

## VILLAS OF THE VENETO

*Architecture and lifestyle in the age of Palladio*

12 - 17 SEPTEMBER 2017 — 6 DAYS — £ 1,500

LECTURER: DR CARLO CORSATO

ANDREA PALLADIO IS ONE OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL ARCHITECTS OF ALL TIME. To a large extent, his enduring fame was the result of his publication in 1570 of the *Quattro Libri dell'Architettura* which made his designs available to architects all over the world. But it is his homeland, the rich countryside surrounding Padua, Vicenza and Verona, where we can admire his most famous buildings: the stately villas of the Veneto. From the middle of the 14th century, wealthy Venetians and mainland aristocrats alike wanted grand buildings from which to overlook and manage their vast farmlands, whether in the river plains of the rivers Brenta, Adige or Po, or in the hills between the Valpolicella, Bassano del Grappa or Asolo. Since Petrarch's times, these country houses answered agricultural needs and reflected social status, but they were also places of relaxation and pleasurable pursuits, where their owners withdrew from the busy life in town. All these aspects found perfect expression in Palladio's buildings. Moreover, they were beautifully proportioned and drew on the prestigious vocabulary of Classical architecture. This *Art Pursuits Abroad* Study Tour will visit most of this architect's surviving villas and compare them with their mediaeval precedents, contemporary designs by other architects, and with 18th-century reinterpretations.

### PROGRAMME

**DAY 1** — Late morning flight with BA from London Gatwick to Venice. On our way to Vicenza, we will stop at Palladio's palatial Villa Foscari at Malcontenta, towering above the Brenta canal and surrounding fields. From there continue to our four-star hotel in Vicenza where all five nights of the tour will be spent. Dinner in a good local restaurant nearby.

**DAY 2** — In-depth exploration of Vicenza to admire Palladio's handsome town architecture, from the ingenious town hall, better known as the Basilica, to the fabulous Teatro Olimpico, the first purpose-built civic theatre building since Antiquity. After lunch, visit Palladio's most iconic building, the Villa Rotonda with four identical temple fronts. A short walk through enchanting countryside will take us to the nearby 17th-century Villa Valmarana ai Nani, frescoed in the 1750s by Giambattista Tiepolo and his son Domenico. Independent evening meal in Vicenza.

**DAY 3** — In the morning, coach excursion to Palladio's unfinished Villa Thiene at Quinto Vicentino, a fascinating architectural-historical puzzle. From there continue to Villa Godi, Palladio's earliest house in the country, austere on the outside, but beautifully frescoed inside. Lunch in the villa's portico will give us an opportunity to enjoy another aspect of the good life of 'villeggiatura'. Return to Vicenza for some

free time and an independent meal.

**DAY 4** — Three grand villas situated to the south and southwest of Vicenza are this day's destinations: Palladio's Villa Pisani at Bagnolo and Villa Poiana at Poiana Maggiore embody the perfect symbiosis of farmstead and country palace, while the nearby Rocca Pisana by Palladio's Vincenzo Scamozzi, majestically placed on the top of a hill, demonstrates Palladio's influence on the next generation. Return to Vicenza via the 18th-century Villa Cordellina with frescoes by Tiepolo. Independent meal.

**DAY 5** — The 1550s were the period of Palladio's greatest activity as a villa architect: enjoy visits to the royal Villa Cornaro at Piombino Dese and Villa Barbaro at Maser, arguably the most beautiful of them all, with its magnificent fresco cycle by Paolo Veronese. Continue to monumental Villa Emo at Fanzolo with its splendid fresco decoration by Giambattista Zelotti. Final dinner in a good restaurant in the centre of Vicenza.

**DAY 6** — By coach to the magnificent 18th-century Villa Pisani at Stra with its charming garden follies and a fantastic trompe-l'oeil Tiepolo ceiling. Continue to the Villa dei Vescovi for a special farewell lunch to end our tour *in bellezza*. Transfer to Bologna for an early evening flight with BA to London Heathrow, scheduled to land at c. 8.30pm.

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## PRACTICALITIES

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TOUR PRICE: £ 1,500 (deposit £ 200) — double room for sole use supplement £ 270 — 'No flights' price £ 1,350

THIS INCLUDES: Scheduled return flights (economy class) with British Airways between London Gatwick and Venice Marco Polo, and Bologna and London Heathrow — transfers and excursions by private coach — accommodation and meals as described below — services of the lecturer and a tour manager — guided visits (some by appointment) to villas and gardens of the Veneto — all entrance fees, taxes, and gratuities for coach drivers and waiters.

ACCOMMODATION: Five nights bed & breakfast in the friendly, family-run four-star Hotel Campo Marzio ([hotelcampomarzio.com](http://hotelcampomarzio.com)) — centrally located just outside the mediaeval town walls of Vicenza — rooms have recently been refurbished to a very high standard — MEALS: Two dinners and two lunches. For independent meals, your tour manager will be happy to make suggestions.

## ABOUT THE LECTURER

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A native Venetian who trained at the universities of Venice and Verona, DR CARLO CORSATO is a specialist in Renaissance art and architecture in Venice and the Veneto. He recently co-edited the first completed monograph on the church of Frari, which perfectly reflects his wide-ranging expertise and research interests, including devotional practice and liturgy, rituals and relics, art patronage and

## ABOUT ART PURSUITS ABROAD

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*Art Pursuits Abroad* has been organising study tours since 2003. Our holidays combine the art of travelling with the pleasure of looking at and learning about art history in beautiful places. We endeavour to give you an enjoyable experience in the company of like-minded individuals and of an expert lecturer who will enthuse, even inspire, so that you return home enriched, stimulated, full of ideas and happy memories.

✓ Each of our tours is conducted by an expert lecturer to make your time with us an enlightening, enjoyable and convivial experience in a small group of up to 22 participants. Most tours also include the services of a tour manager who takes care of the day-to-day practical matters and ensures your well-being. Reading suggestions are provided in advance, while sets of study notes act as aides-mémoire during and after the tour.

✓ We carefully research where we stay. Hotels — mostly four-star — are selected for their location, comfort and character. We like to eat in good restaurants and aim to choose menus typical of the region visited. They normally include wine, water and coffee/tea. On independent evenings you may either explore restaurants on your own, or join the tour manager/lecturer for dinner.

✓ We choose local transport companies for the safety and comfort of their vehicles and vessels.

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STAMINA: This tour involves a fair amount of walking, sometimes on uneven ground up and down gentle hills and steps, though distances are short. Visits to the villas require a lot of standing. Coach journeys generally don't exceed one hour.

SMALL GROUP: Between 12 and 22 participants. In the event that The London Art History Society members do not fill the tour, booking will be opened to all *Art Pursuits Abroad* clients in due course.

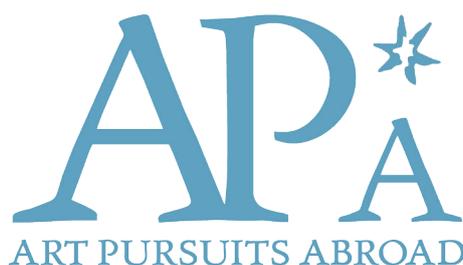
art making through painting, sculpture and architecture. He has lectured at a number of institutions, including the University of St Andrews, Northeastern University in Boston, and Morley College in London, where he currently teaches courses in Renaissance and Baroque art. Carlo has also organised and led numerous art history visits throughout Italy and Europe.

✓ We welcome single travellers. Single supplements are kept to a minimum and simply reflect what the hotel charges us. The advertised price is the price you pay. There are no hidden extras and we do not levy surcharges for any reason.

✓ Being small enables us to provide a personalised service. We consistently receive excellent feedback. Our clients value our personal commitment, enthusiasm and attention to detail, and most come back for more!

✓ All our holidays are fully financially protected in accordance with the Package Travel Regulations: flight-inclusive holidays are protected by our Air Travel Organiser's Licence scheme (ATOL 6436). Non-flight holidays are similarly protected by International Passenger Protection (IPP) and their panel of insurers. Further information can be found on our website, or on [www.atol.org.uk/ATOLCertificate](http://www.atol.org.uk/ATOLCertificate) or [www.ipplondon.co.uk](http://www.ipplondon.co.uk)

✓ *Art Pursuits Abroad* is a member of the Association of Independent Tour Operators (AITO), and organisation representing about 150 British specialist travel companies, most of which are independent and owner-managed. AITO membership is a mark of excellence and reflects a company's high standards of professionalism and customer care. To contact AITO visit [www.aito.co.uk](http://www.aito.co.uk) or call 020 87449280.



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