

His retreat was only accessible by two removable wooden ramps. The canal was bordered by a portico, while the high circular wall enclosing the little "domus" made it even more inaccessible.

The Baths with Heliocaminus (13)

These are the oldest baths in the Villa. The vault of the circular room has a central oculus which was fitted with an adjustable round bronze cover. It was thus possible to increase or diminish the quantity of water vapour heating the room which, with its south-west facing windows, was suitable for afternoon sun-bathing.

Hospitalia (14)

This complex occupies one of the shorter sides of the Courtyard of the Libraries to which it is linked by a flight of steps. It was used to lodge Praetorian officials or unimportant guests. There was a double row of rooms, each with three beds, which opened on to a wide central corridor with a black and white mosaic floor.

The Greek and Latin Libraries (15)

The Greek and Latin libraries stand on an artificial raised plateau which was turned into a garden. The two buildings are linked by a portico. The Greek Library has three floors: the second floor was given over to domestic service, while the third boasted a heating system. Hadrian may have resided here in winter, which would explain why there is an external staircase linking the third floor with the "domus" of the Maritime Theatre. The Latin Library has two floors and is similar to the other. Both have a series of rooms set out along the same axis.

The Philosophers' Room (16)

This large rectangular room has a wide semi-circular apse featuring seven niches. Both the Pecile and the Maritime Theatre are very close and can be reached via the room's two entrances. The Philosophers' Room thus served as a link between buildings. Some think it was used as a library, others that it was used as a Council Chamber. There is also disagreement as to what the niches held: some suggest books, others think they may have contained seven statues of

philosophers or perhaps statues of members of the Imperial Family.

The Temple of Venus (17)

This circular temple in the Doric style was situated in the centre of a semi-circular nymphaeum overlooking the Vale of Tempe. Strong supporting substructure (which incorporated a paved underground road used by servants and carts) made it possible to create the vast plain on which the complex was built. The Temple held a replica of the Aphrodite of Knidos by the famous ancient Greek sculptor Praxiteles, today in the Antiquarium. The plaster copy of the statue together with the four remaining columns and the magnificent entablature give special charm to the ruins.

The Greek Theatre (18)

The modest size of this theatre can be explained by the fact that it was only frequented by members of the Imperial Court. It has the semi-circular shape of Roman theatres. The terraces of the amphitheatre exploit the natural hilly morphology of the local tuff. A wide terrace half way up divides the seating into two sections. It is not yet clear whether the construction which overlooks the terraces was reserved for Hadrian or whether it was a small temple dedicated to a divinity. At the bottom of the terraces, however, the "orchestra" (where the chorus stood) is still clearly visible. The "proscenium" (stage) has been partly preserved, but the "frons scenae" (the "backdrop"), provided by columns for example, has disappeared.

The Palestra (Gymnasium) complex (19)

The complex consists of six buildings and is situated in what the Emperor called the "Vale of Tempe" in homage to a place (in Tessaglia) which had charmed him during his travels in Greece. The introduction of the Italian term "Palestra" is credited to 16th century painter and architect Pirro Ligorio. Ligorio worked for Cardinal Hyppolitus II d'Este, who had given him the task of finding Roman statues to decorate the gardens of Villa d'Este. When he found statues he thought to be of athletes in the Vale of Tempe, he concluded that the ruins must be those of a gymnasium. In actual fact, the complex was to have been dedicated to the goddess Isis.

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Hadrian's Villa

The TiburSuperbum Pocket guide

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How to get there

The site is situated 4 km from Tivoli, near the small village of Villa Adriana and can be reached by public transport:

- From Rome by COTRAL buses leaving from bus terminal situated outside Ponte Mammolo Metro station in N.E.Rome (about 1hour depending on traffic);
- bus "Via Prenestina-Tivoli" stops about 300m from the site
- bus "Via Tiburtina-Tivoli" stops about 1 km from the site
- bus "Tivoli/autostrada A24" stops about 1km from the site.

- From Rome by FS train to Tivoli. Walk from station to Tivoli main square, then catch CAT orange city bus shuttle (n°4) to the Hadrian's Villa stop, about 300m from the site.

Opening hours and tickets

All the information can be read at this address

<http://www.coopculture.it/heritage.cfm?id=75#>

The Villa, UNESCO World Heritage Site

Hadrian's Villa is the largest imperial Roman villa ever built with a complex covering about 300 acres. The Villa became the seat of government and evolved into a veritable city as Hadrian expanded it from the pre-existing 2nd -1st century B.C. late Republican villa which had been part of his wife's dowry. The Villa was only 17 miles from the Esquiline Gate and was also easily accessible from Rome via the River Aniene.

Construction in two phases

Hadrian constructed the Villa in two successive phases between 118 and 133 A.D.

Phase 1 (118-125): Libraries; north complex of Eastern Palace; Hospitalia (sleeping accommodation); garden SE of Palace, Pavilion NE of Piazza d'Oro (Golden Square); Heliocaminus Baths; Maritime Theatre; Stadium; Firemen's Headquarters; Large Baths.

Phase 2 (125-133): Small Baths; central complex of Eastern Palace; Western Palace; Piazza d'Oro; Praetorium, Vestibule (Entrance); Cento Camerelle (100 Chambers) and Pecile; Pavilion near Vale of Tempe; Canopus; Courtyard east of Stadium.

Hadrian's project

Hadrian had travelled widely in Rome's Eastern provinces and he reproduced architectural styles and buildings he had seen, adapting them to his personal taste. He connected the different zones of the Villa by constructing an underground network of roads and pedestrian passageways to be used by the servants, without encroaching on ground level above where only officials and diplomats were allowed to circulate. This arrangement ensured calm and discretion as well as making the complex functional and elegant.

The Pecile (1)

This was a large rectangular double portico inspired by the famous Stoà Poikile in Athens. It provided shelter from sun and rain, allowing people to stroll and converse and enclosed a garden with a large pool in the centre. The nine-metre- high wall on the north side is well conserved. It features the monumental entrance you would have taken if you arrived by the winding road from the north.

The Hundred Chambers (2)

This system of four floors of substructions

divided into small chambers was conceived to raise the surface ground level by a good 15 metres, thus creating a vast level plain on which the rectangular portico of the Pecile could be built. The dark underground cells, which had only a single opening for access, were used to lodge servants. Other rooms and premises on the ground floor were used as storerooms.

The Antinoeion (3)

In 2002, a temple dedicated to Antinous was discovered alongside the path leading to the Main Vestibule. Antinous was Hadrian's young lover, who drowned in the Nile in 130 A.D., and was honoured after his death in the same way as the gods Osiris, Dionysus or Hermes. As well as naming the Egyptian city of Antinoopolis after him, the Emperor dedicated this edifice to him as a memorial site. It was to be the last major building constructed in Hadrian's Villa.

Publius Aelius Hadrianus

He was born in Italica (Spain) in 76 A.D. and adopted by his uncle, Trajan, whom he succeeded in 117 thanks to the support of Trajan's widow Plotina (who may have been his mistress) on the strict condition that he should marry Vibia Sabina. Hadrian was well educated and versed in philosophy and poetry. He also showed political astuteness, travelling far and wide over long periods to visit and inspect the Provinces of the Empire and consolidate its frontiers. He gave coherence to the legislative system but alienated the Senators in the process. Between voyages he stayed at Tivoli, supervising the various building projects. In Rome, among other things, he organized the reconstruction of the Pantheon (which had been destroyed by fire), as well as the construction of the Temple of Venus and the Mausoleum (now the Castel Sant'Angelo) which was to be his own tomb. On the death of his wife Vibia in 137 A.D., Hadrian was accused of uxoricide by the populace. Disenchanted and isolated, he fell ill and died in 138. His successor, Antoninus Pius, overcame the hostility of the Senate and deified him.

The Building with Three Exedrae (4)

This rectangular, highly articulated complex had a triple exedra with porticoes on three of its outer walls. The two wings of the building show structural differences: one has mainly open spaces, the other more has more enclosed areas (the north-facing rooms were used for summer banquets). The building

was a service vestibule for the Building with a Fishpond, Hadrian's private residence, also known as the Winter Palace.

The Small Baths (5)

The Small Baths were built as part of a phase of enlargement of the Villa between 121 and 126, at the same period as the Large Baths, but after the Baths with Heliocaminus (room heated by solar rays). They were situated on the road leading to the Canopus and were serviced via underground tunnels. As they were linked to the Palace and were near the Building with a Fishpond, they may have been used by the Emperor himself or else reserved for women.

The Large Baths (6)

The Large Baths could be reached by crossing a vast square to the east of the Palace complex. They are architecturally less original than the Small Baths and possess all the usual characteristics of Roman baths: sudatorium, caldarium, tepidarium, frigidarium, swimming pools and gymnasium.

The Praetorium (7)

The frequently given explanation that the Praetorium served to lodge the Praetorian Guard, the Emperor's bodyguards, is untrue. The structure of the building has two distinct parts. The lower part, composed of three floors of substructions (servants' lodgings), supported the richly decorated upper part, reserved for distinguished guests. The upper part was on the same level as the Building with a Fishpond and thus enjoyed direct access to the parts of the Palace frequented by the Emperor.

The Canopus (8)

This was inspired by the Canopus Canal which linked the eponymous Egyptian town with nearby Alexandria. Hadrian built his canal in a narrow valley. To the south it is dominated by the Serapaeum, a nymphaeum with an exedra, used for summer banquets. On the east side there was a double colonnade supporting a pergola. The west side was bordered by a single colonnade. Half way along there are plaster copies of six statues which once stood there: four female caryatids and two Silenus figures carrying baskets instead of capitals. At the north end you will see copies of statues of Pallas Athena, Ares, Hermes and two wounded Amazons. There are also copies of fine

statues personifying the Nile and the Tiber and a splendid crocodile.

The Roccabrina Tower (9)

This was inspired by the tower of the Athens Academy. To reach it, take the path from the exhibition building near the Canopus. The Tower originally had three floors and may have been used by Hadrian as an astronomical observatory as well as being a belvedere.

The Piazza d'Oro (10)

The name means "Golden Square" and was no doubt inspired by the architectural and sculptural richness of the building, which was plundered and stripped from the sixteenth century on. Passing through the octagonal vestibule (entrance) with its ribbed vault, the visitor found himself in a large garden enclosed by a portico, with a rectangular pool in the centre. Round the pool there was an arrangement of flowerbeds and small basins. The Great Hall directly opposite the garden, with a wide nymphaeum behind it, may have been used for summer banquets.

The Hall of the Doric Pilasters (11)

The building owes its name to a porticoed peristyle with fluted pilasters which support a Doric entablature. It was not Hadrian's throne room but rather a structure intended to connect the different zones of the Palace. It was built during the second construction phase of the imperial residence and was thus near the Summer Dining Room and the exedrae built during the Republican period. Thanks to this "hub", Hadrian and his guests could reach the Outer Peristyle, the Piazza d'Oro, the Summer Dining Room and the Building with a Fishpond. All that remains of the rectangular portico is the fluted pilasters which supported an entablature with triglyphs and metopes in the Doric style, surmounted by a barrel vault. In the corridor leading to the building you can still see some of the original mosaic floor. It is not known whether or not the central area was covered.

The Maritime Theatre (12)

This is a small, artificial island where Hadrian used to go seeking peace and quiet to meditate. On it stands a miniature, circular "domus" complete with atrium, triclinium, cubiculum, small baths and latrines. The island was surrounded by water from a canal, and the Emperor used to go swimming.