansion stands just a short distance from the centre of the village.



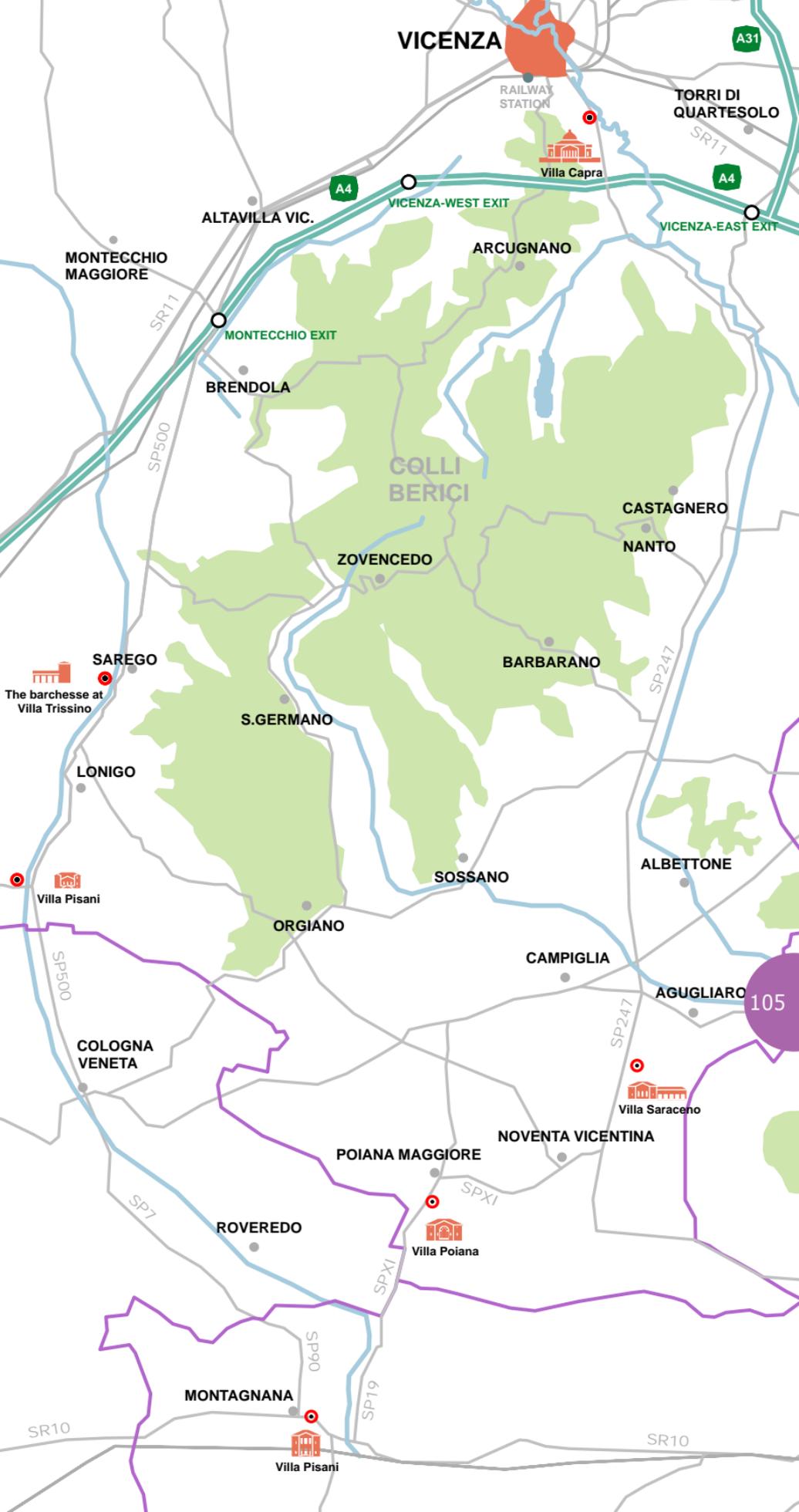
Continuing south, one will eventually reach the small city of Montagnana (in the province of Padua). **Villa Pisani** (1552), located just outside the old walls of the city, has the appearance of a city palazzo. Apart from its very impressive, tall and perfectly intact, mediaeval walls, the city also offers various other buildings worthy of note. Driving back from Montagnana towards Poiana Maggiore and then towards Lonigo and, finally, to the village of Bagnolo, after crossing the bridge over the Guà, visitors will find **Villa Pisani** (1542) situated close to the banks of the water course.



The **barchesse at Villa Trissino** (pre-1562) located at Meledo (after Lonigo and Sarego) are also worth visiting. These structures are the only part ever built of a grandiose complex that was to extend as far as the site of the nearby church.



The rather modest **Villa Arnaldi** at Meledo Alto is not included in the World Heritage List, however it bears visible signs of Palladian interventions, occurring in 1547, aimed at restructuring a pre-existing 15th-century structure, which the owner decided to interrupt prior to their completion. The three arches of the loggia designed by Palladio can be easily recognised.



VICENZA

TORRI DI  
QUARTESOLO

RAILWAY  
STATION  
Villa Capra

ALTAVILLA VIC.

VICENZA-WEST EXIT

VICENZA-EAST EXIT

MONTECCHIO  
MAGGIORE

ARCUGNANO

MONTECCHIO EXIT

BRENDOLA

COLLI  
BERICI

CASTAGNERO

ZOVENCEDO

NANTO

SAREGO

BARBARANO

The barchesse at  
Villa Trissino

S.GERMANO

LONIGO

SOSSANO

ALBETTONE

Villa Pisani

ORGIANO

CAMPIGLIA

AGUGLIARO

105

Villa Saraceno

COLOGNA  
VENETA

POIANA MAGGIORE

NOVENTA VICENTINA

ROVEREDO

Villa Poiana

MONTAGNANA

Villa Pisani

SR10

SR10



Recognized over the centuries as an icon of Palladian architecture, like the Basilica, the 'Rotonda' has become an emblem of the city of Vicenza. A suburban villa, which Palladio categorised in his treatise as a city palazzo, is situated along the Riviera Berica on a portion of slightly raised land not far from the nearby River Bacchiglione. Between the villa and the nearby wooded slopes of the Berici hills there is the charming *Valletta del Silenzio*. The design of the Rotonda presents a centralised plan organised around a main square structure, the vertices of which are aligned with the four cardinal points. The circular, central hall is covered by an external, low-profile cupola surmounted by a decorative lantern. On each of the four sides, the villa presents axially-positioned, outwardly-projecting, Ionic hexastyle pronai with open lateral arches and pediments graced by statues.

The pronai can be accessed by climbing the broad steps present on all four sides of the house flanked by solid parapet walls decorated with statues. The four entrances, also decorated with pediments, are flanked by tall, rectangular windows. The villa develops vertically through three levels: the ground floor housing the domestic service areas, the piano nobile at the level of the pronai and an attic. The latter section was originally formed by just one continuous space and was used as a granary; it was later partitioned however, as revealed on the outside by the presence of a string-course surrounding the building at the height of the entablatures of the pronai. The succession of levels is also highlighted by the windows beside the pronai, which are square on the ground floor and attic levels and rectangular with triangular pediments on brackets on the piano nobile.

Inside, one passes from the central hall to the pronai through four corridors, which separate the four angular areas at the vertices of the square base. Each corner area is composed of a large room and a smaller, lower chamber with a mezzanine above it. The staircases are contained in the four triangular

spaces connecting with the central hall. In the main salon, the narrow gallery landing above the cornice links the rooms of the upper floor.

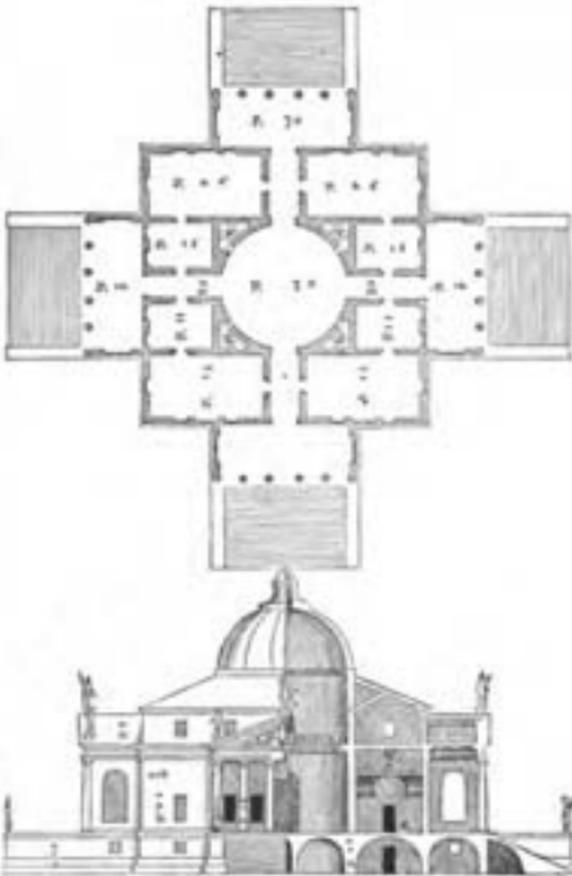
The patron of the villa was the Canon Paolo Almerico, a member a local patrician family, whose successful ecclesiastic career reached its climax at the courts of Popes Pius IV and Pius V. Almerico returned to Vicenza following the death of his close relatives. The commission for this mansion was awarded to Palladio around 1566. Scholars currently tend to agree with this date, supported by increasingly feasible documentary and historical evidence, while longstanding former opinion favoured a much earlier period (around 1551-52). The building was probably constructed between 1567 and 1569, when it has been ascertained the house was actually inhabited. By 1570, the statues at the sides of the stairways, which Palladio himself refers to in his *Quattro Libri*, had been completed by Lorenzo Rubini.

In the past, certain discrepancies between the work as we see it now and the drawings published in Palladio's treatise (including the profile of the dome, which is perfectly hemispherical in the published plans) led scholars to believe that the Palladian concept may have been modified by the architect Vincenzo Scamozzi, who stated that he intervened at the Rotonda after Palladio's death in 1580. Recent studies would however suggest that Scamozzi's intervention was not so extensive as previously thought, also on account of evidence established during a restoration, when, under the tiered roofing, a continuous profile was found similar to that which Palladio had studied in various Roman monuments, including the Pantheon. These elements may thus be attributed to him.

As in the Pantheon, the cupola originally had an open oculus at the top (without a lantern) as Inigo Jones noted in 1613.

The decoration and embellishment of the interior took place after 1569 and (in the period leading up to Paolo Almerico's death in 1589) included the

FRAMOLTI honorati Gentil'huomini Vicentini fi ritrova Monsignor Paolo Almerico huomo di Chiesa, e che fu referendario di due Sommi Pontefici Pio IIII, & V, & che per il fuo ualore meritò di effer fatto Cittadino Romano con tutta cafa fua. Quefto Gentil'huomo dopo l'hauer vagato molt'anni per defiderio di honore; finalmente morti tutti fuoi; uenne à repatriare, e per fuo diporto fi riduffe ad un fuo fuburbano in monte, lungi dalla Città meno di un quarto di miglio: oue ha fabricato fecondo l'inuentione, che fegue: la quale non mi è parfo mettere tra le fabriche di Villa per la uicinanza ch'ella ha con la Città, onde fi può dire che fia nella Città ifteffa. Il fito è de gli ameni, e diletteuoli che fi poffano ritrouare: perche è fopra un monticello di afcefa faciliffima, & è da vna parte bagnato dal Bacchiglione fiume nauigabile, e dall'altra è circondato da altri ameniffimi colli, che rendono l'afpetto di un molto grande Theatro, e fono tutti coltiuati, & abundanti di frutti eccellentiffimi, & di buoniffime viti: Onde perche gode da ogni parte di belliffime uifte, delle quali alcune fono terminate, alcune più lontane, & altre, che terminano con l'Orizonte; ui fono ftate fatte le loggie in tutte quattro le faccie: fotto il piano delle quali, e della Sala fono le ftanze per la commodità; & ufo della famiglia. La Sala è nel mezo, & è ritonda, e piglia il lume di fopra. I camerini fono amezati. Sopra le ftanze grandi, le quali hanno i uolti alti fecondo il primo modo, intorno la Sala ui è un luogo da paffeggiare di larghezza di quindici piedi, e mezo. Nell'eftremità de i piedeftili, che fanno poggio alle fcale delle loggie; ui fono ftatue di mano di Meffer Lorenzo Vicentino Scultore molto eccellente.



from the *Quattro libri dell'architettura* di Andrea Palladio, Venezia 1570



installation of ornate fireplaces and the addition of stucco decorations beneath the dome and on the ceilings of the main chambers. This work was carried out by Ottavio Ridolfi and probably also by Alessandro Vittoria. The sculptors Agostino Rubini, Roger Bascapé and Domenico Fontana, who were present at the villa in 1581, made their own contribution to this work. Other works supervised by Almerico included the frescoes in the east room (Anselmo Canera), the north room (Bernardino India), the four camerini (Heliodorus Forbicini) and the cupola (Alexander Maganza). After Almerico's death, his son sold the villa in 1591 to the brothers Odorico and Mario Capra, who completed various parts of the villa, carried out ordinary maintenance operations and performed work on the steps and

a small garden entrance on the Riviera Berica side (destroyed in World War II). It is supposed that, prior to transfer to the Capras, Scamozzi designed the long rural building beside the entrance avenue, which presents a series of arches on the opposite side, even though the inscription bears the name of Mario Capra and the date 1620. The Capra brothers continued to decorate the interior of the house, adding the frescoes of the south and west rooms (Alexander Maganza, 1599-1600), the statues on the pediments, the armorial bearings of the Capra family (Giambattista Albanese, 1599-1603) and the now dismantled garden fountain (Giambattista and Girolamo Albanese, 1629). Between 1645 and 1663 Girolamo Albanese created the family chapel situated opposite the present entrance to the villa,



which is now linked to the nearby Villa Valmarana ai Nani. At the very end of the 1600s and in the early 1700s, Louis Dorigny frescoed the lower part of the hall and the corridors which connect it to the pronai.

A series of construction projects were carried out in the early 1700s under the supervision of Francesco Muttoni, who partitioned the spaces of the attic, formerly uninterrupted and continuous (i.e. the *"luogo da passeggiare"* around

the cupola referred to in Palladio's treatise), and built the elliptical stone staircase in the place of the triangular one on the west side; the staircase on the south side was replaced between 1761 and 1779. The house was partially damaged during the Austrian siege of Vicenza during the 1848 uprising and again during the two World Wars. Very careful restoration work has been repeatedly carried out by the current owners in recent decades.

#### BUILDING TECHNIQUES

The main structure and the column shafts are in plastered brickwork, while stone was used for the bases and capitals of the columns, the external steps and the cornices and frames of the doors and windows. The horizontal elements of the ground floor are formed by massive low vaults, while the rooms of the piano nobile are covered with barrel vaults. The cupola over the central hall is closed externally by a stone ring, this being a reminder of the original point of termination with an open oculus. The original stairs are in wood; the elliptical-plan staircase on the west side, renewed in the 1700s, is in stone.

### A UNIQUE ARCHITECTURAL WORK

The Rotonda cannot be easily defined. The patron's desire was to have a mansion built in pleasant surroundings, close to the city and which would become his permanent place of residence; in the *Quattro Libri*, Palladio does in fact include the villa among his urban designs. With its perfect biaxial symmetry, based on pure and elementary geometrical forms (the square and circle), it can be considered neither a farm-villa nor a simple country retreat and not even as sumptuous suburban palace. The Rotonda has been defined as a sort of temple-villa: not merely on account of the presence in its design of architectural elements that have al-

ways been associated with religious buildings, such as the pronai, the stairways, columns, pediments (present in many other Palladian villas) and its central plan (the ideal form of temples during the Renaissance) and dome but, rather, insofar as it represents a materialization of an ideal of harmony and perfection which architects of the Renaissance had long attempted to achieve. It moreover appears to reflect an intellectual conception, stemming from humanist values, aimed at celebrating the high social and cultural status of the patron: not through the use of opulent ornaments or materials but by instilling new significance in forms

53 | *View from the road*





apt to convey a sense of spirituality in sacred precincts, recomposing them in a civil, secular context with the intention of ennobling the overall structure. In some respects, the completed work differs from the ideal perfection conveyed by the illustration of the villa published in the *Quattro Libri* (where, for example, its proportions are reduced to elementary harmonic relations and the dome is presented with a perfectly hemispherical form) but this should not lead us to believe that the construction is as a sort of reduction or a possibly empirical adaptation of the original concept dictated by specific circumstances. On the contrary, it reflects the author's

intention to emphasise the principles underlying the idea, conferring upon the design of the villa an abstract sense of purity illustrating these concepts more clearly and adequately.

Certain interventions were definitely determined by practical requirement and necessity, such as the creation of the arches beneath the stairways to provide access to the servants' quarters and workrooms on the ground floor, which disrupts the continuity of the lower section of the building. A desire to avoid compromising the coherent configuration of the planimetry moreover entails certain disadvantages in terms of distribution, which would not be acceptable



by modern standards, such as the positioning of closets in the four corner apartments on the lower floor.

But the Rotonda still conveys to the observer an impression of balance and harmony, which occurs, besides in the elegance and purity of its forms, also through a suggestive combination of natural scenery and architecture, which, throughout history, has been attained so successfully in very few large constructions.

The result is an admirable and extreme form of integration with the surrounding landscape and here the genius of Palladio attained one of its highest peaks of achievement. The architect was ne-

vertheless undoubtedly assisted by the natural beauty of the site and the cultural background of a patron who had lived for so many years in Rome and had known some of the greatest thinkers and artists of his age.

We may not ignore in any case the architect's skill in re-elaborating in an original way diverse aspects of classical architecture, which he had observed during his travels, not only in such edifices as the Temple of Romulus but especially in the great ancient sanctuaries so skilfully integrated into the surrounding landscape, such as those dedicated to *Fortuna Primigenia* at *Pa-lestrina* and to *Hercules* at *Tivoli*.

Outside the villa, on the walls beside the monumental stairways, one will immediately notice the sets of statues sculpted by Lorenzo Rubini that were already completed in the year 1570. Above the pediments, other statues by Giambattista Albanese were produced and installed between 1599 and 1603.

Other sculptures decorating the nearby rural outbuilding and in the garden are attributed to Orazio Marinali.

One enters the villa through the north-east loggia at the top of the internal path leading up from the external side road. As on the other three sides of the villa, the walls of the corridor leading in to the main salon from the pronaos were decorated in the Baroque period with frescoes by Louis Dorigny, while the elaborate stucco decorations above the doorways were produced by artisans from the Valsolda. At the centre of the flooring of the main salon, there is a stone grid decorated with a head of a faun – produced perhaps by Lorenzo Rubini – through which the rainwater falling from the oculus of the dome could flow into a cistern below. Across the circular walls, and in blatant contradiction with the articulation of the real internal space of the salon, the frescoes of the lower part of the hall, which were also produced by Dorigny and are as old as those in the lobbies, create an illusionary architectural partitioning, revealing eight gigantic representations of the gods of Olympus.

On the small pediments above the doorways leading in to the stairwells, there is a series of resting figures sculpted by Agostino Rubini during the first phase of the decorative work. The stucco decorations of the cupola - which Domenico Fontana and Ruggero Bascapé also worked on - were also made at the same time and gilded by 1591. The artists divided the dome into eight sectors; the four narrower partitions correspond with the corridors, where a stucco figure sits in front of a niche, while the other four partitions are wider and contain sumptuous relief cornices that frame the frescoes produced by Alexander Maganza depicting a variety of allegorical figures.

Other figures project outwards from the cornice at the base of the dome.

In the four major chambers, the magnificent marble fireplaces with hoods richly embellished with stucco decoration are the work of Ottaviano Ridolfi. These were made before 1583 with the probable intervention of Alessandro Vittoria.

Ridolfi also produced the stucco decorations appearing on the ceilings of the major chambers, which are closely coordinated with painted decorations made in the same period in the two rooms on the east and north sides.

In the centre of the first chamber, Anselmo Canera painted *Vice triumphs over Virtue* surrounded by four allegorical female figures; the stucco strip presents a bas-relief decoration on a yellow background, depicting a classical-style triumphal procession, and is framed by elegant grotesques on a black background.

In the north hall, attributed to Bernardino India, we find in the central fresco of the ceiling the figure of a woman in white with a snake that is biting its own tail (a symbol of eternity) surrounded by the three *Graces*, while the tondi contain representations of the *Arts*. *Vulcan* and *Minerva* are depicted in the two rectangular panels. The two other large rooms on the south and west sides were painted by Alexander Maganza between 1599 and 1600.

The first shows *Wisdom* represented by *Minerva*, who, surrounded by *Virtue*, attains *Fame* and *Fortune* by overcoming *Fate* and *Sin*; in the second chamber there is a gathering of pagan gods at the centre and, below, scenes of religious sacrifices and the figures of *Virgil*, *Aristotle* and the *Sibyl*.

The four camerini beside the major chambers are decorated with grotesques, added during the course of the first phase of decoration and attributed to Eliodoro Forbicini; these were probably modified in the eighteenth century.





## Via Finale, 8 - Agugliaro (VI)

Forming part of a rural complex including other service buildings, Villa Saraceno is situated at a rather isolated site in the countryside at Finale di Agugliaro, surrounded by a courtyard and an enclosure wall.

The manorial building, facing south and connected to the road by a long, straight avenue, is a rectangular block, presenting a three-level configuration with a lower ground-floor, the piano nobile and an attic, originally used as a granary.

On all fronts of the building there is a base section corresponding with the emerging part of the lower level, string-courses and the surrounding cornice with block trusses. The main façade is characterized by a rather simple configuration, in which the slightly protruding middle section presents a loggia with three arches and pillars and is crowned by a triangular pediment. In the two side portions, we find three windows: rectangular at the bottom, with a triangular pediment on the first floor, and square at the top.

The opposite, north elevation has a similar configuration but in the place of the loggia there is a doorway flanked by windows; these openings, together with those at the sides, are crowned by a rectilinear cornice ornamentation. A similar solution distinguishes the windows on the west side of the main floor, beneath which the apertures of the lower ground-floor level are missing.

One can access the T-shaped internal salon by passing through the loggia, which is open at the rear side. The entrance section is flanked by two service areas; the stairs are located in one of these on the right-hand side. From the main salon, one may also access the two side chambers, and from these the small adjacent rooms at the front.

A barchessa adjoins the main building on the east side with a portico, columns and architrave, followed by a further service outbuilding. To the east of the entrance avenue there are an old house, barn and other rural buildings that existed before the villa was built.

It is certain that Andrea Palladio, who

presented the house in his treatise, was the designer of the building. We also know that the patron was Biagio Saraceno, a member of an important family of Vicenza, who, from 1548, held important public posts in the city. However, there is doubt concerning the chronological sequence of the interventions, which in any case would have certainly occurred between 1546 and 1555, the interval between two successive taxation assessments. In the earlier assessment only the pre-existing 15th-century buildings were recorded, while the new building is included in the second report. Current studies tend to affirm that the design was produced around 1548 - when the social status of the patron was well consolidated - as a result of an analysis of the style adopted by the architect, which justifies a classification of the project amongst Palladio's works of the 1540s, characterized by rather sober linguistic elements and quite simple planimetry.

In the plans published by Palladio in his *Quattro Libri*, the villa appears to surround a large courtyard, to the sides of which there are two buildings with porticos, extending outwards from and then at right-angles to the central mansion.

In actual fact, Palladio produced only the mansion itself as a construction in its own right. The building is in fact perfectly defined from the architectural point of view also on the east side flanked by the barchessa, which was constructed in the following century.

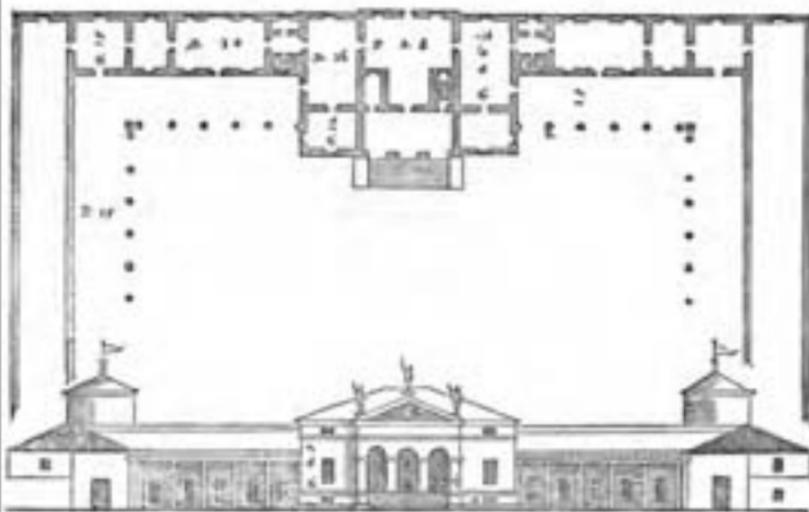
An early, thatched outbuilding was erected in 1604, linking the mansion to the older 15th-century buildings. This was then replaced in 1659 by a barchessa nobile with a portico and columns, configured in accordance with the Palladian design. The latter structure was damaged at the end of the 1700s by fire and rebuilt in its present form in the mid 1800s.

During the 17th century, the villa had moreover already undergone considerable alterations with a partial subdivision of the piano nobile on the east side into two levels, with the consequent opening of new apertures. Further

changes to the internal distribution of spaces occurred in the nineteenth century. The villa was carefully restored in the 1970s by the Landmark Trust, a Bri-

tish foundation, which had purchased the property. At this time, the original external configuration and the internal spatial layout were finally restored.

AD VN luogo del Vicentino detto il FINALE, è la fequente fabrica del Signor Biagio Sarraceno: il piano delle ftanze s'alza da terra cinque piedi: le ftanze maggiori fono lunghe vn quadro, e cinque ottai, & alte quanto larghe, e fono in folaro. Continua quefta altezza ancho nella Sala: i camerini apreffe la loggia fono in uolto: la altezza de' uolti al pari di quella delle ftanze: di fotto vi fono le Cantine, e di fopra il Granaro: il quale occupa tutto il corpo della cafa. Le cucine fono fuori di quella: ma però congiunte in modo che riefcono commode. Dall'vna, e l'altra parte ui fono i luoghi all'vfo di Villa neceffari.



from the *Quattro libri dell'architettura* di Andrea Palladio, Venezia 1570

#### BUILDING TECHNIQUES

The main structure is in plastered brickwork. Externally, stone was used only for the main windows of the façade, the main entrances and the corner pieces of the cornice. Stone was used internally for the doorways.

The cellar in the lower ground-floor level has a lowered vault, while a barrel vault is used for the loggia; originally, the smaller chambers also had vaults. The main rooms on the first floor have wooden ceilings.





#### DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

Frescoes were painted on the vault of the loggia of the villa and parts of the internal walls in the late 1500s and early 1600s by an unknown artist.

On the lunette above the entrance doorway, a painting of a man in armour probably depicts the patron himself. At a higher level, set within panels, there is a representation of *Wealth*, portrayed in the guise of a woman distributing coins, with two cherubs and other monochrome figures.

The main hall has a frieze that runs along the entire upper perimeter of the walls, with alternating scenes and figures. The owner of the mansion is depicted above the north door. The wooden ceiling of the hall is painted in tempera with figures set within oval medallions. The west room presents a similar frescoed frieze, which may have been painted by the Veronese artist Domenico Brusasorci, who had worked in other Palladian buildings and died in 1567.

On the ceiling there remain a few dim traces of decorations similar to those of the main hall. In the adjoining camerino, the frescoes were detached during the transformations occurring in the nineteenth century but traces of preparatory charcoal drawings remain on the lunettes above the windows.

In the old fifteenth-century building, traces were also found in recent restorations of a frieze with monochrome frescoes dating back to the early sixteenth century.



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This villa, one of the most greatly admired works of Palladio on account of its seemingly modern, original appearance, is located to the south of the village of Poiana Maggiore, very close to a set of much older mediaeval buildings known as the *Castello*, along the road leading to Montagnana. The complex consists of a main rectangular building, beside which, set back a short distance on the northern side, there is an adjoining square structure with two octagonal towers emerging on the north side. This second building is in turn connected to a long rural outbuilding, which, together with an orthogonally-positioned barchessa with a portico and a Tuscan order, creates a service courtyard, separated by means of a low wall from the open space in front of the main manorial residence.

The main façade of the villa, rising from a small base corresponding with the emerging part of the lower ground-level section, consists of a slightly projecting central section, where, on the piano nobile, there is a loggia, the apertures of which consist of windows on either side and a Serlian arch formed by simple square pillars in masonry surmounted by two semi-circular 'rings' containing five blind oculi. The middle section culminates in a pediment with an open base crowned with statues. The loggia can be accessed by climbing the stairway, which is as broad as the Serlian arch.

In the lateral partitions of the façade, at the same height, there are two other identical rectangular windows, embellished with simple upper cornices supported by brackets. Above the openings farthest from the Serlian arch there are two square windows that allow light to enter the attic. A similar layout appears at the rear of the building, where, however, only the central doorway of the Serlian-style archway is open (accessed from a semi-circular staircase); the lateral portions of the Serlian design contain two small windows. The oculi in the double-ring embellishment are open and the attic windows are repeated on the vertical axis at the central level of the elevation. The rectangular

windows on the first floor and the square windows of the attic are repeated at the side on three axes.

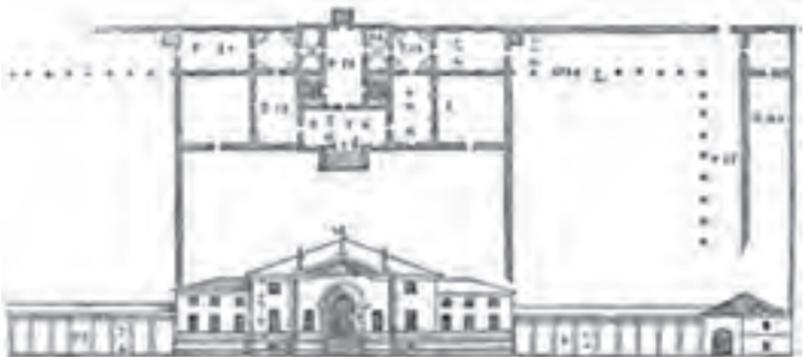
The small rectangular windows of the lower level appear along the base section, on all three sides, and are aligned with the windows above. The distribution of the interior develops around the large, full-height, transverse hall, which is accessed from the front loggia. At the side of this main hall there are the staircases and two small rooms which lead into two symmetrical apartments, formed, in succession, by a square chamber and a long rectangular room of equal width behind the loggia.

The paternity of the villa is certain as Palladio provides an illustration of it in the *Quattro Libri*, where he also indicates the name of the patron, Bonifacio Poiana, a member of a family that held feudal rights over the territory bearing their name, had served in various wars and was well known for its loyalty to the Republic.

Burns has established that the plans for the house would have been produced around 1546, considering that the drawings are a re-elaboration, with very few modifications, of a design made in 1544-45 for a villa at Lanzé (not far from Lisiera and Quinto), which was not built. At that time, the property of Bonifacio Poiana still included only farmhouses, while in a taxation assessment of 1555 the new villa appeared as already constructed (the work may have begun around 1550) though not yet fully completed. Finally, in a subsequent record of 1563, the villa was described as decorated with frescoes. It may thus be assumed that the interior decoration occurred in the period 1555-60. This latter work was carried out by the sculptor Bartolomeo Ridolfi and the painters Battista Zelotti, Anselmo Canera and Bernardino India (the interventions of the last two being cited by Palladio in his treatise).

Recent studies have shown that as soon as the manorial residence was completed, construction work immediately began on the rural buildings of the complex to the left of the main house, respecting the Palladian design. It was

IN POGLIANA Villa del Vicentino è la fottopofta fabrica del Cauallier Pogliana: le fue ftanze fono ftate ornate di pitture, e ftucchi bellifsimi da Meffer Bernardino India, & Meffer Anfelmo Canera pittori Veronefi, e da Meffer Bartolomeo Ridolfi Scultore Veronefe: le ftanze grandi fono lunghe vn quadro, e due terzi, e fono in uolto: le quadre hanno le lunette ne gli angoli: fopra i camerini ui fono mezzati: la altezza della Sala è la metà più della larghezza, e uiene ad effere al pari dell' altezza della loggia: la fala è inuoltata à faccia, e la loggia à crociera: fopra tutti quefti luoghi è il Granaro, e fotto le Cantine, e la cucina: percioche il piano delle ftanze fi alza cinque piedi da terra: Da vn lato ha il cortile, e nella parte di dietro il Bruolo, & una Pefchiera, di modo che quefto gentil'huomo, come quello che è magnifico, e di nobilifsimo animo, non ha mancato di fare tutti quegli ornamenti, & tutte quelle commodità che fono pofsibili per rendere quefto fuo luogo bello, diletteuole, & commodo.



from the *Quattro libri dell'architettura* di Andrea Palladio, Venezia 1570

58 | View of the rear elevation facing the open countryside





not until 1615 that work started on the north barchessa and the enclosure wall under the supervision of Nicolò Poiana, the nephew of Bonifacio. Gerolamo Albanese sculpted the statues above the pediment and on the lateral walls of the stairway in 1648. The construction of the left wing of the villa in the first half of the eighteenth century was an initiative of Alessandro Poiana, who, on account of his great interest in architecture may

well have been its designer. A building added to the right of the villa at that time was subsequently demolished. Finally, the long building connecting the left wing of the house to the north barchessa was constructed in the 1800s. Purchased by the Regional Institute for the Villas of the Veneto in 1959, at various times the villa has undergone very careful conservation and restoration work.

#### BUILDING TECHNIQUES

Only the frames of the doorways in the loggia and in the interior are in stone. Terracotta brickwork was used in both the basic structures and also for the external openings. Recent restoration work has revealed that, externally, the original plaster presented graffito markings so as to simulate a smooth ashlar pattern. The vaulting of the piano nobile is complex and presents different heights across the various internal spaces. The central hall has a barrel vault, while the side rooms have cloister vaults. Both the loggia and the small chambers at the sides of the hall have cloister vaults and central cross-vaulting. The lower ground-floor level is also entirely covered with vaults.



*CLASSICAL CONCEPTS AND MODERN APPEAL*

In addition to the woodcut drawing in the architect's treatise, which differs somewhat from the work as we see it today, as occurs in many Palladian buildings, a number of preparatory autograph drawings for the villa have been collected (RIBA XVI, 4r v), from which we may deduce that Palladio intended to place two lower wings beside the main residence, at the sides of which two courtyards with a portico would have been created for general farm activities (on the left) and as a garden (on the right). In this way, a unified architectural complex was envisaged, facilitating the rational organization and control of the surrounding land and such an intent is generally reflected in the design of this manorial dwelling, which, together with the north barchessa, represents the only part of the Palladian project that was fully completed. A subtle attempt to achieve a 'dialogue' with the surrounding land and countryside can be also noted in an original

'open-and-yet-closed' effect presented in the two different versions of the Serliana arch on the main elevations. But it is above all the neat and 'clean' architectural configuration of the villa that attracts the attention of a modern observer, who is offered a variety of themes and a rich compositional result masterfully achieved by exclusive recourse to sober, linear architectural elements (the Serliana with pillars, windows with unadorned cornices) and simple geometrical forms (semicircular rings of the arches, the round oculi and the clear-cut rectangular apertures) particularly appealing to modern tastes. In the Villa Poiana, Palladio attains great heights of rationality and 'purity', driven by an extremely classical ideal, and in which he succeeds in interpreting - but recomposing in a highly original manner - formal motifs and cultural elements of ancient Roman and also contemporary architecture. These have been recognized by critics in the en-

trance portico of the Teatro di Marcello (Serliana with pillars), in certain Bramantesque designs such as the plans for St. Peter's Basilica or the nymphaeum at Genazzano (double arch with

oculi) and also in the architecture of thermal structures and, in particular, the Baths of Diocletian (broken pediment, different heights of interior spaces and the clever configuration of the vaults).

#### DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

On the outside, on the front of the barchessa facing north, a keystone bearing the coat of arms of the Poiana family is worthy of note; Nicolò Poiana had the stemma made in 1615 when work on the outbuilding was completed. At the front of the villa itself, one will immediately notice the 17th-century statues sculpted by Gerolamo Albanese on the lateral walls of the external stairways and above the pediment.

On entering the loggia, there are frescoes attributed to Battista Zelotti: an allegory of Fortune is depicted in the central octagon, and *Time* and *Fame* appear in the two lateral oval partitions. These representations form part of a weave of false stucco cornices flanked by a fine, decorative band of flowers. In the lunette of the entrance portal we find the Poiana armorial bearings set amongst trophies, which created a background behind a bust (now removed) of the patron produced by Bartolomeo Ridolfi and placed on the upper cornice of the doorway. It is believed that Zelotti also created the three scenes painted on the vault of the hall, the isolation of which seems to suggest an interruption of the interior decoration work, which resulted in the entire left wing of the villa remaining quite bare. In the central oval partition, there is a *Council of the Gods*, while the other areas contain *Bacchus* and *Ceres* and *Mercury* and *the Spring*. The small chamber on the right is frescoed entirely with grotesques by Bernardino India, while archaeological landscapes are painted in the lunettes. In the corner room on the right, the vault presents a partition with *Diana* and *Apollo*, probably by a student of Bernardino India. However, the paintings which are possibly the most effective and convey the greatest sense of unity are those in the large right-hand hall of the villa, frescoed by Bernardino India with a probable contribution by Anselmo Canera, relating to the military interests and feats of the Poiana family. An architectural partition is simulated on the walls with Ionic columns, framing false niches with bronze-coloured statues of Roman generals and open spaces, where scenes of sacrificial rituals are portrayed. The false architectural framework appears to support Ridolfi's stucco work with grotesque motifs that decorate the vault, and framing episodes of Roman history and, at the centre, there appears another *Council of the Gods*.





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The Villa Pisani at Montagnana has the appearance of an urban palace, two sides of which face the surrounding public roads. The mansion is located just outside one of the gates of the city at the junction between the road leading out from the Porta Padova and the ring road surrounding the entire perimeter of the city. The building has a square plan, two floors and a usable attic. At the rear of the building there is a garden bordered on the west side by an enclosure wall, beyond which flows a small canal called the Fiumicello. The two opposite elevations of the villa develop around a central section, distinguished by superimposed double orders (Doric above, Ionic below) with a broader central intercolumniation and crowned by a pediment with a cornice presenting a dentil decoration.

In the façade, the two superimposed orders are formed by semi-columns set against the wall, in the intercolumniations of which, on the ground floor, there is a portal at the centre and, at the sides, windows surmounted by lunettes, while on the main floor there are three doors protected by balconies, topped by rectangular windows vertically quite distant from each other. The first order is concluded by a Doric frieze with triglyphs and bucrania on all four sides of the building, serving as a string-course. The entablature of the second order appears only in the central portion (also on the rear elevation), and on the frieze bears the inscription *Franciscus Pisanus Io[annis] Filius F[ecit]*. The tympanum bears a shield with the stemma of the Pisani: a 'lion rampant' between two winged figures. In each of the two side areas, there is a simple rectangular window on each floor and, at the height of the Ionic frieze, there are the horizontal apertures that illuminate the attic. The three superimposed apertures appear again in four other axes at the sides of the villa.

On the rear elevation, the two superimposed orders, formed by free columns, create two deep loggias, the interior walls of which have portals with cornices supported by brackets. In the lateral

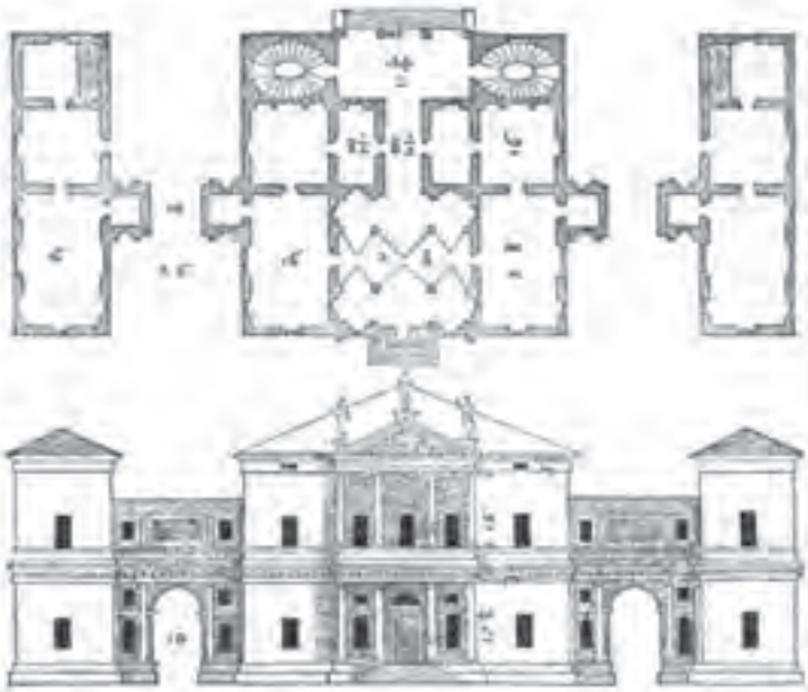
partitions there are, on the two levels, simple horizontal windows set, vertically, at quite some distance one from the other and similar to those at the higher level. On the ground floor, the interior space centres on a splendid atrium with four columns, eight semi-columns set against the walls; this chamber is flanked by rooms that would be used for official meetings and entertainment, is followed by smaller rooms and communicates with the loggia. Access to the piano nobile, the private residential quarters of the house, is provided by two elliptical-plan staircases, installed symmetrically on the two sides of the loggia. The villa was commissioned in 1552 by the Venetian Francesco Pisani, *Procuratore di San Marco* and a Senator of the Republic. This piece of land was the most recent acquisition at Montagnana on the part of Francesco; his father Giovanni Pisani had also already purchased land and houses in the city. The work, built using parts of pre-existing structures, was already in an advanced stage of construction at the end of 1553, when it is recorded that notarial deeds were drawn up in the atrium. It was completed in 1555, the year when Alessandro Vittoria, referred to by Palladio in his treatise, also produced the sculpted decorations.

No autograph drawings of the villa have been found but Palladio published this work in the *Quattro Libri*, where his illustration shows a building flanked by two wings adjoining the main structure by means of arches of triumph. These extensions represent a development that would have been hypothesised only at a later date as the building as we see it is fully finished also at the sides. In a map of 1627, it can be seen that there is a series of rural buildings and a courtyard in front of the building on the other side of the road, besides the kitchen garden; this arrangement was gradually modified with urban development outside the city walls.

The villa was owned by the Pisani family until 1815 and was sold in 1856 to Giusto Antonio Placco, whose heirs still live here.

LA SEGVENTE fabrica è appreffo la porta di Montagnana Caftello del Padoano, e fu edificata dal Magnifico Signor Francefco Pifani: il quale paffato à miglior uita non ha potuta finire. Le ftanze maggiori fono lunghe un quadro e tre quarti: i uolti fono à fchiffo, alti fecondo il fecondo modo delle altezze de' uolti: le mediocri fono quadre, & inuoltate à cadino: I camerini, e l'andito fono di uguale larghezza: i uolti fono alti due quadri: La entrata ha quattro colonne, il quinto più fottili di quelle di fuori: lequali foftentano il pauimento della Sala, e fanno l'altezza del uolto bella, e fecura. Ne i quattro nicchi, che ui fi ueggono fono ftati fcolpiti i quattro tempi dell'anno da Meffer Aleffandro Vittoria Scultore eccellente: il primo ordine delle colonne è Dorico, il fecondo Ionico.

Le ftanze di fopra fono in folaro: L'altezza della Sala giunge fin fotto il tetto. Ha quefta fabrica due frade da i fianchi, doue fono due porte, fopra le quali ui fono anditi, che conducono in cucina, e luoghi per feruitori.



from the *Quattro libri dell'architettura di Andrea Palladio, Venezia 1570*

#### BUILDING TECHNIQUES

The main structure is in brickwork but stone was used externally for the columns, capitals and window frames and also for the columns and semi-columns of the atrium. The entablature of the external fronts are in wood covered in plaster.

The horizontal elements on the ground floor include the cross-vaults of the central salon, the cloister vaults of the two main rooms, a calotte vault with rounded corners in the two small square chambers at the back and barrel vaults in the service areas and servants' quarters at the sides of the corridor.

All of the spaces on the first level have flat ceilings with exposed beams.



#### A VILLA OR AN URBAN PALACE?

Villa Pisani, which stands beside the road that leads out of the city, very close to the mediaeval walls and yet at the same time close to the estate which the family had been acquiring for many decades around the city, represents a particular type of architectural concept amongst the series of villas developed by Palladio. It is functionally conceived as a suburban residence for the management of the activities of an agricultural estate (including nearby mills, driven by the water of the stream flowing under the building) but designed with the elegance and decorum of a stately city dwelling. The urban character of the building can be seen above all in its vertical development, which includes two superimposed levels of equal functional dignity: one having a 'public' purpose (entertainment and official business) and the other having a more private, residential character, but both destined to accommodate the activities of the owner. Nevertheless, typically, in rural villas the owner would reside exclusively on the piano nobile and the other levels - less ornate and less important, also in spatial terms - would be

used for service areas and granaries. A further aspect accentuating the particular role of this building is the presence on the ground floor of the atrium with its four columns; here we find a very distinctive space with an exceptional architectonic effect, enhanced by the soft chiaroscuro decorations of the vaults and by the plastic effect of the semi-columns of its perimeter and the niches with statues. As can be seen also in several old documents, the main salon was used for official business meetings and signing contracts, the drawing up of notarial deeds and discussions with tenants; this was the 'central office' of a country estate but it was also the place where various urban activities and functions were performed. The solution builds on other Palladian experiences in the design of urban architecture (especially at Palazzo Porto in Vicenza), where the atrium however maintains its role as a monumental entrance to the palace, and not also that of providing space for official entertainment or receptions. The two variants of the theme of supe-

imposed orders adopted on the two opposing elevations of the villa further emphasize the twin functions of the building. On the side of the road, we note the dignity and austere decoration of an urban palazzo, while at the rear, we find a garden and the very pleasant

atmosphere created by the double loggia, which proposes in a rather more intimate way - ensuring a direct and immediate link with the park - a solution similar to that which the architect had very recently applied in his designs for the Palazzo Chiericati in Vicenza.

#### DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

The statues of the Seasons created by Victoria Alexander in 1555 are presented in wall niches in the atrium.

63 | *View of the garden*



64 | Detail of the façade seen from the road





The Villa Pisani at Lonigo is located close to the west bank of the Guà watercourse, on the opposite side of the stream with respect to the village of Bagnolo. The building is a compact unit with two storeys and a lower ground-floor level emphasised by rusticated ashlar elements and rough-hewn window frames. In the vertical sense, the villa is distinguished by the simple, square structure of the adjoining west portion towards the stream and a thick front elevation, formed by a central loggia with three arches crowned by a triangular pediment enclosed between two corner towers slightly higher than the rest of the building.

At the front of the villa, the bi-apsidal loggia - access to which is gained by climbing the semi-circular stairway and passing through a central arch - is articulated by means of a rusticated Doric order, with single pilasters at the centre and twin-pattern pilasters at the outer sides, supporting an entablature with smooth metopes and triglyphs. The tympanum above contains the armorial bearings of the Pisani family. The corner elevations of the towers contain two aligned rectangular windows, with slightly protruding decorative cornices on the piano nobile and a recessed section beneath the sills on the upper level. At its centre, and on the piano nobile, the west elevation presents a rectangular doorway, accessible from a recently enlarged set of steps and closely flanked by two rectangular windows with cornices; the identical apertures appearing on either side are perfectly aligned with those beneath the eaves (with the cornices presenting a vertically slightly offset design).

On the higher level, the central group of apertures is surmounted by a large "thermal window" that illuminates the central hall. The side elevations of the structure reproduce, in three axes, the same superimposition of apertures present to the side of the west front. The interior of the building develops around the large, T-shaped hall adjacent to the loggia, the longitudinal arm of which faces west, flanked by large rectangu-

lar rooms that communicate with other rooms and two square rooms situated at the sides of the loggia. Behind the end walls of the transverse arm of the large salon, which also present thermal windows not open on the outside, there are the stairwells and service areas. On the north side, the external space to the west of the villa is bordered by a long rural building with three levels and by walls on the other two sides. Beyond the open space there is still a wing of an old portico, which encircled on three sides another internal farmyard area, presenting an imposing Doric colonnade. It is published in his treatise and we are thus certain that Andrea Palladio designed this building. The evolution of the plans is documented by four original autograph drawings held by the RIBA, in which the front facing the watercourse appears with an exedra with concave-convex stairs, surmounted by a thermal window similar to that produced on the side facing the courtyard. The plans also included the rural structures in a single courtyard with a portico inspired by elements surrounding Roman temples in the Lazio region, as in the *Templum Herculis Victoris* at Tivoli. The commission was conferred by the brothers Vittore, Marco and Daniele Pisani, members of the Venetian nobility and the sons of Giovanni Pisani, who in 1523 had purchased the Bagnolo property following confiscation of the estate from the Nogarola family, who had sided against the *Serenissima* during the war waged against the States that had joined the League of Cambrai.

The dating of the preparation of plans for the project and the beginning of construction work is set by scholars at around 1542. In a taxation declaration referring to the year 1544, the new building was recorded as having been recently completed. According to various studies carried out during recent restorations, the east side of the villa was completed during a subsequent phase, concluded by 1562, when the villa appears in a map with the final solution of the loggia set between the two towers. Palladio therefore abandoned the idea



65 | *General view*

of the exedra, and in the final version proposed the concept of identical towers previously adopted in the design of Villa Cricoli, citing also certain concepts of Sanmicheli in the Doric ashlar of the loggia and introducing a suggestive association with Roman thermal baths in the grandiose design of the salon. The west side of the courtyard villa was also completed during this phase, with dovescotes at the ends - which had already been demolished in the 1700s - and the portico construction, which sur-

rounded on three sides the second rural courtyard (damaged by fire in 1806 and bombed in 1945), of which only one of the colonnades was recovered.

The long agricultural building was built in the nineteenth century. Again, in the 1800s, the villa underwent considerable internal alteration and, following the German occupation, was carefully restored. The original layout and internal spaces were recovered and the lower ground-floor level also became usable and returned to its former state.

#### BUILDING TECHNIQUES

The structure is in brickwork. The lower ground-floor level presents impressive lowered vaults in bare brickwork. The longitudinal arm of the hall is covered by barrel vaulting, which, at the intersection with the transverse arm, forms a cross vault. The loggia, on the east side, has a barrel vault with bowl-shaped vaulting at the apsidal end sections. The lower hall of the southern tower has a cloister vault and the corresponding space of the other tower was restored during the recent restoration work. The other rooms have ceilings with visible beams.

66 | *Façade towards the open countryside*



## DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

In the main salon on the piano nobile, the frescoes, which have been recently attributed to the Veronese painter Francesco Torbido and were therefore produced at the time the villa was built, enhance and blend harmoniously with the architectural space, articulated by pairs of pilasters at the corners. The painted decoration simulates the undersides of the arches of the 'sail' partitions that form the cross vaulting and emphasises the ribbing of the latter with decorative strips, framing intricate grotesques on a gold background that stem from angular masks and end with vases on scrolls. In the barrel vault of the longitudinal arm there are scenes from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, with Fall of Phaeton appearing in the central portion and other mythological figures and episodes at the sides.

The only other room decorated with frescoes, with a style dating to a later period with respect to those of the main hall, is the square room on the piano nobile in the south-east tower. On the cloister vault, against a background decorated with grotesques, there is a central scene and four others on each of the partitions. The walls are also decorated with frescoes depicting scenes from Boccaccio's *Decameron*.

In the rooms facing the west side there are 16th-century, stone fireplaces. In particular, the chamber on the northern side also contains an elegant stone wash basin, which might also be attributed to Palladio.

67 | Elevation on the side facing the Guà watercourse: detail of the loggia





The extant complex, situated beside the Guà watercourse, close to the centre of Meledo, consists of a 15th-century structure, visible from the entrance along the road, and two farm buildings, along the east and west boundaries of the property and connected on the south side by the remains of an enclosure wall with a rusticated doorway at the centre.

Despite various interventions and modifications, the building at the entrance of the complex, predating the 16th-century renovation, maintains various Gothic features on its outer front, such as the two trefoil windows on the piano nobile and the wooden eaves of the roof.

The rural building facing east, rising directly above the bank of the watercourse, reveals its heavy stone foundations just above the surface of the water. The structure consists of a barchessa with a portico, opening onto the farm complex with six Tuscan columns and an adjacent dovecote tower. On the south front, the latter has two large aligned windows, with the lower aperture decorated with a protruding cornice and the upper window presenting a small pediment, rather inappropriately intersected by a string-course. The scheme is repeated twice on the side by the river. The barchessa, along the same front, presents coupled axes of apertures on two levels. All of the apertures have forms very reminiscent of typical Palladian solutions.

The west barchessa also faces the internal space of the property with a portico of eight Tuscan columns similar to those of the opposite construction. In both buildings, the columns present at their base a torus above a cylindrical plinth, which is set on another broader, rough-hewn plinth. The two rural buildings are the only parts ever built of an ambitious project commissioned by the Vicentine noblemen Francesco and Ludovico Trissino and are the sole vestigial remains of intermittent phases of construction. Palladio illustrated the drawings for this complex in his *Quattro Libri*, where he declares that the villa was a work in progress. The complex

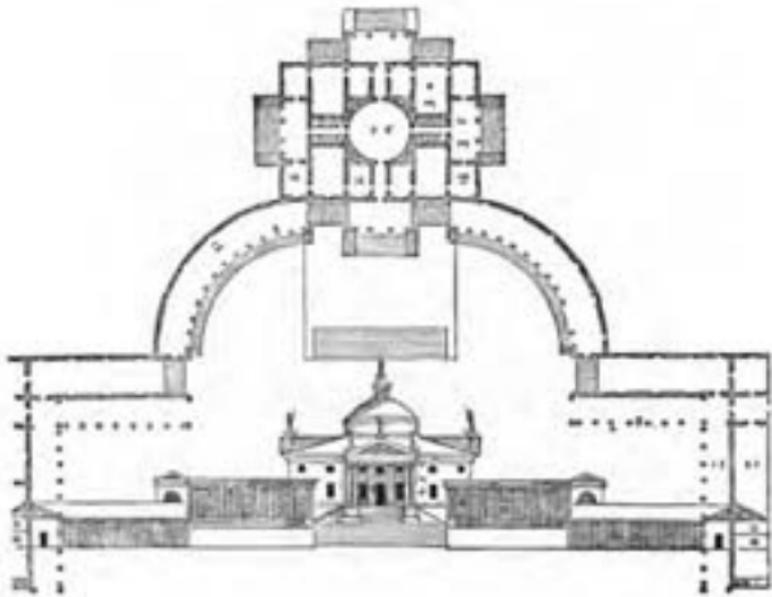
shown in the published engraving includes a manorial residence developing around a circular hall with four monumental pronai, and in which there is an evident reference to the Rotonda at Vicenza. The building was to have stood on the hill where the nearby church is situated and, with a configuration of successive levels, sloping southwards, would have been connected to two large semicircular porticos, which, in turn, would have been connected to similar rectilinear structures.

The whole complex, which would have had a monumental appearance and clearly stood out in the surrounding landscape, can be seen as inspired by certain religious complexes of ancient Rome, such as the sanctuary of *Fortuna Primigenia* at Palestrina, which Palladio had studied on his travels. Giovanni Trissino, one of Palladio's most important clients, gained possession of the property in 1531 together with a fifteenth-century building. It is not clear when Palladio's plans were prepared but this would have certainly occurred before 1562, considering the fact that one of the two patrons, Ludovico, died in that year. It should also be considered however that records reveal that a dovecote, a wall and a doorway were commissioned in 1553. In any case, the work that had been started was most likely terminated soon afterwards.

The well-made foundations along the river can be attributed to the Palladian plans and that particular phase of construction, while the awkward arrangement of the elevations of the dovecote suggests an execution on the part of ill-advised or incompetent local builders. The columns of the barchesse are also attributed to Palladio. Regardless of certain points of controversy, subsequent maps and surveys record the evolution of construction work on this estate.

It can be seen that in 1570 a dovecote and an annexed barchessa had already been built but surviving documents do not reveal their exact position. In 1599, there was a dovecot along the river, connected by a wall to another dovecot

LA SEGVENTE fabrica è ftata cominciata dal Conte Francefco,e Conte Lodouico fratelli de’Trifsini à Meledo Villa del Vicentino. Il fito è bellifsimo: percioche è fopra un colle,il quale è bagnato da vn piaceuole fiumicello,&è nel mezo di vna molto fpaciofa pianura, & à canto ha vna affai frequente ftrada. Nella fommità del colle ha da efferui la Sala ritonda, circondata dalle ftanze, e però tanto alta che pigli il lume fopra di quelle. Sono nella Sala alcune meze colonne, che tolgono fufo un poggiuolo, nel quale fi entra per le ftanze di fopra; le quali perche fono alte folo fette piedi; feruono per mezzati. Sotto il piano delle prime ftanze ui fono le cucine, i tinelli, & altri luoghi. E perche ciafcuna faccia ha bellifsime uifte; ui uanno quattro loggie di ordine Corinthio: fopra i frontefpicij delle quali forge la cupola della Sala. Le loggie,che tendono alla circonferenza fanno vn gratifsimo afpetto: più preffo al piano fono i fenili, le cantine,le ftalle,i granari,i luoghi da Gaftaldo,& altre ftanzr per vfo di Villa: le colonne di questi portici fono di ordine Tofcano:sopra il fiume ne gli angoli del cortile ui fono due colombare.



*from the Quattro libri dell'architettura di Andrea Palladio, Venezia 1570*

adjoining a barchessa. In 1644, beside the dovecot along the river, there were six free columns, which might represent remains of the interrupted Palladian works. Finally, in the 1700s, a

barchessa had been constructed along the river, while the dovecot at the end of the other barchessa disappeared, which corresponds with the situation as we see it today.

#### BUILDING TECHNIQUES

The columns of the two barchesse are in bare stone. The wall-facing of the dovecote presents alternating brickwork and stone elements, with large hewn blocks appearing at the corners.

The foundations of the tower and the barchessa along the river are produced with roughly-hewn rectangular stone blocks.

#### DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

Some ground floor rooms in the dovecote tower are decorated, which bears witness to adaptation and use of a part of the building as a manorial residence after the Palladian project was interrupted. The frescoes have been attributed to the 16th-century Veronese painter Eliodoro Forbicini.

In the first room, the cove vault is divided up by means of a cornice with a rosette decoration, presenting oval side partitions containing monochrome scenes and a central panel with winged putti; the remaining spaces are decorated with grotesques.

Grotesque figures also appear in the cross-vaults of the small adjacent chambers, where intricate decorative patterns reveal a dense array of figures, animals and flowers.

*68 | View of the barchessa from the garden*





Our third itinerary starts at Bertesina, a village located to the east of the city but still within the municipal area of Vicenza. **Villa Gazzotti** (1542), one of Palladio's earlier works, is located in front of a large open space at the centre of Bertesina, beside the church.



Passing through Torri di Quartesolo (State regional route n. 11, towards Padua), one will have to cross a heavy *stone bridge over the River Tesina* (not included in the List of World Heritage sites). The engineering project, attributed to Palladio, was planned around 1569 to restore an older unsafe structure and was actually implemented some eleven years later by Domenico Gropino. Palladian paternity is quite evident in the elegant aedicules set against the pillars, which appear to have been inspired by the bridge of Augustus at Rimini.



The second destination of the excursion is at Vancimuglio, just a short distance away, after crossing the bridge. To the left of the road (travelling out from Vicenza), there is a gateway leading in to **Villa Chiericati** (before 1554), where, for the first time, Palladio adopted a classical pronaos in his designs.



Visitors following this itinerary may also wish to briefly view the *barchessa for Villa Thiene* (not included in the World Heritage List) erected in 1556 at nearby Villafranca Padovana (close to Grisignano di Zocco). The structure, which will be found at a small locality called Cicogna, was the only part made of a grandiose villa planned for Francesco Thiene and his children.



The third place of interest is Quinto Vicentino, which can be reached by returning along route 11 and then passing through Lerino, Marola and Quintarello. The village is located just beyond a bridge over the Tesina, from where one can see the rear elevation of **Villa Thiene** (1542), which now houses the offices of the Municipality of Quinto Vicentino.

The fourth destination is **Villa Valmarana Zen** (1563) at Lisiera, close to Bolzano Vicentino; the villa is flanked by the chapel dedicated to San Carlo Borromeo, which is attributed to Vincenzo Scamozzi.

The itinerary ends at Vigardolo, which can be reached by crossing the 'Postumia' State route and passing through the centre of Bolzano Vicentino. **Villa Valmarana Bressan** (1542), the patrons of which belonged to a branch of the patrician family that commissioned Palladio for their villa and palace in Vicenza. From Vigardolo, one can easily return to Vicenza by passing through the centre of Monticello Conte Otto.





Villa Gazzotti Grimani is situated beside the church at Bertesina, facing south, beside a courtyard that separates it from the street. The building has a single raised level, which develops above a lower ground-floor level with barrel vaulting. The long main front is punctuated by eight composite pilasters, and centres around the three arches of the loggia, crowned by an entablature and classical triangular pediment. In the lateral intercolumniation, there are windows with triangular pediments and slightly protruding sills, alternating with the pedestals of the pilasters.

The other elevations of the building were not developed and have no architectural orders. The rear elevation facing the open countryside presents a central structure that defines the fourth arm of the central salon, which has a cross plan in the extant form, originally conceived with a T-shaped plan.

The planimetric layout of the villa develops around this hall, accessed from the rectangular front loggia. To the side of the initial arm of the hall there are the stairwells. The two large, almost square side rooms, both of which lead in to two other rooms, one square and the other rectangular, can also be accessed from the loggia. The lateral chambers complete the two apartments symmetrically arranged with respect to the central area. At a later date, the two larger side rooms underwent an inappropriate vertical division, traces of which can be noted on the side elevations.

The attribution to Palladio is now a unanimous opinion despite the absence of the villa in the *Quattro Libri*. Critics agree in their identification of the RIBA XVI 16a drawing as the plan for the villa or as a version of the same. The patron was the salt merchant Taddeo Gazzotti, who, in 1533, had purchased from Antenore Pagello (like Giangiorgio Trissino, an advocate of the development of a new style of architecture in Vicenza) this property at Bertesina, where there was a 14th-century tower, identified as corresponding to the side room located in the south-east side of the building next to the church, which Palladio skill-

fully integrated into the new construction. In a fiscal document referring to Gazzotti of 1542, the manorial residence is recorded as already present at the estate at Bertesina, which some of the most recent studies claim is a Palladian structure, assuming that construction work would have begun only a short time previously. Burns however believes the building was constructed in the period 1542-43. The gradual financial collapse of the patron's business caused an interruption of the works after 1545, and thus the building remained unfinished.

Despite the unfortunate events that affected construction work resulting from the owner's financial difficulties, Palladio succeeded in interpreting, on the figurative and architectural planes, the aspirations and desire of his client (not a member of the nobility but increasingly successful on the social level) to convert his gains from commercial activities into tangible assets that might produce further profit. With respect to previous experiences such as Villa Godi, the design of the villa reveals the influence of classical Roman architecture (his first journey to Rome occurred in 1541). Even more easily recognizable is the influence of Giulio Romano, present in Vicenza in 1542 for a consultancy relating to the Palazzo della Ragione and a figure instrumental in promoting the architectural activity of the Thiene family (whose villa is situated a short distance away); critics have moreover recognised this influence in the adoption of a full-height order in the loggia with a barrel vault and in the preference for a configuration in which the building is quite broad though not very deep.

In 1550, the villa passed to the *Procuratore di San Marco*, Girolamo Grimani, after Gazzotti's property was confiscated in 1549 by order of the Venetian authorities following a declaration of bankruptcy. The new owner himself may have been responsible for the unfortunate addition of the rear avant-corps, which modified the configuration of the main T-shaped hall conceived by Palladio and resulted in the extant

69 | Detail of a capital and the entablature



cross-plan and documented in the Bertotti Scamozzi plans produced at the end of the 18th century. In turn, various integrations and interventions were carried out in the villa, with evident consequences relating to the vertical articulation of the interior spaces. The partial restoration recently carried out allowed for the recovery of the original heights of a number of rooms and the corresponding vertical development of the apertures.

#### BUILDING TECHNIQUES

The main structure of the building is in plastered brickwork masonry, while the bases and capitals of the pilasters are in stone. Vaulted ceilings appear in the loggia, the square chambers and in the central hall, which also presents cross-vaulting at the point of intersection between the arms that compose the space it occupies.

70 | *View of the main elevation*





Villa Chiericati is situated in the village of Vancimuglio in the area of Grumolo delle Abbadesse. Beyond the brickwork gateway situated beside the main road that leads from Vicenza to Padua, a long, rectilinear path leads up to the villa. Formed by a parallelepipedon that rises above a tall base marked by a string course, the building presents at the front a high, Ionic, tetrastyle pronaos, which can be accessed from a central stairway. The distinctly protruding loggia has open arches at the sides and presents an entablature, above which the triangular pediment is crowned by statues. The continuation of the base and cornice beneath the eaves around the entire perimeter provides a sense of unity in the building. The central portion projects outwards slightly from the rear elevation and is characterised by an axially-positioned portal flanked by windows, in a manner analogous to the group of apertures that enhance the pronaos at the front. Through the main entrance, one can access a narrow hallway, flanked by two large rectangular rooms with barrel-vaulted ceilings, which opens onto a large central hall covered by a beamed ceiling.

The interior spaces are distributed on three levels: a basement level, a piano nobile providing the owner's living quarters and a loft used as a granary. The interesting structural solution clearly distinguishes the central room of the cellar area, covered by a particular cross-vault with lowered 'sail' partitions converging on a central cylindrical pillar. On the east side of the villa, there is a long adjoining structure, which is in part divided into two levels and in part opened up by arches with pillars, to which is attached a series of Tuscan semi-columns. The construction of the villa was initiated after 1554, at the behest of the Vicentine nobleman Giovanni Chiericati, the brother of the Girolamo Chiericati who had commissioned the palace bearing the same name in Vicenza. At that time, an assessment of Giovanni's property at Vancimuglio included a record referring to a previous building, identical to that found in a deed of 1546

stipulating a division of assets between the Chiericati brothers. In 1557, the construction site had definitely been opened, as is confirmed in the last will and testament of Giovanni Chiericati, who died the following year, in which he invited the heirs to carry on with the construction work at Vancimuglio. However in a declaration subsequent to an assessment of 1564, Lionello Chiericati described the house as a rural building and just two years previously a cadastral map of the site shows the presence of only two agricultural constructions. In 1574 the property was purchased by Ludovico Porto, thanks to whom the villa was completed by 1584. Since the 18th century, the hypothesis that Palladio was the designer of the building has been the subject of debate, and Bertotti Scamozzi also denied that it might have been so. Nowadays, most critics believe that Palladio designed the building on account of an analysis of two autograph planimetric studies dating back to 1547-48, which resemble the structure in question. In one of the drawings however, the main hall has a bi-apsidal structure and a cross-vault.

The designs were apparently delivered to Giovanni Chiericati by 1554, at a time when Palladio, who was still receiving payments for the town building commissioned by his brother Girolamo, had professional relations with the Chiericati family. The design mentioned would suggest a rather more ambitious plan, which is confirmed by the Diocletian window in the rear elevation, which became incongruous as work on the building continued, on account of the readjustment of the height of the main hall and the adoption of a flat ceiling in place of the cross-vaulting.

Indeed Palladio, had no part in the actual execution of the project, which most certainly occurred under the supervision of Domenico Gropino in the early phase of construction and probably also in the final decade of the works, following the transfer of the property to Ludovico Porto. The adjacent rural portico, dating back to 1768, was designed by Ottavio Bertotti Scamozzi.

## BUILDING TECHNIQUES

The structure is in brickwork masonry. Stone is used for the bases and capitals of the columns of the pronaos, the opening frames of the two main fronts and a part of the pediment and entablature.

The vaults and horizontal elements of the main floor are in wood, while the vaults of the lower ground-floor level are in masonry.

71 | *View of the façade*



72 | *View from the gateway*



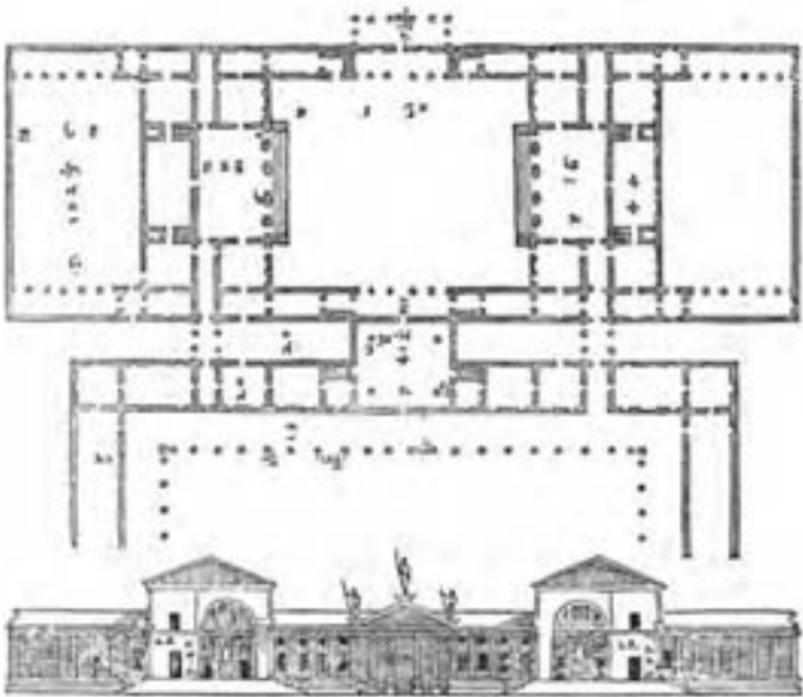


150

Now used as the main municipal building by the local government authorities of Quinto Vicentino, this is the only portion ever completed of a much larger architectural project that remained unfinished. It is a rectangular block with walls in brickwork masonry, articulated by a giant order of Doric pilasters, which on the northern front are coupled and include a niche at the centre. The order moreover separates the front elevation into three parts, all of which originally contained windows (the central part now contains the main entrance). In the first two partitions of the west side, there are windows similar to those of the facade, while the right side presents a large blind arch. In the rear elevation, facing south towards the countryside, the central part clearly stands out with its lowered-arch openings placed between pilasters and crowned by a pediment with a Diocletian window. The original part of the building, corresponding with the northern portion facing the square, is divided into a central hall flanked on both sides by a rectangular room and a square room. The patrons of the villa were the brothers Marcantonio and Adriano Thiene, the sons of Gian Galeazzo, who already owned property at Quinto. Scholars now agree that the plans of the intervention were produced around 1542, at the time when these two wealthy members of the local nobility were also engaged in the enterprise of building their monumental palace in Vicenza. The construction work, evidence of which appears in documents dated 1545 and 1546, had certainly begun in the previous years. The house remained unfinished, owing to the death of the two brothers and the shifting interests of Octavius, the son of Marcantonio, who began to place importance on other properties in the Emilia-Romagna region. Some critics, including Burns, would tend to attribute to Giulio Romano the initial design of the villa (and also that of the grand palace started in the city) because of obvious references to the Palazzo Te in Mantua, (e.g. the outer articulation with full-height Doric pilasters enclosing the

windows and variations of the motif on the various fronts, in which the solutions range from single elements to paired pilasters separated by niches). Giulio Romano had also been present in Vicenza in 1542 as a consultant for the loggias of the Palazzo della Ragione and there is proof of relations existing between the Thiene family and the Gonzagas of Mantua, who were important clients of Giulio Romano. Palladio's contribution was therefore limited - probably until the death in 1546 of the elder and more widely-established artist - to the role of superintendent of works. The Palladian intervention is proven by an autograph sketch (RIBA XIV-4) and by a drawing conserved at Worcester College in Oxford, in which a grand complex is illustrated. The latter was to have included two symmetrical wings at the sides of a central body, comprising a hall and a superb loggia, opening onto the rural settlement on the east side, long arms with porticos and two large rural courtyards, and also orchards and kitchen gardens surrounded by enclosure walls. The irregularities found in the drawing bear witness to a form of adaptation to the site and the inclusion of pre-existing structures in the transformation project. The completed parts of the ambitious plan were a part of the manorial residence, including the extant north wing and loggia (documented by a sketch made by Inigo Jones in 1614, showing it without a roof) and also the farm buildings to the right of the constructed wing indicated in maps of 1610 and 1639. The pre-existing house also remained, which, according to the assessment made by Francesco Muttoni in 1740, coincided with the south wing of the main structure. The villa was modified by Muttoni and also in the early nineteenth century. The pre-existing house and loggia were thus demolished and replaced on the south side by the present building (the thickness of the loggia can be verified on the west side of the villa, at the point corresponding with the walled-up arch). The present configuration of the rear north elevation dates back to this phase.

I DISEGNI, che feguono fono della fabrica del Conte Ottauo Thiene à Quinto fua Villa. Fù cominciata dalla felice memoria del Conte Marc'Antonio fuo padre, e dal Conte Adriano fuo Zio: il fito è molto bello per hauer da una parte la Tefina, e dall'altra vn ramo di detto fiume affai grande : Hà quefto palagio vna loggia dauanti la porta di ordine Dorico: per quefta fi paffa in vn'altra loggia, e di quella in vn cortile: il quale ha ne i fianchi due loggie: dall'vna, e l'altra tefta di quefte loggie fono gli appartamenti delle ftanze, delle quali alcune fono ftate ornate di pitture da Meffer Giouanni Indemio Vicentino huomo di bellifsimo ingegno. Rincontro all'entrata fi troua vna loggia fimile à quella dell'entrata, dalla quale fi entra in vn'Atrio di quattro colonne, e da quello nel cortile, il quale ha i portici di ordine Dorico, e ferue per l'vfo di Villa. Non ui è alcuna fcala principale corrifpondente à tutta la fabrica : percioche la parte di fopra non ha da feruire, fe non per faluarobba, e per luoghi da feruitori.



from the *Quattro libri dell'architettura* di Andrea Palladio, Venezia 1570

#### DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

The frescoes on the vaulted ceilings of the two left-hand rooms of the original portion of the structure have been preserved. In the small, rectangular, barrel-vaulted chamber, there are scenes of landscapes and rural life and other decorative motifs. Frescoes very definitely worthy of note are those covering the vault of the next square room, made in the years 1553-55 by Giovanni De Mio, a painter from of Schio, cited by Palladio in his treatise, also active in Lombardy and central Italy, and one of the more successful Mannerists of the Veneto. The central scene represents the myth of *Deucalion and Pyrrha*, while on the four sail partitions, separated by monochrome, candelabra motifs, there are various scenes of struggle and combat: *Hercules retrieving the girdle of Hippolyta*, *the Intervention of the Amazons in the Trojan War*, *the Rape of the Sabine Women* and *the Battle between the Centaurs and the Lapithae*.



73 | Elevation facing the countryside

#### THE CREATION OF A SELF-SUFFICIENT, WORKING ESTATE

The drawing of Villa Thiene that Palladio published in his treatise is a subsequent scholarly re-elaboration of the design, inspired by the concept of the country villas of antiquity. The aim of the review was to accentuate the ambitious nature of the architectural project, which, by means of a proposal of a vast and articulated, self-sufficient rural complex, constituted a response to the patrons' evident quest for prestige and distinction, in a manner analogous to that of their urban residence, which was made to occupy an entire block of the inner city. But the development of this goal involved the need to rationalize the distribution of the owners' quarters and those of the servants, also recognizing the essential role of the latter in the overall plan. Thus the

Villa Thiene project represents a fundamental point of arrival in the process of development of Palladian villas, however full awareness of the compositional possibilities resulting from an intelligent combination of the parts in a coherent architectural system had not yet been reached. The project moreover reflects a desire to structure and organise the surrounding areas of land starting from the hub of the villa itself. In this regard, Palladio himself refers in his treatise to "well-known" roads, "to be found at Cicogna, at the villa of Count Odoardo Thiene, and at Quinto, the villa of Count Ottavio of the same family, and which, having been ordered [by him], were later embellished and decorated thanks to the diligence and determination of these gentlemen."

#### BUILDING TECHNIQUES

The structure is formed by brickwork originally covered with plaster. The bases and capitals of the pilasters, the window sills and parts of the cornice and pediment are in stone. Other mouldings are in 'cotto'. The spaces on the ground floor of the extant original building are vaulted.

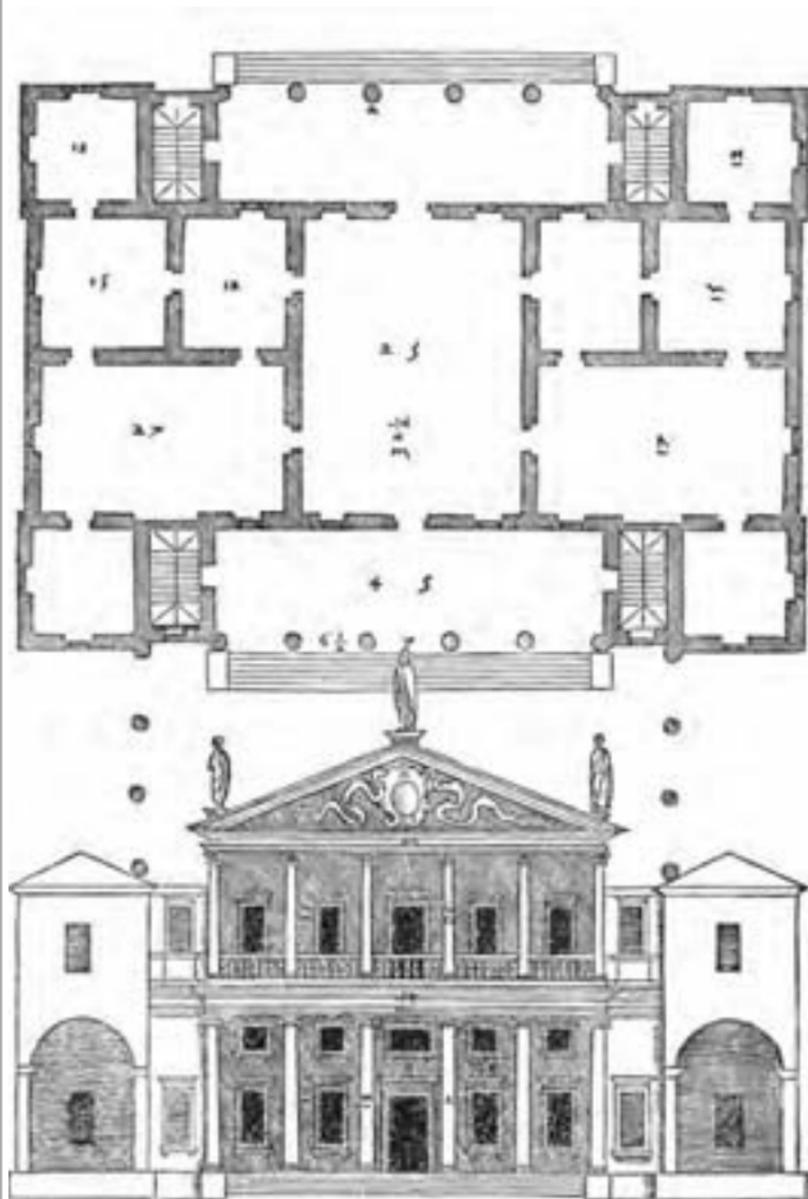


The villa is very close to the ancient *Via Postumia* at the edge of the village of Lisiera. The rectangular manorial residence proper is divided into two levels. The main façade has a large central area, comprising an Ionic portico on the ground floor and a low attic area above, with windows and balustrades, surmounted by a large pediment. At the sides there are two corner towers, joined to the central area by the roofing itself and by very short wall sections, set back slightly from the front elevation, and in which the stairwells are located. The front is crowned by five statues, three of which are set on the top of the pediment and two at the ends of the façade. The interior develops around a vast central hall, open on both sides by two doorways, embellished by architrave mouldings, that lead into side rooms. Two of these rooms, at the back, present further partitioning. There are square rooms in the side turrets. The rear courtyard is bordered by a long rural building set against the northwest corner of the villa and by 15th-century structures, consisting of a tower with crenellation and two lateral barchesse with architraves, the pillars of which have capitals bearing the coat of arms of the Valmarana family. The oratorio dedicated to St. Carlo Borromeo stands in the south-east corner (towards the road) of the enormous garden, which contains various sculptures and a fish pond. The religious building has a square, central-plan configuration, with large niches on the diagonals of the interior and a circular dome set in an octagonal lantern, upon which there is a sundial. Palladio received the commission for the villa from Gianfrancesco Valmarana, at that time a prominent figure in Vicenza and the brother of Giovanni Alvise, who supported him when he was competing for the commission for the work on the Basilica. Alvise's widow was also to later commission him for her family's monumental city palace. For a long time, the Valmarana family had held vast estates at Lisiera, where they enjoyed certain feudal privileges. Exercising his rights of ownership,

Gianfrancesco also undertook to have a wooden bridge built over the River Tesina in 1563. It would appear that this work was part of a large-scale design involving the reorganization of the estate, including also the reconstruction of the family residence, that already existed close to the 15th-century buildings and the extant tower. It is most likely that Palladio's plans were produced in 1563. No autograph drawings have survived and so the only remaining source revealing Palladio's concepts is the treatise, where the plans of the villa present a façade articulated by a double order of logge with columns, surmounted by a well-proportioned pediment, and with rectangular towers. The configuration is repeated on the opposite, north side facing the rural courtyard. Critics have related this project with that of the Villa Cicogna at Villafranca Padua, also dated 1563, but the result was considered less successful on account of the excessive width of the colonnade with respect to the short wall sections with windows joining it to the corner towers and because of the planimetric layout, far removed from the customary rationality of Palladian designs. The outcome probably derives from the fact that the 15th-century elements represented a conditioning factor. It is moreover likely that the corner towers, reminiscent of those at the Villa Trissino in Vicenza (Cricoli) formed part of the earlier building.

Palladio's design was only partially completed owing to the sudden death of the patron in 1566. The parts missing are the rear loggia with the staircases and adjoining towers and, in the main façade, construction was limited to the lower order. It is difficult to determine when the final configuration of the building was determined. When Gianfrancesco died, the property passed to his nephew Leonardo (the son of Giovanni Alvise and patron of the Valmarana Chapel at Santa Corona), who, between 1579 and 1591, was restructuring his Lisiera estate, which however did not seem to include work on the manorial residence. The balustrades of the

A LISIERA luoco propinquo à Vicenza è la fegente fabrica edificata già dalla felice memoria del Signor Gio.Francesco Valmarana. Le loggie fono di ordine Ionico: le colonne hanno fotto una bafa quadra, che gira intorno à tutta la cafe: à quefta altezza è il piano delle loggie, e delle ftanze,le quali tutte fono in folaro: negli angoli della cafe ui sono quattro torri: le quali fono in uolto: la fala anco è inuoltata a falcia: Ha quefta fabrica due cortili, vno dauanti per ufo del padrone, e l'altro di dietro, oue fi trebbia il grano,& ha i coperti,ne' quali fono accomodati tutti i luoghi pertinenti all' ufo di Villa.



from the *Quattro libri dell'architettura* di Andrea Palladio, Venezia 1570



74 | | *View of the façade*

attic windows (but also the decorations of the pediment, which no longer exist) can moreover be ascribed to seventeenth-century tastes, thus the completion of the house may have occurred a few decades later. We have documentary evidence however relating to the construction of the chapel of St. Carlo,

built around 1613 by Elizabeth, Leonardo's wife, and recently attributed to Vincenzo Scamozzi by Burns. The building was bombed and seriously damaged at the end of World War II and in the 1970s underwent careful restoration; the armorial bearings were however not replaced on the tympanum.

#### BUILDING TECHNIQUES

The structure is in brickwork. The bases and capitals of the columns of the loggia are in stone, as are the frames of both the windows and doorways (including those inside the hall).

The two square rooms on either side of the stairs are covered with barrel vaults, while the main hall has a wooden-beam ceiling.

#### DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

The garden of the villa is adorned with various sculptures, produced between 1713 and 1715 by the sculptor Francesco Marinali the Younger and fellow artisans at his workshop, during the rearrangement of the external space in front of the building, when the fishpond was also installed.

The decorative elements in the main hall are also worthy of note and include 19th-century frescoes painted with a neo-classical style; the frescoes of the rectangular chamber on the right were also painted at that time.



158

This villa is situated just outside Vigardolo, in the municipal district of Monticello Conte Otto.

The square-plan house, at the sides of which, on the side facing the countryside, there are low, adjoining service buildings, has two levels (with a mezzanine above the slightly raised piano nobile), culminating with a broad, two-pitch roof, which determines the hut-like configuration of the two fronts.

The main facade, facing north, presents a broad, smooth wall with a low base and a very slightly recessed central portion, in which, on the ground floor, at the top of a few steps, there is a Serlian archway with Tuscan columns on a classical Attic base supporting trabeation, without a frieze but with guttae appearing beneath the cornice and two circular oculi aligned with the side rooms.

On each of the two sides there is a rectangular window with a triangular pediment, while aligned with the three apertures on the ground floor, on the mezzanine level, there are three small framed windows and, close to the summit of the roof, another circular oculus.

The rear facade, which has undergone various alterations, has a small rusticated, arched doorway in the axial position and, on both levels, four rectangular windows and, on the pediment, three small square windows not aligned with the apertures below.

The plan of the building develops from the succession, along the central axis linking the two elevations, of a large square atrium which one can enter by passing through the Serlian arch, followed by a narrow entrance-hall (flanked by two interior rooms, including the staircase), leading to the rectangular hall, open at the rear.

Along the two sides of the square building, there is a symmetrical sequence of three communicating rooms of equal width (short and rectangular; square; long and rectangular). The first two of these chambers open onto the atrium and the last one communicates with the rear hall.

Attribution of the villa to Palladio, the

subject of considerable debate on the part of historians, is now well established and supported by documentary evidence (RIBA, XVII, 2r), which shows the plans for the villa, the construction of which remains largely faithful to the original in its overall articulation but with a few differences in the layout of the front elevation.

The patron was Giuseppe di Bernardino Valmarana, a member of a branch of the noble Vicentine family that commissioned Andrea Palladio for their city palace and the villa at Lisiera, however it is unclear whether the initiative was shared by his cousin Antonio Valmarana, who in 1560 declared to the tax authorities that he owned half of the villa.

The sense gathered from extant documentary evidence and cartographic materials referring to both the villa and the patron, previously misunderstood on account of a certain ambiguity, was recently reviewed, leading to a new opinion concerning the date when construction started, which is now set at 1542-43 instead of 1541, and thus after Palladio's first journey to Rome.

The recently proposed dating is based on stylistic similarities between the rusticated windows with semicircular pediments shown in the plans, later simplified during construction, and those of the Palazzo Thiene in Vicenza, begun in 1542.

An analysis of the layout of the villa also supports the hypothesis of the genesis of the concept of this building after Palladio's stay in Rome. It is in fact a re-elaboration of the local tradition (the planimetry closely adheres to that adopted for the Villa Trissino at Cricoli), reviewed in the light of the experience of grandiose architectural spaces such as the Roman baths, which the cross-vaulting of the square atrium, abandoned for a flat ceiling owing to the addition of the mezzanine, would have certainly evoked more effectively.

The frescoes, most of which were probably already painted in the sixteenth century, were extended in the 1700s. The villa was restored in the 1980s.

## BUILDING TECHNIQUES

The building is constructed with plastered brickwork. Stone was used for the Serlian arch and also for the frames of the windows and doors, also on the inside.

The main interior spaces, including the entrance hall, are covered with ceilings with visible wooden beams.

## DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

The frescoes of the atrium were painted in the 1700s and include monochrome paintings of the early emperors and female figures over the doors. The frescoes painted by Costantino Pasqualotto in the central hall on the south side (frieze with *Stories of Joseph*) and in the two rooms on either side were also produced in the 1700s.

On the east and north walls of the rear hall, parts of the 16th-century frescoes have come to light, which implies that the earliest decorations included mythological scenes, framed within trompe-l'oeil archways. The two medallions in the two rooms of the east apartment, representing the *Rape of Proserpina* and *The Presentation of Jesus at the Temple* were also painted at the end of the sixteenth century.





76 | Rear elevation



#### NEW CONCEPTS IN DESIGN

The planimetry of the Palladian villa at Vigardolo substantially adheres to that indicated in the plan shown in the RIBA document (XVII, 2r), with respect to which the only difference is that in the drawing the two side apartments can only be accessed from the rear hall and do not open onto the atrium as occurs in the actual building. The conceived solution is a re-elaboration of the functional arrangement envisaged for Giangiorgio Trissino's villa at Cricoli but implemented within a square form and, above all, organized on the basis of clear geometric relations between the spaces. In particular, well-defined proportional ratios regulate the depth of the three consecutive rooms of the two side apartments (12, 18, and 30 Vicentine feet, corresponding to the ratios 2:3:5). It appears evident that during this phase Palladio was intent on defining his individual method. He had not yet arrived at the more mature period of his career, however he offers convincing results and reveals a capacity to arrange the interiors of his buildings, based on a strict geometrical and mathematical control of the various parts and elements of each structure, which will be increasingly seen as the core of his method of design.



The fourth route is in the Province of Verona. On various occasions Palladio came into contact with the cultural and artistic environment of Verona, and there can be little doubt that to a large extent his 'rediscovery' of classical Roman architecture was due to his connection with this city and its ancient monuments.

The most important Palladian monument in this province is undoubtedly **Villa Sarego** at Santa Sofia di Pedemonte in Valpolicella.

The villa can be reached from Verona by travelling along State Route 12. For visitors arriving from the motorway (A22), the suggested exit toll-gate is North Verona.

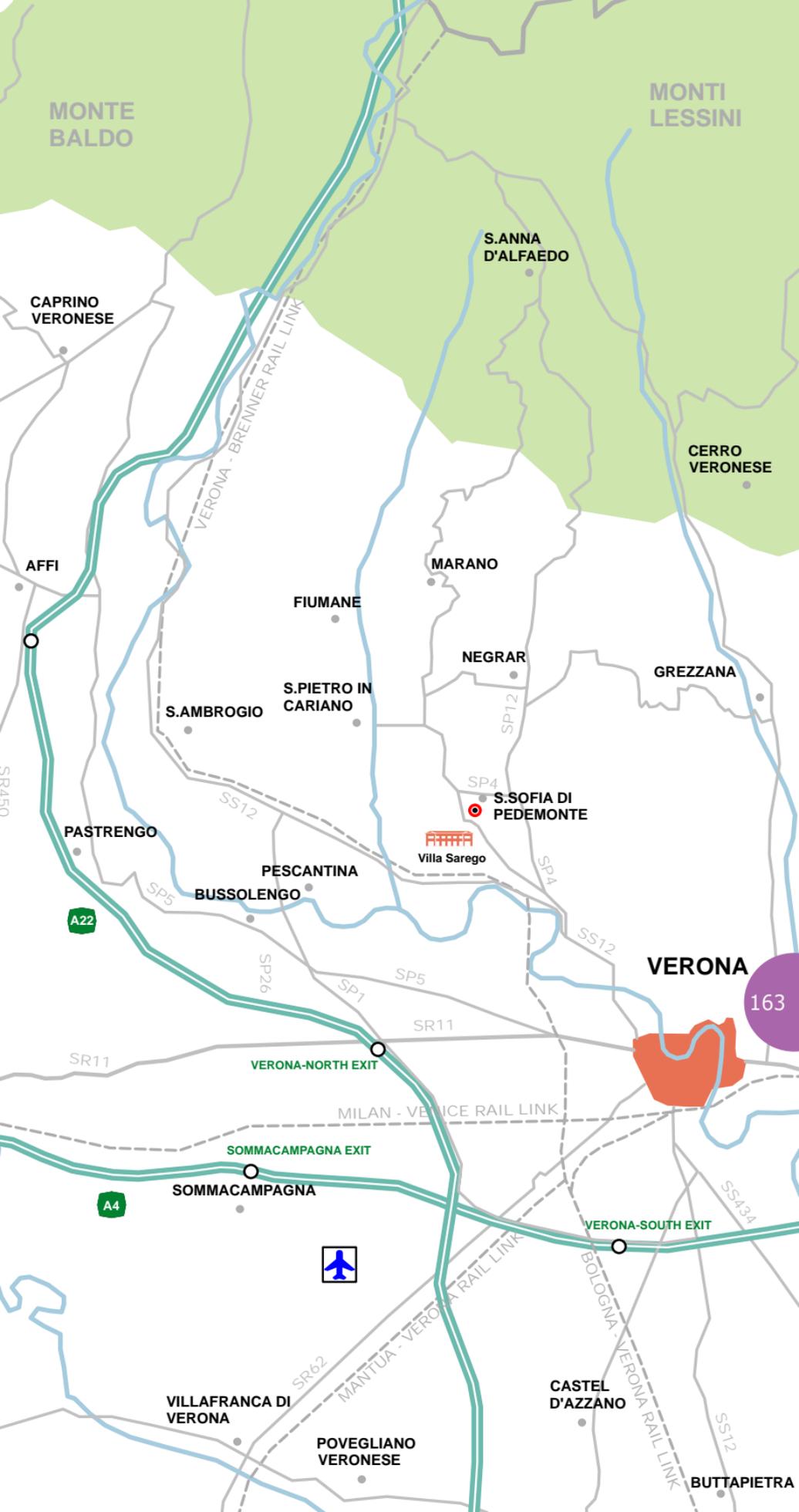
The only work designed by Palladio in the city of Verona is the *Palazzo Dalla Torre*, which was commissioned by Giovanni Battista Dalla Torre, a man with many scientific and cultural interests and a friend of various celebrities of his age.

The date of construction of the building is uncertain (probably around 1555), as is the true configuration of the structure, which was only partially completed.

During the Second World War, it was bombed and damaged; the only remaining elements are a majestic portal and the courtyard with columns and entablature.

These few extant elements nevertheless create the fascinating and mysterious effect of an ancient ruin.

Situated in the Vicolo Padovano, in the historic centre of the city, the villa can be seen from the outside only.



MONTE BALDO

MONTI LESSINI

CAPRINO VERONESE

S. ANNA D'ALFAEDO

CERRO VERONESE

AFFI

MARANO

FIUMANE

NEGRAR

GREZZANA

S. AMBROGIO

S. PIETRO IN CARIANO

S. SOFIA DI PEDEMONTE

PASTRENCO

Villa Sarego

BUSSOLENGO

PESCANTINA

VERONA

163

SR11

VERONA-NORTH EXIT

MILAN - VENICE RAIL LINK

SOMMACAMPAGNA EXIT

SOMMACAMPAGNA

A4



VERONA-SOUTH EXIT

VILLAFRANCA DI VERONA

POVEGLIANO VERONESE

CASTEL D'AZZANO

BUTTAPIETRA



Close to the village of Pedemonte, in the heart of the Valpolicella district, the villa stands on a gently sloping hill in a pleasant landscape, at the front of an extensive wooded park. The most important part of the complex consists of a U-shaped structure facing south towards the garden, representing that part of the Palladian designs that was actually built. Adjoining this structure, on the west side, is an L-shaped building, slightly higher in the section flanking the main building, which hides it from the sight of visitors entering from the small side road that connects with the nearby village.

The main entrance of the villa, to the south of the park, faces the countryside. The main body of the villa, opening onto the courtyard in front of it, with a double set of loggias, presents a giant order of rusticated Ionic columns, uniting the two storeys, and the trabeation of which supports the roof directly. The order is intersected in the middle by the gallery and balustrade of the upper loggia. Only the central arm of the building continues behind the two levels of the loggia with the rooms of the manorial residence. The west wing of the double loggia is linked to the first two floors of the building adjoining the main body, while the thickness of the east wing is restricted to the loggia, without any internal spaces behind them.

Andrea Palladio published the design in his *Quattro Libri*, where the building is presented with the full configuration envisaged in the project. This cannot be easily interpreted however, given the discrepancy between the plan and the upright representation. Thanks to the eighteenth-century testimony of Muttoni and Bertotti Scamozzi, we can determine that the portion of the project that was built corresponds with the left half of a rectangular courtyard, around which the residential spaces would have developed on three sides, while the fourth side, corresponding with the current east wing without interior spaces, would have formed a 'diaphragm', beyond which a semicircular garden was envisaged, having an exedra con-

formation, and closed by a colonnade. The internal courtyard would have been preceded by an initial U-shaped forecourt (with an orientation perpendicular to the constructed portion and facing the access road from the village), and the wings of which would have also been punctuated by a giant, rusticated Ionic order.

The patron of the villa was Marcantonio Sarego, a Veronese aristocrat married to Ginevra Alighieri, the last direct descendant of Dante Alighieri, and brother-in-law of Giambattista Dalla Torre, who commissioned from Palladio the urban palace in Via dei Borsari in Verona. He had purchased the Santa Sofia estate in 1552. The estate, which had been given to the Sarego family in the fourteenth century by the Scaligers, already had a manorial residence, with adjoining service buildings and a church, which were restored by Bruno-oro, Marcantonio's father around 1536. The interest expressed by the Sarego family in having ornamental fountains installed in the garden was documented in 1543 and Palladio refers to the fact with very positive comments in his treatise. For many years historians debated the topic of when the design may have been produced but more recently scholars have established that the drawings must have been made around 1565, the year when the construction work began to be recorded. Work on the building probably ended in 1569.

It is moreover likely that at that time materials were used from the interventions of thirty years earlier. After work on the villa was interrupted, it was never completed. Writing in the 1700s, Muttoni tell us that in front of the part that was built, there were the bases and column shafts that would have completed the courtyard and states that, amongst those produced, there were chambers only on the north side. In the mid 1800s, the Veronese architect Luigi Trezza had the west structure completed, which made it possible for the left wing of the part built in the 1500s to be inhabited. Moreover, perhaps also using the roughly-worked parts Muttoni had referred

A SANTA Sofia luogo vicino à Verona cinque miglia è la fequente fabrica del Signor Conte Marc'Antonio Sarego pofta in vn bellissimo fito,cioè fopra vn colle di afcefa facilifsima,che difcuopre parte della Città,& è tra due Vallette: tutti i colli intorno fono amenifsimi,e copiofi di buonifsime acque; onde quefta fabrica è ornata di giardini,& di fontane marauigliofe. Fù quefto luogo per la fua amenità le delicie de i Signori dalla Scala,e per alcuni ueftigij,che ui fi ueggono,fi comprende che ancho al tempo de'Romani fu tenuto da quegli antichi in non picciola ftima. La parte di quefta fabrica,che ferue all'vfo del padrone,& della famiglia, ha vn cortile: intorno al quale fono i portici; le colonne fono di ordine Ionico, fatte di pietre non polite,come pare che ricerchi la Villa,alla quale fi conuengono le cofe più tofto fchiette,e femplici,che delicate: uanno quefte colonne à tuor fufo la eftrema cornice,che fa gorna,oue piauono l'acque del coperto,6 hanno nella parte di dietro,cioè fotto i portici alcuni pilaftri,che tolgono fufo il pauimento delle loggie di fopra; cioè del fecondo folaro. In quefto fecondo folaro ui fono due fale, una rincontro all'altra: la grandezza delle quali è moftata nel difegno della pianta con le linee,che fi interfecano,e fono tirate da gli eftremi muri della fabrica alle colonne. A canto quefto cortile ui è quello per le cofe di Villa, dall'vna, e l'altra parte del quale ui fono i coperti per quelle commodità,che nelle Ville fi ricercano.



from the *Quattro libri dell'architettura* di Andrea Palladio, Venezia 1570

#### BUILDING TECHNIQUES

Unlike the solution usually adopted by Palladio in his buildings, the structures of which were formed mainly by brickwork (including the column shafts) and where for economic reasons the use of stone is restricted to just a few architecturally significant details, such as bases and capitals, in the case of Villa Sarego the columns are made entirely of stone, presenting a rough-hewn finish. However, in this case, availability of the nobler material was ensured by the possibility - on the part of the Sarego family - of easily acquiring it from several local stone quarries.

to, a finished appearance was given to the ends of the Palladian fragment, reorganising the entablature and balu-

strade and producing the outer columns now visible at the ends of the two wings of the buildings.

#### A VILLA AROUND A COURTYARD

The date now widely accepted by historians (around 1565) implies that the Palladian designs for Villa Sarego are one of the architect's last works within the villa category (the Rotonda in Vicenza was produced only a short time afterwards). Here, Palladio introduced a completely new approach with respect to his customary typological tendency, whereby he would normally focus on the volume of a main residential structure, to which, in a unified architectural system, the secondary and service buildings are then hierarchically related.

In the design for the Santa Sofia villa the focus of composition is not the solid volume of a building but rather the empty space of the courtyard with its double portico, of which only the extant part now visible was ever produced.

Palladio's envisaged solution for the architectonic articulation of the volume, or, the giant, rusticated Ionic order, would have also characterized the forecourt at the entrance of the building, in a sort of prelude to the power and material force of the colonnade that would have surrounded and enlivened the internal courtyard. Scholars identify a reference to this form of organization in the study of ancient Roman houses, which, in his treatise Palladio includes immediately after the pages dedicated to Villa Sa-

regio. In this case too, the architectonic system is structured around a large peristylum with a colonnade, which, from both the compositional and spatial point of view, actually represents the most significant part of the entire work.

An important precedent, occurring much earlier in Palladio's work, can be identified in the drawings for the Villa Thiene at Quinto; also in this case only a part of the structure was ever completed.

But the other particular aspect of this villa and the rusticated order, is a solution not frequently found in Palladio's works. In this choice, critics identify a clear reference to certain characteristics of Roman architecture in Verona, starting with the amphitheatre itself, which moreover also inspired other important contemporary works produced in Verona, such as the Porta Palio (Sanmichele), which may have also influenced the drawings for Santa Sofia.

Some experts would not exclude the possibility that Palladio was influenced by Bartolomeo Ammannati's work on the Palazzo Pitti in Florence, starting in 1561, with the creation of the rear courtyard enlivened by the superimposition of rusticated orders and opening on the fourth side towards the rear gardens: a solution analogous to that adopted by Andrea Palladio for the Villa Sarego.

#### 77 | *View of the Portico*





The fifth itinerary includes three villas, amongst the most important ever built by Palladio. The works were commissioned by influential members of the Venetian nobility.

On this route, visitors will cross a flat area of land in the heart of the Veneto, with a spread of settlements across a territory that is very pleasant in terms of its landscape and on account of a variety of agricultural activities. The area is bordered to the north by sloping pre-alpine countryside, which will be reached at Maser, the last stage of the proposed trip.

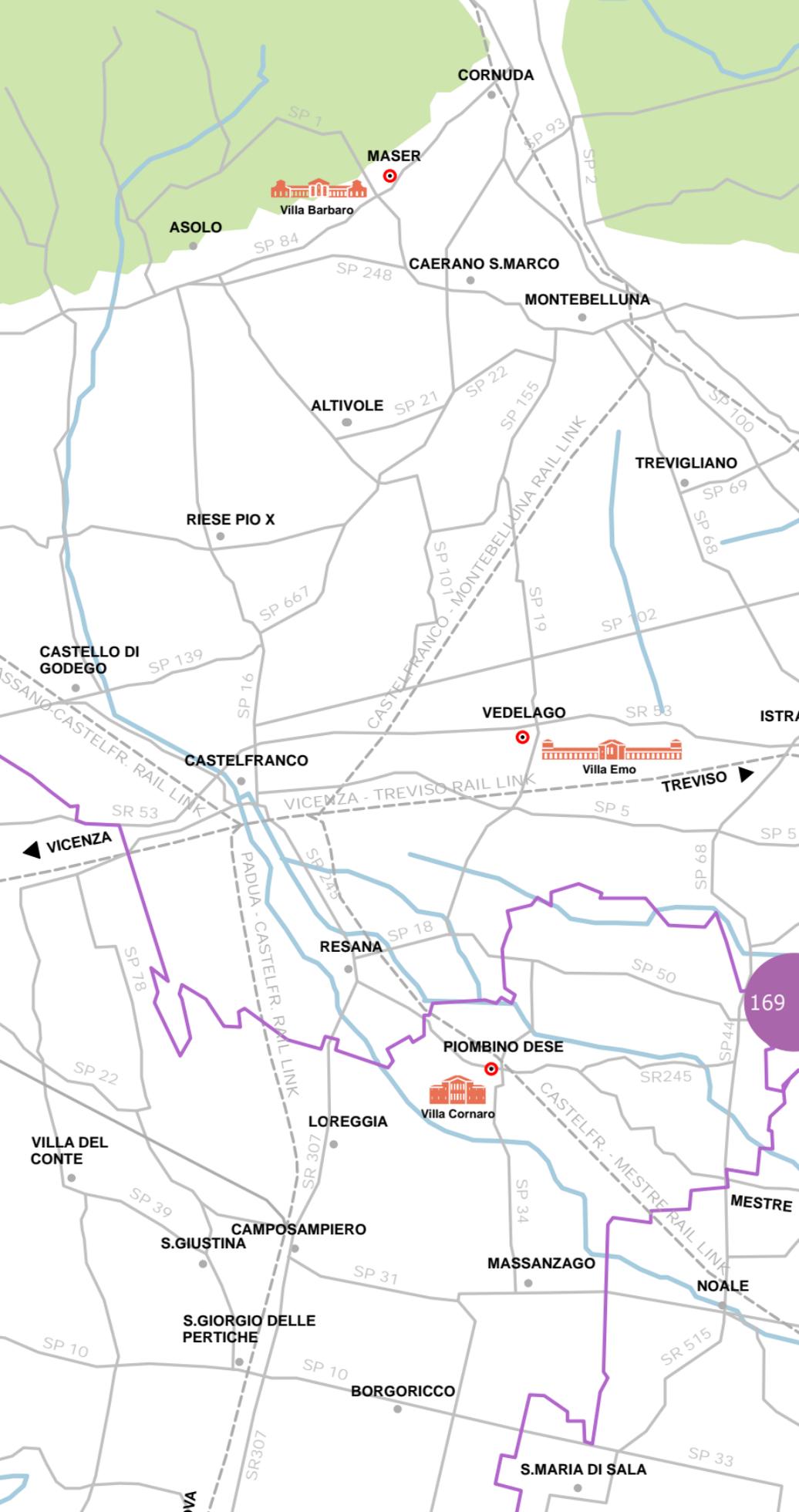
The first destination is Piombino Dese in the province of Padua. For visitors travelling from distant locations, the site can be reached by travelling north, in the direction of Castelfranco Veneto, after leaving the A4 motorway at the Padua-East toll-gate.

**Villa Cornaro** (1552), situated close to the centre of Piombino Dese, is a building that presents the appearance of a grand palace, overlooking gardens on both sides and a succession of perfectly aligned orchards and fields.

From Piombino Dese, the route continues northwards and, entering the province of Treviso, arrives at Veduggio, where, at the edge of the village of Fanzolo, there is the enormous **Villa Emo** (1557-58) complex, a successful and convincing example of the new type of villa-farm conceived by Palladio, in which the service buildings integrate with the owner's residence in a united architectural system. The land pertaining to the villa is still structured in relation to the long north-south territorial axis that passes through the middle of the manorial residence, which, in turn, is placed within a neat layout of areas to a large extent based on plot divisions determined in Roman times.

Again, travelling north From Fanzolo, towards the foothills, the next stop is at Maser just beneath the surrounding hills. **Villa Barbaro** (1554), set within a beautiful landscape, is yet another Palladian achievement famous for its cycles of frescoes painted by Paolo Veronese.

Close to the villa, at the side of the road leading to the entrance gateway, there is the *Tempietto Barbaro* (1580), which is one of his very last works. This is the site where, according to tradition, Palladio died at the age of 72.



CORNUDA

MASER



Villa Barbaro

ASOLO

CAERANO S.MARCO

MONTEBELLUNA

ALTIVOLE

TREVIGLIANO

RIESE PIO X

CASTELLO DI GODEGO

CASTELFRANCO

VEDELAGO



Villa Emo

TREVI

VICENZA

RESANA

PIOMBINO DESE



Villa Cornaro

VILLA DEL CONTE

LOREGGIA

CAMPOSAMPIERO

S.GIUSTINA

MASSANZAGO

MESTRE

S.GIORGIO DELLE PERTICHE

BORGORICCO

NOALE

S.MARIA DI SALA

169



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## Via Roma - Piombino Dese (PD)

Situated at the centre of an orderly series of spaces adjoining the villa (gardens, orchard and kitchen garden, fields) aligned along a territorial axis, the villa is located within the urban structure of Piombino Dese in a position set back quite some way from the road, onto which the entrance gate leading into the front garden opens directly.

The building consists of a square block, flanked - on the side facing the road - by two wings that are lower and of lesser depth and is organized on two levels rising above a lower ground-floor level, visible externally as a base in exposed brickwork.

The main façade has a projecting middle section, consisting of a hexastyle loggia with two orders of columns, Ionic below and Corinthian above, crowned by a triangular pediment with a small rosette decoration; the lower order is reached by climbing a flight of steps of equal width. The side fronts of the loggia present walled sections with arched openings. The lateral areas of the façade present two simple, vertically-aligned windows (arched below and rectangular above), corresponding with the lower basement apertures and those of the attic. The windows of the first order of the wings and logge are also curved. The apertures, which have no surrounding decorative elements, form part of a configuration consisting of a smooth ashlar pattern carved into the surface of the plaster, continuing on all fronts of the building.

The building is unified by the string-course that separates the two main levels, proceeding along the wings adjacent to the façade, while the upper cornice with a dentil decoration is present only above the central unit.

On the rear elevation towards the countryside, the loggia with two orders with a triangular pediment occupying the central section is set between the side wall surfaces, from which it protrudes slightly, emphasizing the plastic character of the end columns. In the lateral areas, the vertically-aligned windows are all square. The loggias of both elevations present a broader central in-

tercolumniation.

Internally, the first level centres on the splendid main hall articulated by four free columns beneath the entablature supporting the visible wooden beams of the ceiling, conferring a monumental effect in the main space of the house.

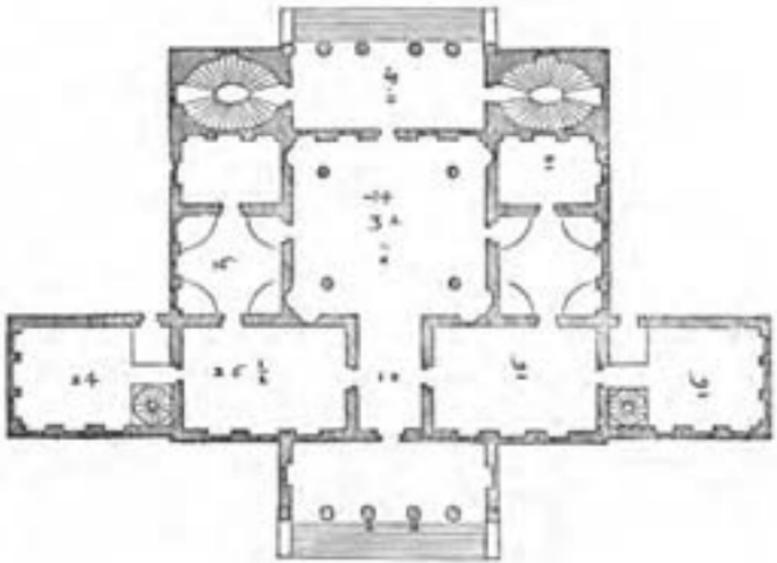
Access to the main chamber, which opens directly onto the rear loggia, is gained through a short, narrow hallway that communicates with the front loggia. The plan of the building, presenting two large rectangular rooms at the sides and opening onto the façade, followed by square rooms and two rectangular chambers, develops around the succeeding vestibule and main hall along the median axis.

Access to the upper level, containing the private residential quarters, is gained by the oval spiral staircases situated beside the loggia. It is certain that the building was designed by Palladio, who published drawings of it in his *Quattro Libri* very similar to the extant structure.

The project was commissioned around 1552 by Giorgio Cornaro, a leading member of the Venetian aristocracy, who had acquired the estate in 1551. Work is recorded as having occurred in the years 1553-54, following which the central block was produced, only partially habitable, and perhaps the wings were also initiated. Later phases of construction date back to 1569 (probably only marginal interventions) and 1588. At that time, according to some scholars, Vincenzo Scamozzi also intervened at the site, whose presence is documented in the period 1596-97, when he built the barchessa located along the public road to the right of the villa. The creation, at the end of the *Cinquecento*, of the sculptures that decorate the main hall with the four columns is attributed to the artist Camillo Mariani.

Complete with wings, the villa appears in a map of 1613, where we also find drawings of the well-organised weave of external spaces, the concept of which may have thus been developed at the same time as that of the building itself.

LA FABRICA, che fegue è del Magnifico Signor Giorgio Cornaro in Piombino luogo di Castel Franco. Il primo ordine delle loggie è Ionico. La Sala è pofta nella parte più a dentro della cafa, accioche fia lontana dal caldo, e dal freddo: le ale oue fi ueggono i nicchi fono larghe la terza parte della fua lunghezza: le colonne rifpondono al diritto delle penultime delle loggie, e fono tanto diftanti tra fe, quanto alte: le ftanze maggiori fono lunghe un quadro, e tre quarti: i uolti fono alti fecondo il primo modo delle altezze de' volti: le mediocri fono quadre il terzo più alte che larghe; i uolti fono à lunette: fopra i camerini vi fono mezzati. Le loggie di fopra fono di ordine Corinthio: le colonne fono la quinta parte più fottili di quelle di fotto. Le ftanze fono in folaro, & hanno fopra alcuni mezzati. Da vna parte ui è la cucina, e luoghi per maffare, e dall'altra i luoghi per feruitori.



from the *Quattro libri dell'architettura* di Andrea Palladio, Venezia 1570

Again, in 1655, a last will and testament informs us that work was in progress, very definitely involving the interiors, and that it continued in the following decades. Stucco decorations were

created by Bartolomeo Cagianca, and frescoes were painted by Matthias Borloni in 1716. Outdoor sculptures were installed at the end of the eighteenth century.



#### BUILDING TECHNIQUES

The bases and the capitals of the Ionic columns in the lower order of the two logge and in the room with four columns are made of stone, while the column shafts are in plastered 'cotto'. The capitals of the Corinthian columns of the upper orders are also in 'cotto'.

The entablatures are made of wood and covered with stucco simulating the effect of stone. The exterior is covered with a plaster presenting an engraved smooth-textured ashlar pattern.

## THE SUGGESTIVE MAIN SALON AT VILLA CORNARO

Inside the villa, visitors will be struck by the elegance and rational appeal of the central chamber of the house, a space modulated by its four free columns, inspired by Palladio's studies of ancient Roman dwellings, and illustrated in his treatise.

The choice not to press the columns back against the walls gives the space the feel of a large hall rather than an atrium, a solution which moreover differentiates this space from that of the villa in Montagnana, which Villa Cornaro resembles in certain respects on account of various analogies in their design and the character of a 'villa-palace' which they share.

At Villa Cornaro, the hall becomes a place that conveys a sense of prestige

and the high rank of the owners of the house, also by means of an array of statues set in decorative niches.

But the articulation of the walls of this space, along with column shafts, also creates an intense and 'vibrant' chiaroscuro effect, representing a definitely suggestive 'episode' in the spatial sequence, which, from the transparency of the front loggia, through the shadowy, dim light of the vestibule, bursts into the central hall opening up to the luminosity and a pleasant view of the surrounding countryside offered by the rear loggia. Critics saw in this solution a reinterpretation of the typical Venetian transverse hall: a choice evidently motivated by the background and noble rank of Palladio's client.

79 | *View from the garden*





#### DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

Close to the corners of the room, the walls of the hall with four columns are enlivened by niches (except for the wall by the loggia), containing stucco statues of the late sixteenth century produced by the Vicentine sculptor Camillo Mariani, who also intervened at the Olympic Theatre in Vicenza. The sculptures represent famous members of the Cornaro family, including the patron Giorgio Cornaro himself (in the niche located to the left of the entrance leading in from the vestibule) and Caterina Cornaro, the Queen of Cyprus, in the right-hand niche close to the outer wall. In the central hall itself, but also in the side rooms, there are other stucco decorations made by the sculptor Bartolomeo Cagianca in 1716. These side rooms, also containing elegant marble fireplaces, were painted in that period by Mattia Bortoloni, a painter from Bergamo, whose work is characterised by a certain rococo taste and who also intervened in the two small chambers on the floor above, creating scenes from the Old and New Testaments.



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Located close to Fanzolo, Villa Emo stands at the centre of an extensive area bearing traces of Roman centuriation (land division) and extending northwards with respect to the ancient *Via Postumia*.

Leading off from this road, a long, rectilinear axis runs straight across the estate in the north-south direction. The groups of trees and the layout of crop-bearing fields are arranged in line with this axis, with which the building is also aligned in a strategic position. The layout of the villa is extremely simple and rational, being formed by an almost square manorial residence, comprising two main levels, flanked by two, long, lower, symmetrical wings with porticos housing the cellars, granaries and other service areas.

The manorial residence is in the central portion of the façade with an imposing, full-height, Doric tetrastyle pronaos, crowned by a triangular pediment, slightly projecting with respect to the bare side walls, where, aligned along the vertical axis, there are the simple windows of the ground floor, the piano nobile and the attic.

By climbing the ramp of steps, which is as wide as the pronaos itself, one gains access to the spacious loggia, from which one can appreciate the presence of a long axis, which, after passing through the main point of entry, crosses the entire estate. The two long barchesse, concluded at their ends by tall dovescotes, face the garden with arched porticos created by rather sober-looking pillars, with bases and capitals having the form of rectangular blocks. The west barchesse also contains a chapel.

The rear facade of the complex is quite austere and simple, also at the point corresponding with the main building, where a linear stringcourse distinguishes the lower ground-floor level, and its surface is enlivened by simple apertures.

Also from the rear entrance, facing north and accessible from a non-original stairway, one may observe, against the background of the foothills in the di-

stance, the long extension of the axis in relation to which the configuration of the agricultural area pertaining to the villa is organised.

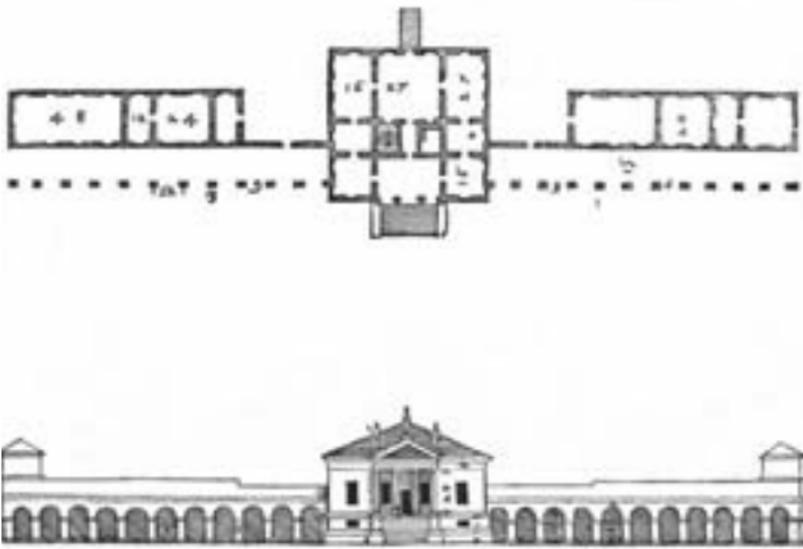
The interior presents, at its central axis, the sequence of the loggia, the vestibule (flanked by the stairs) and the main hall, to the sides of which, in a symmetrical succession, from the north side, there is a large rectangular room, a small chamber and a square room that opens onto the loggia and from which, through a window, it was possible to view the portico of the adjacent wing.

The drawings published by Palladio in the *Quattro Libri* is generally concordant with the actual building and represents the sole evidence of the original concept, in the absence of original autograph plans. The solution adopted reveals the typological format of the villa-farm invented by Palladio, also found in the Barbaro and Badoer villas, where the barchesse merge with the manorial residence, forming an architectural unit and contributing with equal dignity towards the overall result.

In this work, Palladio in fact attains an outcome expressing great harmony and coherence in terms of form, with a convincing balance between functional factors and the intent to achieve a prestigious effect through recourse to such classical and formal architectural elements as the pronaos and pediment. The patron of the villa was Leonardo Emo, the son of Alvise, a celebrated member of the Venetian aristocracy born in 1532, who had inherited the Fanzolo estate in 1549. The property had been owned since the mid-fifteenth century by the Emo family, who had long since dedicated it to intensive agricultural activities. The chronology of intervention has not yet been sufficiently documented. It is certain that the villa did not exist in 1549 and it is recorded that it had been built in 1561.

Critics tend to date the Palladian drawings at around 1557-58 and believe the villa was constructed over the next three years. In the mid 1560s other works were carried out, and notably the decorations of the interior and the crea-

A FANZOLO Villa del Triuigiano difcofto da Caftelfranco tre miglia, è la fottopofta fabrica del Magnifico Signor Leonardo Emo. Le Cantine, i Granari, le Stalle, e gli altri luoghi di Villa fono dall'vna, e l'altra parte della cafa dominicale, e nell'effremità loro vi fono due colombarie, che apportano utile al padrone, & ornamento al luogo, e per tutto fi può andare al coperto: ilche è vna delle principal cofe, che fi ricercano ad vna cafa di Villa, come è ftato auertito di fopra. Dietro à quefta fabrica è vn giardino quadro di ottanta campi Triuigiani: per mezo il quale corre vn fiumicello, che rende il fito molto bello, e diletteuole. E' ftata ornata di pitture da M. Battifta Venetiano.



from the *Quattro libri dell'architettura* di Andrea Palladio, Venezia 1570

tion of a chapel in the west barchessa, consecrated in 1567.

The villa underwent partial alteration in 1744; this was carried out by Francesco Muttoni, who transformed into a residential section also a part of the barchesse, sealing off the arches that opened on to the rear elevation of the two wings close to the points of connection with the central structure, and which previously accentuated the structure of the manorial residence, also

allowing a view from the garden of the countryside at the rear. At that time, links between the small side chambers of the Villa were also created and the external rear staircase was modified. The suspended ceiling added to the salon in the eighteenth century was removed during restoration in the period 1937-40. The villa and its surrounding estate, recently purchased by a local credit institute, underwent further restoration a few years ago.

#### BUILDING TECHNIQUES

The structures are in brickwork with a plaster finish. The spaces on the piano nobile have ceilings with visible wooded beams. The ceiling of the loggia is coffered.



#### DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

The cycle of frescoes produced inside the villa is the work of the Veronese painter Battista Zelotti, as referred by Palladio himself in his treatise, the date of completion of this work was around 1566. The explicit reference to the decorations on the part of the architect suggest that he may have intervened in the design of the architectonic illusions in the scenes represented.

In the loggia we find representations of *Callisto*, *Jupiter*, *Jupiter in the Guise of Diana* and *Callisto transformed into a Bear by Juno*.

In the central hall, the paintings are placed between Corinthian columns rising from high pedestals. On the side walls, in the central panels, there are scenes from Roman history alluding to marital virtues: on the left *Scipio returns the girl betrothed to Allucius*, while on the right there is the *Killing of Virginia*. At the sides there are monochrome figures in false niches, representing *Jupiter holding a Torch*, *Juno and the Peacock*, *Neptune with the Dolphin* and *Cybele with the Lioness*, alluding to the four natural elements (Earth, Air, Fire and Water). In the side panels enormous Prisoners seem to be emerging from the false architectural framework.

On the south wall of the hall, towards the vestibule, a false broken pediment appears above the real entrance arch, with the two female figures of *Prudence* (with the mirror) and *Peace* (with the olive branch). On the north wall, at the centre in the upper part, there is the crest of the Emo family, in carved, gilt wood, surrounded by trompe-l'oeil cornices and festoons. To the left of the main chamber, the Hall of Hercules contains episodes referring mainly to the mythological hero, with the intent of emphasizing the victory of virtue and reason over vice, inserted in a framework of false Ionic columns. On the east wall, the scenes of *Hercules embracing Dejanira* and *Hercules throwing Lica into the Sea* are beside *The Fame of Hercules* at the centre; on the west wall, within a false arch, there is *Hercules at the Stake* and finally, on the south wall, a panel above the door contains a depiction of the *Noli me tangere* [Touch me not] scene. In the Hall of Venus, to the right, we find, on the west wall, within false arches, *Venus deters*

*Adonis from Hunting and Venus aids the Wounded Adonis*, and on the east wall, *Venus Wounded by Love*. On the south wall, the panel above the doorway shows the *Penitent St. Jerome*, a religious image corresponding with that present in the hall of Hercules. The two rectangular rooms are followed by the two small chambers decorated with grotesques, beyond which there are the two rooms flanking the loggia.

The south-west room is dedicated to the Arts and shows six allegories appearing between false Corinthian columns on a high pedestal, above which runs a frieze with putti amongst flowers and fruit, including corn (which had only recently been introduced into the Po valley).

The arts presented are *Astronomy*, with an armillary sphere and compass, *Architecture*, holding a treatise open at a page showing the plans of a villa (possibly Villa Emo), *Poetry*, with a crown of laurel, *Painting*, with a brush and palette, *Sculpture*, and *Music* with the lute. In the false panel above the north wall there is a *Holy Family* scene. On the side walls, set within false niches, there are monochrome depictions of the allegories of *Winter*, with a male figure wearing a cloak and hood, and *Summer*, crowned by ears of corn.

The cycle of the seasons is completed in the south-east room, dedicated to Jupiter and Io located on the other side of the loggia, with the allegories of *Autumn*, crowned with bunches of grapes and *Spring* surrounded by flowers. This room, decorated in a manner similar to that dedicated to the Arts, contains scenes of *The embracing Jupiter and Io discovered by Juno behind a cloud*, *Juno tran-*

## 82 | General view



sforms Io into a Cow, Juno delivering the Cow to Argos, Mercury playing the flute to distract Argos, Mercury cuts off Argos' head. Juno collects Argos' hundred eyes to place them on the tails of her peacocks. On the lunette above the window facing south, there is the monochrome figure of Juno holding the Sceptre. The false panel painted on the north wall, above the door, contains a 'Ecce Homo' scene.

83 | Hall of the Arts: 'Architecture'





Villa Barbaro is situated on a gentle slope descending to the plain below the hills to the north of Maser. The architectural complex cleverly accommodates the sloping surface by means of an appropriate linking of the two main levels with the surrounding outdoor spaces: the ground floor with the front garden facing the countryside, and the piano nobile with the rear courtyard, facing the hills and presenting a beautiful semi-circular *nymphaeum*.

The parts forming the complex are arranged along a line, with the manorial residence in an advancing, axial position with respect to the garden, and flanked on either side by the barchesse, presenting porticos and dovecote towers at the ends. The two end structures moreover extend back, linking with the back wall of the rear court, where the *nymphaeum* is located.

The villa entrance by the road stands in front of a semi-circular area providing access to the agricultural estate.

The main elevation of the house is punctuated by a giant order of four Ionic semi-columns, crowned by a pediment with relief decorations.

In the three sectors of the front there are three axes of apertures, which, at the sides, on the ground-floor level present curved pediments and triangular pediments on the piano nobile. In the central sector, the rectangular aperture on the ground floor is surmounted by an arched full-height door that interrupts the entablature.

The configuration of the side elevations is fairly incoherent and influenced by a rearrangement of pre-existing structures. An axis of apertures corresponds with the transverse arm of the cross-plan hall on the piano nobile, highlighted above by a small pediment. The porticos of the barchesse present a succession of arches on strong pillars, with masks on the keystones. The two symmetrical wings are concluded at the ends by two, slightly protruding elements, corresponding with the dovecote towers, from which emerges, between curved masonry connecting sections, the central part decorated with a sun-

dial and crowned by a pediment. The interior on the main floor is focused on the cross-plan salon, the longitudinal arm of which is followed by a square room. The hall is flanked at the front by two rectangular rooms and, further back, by the stairs rising from the porticos of the wings.

No original autograph drawings exist and we only have the drawing that Palladio published in his treatise, which by and large reflects the form of the extant building. The patrons were the brothers Daniele and Marcantonio Barbaro, two influential members of the Venetian aristocracy and both interested in classical culture. Collaborating with Palladio, the former published in 1556 an Italian translation of Vitruvius' treatise; it would appear that Marcantonio was also an amateur sculptor. Critics believe that the drawings were prepared immediately after Palladio and Daniele Barbaro returned from their journey to Rome in the spring of 1554. Construction activity was in fact documented in the last part of that year and in the following year.

The villa is mentioned in a poetical composition by Magagna written in 1558.

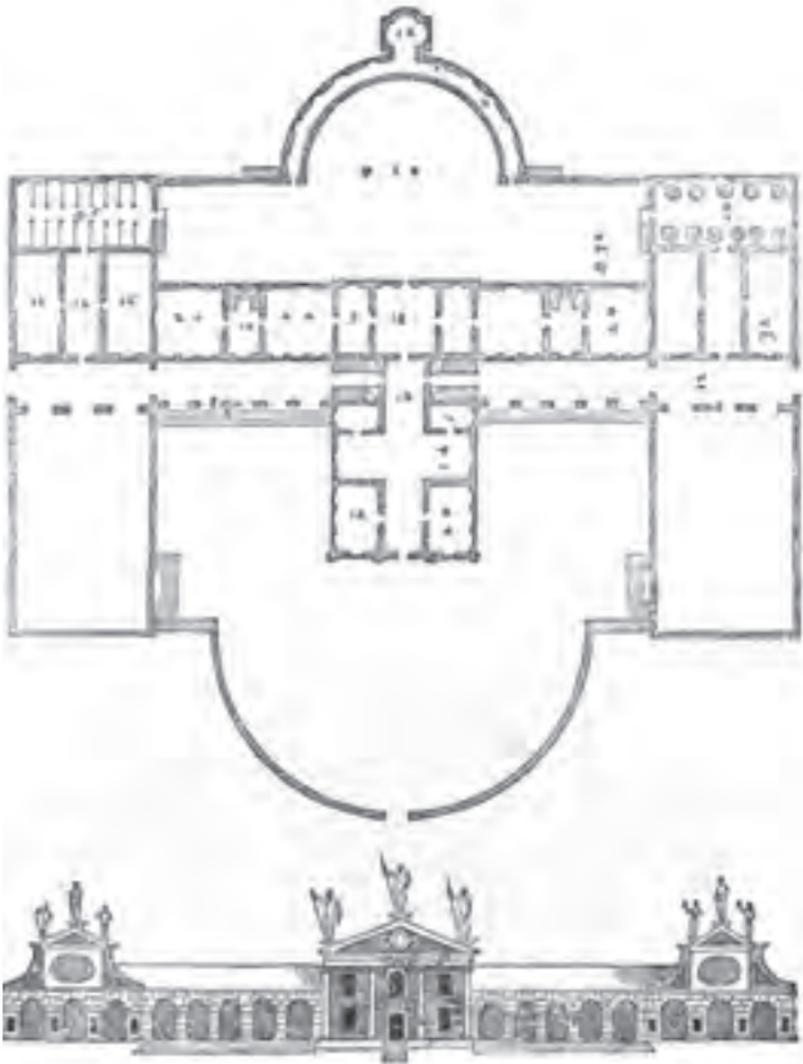
Recent archival investigations and reconstructions have revealed that the operation consisted in a masterful adaptation of pre-existing structures, inherited by the Barbaro brothers from their father Francesco, who died in 1549. The project reorganized the complex, in which the arrangement of the rear courtyard, centred on the *nymphaeum*, attributed to the estate a classical and humanistic appeal.

The pre-existing manorial residence was extended in terms of its depth, with the addition of the room facing the new suspended space and connected to the previously separate barchesse. The entire complex was then reconfigured, assuming a united architectural physiognomy.

The former structures in any case conditioned the final outcome, especially in the main corpus, where the apertures are vertically arranged without adequate spacing.

The exuberant plastic decoration of the

LA SOTTOPOSTA fabrica è à Mafera Villa vicina ad Afolo Caftello del Triuigiano, di Monfignor Reuerendifsimo Eletto di Aquileia, e del Magnifico Signor Marc'Antonio fratelli de' Barbari. Quella parte della fabrica,che efce alquanto in fuori;ha due ordini di ftanze, il piano di quelle di fopra è à pari del piano del cortile di dietro,oue è tagliata nel monte rincontro alla cafa vna fontana con infiniti ornamenti di ftucco,e di pittura. Fa quefta fonte vn laghetto, che ferue per pefchiera: da quefto luogo partitafi l'acqua fcorre nella cucina,& dapoi irrigati i giardini,che fono dalla deftra,e finiftra parte della ftrada, la quale pian piano afcendendo conduce alla fabrica; fa due pefchiere co i loro beueratori fopra la ftrata commune: d'onde partitafi; adacqua il Bruolo, ilquale è grandifsimo,e pieno di frutti eccellentifsimi,e di diuerfe feluaticine. La facciata della cafa del padrone hà quattro colonne di ordine Ionico:il capitello di quelle de gli angoli fa fronte da due parti: i quai capitelli come fi facciano;porrò nel libro dei Tempij. Dall'vna,e l'altra parte ui fono loggie, le quali nell'eftremità hanno due colombarie,e fotto quelle ui fono luoghi da fare i uini,e le ftalle, e gli altri luoghi per vfo di Villa.



from the *Quattro libri dell'architettura* di Andrea Palladio, Venezia 1570



external front attributed to the sculptor Alessandro Vittoria, but for which the intervention of Marcantonio Barbaro was also suggested, and also the famous cycle of frescoes which Paolo Veronese created in the interior, between 1559 and 1561, were not reported by Palladio in the treatise. The omission is interpreted by critics as revealing a critical position on the part of Palladio with respect to the artistic interventions

(strongly desired by the clients), which he possibly saw as competing with the coherence and clarity of the architectural concept.

In later centuries, the villa underwent only minor modifications in the internal distribution of the wings. In the 1800s, a part of the frescoes in the salon were plastered over but these were rediscovered during the restoration performed by Mario Botter in the 1930s.

#### BUILDING TECHNIQUES

Up to a certain level, the walls of the manorial residence, and especially the perimeter walls, form part of the pre-existing structure. Stone is used in the bases and capitals of the Ionic semi-columns, in the window frames and in the balustrades.

The main hall has barrel vaulting, forming a crossed section at the point of intersection of the two arms.

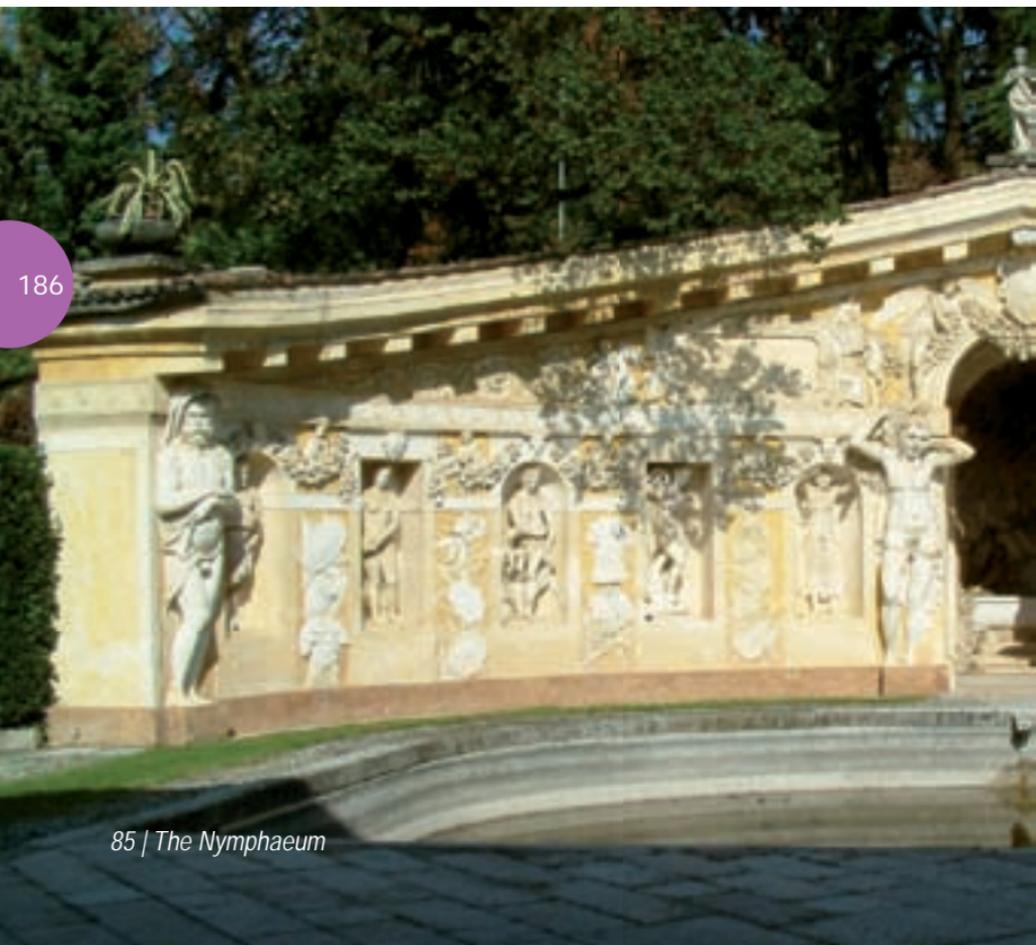
Critics believe that in the development of the concept of the villa an active role was played by the two patrons and by Daniele Barbaro in particular, an erudite humanist who, with Palladio, shared the intention of reviving the ideal of the classical villa as a place where cultural activities might be promoted and enjoyed and where a special relationship would be established with the site and its surroundings.

The concept of the *nymphaeum*, in relation to the design of which Palladio refers to his own technical expertise in a detailed description offered in his treatise, represents a characteristic moment of this ideal.

The fountain and hemicycle in fact become a central point, with respect to which the configuration of the villa is developed (one should consider the axis that crosses the entire piano nobile, starting from the elevation facing the countryside, and continuing along the longitudinal arm of the salon and the subsequent hall of Olympus, and then finally reaching the central niche of the

*nymphaeum*). The fountain however is also a sort of filter mediating the relationship of the villa with the wooded hill rising behind it. The solution reflects the experiences of the two protagonists during their visit to Rome in 1554 and, in particular, one will not fail to see the influence of contemporary experimentation on the theme of classical villa environments, as occurred in the plans for Villa Giulia and Villa Madama and in Pirro Ligorio's garden and fountain for the Villa d'Este at Tivoli.

However, the villa is also a successful agricultural concern and functional and organisational variables are determining factors in the concept of the project, and it is here that Palladio's professional ability comes to the fore. Here, he developed and achieved the solution formerly proposed but not implemented at the Villa Angarano at Bassano del Grappa, a solution whereby the stately residence stands in a central position and is set slightly forward, flanked by the service and farm buildings, which assume equal dignity





86 | *The Dovecote*

with respect to the house itself and are 'qualified' as an integral part of the entire architectural system.

However, in the final solution, the intention of Palladio's clients was very important and, more than on other occasions, most certainly influenced the role assumed by Palladio and also his choices in the designs. The decorative elements produced reveal a desire to create a

sort of humanistic compendium of the arts, expressing an eclectic stance, which would be reflected not only in the rigour of Palladio's work but also in that of the exuberant artist Paolo Veronese, who had moreover spent some of his earlier years training as an architect and was in any case quite capable of interpreting in an opulent manner the desires of his clients.



## DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

Externally, one will immediately note the highly-detailed decoration of the tympanum, where the armorial bearings of the Barbaro family are placed between relief figures. The paternity of this work has been attributed to Alessandro Vittoria but Marcantonio Barbaro himself, one of the patrons, may have also intervened in this work as he was an amateur sculptor.

On the piano nobile there is a well-known cycle of frescoes - one of the most noteworthy of the entire *Cinquecento* - painted by Paolo Caliari, known as Il Veronese, between 1559 and 1561. The painted decorations produce suggestive illusions, impressively created within the real surrounding spaces, opening up the rooms with luminous landscapes and introducing fascinating characters that appear within simulated doorways and at other points with surprising perspective.

Along the longitudinal arm of the salon, there are false archways with balustrades opening onto pleasant landscapes. In the transverse arm we find eight *Muses* set within niches. In this area, the illusionary effect of the frescoes is fully felt in some of the most original and famous examples of such work that include the figure of a young man and a small child entering from open doorways. The two rooms that flank the main hall on the side of the façade are also decorated with frescoes. On the west side, the hall of *Bacchus* reveals the deity in a curious position together with other figures, while *Venus*, *Apollo* and *Amor* are depicted above the door and *Ceres* and *Pluto* above the fireplace. On the vault of the east room there is the allegory of the *Happy Married Couple* and on the door there is a representation of the allegory of *Abundance*, and *Music* appears above the fireplace.

In the hall dedicated to Olympus, which follows the main hall in the direction of the rear part of the building, the vault presents a depiction of *Wisdom*, in the octagonal central portion, surrounded by allegorical figures and deities. A false balustrade runs around this space, from which we see Giustiniana Giustiniani, the wife of Marcantonio Barbaro, with a nursing mother and her children.

To the east of the Hall of Olympus, besides the animal from which it acquires its name, the Room of the Dog presents on the ceiling the allegory of *Fortune defending Abundance from Fraud*. The lunette facing the window contains a false panel with the *Holy Family*, *San Giovannino* and *Saint Catherine*. The corresponding room on the opposite side of the Hall of Olympus is called the Room of the Lantern as this object can be seen at the centre of the ceiling held up by a putto and surrounded by the allegories of *Faith and Charity protecting a Christian*, *Virtue controlling Passion* and *Strength relying on Prudence*. The religious painting in the position corresponding with that of the symmetrically positioned room is a *Holy Family* [Madonna della Pappa] scene. Both sides of the Hall of Olympus present a row of rooms, at the back of which there are frescoes depicting, respectively, a *Gentleman returning from the Hunt*, taken as a self-portrait of the painter, and a *Gentlewoman*. Outside the Hall of Olympus one can enter the *nymphaeum*, the statues of which, together with those of the garden, form part of the overall decorative project undertaken when the villa was completed. Integration with the architectonic configuration of the fountain would suggest that the sculpted works in the *nymphaeum* adhered more closely to the original Palladian concept. In the grotto there is a frescoed depiction of an allegorical '*Pax Venetiana*'.

## THE TEMPLE AT VILLA BARBARO

Close to the villa, along the road that runs beside the enclosure wall facing the flat, open countryside, there is the 'Tempietto' built in 1580 at the behest of Marcantonio Barbaro.

The structure has a central plan, with small chapels situated at points corresponding with the two main axes, which determine the original overlapping of a Greek cross over the central space,



87 | The temple

covered by a hemispherical cupola. On the outside, the cylindrical volume is articulated by the protrusion of these chapels and culminates with the profile of the spherical upper shell, partially set into the containing masonry of the perimeter and crowned by a lantern. The entrance is preceded by a Corinthian hexastyle pronaos, which one may enter by climbing the broad steps. Above the pronaos there is a richly decorated tympanum, behind which emerge two small symmetrical bell-towers.

The inscription on the frieze of the pronaos tells us that the building was built by *Marcus Antonius Barbarus Procurator Franc[iscij] Filius*, while on the right-hand side of the pronaos we learn the name of the architect: *Andreas Palladius Vicentinus Inventor*. The date is also provided: *Anno Domini Jesu Christi MDLXXX* [in the year of (our) Lord Jesus Christ 1580].

The inscriptions provide us with the main information concerning the construction of the building, indicating the date, its patron and the architect. Together with the Olympic Theatre, this small religious building was one of the last projects Palladio ever worked on. It is believed that Palladio died when he was still working at Maser and thus it is likely that he was unable to participate

in its completion and final work on the structure.

It appears evident and quite comprehensible that Palladio should cite the Pantheon in Rome, considering the predilection he expressed in his treatise for the circular layout in religious buildings. In any case, the choice of such a plan most likely derives from Marcantonio's desire to create a church in the form he also preferred after failure to achieve this goal in the Church of the Redeemer in Venice.

Barbaro probably wanted to have this temple built as a family chapel but the structure also had to serve as the parish church in the village of Maser. The double use also determined the site of the building: outside the grounds of the villa but close to it.

The sculpted decoration on the tympanum represents the Martyrdom of St. Paul. The interior is also richly adorned by stucco works representing Christ the Redeemer, the richness of which might suggest that Palladio was not involved in the choices that were made. Nevertheless, it should be said that such decorative splendour often characterises Palladio's works of the last decade of his life, both internally and externally, as in the Loggia del Capitaniato in Vicenza.



In the city of Venice, Palladio produced the *Church of the Redeemer* [*Chiesa del Redentore*] at the Giudecca, the *Church of San Giorgio Maggiore* on the Island of San Giorgio, with the large Ionic cloisters of the Monastery of San Giorgio Maggiore and the splendid Refectory, the *Church of San Francesco della Vigna* and also the *oval staircase* designed for the *Accademia Veneziana*, defined by Goethe in his travel notes as “*the most beautiful spiral staircase in the world*”. The Church of the Redeemer (Campo SS. Redentore) was built following the plague that broke out in Venice in 1575. In May 1577 work began in this church, the planimetry of which is partially inspired by the structure of ancient Roman baths and their sequences of spaces that follow, harmoniously, one after the other. The plan derives from the composition of four spatial cells, perfectly defined and different from each other: the rectangle of the nave, the side chapels, the ‘*cella trichora*’ composed of the two apses and the filter of curved columns and the choir. The façade of the church is the most mature result of Palladio’s reflections on church fronts with intersecting orders.

Also in the Church of San Giorgio Maggiore, designs for which were produced around 1565, Palladio adopts as his point of reference the architecture of the ancient Roman baths. The main nave, with a barrel vault and braced by three cross-vaults, just like the frigidarium of ancient Roman thermal structures, is followed by the sudden lateral expansion of the apses and the vertical expansion of the great cupola on its drum structure beneath. Palladio flanked the latter with the carefully studied space of the presbytery, from which one can see the choir. The arrangement creates a situation in which we feel we are on the inside of a building looking out, as if the barrier of columns were the pronaos of a villa, through which we might gaze out at the countryside. The façade, created in the early 1600s is quite different from Palladio’s original concept.

In 1564, for the Church of San Francesco della Vigna in the Campo della Confraternita in the Castello district of Venice, Palladio produced an impressive façade, developing the theme of an adaptation of the front of a single-nave building - such as a classical temple - to the multiple-nave layout typical of Christian churches.

On the Venetian mainland, Palladio built the splendid **Villa Foscari**, otherwise known as ‘**La Malcontenta**’, which can be reached by travelling along regional route 309 after leaving the Mestre toll-gate on the Venice-Milan M4 motorway.



TREVISO

SR 53

QUINTO DI  
TREVISO



CASIER

SR 89

RONCADE

SP5

SP17

VENICE - TREVISO RAIL LINK

SS13

PREGANZIOL

CASALE SUL SILE

ZERO BRANCO

SP65

MOGLIANO VENETO EXIT

QUARTO D'ALTINO EX

SR515

SP39

MARCON

A4

MOGLIANO  
VENETO

VENICE - TRIESTE RAIL LINK

MARTELLAGO

SR245

MESTRE-EAST EXIT



SR14

SS14

CASTELFR. - MESTRE RAIL LINK

SP38

ANO SP32 SPINEA

MESTRE

MILAN - VENICE RAIL LINK

MESTRE-WEST EXIT

SR11

ORIOLO-MIRA EXIT

SP30

SS309

SR17

VENICE

MIRA

VENICE - ADRIA RAIL LINK

E55



Villa Foscari

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ADRIATIC  
SEA



Villa Foscari, also called the 'Malcontenta', is situated close to a bend in the navigable Naviglio del Brenta watercourse, which in the past provided the river link between Venice and Padua. Its position on the mainland at a site close to the lagoon and easily accessible from the city but also the absence (as in former centuries) of any adjoining rural buildings make this a 'suburban palace' and its closeness to the water possibly confers the charm and character of a residence situated in the lagoon.

The house comprises a high base, defined by a string-course and a series of unframed windows on all sides; used for the servant's quarters and service rooms, the lower level would have been indispensable to isolate the upper floors from ground humidity. The solution moreover affords a certain degree of monumental appeal as might be the case with the podium in an ancient temple.

The effect is accentuated, on the main façade facing the river, by the presence of the double-ramp stairway, which leads into the impressive, outwardly projecting, Ionic, hexastyle pronaos, also defined at the sides by columns and crowned by a triangular pediment with dentil decoration on the cornice. To the sides of the pronaos, two simple rectangular windows, contained in a plastered wall decorated with a graffito pattern simulating the presence of regularly-hewn, smooth ashlar elements. Similar features appear in the attic floor, emphasized by the continuation of the entablature of the pronaos, which, by running around the building, acts as a string-course.

Above the attic, at the centre, there is a dormer structure with a small triangular pediment. On each side there are two chimneys in the typical Venetian form. The rear elevation, facing the open park surrounded by trees, presents at the centre a protruding full-height middle section enlivened on the piano nobile by an array of apertures culminating with a thermal window, which penetrates the entablature of the upper triangular pediment. The elevation presents, at the sides and in the upper area, fea-

tures similar to those of the main façade and has the same smooth graffito ashlar pattern that surrounds the entire building. The two lateral elevations present three axes of windows on the three main levels.

The interior develops around the large, double-height, cruciform hall. The spacing of the internal room is revealed on the front facing the park by the close array of windows of the middle part. At the sides, there are the staircases and two symmetrical apartments, formed by the succession of large rooms facing towards the watercourse, square rooms and rectangular chambers, with dimensions determined by specific proportional relations and ratios.

The Palladian paternity is confirmed by the publication of the drawings of the building in the *Quattro Libri*. The exact date of the preparation of the drawings is difficult to ascertain but on the basis of certain evidence, historians believe it would around 1556, immediately after the marriage of the patron, Nicolò Foscari, in 1555.

In the same year, Palladio had also designed for the Foscari an altar for the Venetian church of San Pantolon.

Critics usually compare the villa with the Roman temple of Clitumnus at Spoleto, which Palladio had studied, on account of the vicinity of the water, the presence of a high podium and the protruding pronaos. However, other associations can be noted in the building, such as the impressive configuration and spatial articulation of Roman thermal edifices reflected in the cross-plan hall and the corresponding layout of the apertures facing the park.

After Foscari's death in 1560, the work was following by his brother Alvise, whose name appears together with that of Nicolò in the inscription on the fascia of the pronaos. This is when the decorative phase began, with the intervention of the artists Battista Franco and Battista Zelotti.

In the 1700s, a long residential building was constructed to the left of the villa and, on the opposite side a chapel was built. These structures, which appear in



88 | Façade facing the park

an engraving made by Costa of the mid 1700s, were demolished during the Austrian occupation in 1848-49.

In the meantime, the villa had been ceded by the Foscari family and sold to new owners, who made no effort to maintain the building, leaving it to decay and in poor condition. During this latter period, various frescoes were detached and transferred to the Castelvecchio Museum in Verona and the Vicentine Sanctuary at Monte Berico.

The legend of an unhappy woman [It. la 'malcontenta'] shut up inside the building dates back to this phase of abandonment. The restoration of the house began in 1925, when the new owner, Landsberg, promoted a general conservation project. Further restoration work was carried out in the 1960s. The house returned to the Foscari family in 1973 and underwent new and definitive restoration work, ensuring the excellent condition in which it is found today.

#### BUILDING TECHNIQUES

Stone was used only in the bases and capitals of the columns of the pronaos and in the window sills. Brickwork masonry is used in the general structure and in the column shafts, which are covered with a terracotta-colour mortar to provide uniformity. The finish of the exterior is produced with *marmorino* [marble-finish] plaster with a graffito pattern simulating a smooth ashlar surface. The ground floor presents a system of strong brickwork vaulting.

The horizontal elements of the piano nobile vary in the various spaces of the interior: the main salon has a cross-vault, with the four arms having barrel vaulting, the large rectangular rooms have pavilion vaults and the square chambers have bowl-shaped vaults with pendentives.

The lower, attic rooms have flat ceilings.

## DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

The decorations were produced, starting in 1560, by Battista Franco, who died the following year while he was still working on the frescoes, and by Battista Zelotti. The frescoes of the walls of the salon are organised with a false partitioning of Ionic columns, similar to the real columns in the pronaos, and amongst which Zelotti painted bronze statues in niches with trophies. In the panels above the doors there are the allegories of the *Arts*, with female figures. In the lunettes at the ends of the arms of the cruciform space there are scenes with mythological content: on the entrance wall, *Jupiter and Mercury in the house of Philemon and Baucis*, at the end of the left arm, *Jupiter and Mercury witness the killing of a Traveller*, and, to the right, *Jupiter and Mercury leave Philemon and Baucis as Custodians of their Temple*. On the vault of the salon, the artist has inserted pairs of Prisoners reflecting the style of Michelangelo. In the two frescoed oval sections in the longitudinal arms in the cross-vault are represented, starting from the entrance, *Astraea presents to Jupiter the Pleasures of the Earth* and *Two Women offering Incense to Janus*. The central octagon contains the *Virtues*. The decoration of the square chamber to the left of the salon, called the Giants' Room, was probably begun by Franco but completed by another artist. It takes the name of the frescoes with which it is decorated: in the round partition at the centre of the vault, *Jupiter surrounded by the Gods of Olympus strikes the Giants* and, on the walls, the *Fall of the Giants*. In the adjacent rectangular chamber there are grotesques, false cameos and, in the lunettes, classical scenes, while in the oval partition at the centre of the vault there is the allegory of *Fame*. In the large rectangular room to the left of the entrance, called Prometheus' Room, the panel in the vault has a depiction of *Prometheus steals the Fire of Olympus for Mankind*. The corresponding room to the right is called Aurora's Room on account of the subject of the painting in the panel of the vault: *Aurora's Carriage drawn by the Horae*. In both rooms, the frescoes, enriched by country scenes and landscapes, allude to the pleasures of life on a country estate in the countryside. The square room on the right of the main hall takes the name of the scene painted in the round partition at the centre of the vault, where *Bacchus squeezes a Bunch of Grapes with Venus and Amor*. The painting extends across the walls with a pergola opening onto a background landscape and the sky. Finally, the small, adjacent, rectangular room has grotesques and landscapes as in the corresponding space of the left wing. At the centre of the vault, the oval partition contains an allegory of *Time*.

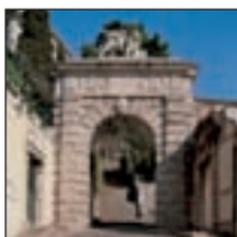


89 | The elevation facing the river



The places to visit in this itinerary are in the eastern part of the Veneto and in the Friuli region, where Palladio left various traces of his work as an architect.

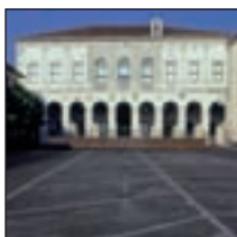
The first destination, close to Cessalto, at a site situated in the Treviso area, almost within the Province of Venice, can be reached from the Cessalto toll-gate exit on the Venice-Trieste section of the M4 motorway. Here, visitors are invited to visit the rural setting of the *Villa Zeno* (1554), a building commissioned by an important member of the Venetian aristocracy at a time when Palladio's professional prestige was well consolidated in the capital of the Republic.



Continuing along the motorway in the direction of Trieste and then branching off towards the north, one will soon reach Udine, where a few other Palladian works can be found (not listed in the World Heritage Site). The *Arco Bollani* (1556), below the steps that lead up to the castle, is situated in the Piazza della Libertà. The monument is named after Domenico Bollani, an official of the Serenissima, who had it built to commemorate his own personal success.



*Palazzo Antonini*, built at the same time as the archway, was commissioned by Floriano Antonini, a leading member of a patrician family from Udine. The palace was already habitable in 1559 but the construction site remained open and the building later underwent substantial alteration.

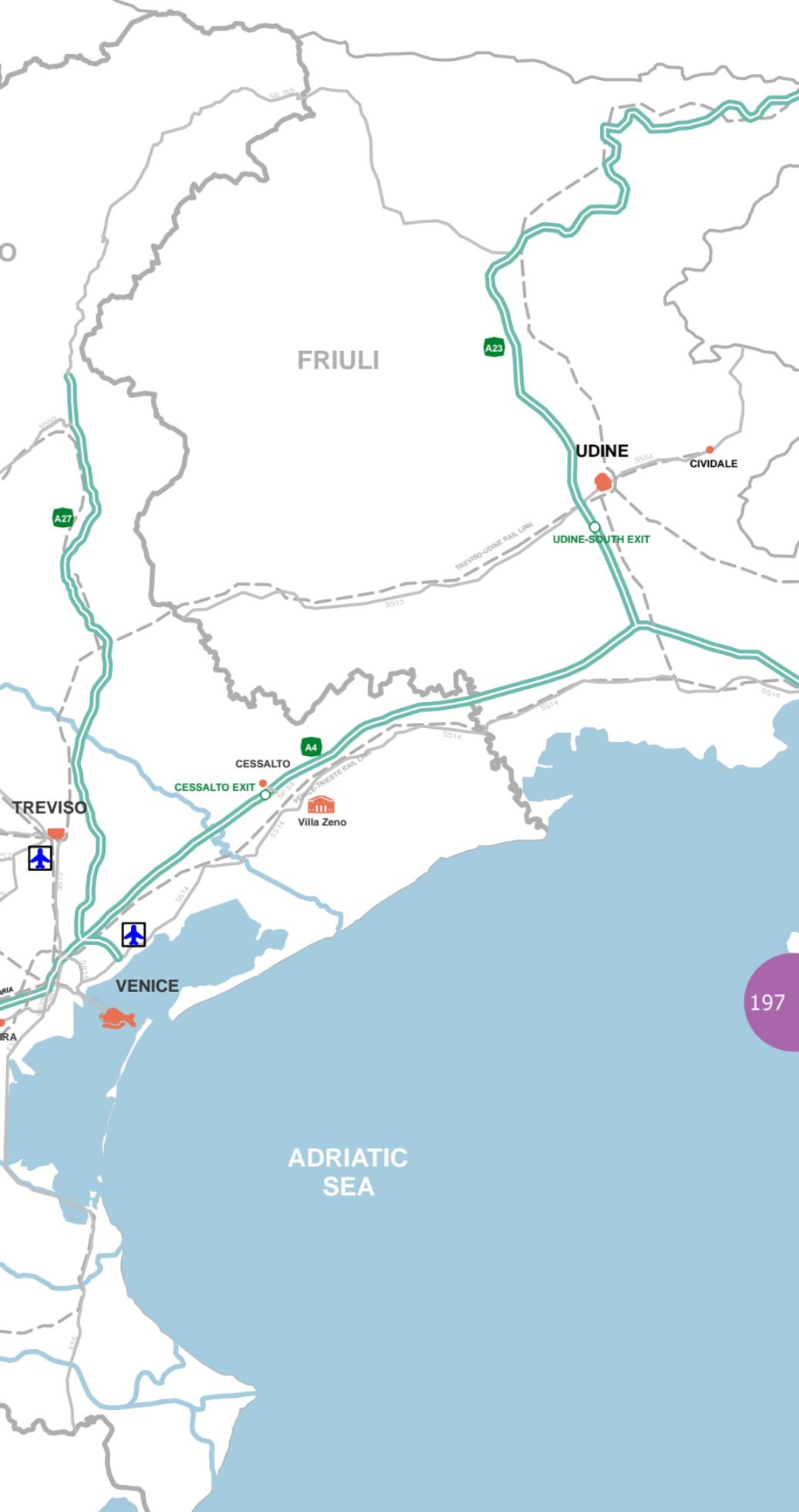


Apart from the overall layout (excluding the stairs) and the volumetric aspect, the remaining elements of Palladio's work are the superimposed, front and rear logge (above which, the pediments were never installed). These elements provide Palazzo Antonini with the 'open' character of a suburban residence and making it resemble other similar Palladian works, such as the villas at Montagnana and Piombino Dese and also Palazzo Chiericati.



Palladio apparently also worked at Cividale del Friuli. Vasari attributes to the Vicentine architect the *Palazzo Pretorio*, dating back to 1564, the construction of which was however implemented without any supervision on his part and resulting in a deviation from the original plans.

The *Porta Gemona*, presenting the scheme adopted in the archway at Udine, is yet another local Palladian work, erected at San Daniele del Friuli in 1579 at the behest of Cardinal Giovanni Grimani.



FRIULI

UDINE

CIVIDALE

UDINE-SOUTH EXIT

CESSALTO

CESSALTO EXIT

Villa Zeno

TREVISO

VENICE

ADRIATIC  
SEA



Villa Zeno is situated in the countryside, close to the Canale Piavon. Organised around a rectangular courtyard, the complex presents a manorial residence at the central position on the north side of the area, flanked by low side buildings, of which, the eastern edifice is longer.

The courtyard is enclosed on the east and west sides by other constructions perpendicular to the villa. The building on the west side in particular has a portico with three arches.

The internal elevation of the villa presents a pair of windows set close together on either side of the main door and also above, on the first floor.

Another two apertures are present at the edges of the front elevation on both sides. The central portion of the façade is surmounted by a wide triangular pediment, with a circular oculus at the centre and surrounded by a dentil cornice.

The external elevation, facing north towards the countryside, has a loggia with three arches and austere pilasters, characterising the slightly protruding central portion, which is crowned by a pediment similar to that on the opposite side of the building.

Along the upper section of the elevation there are windows which provide light for the attic.

The internal articulation, focusing on a central longitudinal axis, develops from the long transverse salon extending from the main entrance to the loggia at the rear.

Starting from the courtyard, on both sides of the main space, we find in succession a large rectangular hall, a square chamber and a minor, rectangular room open towards the loggia; the stairs flank the main hall close to the front elevation.

Drawings of the villa were published in the *Quattro Libri* but autograph plans of the building have not been found. The patron was Marco Zeno, a member of a prestigious, aristocratic Venetian family and related to various dignitaries who been assigned to important public duties and posts within the Republic.

Zeno was also the *podestà* of Vicenza in the period 1558-59. On the basis of recent research, historians now believe that Palladio received a commission for this project about 1554, immediately after Zeno took possession of the Donegal estate, which his wife Lucrezia Barbo had inherited and which already had a manorial residence and other rural buildings.

He was also able to follow the development of the project quite closely as he had been appointed as the *podestà* of Motta in 1556, which was close to his property. It is not known when the villa was completed but this had definitely occurred in 1566.

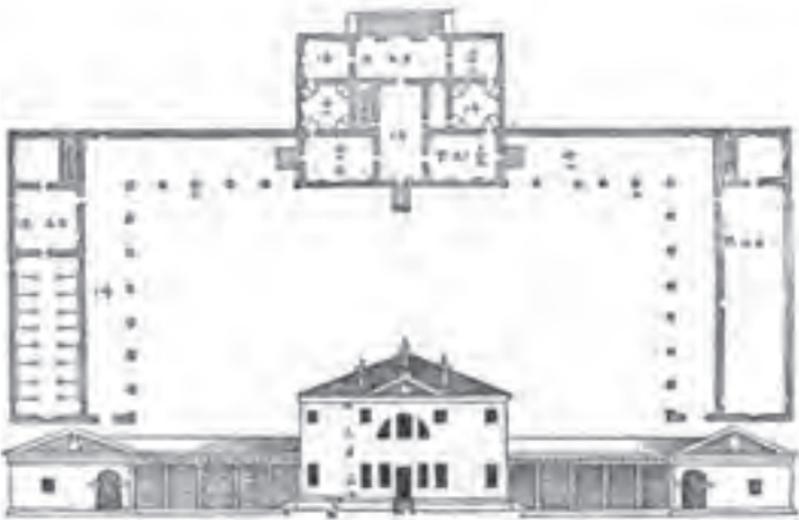
In any case, construction during that phase was restricted to the main building, as documented by a map of 1588, in which the façade facing the courtyard appears with a thermal window above the three central apertures: a composition fully compliant with Palladio's concept and definitely true to his drawings.

The use of a certain form of distribution and typical Palladian stylistic elements, such as the loggia with three arches and pillars surmounted by a pediment, the 'thermal' window and the transverse hall make this structure comparable with previous works, such as the Villa Saraceno or Villa Pisani at Bagnolo. However, at Cessalto, the combination of these elements occurs, inverting the customary scheme, with the loggia, which would normally be a part of the front façade, situated in the elevation facing the countryside.

From an analysis of two maps, dated 1625 and 1639, we learn that, over this period, a few rural buildings were built perpendicular to the house and in compliance with Palladio's plans. However, the buildings with porticos, which should have flanked the central building were not constructed. The portico with three arches in the structure to the west of the courtyard might be the remains of the 16th-century building.

Service quarters that were built later and most of which no longer exist were documented by Muttoni in 1740. The complex underwent considerable

IL MAGNIFICO Signor Marco Zeno ha fabricato fecondo la inuentione,che fegue in Cefalto luogo propinquo alla Motta, Caftello del Triuigiano. Sopra vn bafamento,il quale circonda tutta la fabrica,è il pauimento delle ftanze: lequali tutte fono fatte in uolto:l'altezza de i uolti delle maggiori è fecondo il modo fecondo delle altezze de' uolti. Le quadre hanno le lunette ne gli angoli,al diritto delle fineftre:i camerini appreffo la loggia,hanno i uolti à fafcia,e cofi ancho la fala:il volto della loggia è alto quanto quello della fala,e fuperano tutti due l'altezza delle ftanze. Ha quefta fabrica Giardini,Cortile,Colombara,e tutto quello,che fa bifogno all' ufo di Villa.



from the *Quattro libri dell'architettura di Andrea Palladio, Venezia 1570*

modification in the 1800s, when the still-existing rural buildings and edifices were constructed. Great changes were made also in the manorial residence itself, where the thermal window was removed and replaced by the upper central windows on account of the vertical subdivision of space of the main

hall, carried out to obtain new rooms on the upper level.

This insertion determined further transformations on the outside; the originally arched windows on the ground floor became rectangular, and the apertures above the loggia on the side facing the fields were created.

#### BUILDING TECHNIQUES

The masonry is in brickwork. The main hall and the loggia, originally with barrel vaults, present flat ceilings in the lower spaces created at the end of the 1700s. The horizontal elements of the other rooms of the villa comply with the Palladian designs, with cavetto vaults in the rectangular, front rooms, vaults with corner lunettes in the square chambers, and barrel vaults in the two rooms beside the loggia.

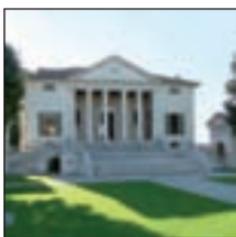
90 | Main façade



91 | Rear view



## ITINERARY 8: The Province of Rovigo



The province of Rovigo is in the central part of the Po Valley. Also known as the 'Polesine', the area was modelled by the waters of the Adige and Po rivers and by numerous hydrological works. One of the most grandiose of these interventions was the sectioning of the Po in 1604 by order of the Republic of Venice, which preferred to divert the course of the river towards the south, thus also developing its majestic delta.

The main administrative centre of the area, Rovigo, presents numerous buildings of historical and artistic interest. These constructions are distinguished by the style of the Serenissima, which governed the area from the 15th to the 18th century and also that of architectural works produced during the period of rule of the Lords of Ferrara. Buildings remaining from the mediaeval period include the ruins of the walls of the Castello and two towers; one of the latter is now reduced in size but the Torre Donà is a symbol of the city and, amongst those dating back to the 10th century, one of the tallest towers in Italy. The upper area of the Polesine, which presents various prestigious stately homes, can be reached from the A13 motorway (South Rovigo exit).

At Fratta (along State route 434 in the Verona direction), visitors may wish to view the splendid **Villa Badoer**, also called '**La Badoera**', a work known to have been designed by Palladio, and the **Villa Molin-Avezzù** of the Palladian school. It is not certain who the designer of the latter building might have been. It was in any case constructed in the period 1557-67 for the marriage of Isabella, the daughter of Vincenzo Grimani, to Andrea Molin, the Venetian noble who commissioned the work.

Some critics have hypothesised that the work may have been designed by Domenico Gropino, one of Palladio's students and collaborators, who conceived the building within an urban system.

The relationship with the surrounding environment however is not the same as in the Villa Badoer, and emphasis is rather placed on the geometrical regularity of forms and lines, which can be noticed in the positioning of the stairs and the barchesse. There is thus a link between the two villas, which can be detected not only in the architecture but also in the interiors decorated by painters of the same school that would be hard to match in the Veneto.

The villa contains numerous frescoes, for a long time attributed to Giallo Fiorentino, which were in fact produced by Anonimo Grimani, a member of the artistic circle of Giallo Fiorentino and Giuseppe Porta Salviati. The frescoes depict allegories and mythological scenes.





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The villa is close to the centre of Fratta Polesine, near the Scortico canal. It is linked to the town by a bridge aligned with the main axis of the estate.

The manorial residence is at the centre of the complex and is flanked by two, low, semi-circular service buildings, with rectilinear sections extending along the sides as far as the road and bordering the garden in front of the house.

The garden is embellished with two fountains and a well-head, which was originally located on a middle level of the ramp of steps. The main building rises above a ground-floor level formed by an earthwork section, which isolates the construction from the humidity of the marshland soil, and by a lower level dedicated to the servants' quarters and work areas. The façade presents at the centre a slightly-protruding, double-height loggia with an Ionic hexastyle order and is crowned by a triangular pediment with the family crest set in the tympanum. The trussed cornice decoration appears all around the top of the building. In the two side portions there are simple rectangular windows on the piano nobile, with which the low apertures of the base level and at the attic level are aligned.

One enters the loggia by climbing the stairway, which is divided into three ramps. Other sets of steps perpendicular to the main ramp, leading up from archways in the two semi-circular lateral arms occur at the height of the second level. The lateral porticos open onto the garden with six intercolumniations of the Doric order and are surmounted by an entablature decorated with a frieze with metopes and triglyphs. The end sections of the porticos also terminate with a curved passageway, culminating with a small triangular pediment. The adjacent, rectilinear structures present simple fronts with square windows on the two levels.

The configuration of the rear elevation of the residence is very simple, with a main focus on the doors with full-height windows of the piano nobile. These are flanked by two apertures and followed on either side by two axes of windows

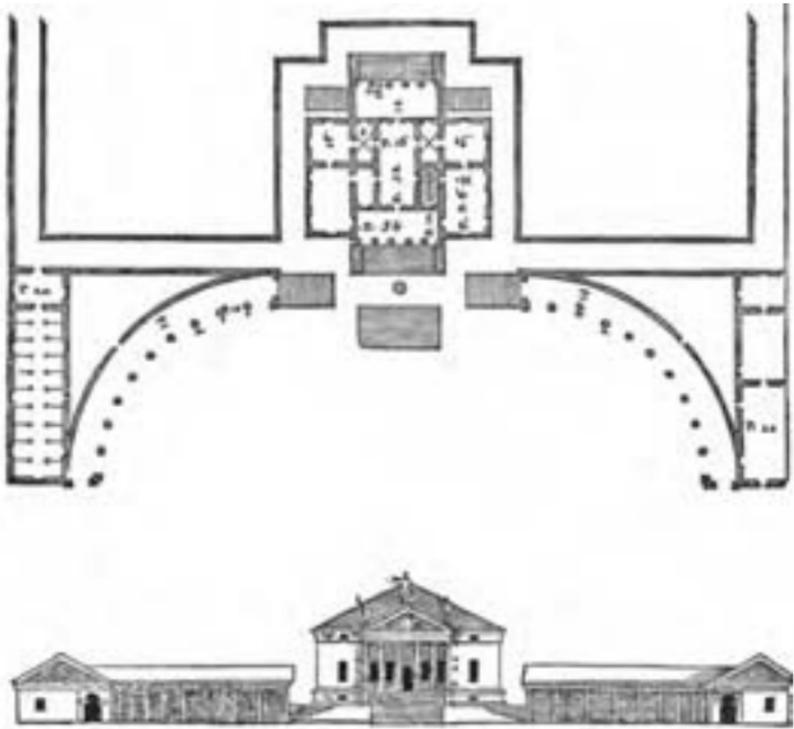
similar to those of the façade. The same vertical succession of apertures, repeated three times, is present on the two side fronts, alternated with the chimney flues.

The plan of the piano nobile develops around a large transverse hall flanked on each side by two small rectangular chambers, one of which contains the staircase. At the two lateral ends we find, in succession, a rectangular room and then a square room.

Palladio published the drawing of the villa in the *Quattro Libri* but in various ways the actual building is not fully compliant with the plans, principle amongst which is the absence of the loggia and set of steps at the rear, the decrease in the number of columns of the curved lateral arms with porticos and the lower height of the roof of the villa. At the front, the presence of the pediment provides a majestic, even 'sacred' value to the construction, with an intention of thus reflecting the high social rank of the patron, Francesco Badoer, who was a member of a minor branch of a noble Venetian family that had not been assigned very important duties by the government of the Republic. The property at Fratta passed into his hands on account of his wife's having inherited the estate around 1545.

Historians have decided that the drawings for the villa were completed around 1554, immediately after Palladio's return from his journey to Rome in the company of Daniele Barbaro. Critics in fact believe that the architect's choice of a curvilinear articulation of the lateral structures contains a reference to ancient Roman works, such as the Temple of *Hercules Victor* at Tivoli but also recent designs such as Raphael's Villa Madama. Palladio's plans have also been seen as a kind of semi-circular Roman forum with a portico, at the end of which the stately home, with its Ionic loggia and pediment, stands out as if it were a temple. The villa is recorded as just having been completed in a document dated 1556, in which the patron established an agreement with representatives of the local communi-

LA SEGVENTE fabrica è del Magnifico Signor Francefco Badoero nel Polefine ad vn luogo detto la Frata, in vn fito alquanto rileuato, e bagnata da un ramo dell'Adige, oue era anticamente vn Caftello di Salinguerra da Efte cognato di Ezzelino da Reomano. Fa bafa à tutta la fabrica vn piedeftilo alto cinque piedi: a quefta altezza è il pauimento delle ftanze: le quali tutte fono in folaro, e fono ftate ornate di Grottefche di belliffima inuentione dal Giallo Fiorentino. Di fopra hanno il granaro, e di fotto la cucina, le cantine, & altri luoghi alla commodità pertinenti: Le colonne delle Loggie della cafa del padrone fono Ioniche: La Cornice come corona circonda tutta la cafa. Il frontefpicio fopra loggie fa vna belliffima uifta: perche rende la parte di mezo più eminente dei fianchi. Diccendendo poi al piano fi ritrouano luoghi da Fattore, Gaftaldo, ftalle, & altri alla Villa conueneuoli.



from the *Quattro libri dell'architettura* di Andrea Palladio, Venezia 1570

ty for the reconstruction of the bridge over the Scortico Canal in front of his residence, thereby confirming, from a general urban-planning perspective, its central position in the context of the rural settlement of Fratta. A map dated 1564 shows the complex as being fully constructed. It is believed that the decoration of the interiors, by Giallo Fiorentino, occurred just after the villa was completed. Following its transfer to the Mocenigo family in 1681, the height of certain rooms was reduced and the frescoes were plastered over. At the end of the 1700s, the rectilinear structures

of the barchesse were extended as far as the road and an oratory was created in the left-hand building. At this time the well-head on the steps was transferred to the garden and the Badoer crest was removed from the tympanum.

Starting in the 1960s, the villa underwent extensive restoration work, and again also very recently, after it was purchased by the local government authorities of the Province of Rovigo. The previously hidden frescoes have now been uncovered and the horizontal elements that had reduced the height of certain rooms have been removed.



92 | | Main façade

#### DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

There are two 18th-century fountains in the front garden.

The two aediculae situated at the ends of the enclosure wall at the rear of the villa have been attributed to Palladio, who apparently took the idea from those he had observed at the villa of Maecenas at Tivoli.

The piano nobile, within the loggia and then in all of the interiors, is decorated with the frescoes that were painted, immediately after the completion of the villa, by Giallo Fiorentino (Pierfrancesco di Jacopo Foschi), a collaborator of the Mannerist painter Giuseppe Salviati at the Palazzo Loredan in Venice.

The grotesques painted by Fiorentino have been interpreted in various ways as regards their content and underlying meaning. In the main hall, we find pastoral scenes in pleasant landscapes and deities of the rivers and woods.

In the other rooms, the depicted scenes and landscapes generally refer to rural life. There are also representations of mythological episodes, such as the *Rape of Ganymede* and *Leda and the Dioscuri* in the room to the right, which critics believe may be a reference to the premature death of the brother-in-law and great friend of Giorgio Loredan, the owner of the property.

93 | Giallo Fiorentino - Decoration on the right-hand side of the main hall



## BUILDING TECHNIQUES

The walls of the villa are in brickwork masonry. The spaces of the ground floor, developing over a solid masonry earthwork, visible at the rear of the building, present a complex system of masonry vaults.

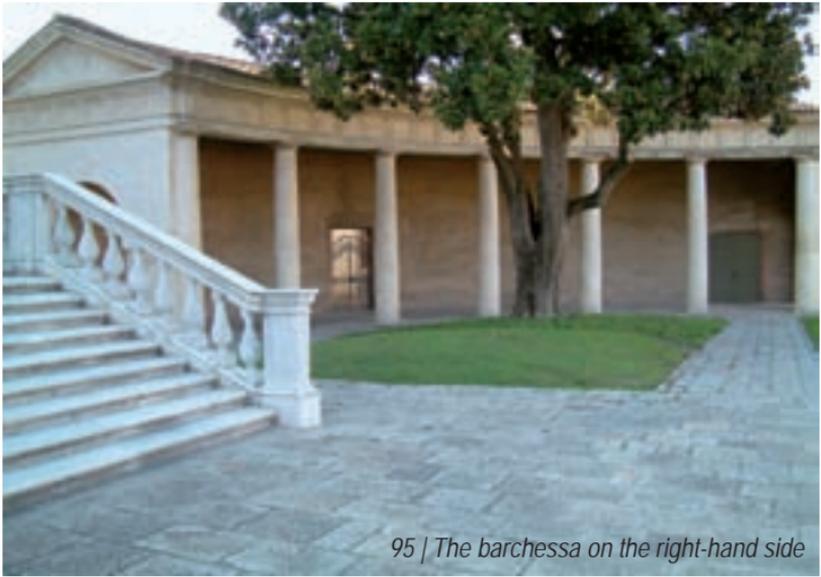
Various scholars maintain that these structures formed part of a former castle, belonging to Salinguerra of Este, at the site of which the villa was built.

All of the piano nobile has flat wooden ceilings with visible beams. The loggia has a coffered ceiling and the architrave above the columns is also in wood.

Following the recent restoration, the attic area, originally a granary, is also accessible and reveals the wooden tie-beam structure of the roof. The hemi-cycle porticos of the barchesse also present trussed roofing.

The brickwork enclosure has an undulating configuration and is decorated with an upturned arch pattern and marble spheres.





95 | *The barchessa on the right-hand side*



HISTORIC / ARTISTIC / POLITICAL	BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES	PALLADIO'S WORKS
<b>1508</b>		
A grand alliance is established at Cambrai (Flanders) between the Emperor Maximilian, Louis XII of France, Pope Julius II and Ferdinand V of Aragon to thwart the political ambitions of Venice. Raphael arrives in Rome. Pope Julius II (Giuliano della Rovere) commissions Michelangelo for the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel.	Birth of Andrea, son of Marta (also recorded as 'la zota') and Pietro "dalla Gondola", a miller, in November 1508.	
<b>1509</b>		
Henry VII dies in England. On becoming king, Henry VIII marries Catherine of Aragon. Pope Julius II excommunicates the Venetians. The armies of the League of Cambrai defeat the Venetian army at Agnadello, close to the River Adda. The Veneto is invaded.		
<b>1510</b>		
Julius II withdraws the Venetian excommunication. Bramante designs Palazzo Caprini. The building will be later purchased by Raphael. Botticelli dies in Florence. Giorgione, by whom Titian was influenced, dies in Venice.		
<b>1511</b>		
A Holy Alliance is advocated against Louis XII of France, the members of which include Pope Julius II, the Republic of Venice, Spain, The Swiss Confederation, Austria and England. Erasmus of Rotterdam publishes his <i>Morias Enkomion</i> [the Praise of Folly]. Birth of Giorgio Vasari at Arezzo on 30th July.		
<b>1512</b>		
The Holy Alliance defeats the French, who are forced to release their hold on Italy. The Sistine Chapel is opened in Rome on 31st October. Raphael begins the Chigi Chapel in the Basilica of Santa Maria del Popolo.		
<b>1513</b>		
Pope Julius II dies and is succeeded by Giovanni de' Medici who assumes the name of Leo X. Machiavelli writes <i>The Prince</i> .		
<b>1514</b>		
Death of Bramante. Raphael becomes the architect responsible for St. Peter's.		
<b>1515</b>		
Louis XII of France dies and is succeeded by Francis I, who, in the same year, descends into Italy and establishes alliances with the Venetians.		
<b>1516</b>		
Ferdinand the Catholic dies in Spain and is succeeded by his young nephew Charles of Habsburg. Francis I negotiates the Noyon peace treaty and French dominion in Milan is recognised. The first edition of Ariosto's <i>Orlando il Furioso</i> . Death of Giovanni Bellini. The ghetto is created in Venice, placing restrictions on the Jews resident in the city.		

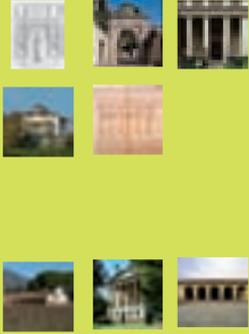
HISTORIC / ARTISTIC / POLITICAL	BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES	PALLADIO'S WORKS
<b>1517</b>		
<p>The Fifth Council of the Lateran is concluded.  A truce is signed between Venice and the Emperor Maximilian I of Habsburg, who releases his hold over Friuli.  Martin Luther publishes his theses, which will influence the Protestant reforms.  Raphael begins work on the Villa Madama in Rome. The Cardinal Farnese starts work on his new palazzo in Rome.  Venetian troops enter Verona, defeating the army of the League of Cambrai.</p>		
<b>1518</b>		
<p>Giulio Romano starts work on Villa Lante on the Gianicolo.  Birth of Tintoretto.</p>		
<b>1519</b>		
<p>Death of Maximilian I, who is succeeded by Charles, thereby leading to the unification of the Kingdom of Spain and the Habsburg Empire.  Death of Leonardo at Amboise.</p>		
<b>1520</b>		
<p>Beginning of the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent, Sultan of the Ottoman Empire.  Death of Raphael.</p>		
<b>1521</b>		
<p>Death of Pope Leo X, succeeded by a Dutch Pope, Adrian VI.  Antonio Grimani becomes the Doge of Venice.  Giovanni Maria Falconetto and Pietro Bembo arrive in Padua.</p>	<p>Andrea begins his apprenticeship in Padua at the workshop of the stone engraver Bartolomeo Cavazza from Sossano.  He will work as an apprentice for the next six years.</p>	
<b>1522</b>		
<p>Rhodes conquered by the Turks.  Milan is besieged and the French defeated.</p>		
<b>1523</b>		
<p>Andrea Gritti becomes the Doge of Venice.  Adrian VI dies in Rome.  Giulio de' Medici becomes Pope, assuming the name of Clement VII.  Death of Il Perugino.</p>	<p>Andrea breaks his apprentice's contract with Cavazza and moves to Vicenza with his family.</p>	
<b>1524</b>		
<p>Francis I, king of France, occupies Milan.  Giulio Romano moves to the Court of the Gonzaga in Mantua.  Il Falconetto begins work on the loggia for Alvise Corner in Padua.  The Rialto bridge collapses in Venice.</p>	<p>Membership of the stonemasons' guild in Vicenza and mason at the workshop of Giovanni and Giacomo da Porlezza and Girolamo Pittoni in the Contrada di Pedemuro.</p>	
<b>1525</b>		
<p>French and Austrian troops engage in battle at Pavia.  Francis I of France is captured by Charles V.  Giulio Romano starts work at the Palazzo Te.  Michelangelo designs the Biblioteca Laurenziana.</p>		
<b>1526</b>		
<p>Following the Treaty of Madrid, Francis I abandons his ambitions concerning Milan, Naples and Bourgogne and organises the League of Cognac with Venice, Florence and the Pope against the imperial forces.  Death of Carpaccio.</p>		

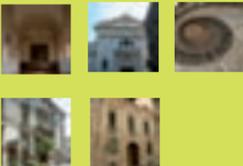
HISTORIC / ARTISTIC / POLITICAL	BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES	PALLADIO'S WORKS
<b>1527</b>		
<p>Rome is sacked by the imperial armies of Charles V. Pietro Aretino, Jacopo Sansovino and Sebastiano Serlio move to Venice. The Medici are banished from Florence and a republic is formed.</p>		
<b>1528</b>		
<p>With Francis I, Venice renews the alliance against Charles V. Falconetto produces the Porta San Giovanni in Padua. Sansovino is nominated <i>Proto di S. Marco</i>. Birth of il Veronese.</p>	<p>Palladio works at the bottega of the Pedemuro family.</p>	
<b>1529</b>		
<p>Charles V, victorious against the League of Cognac, signs the Cambrai peace treaty with Francis I, who abandons his dreams of expansion in Italian territory. The Turks besiege Vienna. The Barcellona Treaty is signed, bringing peace between the Empire, the king of France, the Vatican and Venice. In Florence, Michelangelo oversees the military defensive works of the city.</p>		
<b>1530</b>		
<p>Charles V is crowned king of Italy and Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire in Bologna. The emperor nominates Frederic II (Gonzaga) as the Duke of Mantua. In Florence, Michelangelo continues his work on the new sacristy and the Libreria Laurenziana. Giulio Romano finishes the decorations in the Sala di Psiche at the Palazzo Te in Mantua. Michele Sanmicheli enters service in Venice. Il Falconetto produces Porta Saronarola in Padua.</p>	<p>Andrea rents a shop beneath the Palazzo della Ragione but cedes it very shortly afterwards.</p>	
<b>1531</b>		
<p>Alessandro de' Medici returns to Florence, ushering in a period of despotic rule. Giorgio Vasari moves to Rome.</p>	<p>Commissioned by Francesco Godi, the masons Giovanni da Porlezza and Girolamo Pittoni produce the main portal of the Church of Santa Maria dei Servi. Palladio's name does not appear in any documents of this period but it is believed he contributed towards the conception of this work.</p>	
<b>1532</b>		
<p>Francis I becomes an ally of the Sultan against Charles V. Giulio Romano works on the decorations of the giants' apartment at the Palazzo Te. Peruzzi begins work on the Palazzo Massimo alle Colonne.</p>		
<b>1533</b>		
<p>Henry VIII of England repudiates his wife Catherine of Aragon and marries Anne Boleyn, mother of the future queen Elizabeth I. Henry is excommunicated by the Pope. In Russia (although only three years old) Ivan IV (later to be called Ivan the 'Terrible') inherits the throne. Clement VI commissions Michelangelo to paint the <i>Last Judgment</i> in the Sistine Chapel. Sanmicheli starts the Porta Nuova in Verona. In Venice, Jacopo Sansovino designs the palazzo Corner. Death of Ariosto. Birth of Montaigne.</p>	<p>In a notarial deed, Andrea is registered as an assistant at the Pedemuro workshop.</p>	

HISTORIC / ARTISTIC / POLITICAL	BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES	PALLADIO'S WORKS
<b>1534</b>		
<p>By the Act of Supremacy, Henry VIII becomes the Head of the Anglican Church.            Death of Clement VII and Alessandro Farnese becomes Pope, assuming the name of Paul III.            Death of Correggio.</p>	<p>Marriage to Allegradonna, daughter of the carpenter Marcantonio. The couple are provided with living quarters at the premises of the Pedemuro workshop.            Commissioned by Aurello Dell'Acqua, the masons Giovanni da Porlezza and Girolamo Pittoni design and create the main altar of the Cathedral of Vicenza.            Although Palladio's name appears in no contemporary documents, it is believed he intervened in this work.</p>	
<b>1535</b>		
<p>Following the death of Francesco Sforza, the Duchy of Milan passes into Spanish hands. Paul III nominates Michelangelo as official painter, sculptor and architect of the Vatican palace. In the same year the artist begins to prepare the drawings for the Sistine Chapel. Il Falconetto dies in Padua after designing the villa for the bishops of Padua at Luvigliano.</p>		
<b>1536</b>		
<p>Henry VIII has Anne Boleyn executed and marries Jane Seymour.            Michelangelo starts work on the Last Judgement.            Sansovino starts work at the Zecca in Venice.</p>	<p>Construction of the portal for the Domus Comestabilis in Vicenza</p>	
<b>1537</b>		
<p>In Florence, the despot Alessandro de' Medici is assassinated and the young Cosimo I becomes Duke.            Sansovino begins the Marciana Library.            Sebastiano Serlio publishes the fourth volume on the General Rules of Architecture.</p>	<p>Giovanni da Porlezza and Girolamo Pittoni create the funerary monument of the Bishop of Vaison Girolamo Bencucci da Schio in the Cathedral of Vicenza.            It is believed that Palladio contributed towards the development of the concept of this work.            Recorded for the last time as present at the Pedemuro workshop.            Work on the Villa Godi begins at Lonedo (Lugo di Vicenza).            Giangiorgio Trissino starts his project to develop the villa at Cricoli (VI), where Palladio is probably involved in the design of the loggia.</p>	  
<b>1538</b>		
<p>At Nice, Francis I and Charles V resolve to end the third war between France and the Habsburgs.            The Catholic princes of the Empire join forces with the Catholic League of Nuremburg.            Venice is defeated by the Turks.            Michelangelo starts work on the Piazza del Campidoglio in Rome.            Sansovino's opinion is sought in Vicenza for the Logge of the Palazzo della Ragione.</p>	<p>Documents record the presence of Andrea dalla Gondola at the villa of Giangiorgio Trissino at Cricoli during the restructuring work.</p>	
<b>1539</b>		
<p>Pietro Lando becomes Doge of Venice.            Serlio builds a wooden theatre in the courtyard of Palazzo Porto Colleoni in Vicenza and submits his opinion concerning the Logge of the Palazzo della Ragione.</p>	<p>Work begins on the project for Villa Piovene at Lonedo (Lugo di Vicenza).</p>	

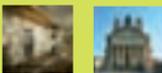
HISTORIC / ARTISTIC / POLITICAL	BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES	PALLADIO'S WORKS
<b>1540</b>		
<p>Phillip, the son of Charles V, becomes the Duke of Milan. A new war starts against the Turks, which ends with the peace treaty of Constantinople drawn up by Venice and the Magnificent Suleiman. Death of Frederic II. Serlio publishes "Le antichità di Roma" and enters the service of Francis I of France.</p>	<p>For the first time, Andrea dalla Gondola is referred to as 'Palladio' in a legal document. Drawings are made for palazzo Civena at the Ponte Furo and palazzo Poiana in Corso Palladio in Vicenza. Work begins on the Villa Plovene at Lonedo di Lugo (VI).</p>	
<b>1541</b>		
<p>Vasari arrives in Venice. Sanmicheli travels to Vicenza to provide an opinion concerning the Palazzo della Ragione.</p>	<p>Palladio probably works at the Pedemuro bottega to produce the funerary monument of Girolamo Orgiano in the Basilica at Monte Berico. First journey to Rome with Giangiorgio Trissino.</p>	
<b>1542</b>		
<p>War breaks out again between Francis I and Charles V. Paul III creates the institution of the Holy Inquisition. Giulio Romano comes to Vicenza to offer his own opinion on the Palazzo della Ragione and to draw up plans for the palazzo and the villa Thiene.</p>	<p>Referred to as a stonemason in the contract for palazzo Thiene, Palladio creates the designs for Palazzo Thiene in Vicenza, Villa Pisani at Lonigo, Villa Gazzotti at Bertesina, Villa Caldogno at Caldogno, Villa Thiene at Quinto and Villa Valmarana at Vigardolo (Monticello Conte Otto).</p>	
<b>1543</b>		
<p>Charles V stipulates a treaty against France with Henry VIII. Francis I is allied with the Turks. Alessandro Vittoria arrives in Venice and starts working with Sansovino.</p>	<p>First public commission for the city of Vicenza: the preparation of the apparati trionfali and temporary decorative structures for the arrival of the bishop Niccolò Ridolfi.</p>	
<b>1544</b>		
<p>In Padua, Ammanati constructs the arch for Marco Mantova Benavides.</p>	<p>Drawings prepared for the Palazzo Porto in Contrà Porti in Vicenza.</p>	
<b>1545</b>		
<p>The Council of Trent is convened, thereby initiating a process of reform within the Catholic Church. Francesco Donà is elected Doge of Venice. Sansovino starts Palazzo Corner della Cà Grande. The vault designed by Sansovino for the Marciana Library collapses.</p>	<p>Referred to as an 'architect' for the first time in an official document. Second journey to Rome, with Trissino and Marco Thiene.</p>	
<b>1546</b>		
<p>Death of Antonio da Sangallo the Younger. In Rome, Michelangelo is nominated as chief architect for the work in progress at St. Peter's. In Paris, Lescot starts the restructuring operations at the Louvre. Deaths of Giulio Romano and Valerio Belli. Martin Luther dies in Germany.</p>	<p>Together with Giovanni da Portezza, Palladio presents plans for the Palazzo della Ragione (the 'Basilica'). Third journey to Rome. Drawings completed for Villa Contarini at Piazzola sul Brenta (PD) and Villa Poiana at Poiana Maggiore (VI).</p>	
<b>1547</b>		
<p>The Council of Trent is transferred to Bologna. Francis I dies in France and is succeeded by his son Henry II. Henry VIII dies in England; his six-year old son becomes Edward VI. Ivan IV is Czar of Russia. The first volume of Giangiorgio's work <i>Italy freed from the Goths</i> is published in Rome.</p>	<p>Returns to Rome. Visits Tivoli, Palestrina and Albano. Drawings produced for Villa Arnaldi at Meledo di Sarego (VI).</p>	

HISTORIC / ARTISTIC / POLITICAL	BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES	PALLADIO'S WORKS
<b>1548</b>		
<p>Birth of Giordano Bruno at Nola, close to Naples. Birth of Vincenzo Scamozzi.</p>	<p>Drawings produced for Villa Angaran at Bassano del Grappa (VI), Villa Saraceno at Agugliaro (VI) and Villa Caldogno at Caldogno (VI).</p>	
<b>1549</b>		
<p>Death of Pope Paul III.</p>	<p>Receives his first salary as superintendent of the construction site formed to build the loggias of the 'Basilica'.</p>	
<b>1550</b>		
<p>England signs a peace treaty with France. Julius III (Giovanni del Monte) is elected Pope. Deaths of G. Trissino and Adriano Thiene. Vasari publishes the first edition of his Lives of the Artists in Florence.</p>	<p>Palladio travels to Brescia and probably also visits Sirmione. Work begins on the bridge over the River Cison. Drawings produced for Palazzo Chiericati in Vicenza and the Villa Chiericati at Grumolo of the Abbadesse (VI).</p>	
<b>1551</b>		
<p>Second phase of the Council of Trent. Work on the Roman villa for Julius III is initiated according to plans prepared by Ammanati, Vasari and Vignola.</p>	<p>Work begins on Palazzo Chiericati in Vicenza.</p>	
<b>1552</b>		
<p>Second phase of the Council of Trent is concluded. Alessandro Vittoria is a guest of Marcantonio Thiene, for whom he creates stucco decorations in various rooms of his palace. Death of Gualtiero Padovano, interrupting the decorative work at Villa Godi, which is continued by Zelotti.</p>	<p>Palladio takes up residence in Vicenza in piazza Castello, probably at one of the houses owned by Orazio and Francesco Thiene. Designs made for the Villa Pisani at Montagnana (PD).</p>	
<b>1553</b>		
<p>Following the death of Edward VI, the catholic Mary Tudor, daughter of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon, becomes Queen of England. Marcantonio Trevisan is elected Doge of Venice. Sebastiano Serlio dies. Il Veronese starts working in the Sale dei Dieci [the Chambers of the Council of Ten] in the Ducal Palace in Venice. Sansovino terminates his work (completing the 13th archway) at the Marciana library.</p>	<p>Contemporary documents record the presence of Palladio at the home of the Pisani at Montagnana (PD). Drawings made for Villa Cornaro at Piombino Dese.</p>	
<b>1554</b>		
<p>Mary Tudor marries Philip II Of Habsburg, son of Charles V. France is again at war with Charles V. Francesco Venier is elected as Doge.</p>	<p>Palladio takes part in a public competition for the post of 'Proto al Sal' [superintendent of public building works] of the Republic of Venice, a position eventually assigned to Pietro Guberni. Last journey to Rome, with Daniele Barbaro. Designs produced for: Villa Barbaro at Maser (TV), Villa Zenò at Donegal di Cessalto (TV), Villa Badoer at Fratta Polesine (RO), Villa da Porto at Vivaro di Dueville (VI), Villa Angaran at Bassano del Grappa (VI), Villa Chiericati at Grumolo of the Abbadesse (VI) and Villa Valmarana at Lisiera di Bolzano Vicentino (VI). First drawings produced for the Rialto bridge in Venice. Publishes the works "Le Chiese di Roma" and "Le Antichità di Roma".</p>	

HISTORIC / ARTISTIC / POLITICAL	BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES	PALLADIO'S WORKS
<b>1555</b>		
<p>Gian Pietro Carafa becomes Pope Paul IV. The Fabbriche Nuove are produced at the Rialto according to Sansovino's drawings. Sanmichelì builds the Porta Paolìo in Verona.</p>	<p>His position as architect of the patrician families of Venice is consolidated. Tenders a proposal for the Scala d'Oro at the Palazzo Ducale in Venice but the project is awarded to Sansovino. Designs Villa Thiene at Villafranca (PD) and begins work on the Palazzo dalla Torre (VR). Palladio is probably the designer of Palazzo Poiana at San Tomaso in Vicenza.</p>	
<b>1556</b>		
<p>The Emperor Charles V abdicates in favour of Philip II. In Venice the Doge Francesco Venier dies and is succeeded by Lorenzo Priuli. The Accademia Olimpica is founded. The decorative work is concluded at Palazzo Thiene.</p>	<p>Palladio is named in documents as one of the founders of the Accademia Olimpica. In Venice, Daniele Barbaro publishes an annotated translation of Vitruvius' De Architectura with illustrations produced by Palladio. Designs made for the Arco Bollani and Palazzo Antonini in Udine and the Villa Almerico-Capra in Vicenza. Palazzo Piovene all'Isola was probably under construction at this time. Palladio builds the barchesse for Villa Angarano at Bassano. Designs made for Villa Foscari (La 'Malcontenta') at Mira (VE) and villa Thiene at Villafranca Padovana (PD).</p>	
<b>1557</b>		
<p>Philip II of Spain defeats the French at San Quintino. Pope Paul IV publishes the 'Index Librorum Prohibitorum', a list of forbidden books. After establishing an alliance with Spain, Queen Mary of England declares war on France. In Venice, Sanmichelì starts work on plans for palazzo Grimani</p>	<p>Drawings completed for the Villa Repeta at Campiglia of the Berici (VI).</p>	
<b>1558</b>		
<p>Death of Charles V. Mary Tudor dies in England and is succeeded by her protestant half-sister Elisabeth, daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn. Zelotti works on the interior decorations at Palazzo Chiericati.</p>	<p>Palladio takes up residence with his family close to Borgo Santa Lucia in Vicenza. He designs the cupola of the Cathedral of Vicenza, the façade of the Chiesa di San Pietro in Castello at Venice and Villa Emo at Fanzolo di Veduggio.</p>	
<b>1559</b>		
<p>The peace treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis is signed, ending the seventy years of war between various foreign armies that had aimed to take control of the Italian peninsula. Pope Paul IV dies and is succeeded by Pius IV. Henry II of France is succeeded by his son Francis II, the husband of Mary Stuart of Scotland. Girolamo Priuli is elected Doge of Venice. Vignola starts work on the Palazzo Farnese at Caprarola. Vittoria works on the stucco decorations of the staircase at the Marciana library, while Battista Franco and Battista Del Moro complete the frescoes. Death of Sanmichelì.</p>	<p>He designs the façade of Casa Cogollo in Vicenza and works on the 'Malcontenta' at Mira (VE). He is commissioned to design and construct a bridge in wood over the River Bacchiglione just outside the Porta Santa Croce in Vicenza. Probable involvement in repair work carried out on the Ponte degli Angeli in Vicenza.</p>	

HISTORIC / ARTISTIC / POLITICAL	BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES	PALLADIO'S WORKS
<b>1560</b>		
<p>Francis II of France dies and is succeeded by his brother Charles IX, who will remain under the protection of his mother Caterina de' Medici until 1563. Giorgio Vasari works at the Uffizi in Florence.</p>	<p>Palladio is the architect in charge of the work being carried out on the Logge. At this time, Ferramosca suspends his salary for two months, accusing him of having neglected his duties and the building site. His supporters succeed in having the order repealed. He designs the refectory for San Giorgio Maggiore, the façade of San Francesco della Vigna and the Convento della Carità in Venice and Palazzo Capra (in the Corso) and Palazzo da Schio in Vicenza.</p>	
<b>1561</b>		
<p>Battista Franco dies, interrupting the decorative work at Villa Foscari, which is continued by Zelotti. The Venetian Government decides that no churches, monasteries and hospitals may be built without the consent of the Council of Ten.</p>	<p>Palladio's son Marcantonio works at Vittoria's workshop in Venice. He receives payment for his work on the model of the Convento della Carità...</p>	
<b>1562</b>		
<p>Beginning of the third phase of the Council of Trent. Tintoretto concludes his work at the Scuola di San Marco. Paolo Veronese finishes his decorative work at Villa Barbaro.</p>	<p>Journey to Brescia, where he creates the upper order of the municipal building. Construction of Villa Mocenigo at Marocco.</p>	
<b>1563</b>		
<p>The third phase of the Council of Trent ends. The painter Il Veronese finishes the Nozze di Cana for the refectory of the Monastero di San Giorgio. Philip II has the Escorial Monastery built.</p>	<p>Palladio designs Villa Valmarana at Lisiera di Bolzano Vicentino (VI) and the side portal of the Cathedral of Vicenza.</p>	
<b>1564</b>		
<p>The Emperor Ferdinand I of Habsburg dies and is succeeded by his son Maximilian II. Parts of the frescoes produced by Michelangelo for the Last Judgement in the Sistine Chapel are covered on account of their having been considered obscene. Michelangelo dies in the same year.</p>	<p>Palladio's daughter Zenobia marries Giovanni Battista della Fede. Palladio designs the Palazzo Pretorio at Cividale in Friuli.</p>	
<b>1565</b>		
<p>Pope Pius IV dies.</p>	<p>Period spent in Cividale for the construction of the palazzo Pretorio. He creates temporary decorative structures for celebrations relating to the arrival in Vicenza of the bishop Matteo Priuli. He designs palazzo Valmarana in Vicenza and the Loggia del Capitaniato, the façade of the Chiesa di San Giorgio Maggiore in Venice, Villa Serego at Santa Sofia di Pedemonte (VR) and Villa Forni Cerato at Montecchio Precalcino (VI).</p>	
<b>1566</b>		
<p>Suleiman the Magnificent dies. Election of Pope Pius V. Sansovino creates the sculptures Mars, Venus and Neptune for the external stairway of the Duca Palace. Zelotti paints frescoes at the Villa Emo at Fanzolo. Giorgio Vasari comes to Venice.</p>	<p>Vasari meets Palladio in Venice. In Venice he signs documents produced during arbitration proceedings relating to Palazzo Grimani at San Luca together with Pietro Guberni and Jacopo Sansovino. He produces the plans for Villa Almerico Capra in Vicenza.</p>	

HISTORIC / ARTISTIC / POLITICAL	BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES	PALLADIO'S WORKS
<b>1567</b>		
<p>Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland, is imprisoned and obliged to abdicate in favour of her son James IV. Pietro Loredan becomes the Doge of Venice. El Greco arrives in Venice.</p>	<p>Designs the Villa Trissino at Meledo di Sarego (VI). Signs a second deed of arbitration concerning Palazzo Grimani in Venice.</p>	
<b>1568</b>		
<p>In Florence Vasari publishes the second edition of his "Lives of the Artists". Work on the Chiesa del Gesù begins in Rome according to plans made by Vignola.</p>	<p>Palladio spends some time in Piedmont as a guest of Emanuele Filiberto of the House of Savoy. On account of his many commitments, he declines an invitation to the imperial court in Vienna.</p>	
<b>1569</b>		
<p>Cosimo I de' Medici receives the title of Grand Duke from Pope Pius V.</p>	<p>His son Orazio obtains his degree in law at Padua. His son Leonida is tried for homicide during a quarrel and pardoned with a verdict of lawful self defence. In Vicenza, Palladio moves to the other side of the present via IV Novembre. Palladio works on the Palazzo Piovene all'Isola in Vicenza and Villa Mocenigo at Dolo (VE). He designs the bridge at Bassanodel Grappa (VI), the bridge over the River Tesina (VI), the second version of the Ponte di Rialto (VE) and Palazzo Barbaran da Porto (VI).</p>	   
<b>1570</b>		
<p>Elisabeth I of England is excommunicated by Pius V. In the War of Cyprus, Venice loses Nicosia. Alvise Mocenigo is the new Doge. Jacopo Sansovino and Daniele Barbaro die in Venice.</p>	<p>Palladio moves to Venice and takes an apartment in Giacomo Contarini's house at San Samuele. In the capital, he presents an assessment regarding the palazzoof Marin Malipiero. He succeeds Sansovino as official public consultant of the Republic for architectural matters. Work begins on the Palazzo Barbaranda Porto a Vicenza. He designs Villa Porto at Molina di Malo (VI). The Quattro Libri dell'Architettura are published.</p>	 
<b>1571</b>		
<p>Venice is allied with Spain and the Pope against the Turks, who are defeated in October in the Battle of Lepanto. Death of Benvenuto Cellini Caravaggio is born.</p>	<p>Orazio is summoned and questioned by the Holy Inquisition. The Loggia del Capitaniato is under construction in Vicenza. He produces plans for the palazzo Porto in Piazza Castello in Vicenza and the Villa Porto at Molina di Malo (VI).</p>	
<b>1572</b>		
<p>Election of Pope Gregory XIII. The Turks conquer Cyprus.</p>	<p>Death of his children Leonida and Orazio. He provides initial consultation and early plans for the façade of the Basilica of San Petronio in Bologna. He prepares the drawings for palazzo Thiene Bonin Longare in Vicenza.</p>	 
<b>1573</b>		
<p>Venice loses other possessions in the Aegean and abandons Cyprus. Peace negotiated with the Turks. Venice loses Cyprus completely.</p>		

HISTORIC / ARTISTIC / POLITICAL	BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES	PALLADIO'S WORKS
<b>1574</b>		
<p>Charles IX dies in France and is succeeded by Henry III. A fire breaks out in the Ducal Palace. Scamozzi designs Villa Verlato. Death of Vasari.</p>	<p>He produces two temporary works (a triumphal arch and loggia) at the Lido of Venice, which form part of structures erected to celebrate the visit of Henry III, the King of France. He is asked for an opinion concerning restoration work carried out in the chambers of the Collegio and on the four portals of the Ducal Palace.</p>	
<b>1575</b>		
<p>Henry III of France visits Venice. Outbreak of the plague in Venice. The Doge of Venice Alvise Mocenigo dies and is succeeded by Sebastiano Venier.</p>	<p>Palladio publishes the <i>Commentari di C. Giulio Cesare</i>. Journey to Brescia. Completion of the main building of the Church of San Giorgio Maggiore in Venice.</p>	
<b>1576</b>		
<p>The Emperor Maximilian II dies and is succeeded by his son Rudolf II. Titian dies, is a victim of the plague in Venice, leaving his work <i>La Pietà</i> unfinished. Scamozzi designs la Rocca Pisana at Lonigo.</p>	<p>Design for the Valmarana Chapel in the Chiesa di Santa Corona in Vicenza.</p>	
<b>1577</b>		
<p>Sebastiano Venier is the Doge of Venice. Scamozzi designs Palazzo Trissino by the Cathedral. Another very serious fire breaks out at the Ducal Palace, destroying works by Tintoretto and Titian.</p>	<p>The project for the Chiesa del Redentore in Venice is completed. Palladio's opinion is sought in relation to restoration work at the Ducal Palace.</p>	
<b>1578</b>		
<p>Sebastiano Venier dies and Nicolò da Ponte is elected as Doge.</p>	<p>With his brother-in-law dalla Fede, Palladio's son Silla purchases a portion of land for the family tomb at Santa Corona in Vicenza. Palladio is again requested to provide consultancy relating to the Basilica of San Petronio in Bologna. Plans are completed for the Church of Santa Maria Nova in Vicenza.</p>	
<b>1579</b>		
<p>Jacopo Bassano starts to paint the 'Deposition in the Tomb' for the church of Santa Maria in Vanzo at Padua.</p>	<p>He designs the Porta Gemona at San Daniele in Friuli.</p>	
<b>1580</b>		
<p>Vincenzo Scamozzi moves to Venice.</p>	<p>Design of the Olympic Theatre in Vicenza and the Tempietto for Villa Barbaro at Maser (TV). Palladio dies on 19th August 1580, probably at Maser, and is buried in the Chiesa di Santa Corona in Vicenza.</p>	

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**United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**

[www.sitiunesco.org](http://www.sitiunesco.org)

Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali - Commissione Nazionale Siti UNESCO e Sistemi Turistici Locali

[www.sitiunesco.it](http://www.sitiunesco.it)

Associazione Città Italiane Patrimonio Unesco

[www.comune.vicenza.it](http://www.comune.vicenza.it)

Comune di Vicenza

[www.vicenzaforumcenter.it](http://www.vicenzaforumcenter.it)

Forum Center del Comune di Vicenza

[www.cisapalladio.org](http://www.cisapalladio.org)

Centro Internazionale di Studi di Architettura Andrea Palladio

[www.andreapalladio500.it](http://www.andreapalladio500.it)

Comitato Nazionale per il V Centenario della nascita di Andrea Palladio

[www.irvv.net](http://www.irvv.net)

Istituto Regionale Ville Venete

[www.comune.caldogno.vi.it](http://www.comune.caldogno.vi.it)

Comune di Caldogno, proprietario di Villa Caldogno

[www.comune.quintovicentino.vi.it](http://www.comune.quintovicentino.vi.it)

Comune di Quinto Vicentino, proprietario di Villa Thiene

[www.provincia.rovigo.it](http://www.provincia.rovigo.it)

Provincia di Rovigo, proprietaria di Villa Badoer

Websites specifically dedicated to Palladian architecture:

[www.cisapalladio.org](http://www.cisapalladio.org)

Palazzo Barbaran da Porto

Sede del Centro Internazionale di Studi di Architettura Andrea Palladio

[www.palazzothiene.it](http://www.palazzothiene.it)

Palazzo Thiene – Sede della Banca Popolare di Vicenza

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Teatro Olimpico – Sito delle Settimane Musicali al Teatro Olimpico

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Villa Foscari

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