

The twittering had been realized taking advantage of the air outcoming from the beak of the birds. These devices, hidden in the fountains, were invented to astonish the hosts of the Cardinal.

#### **Proserpina fountain** (13)

The fountain takes its name from the marble sculpture in the center of the nympheum representing Proserpina being kidnapped from Avernus by Pluto. It's composed by a central nympheum flanked by two niches bounded by four twisted columns and two staircases which join the different levels of the park.

#### **The "Rometta" fountain** (14)

Created by the usual Pirro Logorio, unfortunately today the Fountain is not as it was originally because it was partially demolished in the XIX century, as it is possible to see by looking at the designs made by Venturini in 1685. They represented some important statues that still exist here like the she wolf with the twins, Rome armed with armour, helmet and lance. At the feet of this statue there is a little channel (the river Tevere). So the artistical Roman beauties are opposed to the natural Tiburtine beauties, exalted in the Ovato Fountain too.

#### **The one hundred fountains avenue** (15)

It is a tree-lined avenue that joins the Fountain of Tivoli (or Ovato) to the Fountain of Rome (or Rometta). The fountains are structured on three plans in which the waters of three "rivers" (Albunio, Aniene and Ercolano) flow symbolically and then meet in the Fountain of the Rometta, whose channel symbolizes the Tevere. The fountain is composed by one hundred fountains with the shape of lilies, eagles, obelisks, small boats from which water comes out.

#### **The Ovate fountain (or Tivoli)** (16)

The Fountain of Ovate has been called this way since 1567 because of its shape. It is a semicircular exedra with a basin in the center which takes water from the top. It has some statues representing mythological heroes exalting the Este dynasty and Tivoli greatness. It symbolically represents the Tivoli falls while the cliffs of the upper part of the fountain represent the Tiburtine mountains.

#### **The "Bicchierone" fountain (Great Glass)** (17)

Built according to a design by Gian Lorenzo Bernini between 1660 and 1661, the fountain was added as to decorate of the central longitudinal axis in the 17th century. This fountain has the shape of a serrated chalice, from which a high jet of water falls into a conch.

### **Where to eat**

#### **Restaurant - Pizzeria "Il Ciocco"**

It is located at just a few meters from the entrance of Villa Gregoriana and it offers a wonderful garden with a great view on the natural precipice of the villa. It also offers a wide choice of typical dishes of fish and meat.  
Via Ponte Gregoriano 33 - Tivoli  
Tel. +39 0774 333482  
Opened all days

### **Accommodations**

#### **Park Hotel "Imperatore Adriano"**

It's a perfect marriage between a rediscovered architectural style and a touch of class, is located a few kilometres from Rome "the Eternal City", at the slopes of Monti Tiburtini, where Tivoli, "the City of Art" dominates the Aniene Valley.

Via Garibaldi 167 - Villanova di Guidonia  
Tel. +39 0774 324844

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# Villa d'Este

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### **Visiting Hours**

8.30 - 1h before sunset  
Closed:  
on Monday and 1 Jan.  
and 25 Dec.

If Monday is a holiday, the monument will remain open and the weekly closure will then be delayed until the following business day.

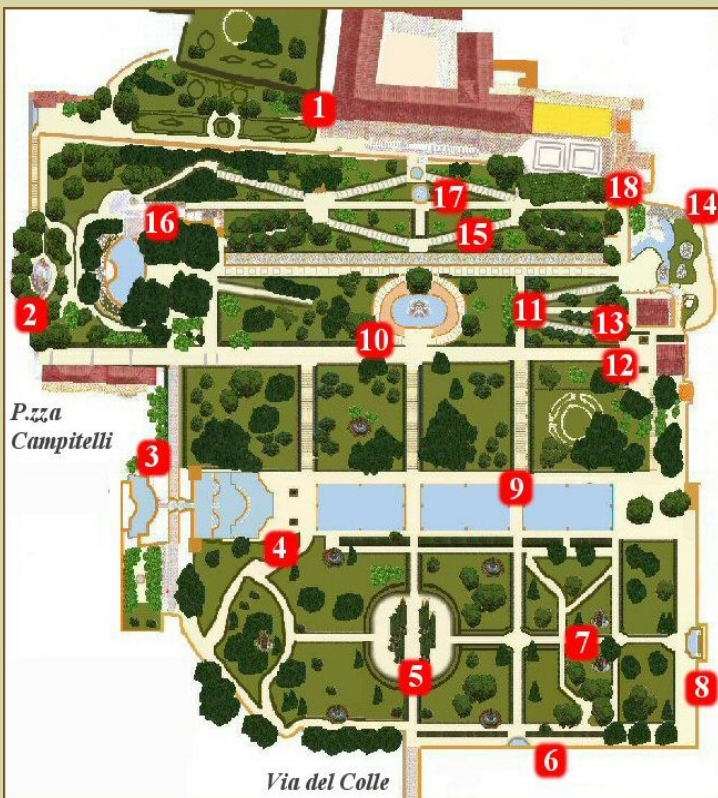
### **Tickets**

- 9.00 € (if there is a exhibition)
- 8.00 €
- 4.00 € for the EEC citizens from 18 to 24 years
- free for EEC citizens under 18 or over 65 years

Ticket service: Pierreci  
Tel. +39 0774 312070

### **How to arrive**

Villa d'Este is near Piazza Garibaldi, in the heart of Tivoli. Tivoli is situated approximately 30 km (20 miles) from Rome and can be reached by motorway A24 or by some number of buses and/or trains.



- (1) The building
- (2) Pegasus fountain
- (3) The Organ fountain
- (4) Neptune fountain
- (5) The cypresses round terrace
- (6) Goddess Nature fountain
- (7) The "Mete" fountain
- (8) Arianna fountain
- (9) The fish ponds
- (10) The fountain of Dragons
- (11) The "Cordonata dei Bollori"
- (12) The Owllet fountain
- (13) Proserpina fountain
- (14) The "Rometta" fountain
- (15) The one hundred fountains avenue
- (16) The Ovate fountain
- (17) The "Bicchierone" fountain
- (18) Diana fountain

### The sounding fountains

The hydraulic organ of the Organ fountain is activated daily at: 10.30 - 12.30 - 2.30 p.m - 4.30 p.m - 6.30 p.m  
The Owllet fountain utters daily at: 10.00 - 12.00 - 2.00 p.m - 4.00 p.m - 6.00 p.m

Villa d'Este was built in 1550 by order of Cardinal Ippolito II d'Este; it is very famous for its artistic wonders and especially for the innumerable fountains which amaze the visitor of this ancient royal palace. Since 2001 it has been recognized as a UNESCO Patrimony.

For its erection, the Cardinal chose a place which had a very happy name: " Hedonistic Valley", a valley descending among sweet slopes covered with vineyards and olive groves, with country paths and white little houses with red roofs and a little church.

### The Cardinal Ippolito II d'Este

Ippolito II d' Este, Cardinal of Ferrara, son of the famous Lucrezia Borgia and Alfonso d' Este, was the inventor and the constructor of Villa d'Este. During the Conclave of Giulio III, he was proclaimed Governor of Tivoli. He accepted the assignment considering this role as a springboard for his future. He took possession of his Office the 9th September 1550, while the guns of Rocca Pia greeted him and the most important citizens welcomed him enthusiastically.

The building of the Villa was committed to Pirro Ligorio, a Neapolitan architect, and lasted about 20 years, beginning from 1550. He excavated a long gallery which brought an incredible mass of water from the river Aniene to the basin of the Ovate fountain and from here, using the principle of communicating vessels only, realized all the water plays still present in the fountains. The Villa is still supplied through this pipe which brings about 300 litres of water per second.

### The Building (1)

The Building, adapted to the pre-existing friary, was given a very sober façade, characterized by a large central loggia. The lofty floor (or old apartment) was used for the Cardinal's private rooms. It is composed by about ten rooms, whose vaults were frescoed by Livio Agresti and his School. The apartment of the Cardinal is on the same level as the courtyard and the reception rooms, linked together at the back by a long corridor called the "Manica Lunga". From the central room, or throne room, it is possible to go to the loggia and admire the

brehtaking view. The ceiling is divided into four parts, reproducing two views of the Aniene river, the "Tosse" temple and the little Vesta temple. At the end of the floor, you can visit the little and lovely Chapel, made by Federico Zuccari: the decoration consists of large figures of prophets and sibyls in alcoves, surmounted by monochrome panels depicting the life of the Virgin and the Coronation on the ceiling. The ground floor (or Noble apartment) constitutes the most relevant part of the building, with its nine halls and banqueting-rooms, because of Muziano's and Zuccari's frescoes. Here you can also admire the two Tiburtine statues, made by Cesare Nebbia, witnessing the desire of exalting the historical events linked to the foundation of Tivoli and to the myths connected to this town.

### Pegasus fountain (2)

It is dominated by a statue representing Pegasus, the famous mythical winged horse originated, by a legend, by Medusa's blood when Perseus beheaded her. The newborn horse flew to the Olympus and Athena and Poseidon domed him. In the fountain, the horse is represented with outspread wings as if he was flying off.

### The Organ fountain (3)

Its construction began in 1568 and finished in 1611 under the Cardinal Alessandro d'Este. It is clearly baroque, so really different from the Renaissance style of the rest of the Villa. In the central niche there is a little temple which protects the hydraulic organ commissioned to the French Claude Venard that invented an engine in which the fall of water determined a leak of air from the organ-pipes.

### The central courtyard

The present entrance at Piazza Trento (originally the secondary one, because the main entrance used to be at the bottom of the garden) leads to the central courtyard, the reconverted former cloister (1566-67) embellished with the Fountain of Venus.

### Neptune fountain (4)

This is the only fountain to be realized during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, transforming the Bernini waterfall which had run wild for almost two centuries and was irreparably compromised. Around 1930, Attilio Rossi was given the task for the substantial restoration work.

Helped by Mr. Emo Salvati, he readapted the difference of level between the Organ fountain and the fish ponds, creating the spectacular fountain which we can still admire. In the middle, among the high jets of the fountain, through the film of water, we can see indistinctly the bust of Neptune, the God who the fountain is entitled to.

### The cypresses round terrace (5)

The sixteenth century visitor, crossing the gate in Via del Colle, was astonished by this round exedra and by the vision of the building which could be made out among the green and the jets of the fountains. It's a circular area adorned with four small fountains and surrounded by the oldest cypress trees in Italy.

### The Este Stables

The huge building, which dominates Garibaldi Square with its stateliness, was commissioned by Cardinal Alessandro d'Este in 1621, in order to settle the stables of the ducal family (fit for more than one hundred horses).

As they were built on a ground which the town had ceded, they stood outside the town walls but next to the Rocca Pia, the Este Villa and the Porta Santa Croce (which was knocked down in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century because of road engineering regulations). The new bishops, governors and any other authority entered the town by this door.

### Goddess Nature fountain (6)

It is situated near the old entrance of the Villa, the one in Via del Colle. It is a travertine copy of the statue of Diana of Ephesus.

### The Fountain of Dragons (10)

It is placed in the middle of two opposing graded ramps and takes its name from the presence of a group of four dragons whose open jaws pour out high jets of water. The fountain is to commemorate the killing of Ladone, a dragon imagined to have one hundred heads, and to exalt the eleventh labour of Hercules, a God who Ippolito II and his family were particularly devoted to.

### The Owllet fountain (12)

Also in this case, as for the Organ Fountain, there is a hydraulic device which, taking advantage of the fall of the water, let an artificial owl to approach the bronze little birds on a branch, to frightening them and making them stop twittering.