

and wall niches. Contemporary designers are following Palladio's lead when they use arches to soften the passageways between rooms. Arched windows and doorways appear on many houses, but you will especially notice this feature on Spanish and Mediterranean style homes.

- **Palladian Windows.** Named after the Renaissance master, a Palladian window combines the pleasing arched shape with a keen sense of symmetry. A tall window rounded at the top is flanked by two smaller rectangles. You'll most often see a Palladian window on the second story, directly above the front entrance. This type of window is characteristic of the Federal style, but has been widely used on other homes from Victorian to modern times. Upscale new homes sometimes have oversized floor-to-ceiling Palladian windows.

### **Palladio's Influence**

Palladio's influence was far-reaching. Palladio's work became well known after the publication of *I Quattro Libri dell'Architettura* (*The Four Books of Architecture*) in 1570. Interest in his style was renewed in later generations and became fashionable all over Europe, for example in parts of the Loire Valley of France. In Britain, Inigo Jones and Christopher Wren embraced the Palladian style. Another admirer was the architect Richard Boyle, 4th Earl of Cork, also known as Lord Burlington, who, with William Kent, designed Chiswick House. Exponents of Palladianism include the 18th century Venetian architect Giacomo Leoni who published an authoritative four-volume work on Palladio and his architectural concepts.

Palladio died in Maser, near Treviso.

### **Chronology**

- 1508: Born in Padua on November 30
- 1521: Begins work as a stone mason
- 1540: Begins his first work, Villa Godi in Lonedo
- 1544: Begins construction of Villa Pisani in Bagnolo
- 1545: Involved in the refurbishment of the Basilica of Vicenza
- 1550: Produces drawings for Palazzo Chiericati and Villa Foscari
- 1552: Begins work on Villa Cornaro and the palace of Iseppo De' Porti

- 1554: Begins work on Villa Barbaro in Maser
- 1556: In Udine he works on Casa Antonini and in Vicenza begins with Palazzo Thiene. Assignments increase along with his fame. Collaborates with Daniele Barbaro, the patriarch of Aquileia on his commentary on Vitruvius, providing the drawings.
- 1557: Begins Villa Badoer in the Po river valley
- 1558: Realizes a project for the church of San Pietro di Castello in Venice and probably in the same year begins the construction of Villa Malcontenta
- 1559: Begins Villa Emo in the village of Fanzolo di Vedelago
- 1561: Begins the construction of Villa Pojana Maggiore and at the same time of the refectory of the Benedictine San Giorgio Monastery, and subsequently the facade of the monastery Monastero per la Carità and the Villa Serego
- 1562: Begins the facade of San Francesco della Vigna and work on San Giorgio Maggiore
- 1565: Begins the construction of Villa Cagollo in Vicenza and Villa Pisani in Montagnana
- 1566: Palazzo Valmarana and Villa Zeno
- 1567: Begins works for the Villa Capra "La Rotonda"
- 1570: He is nominated Proto della Serenissima (chief architect of the Republic of Venice), and publishes in Venice *I Quattro Libri dell'Architettura* (*The Four Books of Architecture*)
- 1571: Realizes: Villa Piovene, Palazzo Porto Barbaran, the Loggia del Capitanio and Palazzo Porto Breganze.
- 1574: Publishes the 'Commentari' (Commentaries) of Caesar and works on studies for the front of the Basilica di San Petronio in Bologna
- 1577: Begins the construction of the church of Il Redentore
- 1580: Prepares drawings for the interior of the church of S. Lucia in Venice and in the same year on March 23 oversees the beginning of the construction of the Teatro Olimpico but dies on August 19, 1580.

## ITALIAN HERITAGE & CULTURE COMMITTEE OF NEW YORK, INC.

For more than thirty years the Italian Heritage & Culture Committee has organized events, concerts, exhibits and lectures, celebrating Italian culture. Each year a theme representative of the history and culture of Italy and Italian Americans is highlighted. The committee promotes Italian culture by focusing on schools and taking a leadership role in promoting Italy and its cultural contributions. The committee web site, [www.italyculturemonth.org](http://www.italyculturemonth.org), is the place to go for anything Italian: language, newspapers, culture, travel and many other resources on Italy and Italian culture.

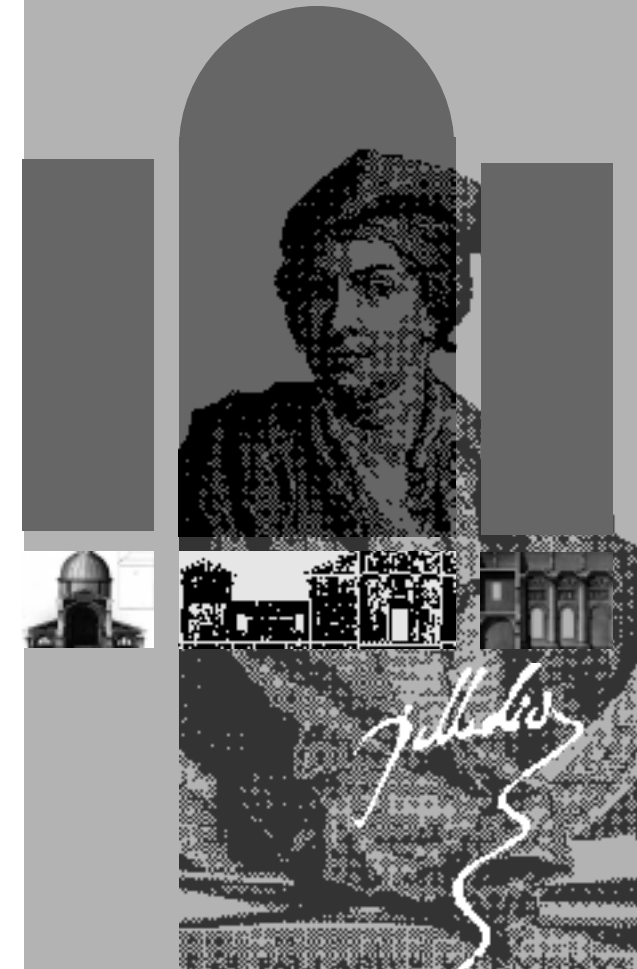
Mailing Address:  
Italian Heritage & Culture Committee  
C/O Italian Cultural Institute  
686 Park Avenue  
New York, New York 10021  
Telephone: (212) 642-2094  
Web address:  
[www.italyculturemonth.org](http://www.italyculturemonth.org)

© 2008 Italian Heritage and Culture  
Committee of New York, Inc. All Rights Reserved • 6/20/08

Text: This text is licensed under the GNU Free Documentation License. It uses material from the Wikipedia article "Metasyntactic variable."  
Other sections written by Jackie Craven for realtor.org  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrea\\_Palladio](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrea_Palladio)  
<http://www.realtor.org/rmoarch.nsf/pages/arch20041129>

## ITALIAN HERITAGE & CULTURE COMMITTEE OF NEW YORK, INC.

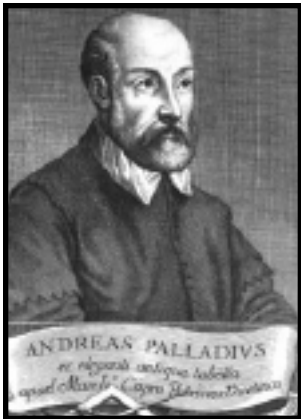
# ANDREA PALLADIO 1508 - 1580



ARCHITECT FOR THE AGES  
A QUINCENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

# Andrea Palladio

## 1508 -1580



Andrea Palladio (November 30, 1508 – August 19, 1580), was an Italian architect, widely considered the most influential person in the history of Western architecture.

He was born Andrea di Pietro della Gondola in Padova (Padua), then part of the Republic of Venice. Apprenticed

as a stonecutter in Padova when he was 13, he broke his contract after only 18 months and fled to the nearby town of Vicenza. There he became an assistant in the leading workshop of stonecutters and masons. He frequented the workshop of Bartolomeo Cavazza, from whom he learned some of his skills.

His talents were first recognized in his early thirties by Count Gian Giorgio Trissino, who employed the young mason on a building project. Trissino also gave him the name by which he is now known, Palladio, an allusion to the Greek goddess of wisdom Pallas Athene. Palladio later benefited from the patronage of the Barbaro family, and in particular Daniele Barbaro who encouraged his studies of classical architecture in Rome. The Palladian style, named after him, adhered to classical Roman principles. (Palladio knew relatively little about Greek architecture). His architectural works have "been valued for centuries as the quintessence of High Renaissance calm and harmony" (Watkin, D., *A History of Western Architecture*). Palladio designed many churches, villas, and palaces, especially in Venice, Vicenza and the surrounding area. A number of his works are protected as part of the World Heritage Site Palladian Villas of the Veneto.

Palladio was chosen by the most powerful members of Venetian society for numerous important commissions. His success as an architect is based not only on the beauty of his work, but also for its



harmony with the culture of his time. His success and influence were a result of the integration of extraordinary aesthetic quality with expressive characteristics that resonated with his client's social aspirations. His buildings served to visually communicate their place in the social order of their culture. This integration of beauty and deep meaning is apparent in three major building types: the urban palazzo, the agricultural villa, and the church.

In his urban structures he developed a new improved version of the typical Early Renaissance palazzo (exemplified by the Palazzo Strozzi). Adapting a new urban palazzo type created by Bramante in the House of Raphael, Palladio found a powerful expression of the importance of the owner and his social position. The main living quarters of the owner on the second level are now clearly distinguished in importance by use of a flattened classical portico, centered and raised above the subsidiary and utilitarian ground level (illustrated in the Palazzo da Porto Festa and the Palazzo Valmarana Braga). The height of the portico is achieved by incorporating the owner's sleeping quarters on the third level, within a giant two story classical colonnade, a motif adapted from Michelangelo's Capitoline buildings in Rome. The main floor level became known as the "piano nobile," and it is still referred to as the "first floor" in continental Europe.

Palladio also established an influential new building format for the agricultural villas of the Venetian aristocracy. He consolidated the various stand-alone farm outbuildings into a single impressive structure, arranged as a highly organized whole dominated by a strong center and symmetrical side wings, as illustrated at (Villa Barbaro). The Palladian villa configuration often consisted of a centralized block raised on an elevated podium, accessed by grand steps and flanked by lower service wings, as at (Villa Foscari



and Villa Badoer). This format, with the quarters of the owner at the elevated center of their own universe, found resonance as a prototype for Italian villas and later for the country estates of the

English nobility (such as Lord Burlington's Chiswick House, Vanbrugh's Blenheim, Walpole's Houghton Hall, and Adam's Kedleston Hall). The configuration was a perfect architectural expression of their perceived position in the social order of the times. His influence was extended worldwide into the British colonies. The Palladian villa format can be seen at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello and as recently as 1940 in Pope's National Gallery in Washington DC, adapted to convey the importance of art. The rustication of exposed basement walls of Victorian residences is a remnant of the Palladian podium.

Similarly, Palladio created a new configuration for the design of Roman Catholic churches that established two interlocking architectural orders, each clearly articulated, yet delineating a hierarchy of a larger order overriding a lesser order. This idea coincided with the rising acceptance of the theological ideas of St. Thomas Aquinas, who postulated the notion of two worlds existing simultaneously: the divine world of faith and the earthly world of man. Palladio created an architecture which made a visual statement communicating the idea of two superimposed systems, as (illustrated at San Francesco della Vigna). In a time when religious dominance in Western culture was threatened by the rising power of science and secular humanists, this architecture found great favor with the Church as a clear statement of the proper relationship of the earthly and the spiritual worlds.



### Palladio Architectural Features

• Symmetrical Floor Plans. Like the great builders of ancient Rome, Palladio believed that beauty comes from harmony. "Our homes, he wrote, should be proportioned like our bodies, with rooms balanced equally on each side of the entrance hall". You will find this type of symmetry in a Center Hall Colonial and many Georgian and Neoclassical homes.

• Columns. Since Palladio modeled his work after the great buildings of ancient Greece and Rome, it's not surprising that he made extensive use of columns. An assortment of column styles—Corinthian, Ionic, and Doric was used to support roofs, frame archways, and divide interior spaces. America's stately Southern mansions—those multi-columned "Gone with the Wind" houses—are grandiose examples of Palladian design. Indeed, Palladio's villas are the inspiration behind the columned porches you see on Greek Revival and Neoclassical houses.

• Pediments. A pediment is a triangular shape resembling the gable of an ancient Grecian temple. The pediment shape is a hallmark of the Greek Revival style, but you will often see miniature pediments used on a variety of homes. Look for triangular roofs or ledges over doors, windows, and porticos.

• Porticos. A portico is an entry porch with columns. The White House in Washington, D.C., has a grand, rounded portico, but a portico can be much smaller. Often it is simply a front stoop that is sheltered by a small pediment. Today you will find porticos at the entrance to many houses, from Colonial to Contemporary. In keeping with Palladio's love of balance, the portico is often placed at the center of the facade, with windows distributed equally on each side.

• Rounded Arches. Wide, rounded arches are as Roman as the Coliseum. Inspired by ancient architecture, Palladio built arched doorways, windows,

