



CICERONI
T R A V E L

AN INVITATION TO THE VENETO PALLADIO, GIOTTO & VERONESE

THURSDAY 25 – WEDNESDAY 31 MAY 2017 (7 DAYS)

LECTURER: TOM DUNCAN

£2270

- **Marvellous opportunity to explore the Veneto and its many famous villas**
- **Visit the most important masterpieces of Palladio, Scamozzi, Giotto & Veronese**
- **Several private visits to villas hardly ever open to groups, in some of which we shall be entertained to lunch and dinner**
- **Hotel situated in lovely countryside not far from Vicenza with wonderful views over rolling hills**



Villa Rotonda

OVERVIEW

The art history of Italy from the end of the Middle Ages to the Renaissance and beyond is dominated by several interwoven strands. There is the emergence of city-states great and small – in the case of this visit, Venice and its rich agricultural hinterland, the Veneto. Given the power of Venice, ambitious families used patronage via the creation of magnificent works of architecture and art as a means of furthering their status and to serve these ends, great artists produced masterpieces in every possible medium. Quite simply, this part of northern Italy offers an unrivalled selection of architecture, sculpture, painting and landscape art for the discerning traveller.

In British eyes the architectural heritage of the Veneto is dominated by one man, Andrea Palladio (1508 – 1580). His career, centred on his adopted home of Vicenza, saw his style mature into a sophisticated blend of architectural theory, modular planning and a mastery of the classical language of architecture. At the end of the sixteenth century Palladio's student and assistant, Vincenzo Scamozzi, not only completed many of the buildings left unfinished at his master's death, he also continued to work in Palladio's style. Indeed, it is through the meeting in 1613 between Scamozzi, Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel and Inigo Jones (while they were in the Veneto), that the Palladian style came to be introduced into England. Ironically, it was in the eighteenth century that this very combination of sources – Palladio, Scamozzi and Jones – led Lord Burlington, William Kent and others to create that most quintessential of styles, neo-Palladianism.

These wonderful buildings are not our only focus as the Veneto has an equally rich heritage of paintings and sculptures. Giotto's wonderful frescoes in Padua's Arena Chapel and their neighbour, Mantegna's early work in the Eremitani church, will be complemented by Donatello's many works created during his time there. Veronese is the painter most closely associated with Palladio and his work at Villa Barbaro at Maser will surely be a highlight? Finally, the Tiepolo family of fresco painters left work of outstanding beauty at Villa Valmarana.

We shall stay in the Berici hills at Arcugnano, just south of Vicenza, at the charming 4* Hotel Villa Michelangelo. A former historic villa, it is surrounded by lovely countryside and has a swimming pool and an excellent restaurant. Vicenza is 15 minutes away by bus or taxi.

ITINERARY OUTLINE

Day 1: Thursday 25 May - On arrival at Venice Airport in the early afternoon, we make our way by coach directly to our hotel in the Berici hills south of **Vicenza**, the charming **4* Hotel Villa Michelangelo** at Arcugnano and later that evening we have dinner in the hotel's restaurant - wine, water and coffee are included with all group lunches and dinners.

Day 2: Friday 26 May - We drive into Vicenza and begin with a walk starting at Palladio's famous re-cladding of the city's **Palazzo della Ragione** or **Basilica**. We also look at a selection of his palace designs to include **Palazzi Thienne, Iseppa da Porto** and **Varmarana** and we also visit the **Palladio Museum**. We break for lunch (not included), after which we look at the justly famed **Teatro Olimpico** and end with a visit to **Palazzo Chiericati**,

now the local **Picture Gallery**. We return to our hotel and in the early evening drive to **Villa Godi**, one of Palladio's earliest villas, which we shall visit privately, to include dinner in the villa's frescoed *Salone*.

Day 3: Saturday 27 May – Our day starts at the **Villa Barbaro** at **Maser**, one of Palladio's most famous compositions. The villa stands apart from all other villas within Palladio's oeuvre, not least because of the amazing quality of the fresco decorations, painted between 1560 and 1562, by **Veronese**, the great Venetian painter and younger contemporary of Titian's. We continue to the nearby **Villa Angarano**, partly by Palladio, partly by Baldassare Longhena, for a private visit and lunch. Mid afternoon we pay a brief visit to **Bassano del Grappa**, a delightful town where we see Palladio's famous wooden **Bridge**, rebuilt to his original design. On our return to the hotel, the evening will be free.

Day 4: Sunday 28 May – **Padua** is one of northern Italy's most important cities and it will be the focus of today's visit. Giotto frescoed the **Scrovegni (Arena) Chapel** by about 1313 and these remain one of the supreme achievements of medieval painting. Miraculously spared from bombing damage during World War II, the nearby **Eremitani** church was not so lucky and its famous frescoes by Mantegna were badly damaged, though enough remains to support their deserved reputation. The city centre is a delightful place for lunch (not included) and afterwards we visit the **Basilica of St Anthony**, a fine medieval church with amazing sculptures by Donatello on the main altar, to which we shall have privileged access. Our afternoon will end with a visit to the city's famous **Botanical Garden**, the oldest such in Italy. We have dinner in a local restaurant close to our hotel.

Day 5: Monday 29 May – We drive to Palladio's **Villa Emo Capodilista** at Fanzola, still the centre of a working farm, where the interiors have frescoes by Zelotti and his team. We continue the short distance to **Villa Cornaro Gable** at Piombino Dese. Palladio was engaged to design this villa about 1552 and it was inhabited by 1554, though the side wings were not completed until 1590. Many rooms retain their original decorative finishes making this one of the most evocative of Palladio's villas. Nearby we also visit **Villa Marcello** for a private lunch, hosted by Count Jacopo Marcello. This is one of the finest early eighteenth century villas in the Veneto and was clearly inspired by Palladian prototypes. We return to the hotel and the evening will be free.

Day 6: Tuesday 30 May – **Villa Pisano Bonetti** at Lonigo was designed by Palladio just after his 1541 return from Rome and it displays a new confidence in his work based on his recent experiences. We continue to **Villa Rocca Pisani**, a wonderful villa by Palladio's assistant and successor, Vincenzo Scamozzi, which we shall visit privately. This is a very important villa as it is the major source for Lord Burlington's villa at Chiswick. En route back to our hotel, participants can be dropped in **Vicenza** for some free time and lunch (not included), if required. Later that evening, we drive the short distance to **Villa Valmarana ai Nani**, for a private visit. The "ai Nani" refers to the amusing group of statues of placed on the walls of the garden. The villa sits on an enviable hillside site and it has magnificent frescoes by Giambattista Tiepolo, while his son, Giovanni Domenico, frescoed the nearby Guest villa where we shall have our final group dinner.

Day 7: Wednesday 31 May – On leaving the hotel for the final time, we shall stop at the votive **Monte Berico Church** to see a very fine altarpiece by Veronese. Sited nearby on the edge of Vicenza, the **Villa Almerico Capra Valmarana**, popularly know as **La Rotonda** is surely the most influential of all his villas? The lavishly frescoed interiors are open one day per week, and luckily this is the day! We continue on to the Soave wine growing area where we shall stop for a snack lunch (not included) and then drive to Verona Airport for the return flight to London.

PRACTICALITIES

Price £2270 **Without Flights** £2120 **Deposit** £300

Single Supplement £265 (Double for Sole Use)

Hotel 6 Nights Bed & Breakfast at the 4* Hotel Villa Michelangelo

Room Upgrades Deluxe Double or Twin room for an additional £120 (per room) subject to availability.

Tour Manager James Hill

Flights British Airways

Outward: **BA2584** Depart London Gatwick (South Terminal) **1300**, arrive Venice **1610**

Return: **BA2597** Depart Verona **1715**, arrive London Gatwick (South Terminal) **1815**

Price includes 4 Dinners & 2 Lunches with wine, water & coffee, all local transfers, entry fees & gratuities

Not included Travel to/from Gatwick, 2 Dinners & 4 Lunches



CICERONI TRAVEL
2 The Square, Aynho, Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX17 3BL
Telephone +44 (0) 1869 811167 Fax +44 (0) 1869 811188
Email info@ciceroni.co.uk Website www.ciceroni.co.uk

