

PALAZZO VALMARANA BRAGA

A short chronology of Valmarana's Palace

As a memorial to her husband Isabella Nogarole, widow of Giovanni Alvise Valmarana, on December the 14th, 1565, drew up a contract with the constructor Pietro di Nanto to build the palace. A commemorative medal which establishes 1566 as the year the building work actually began was discovered under a column in the atrium.



The Palace was built on a plot of land which had belonged to the Valmarana's family since 1483. The area extended from Corso Fogazaro to the Church of San Giacomo.

Existing buildings meant the Palace's width was limited. This inspired Palladio to abandon the classical model that placed the main hall in the centre of a building, till then a typical feature in Veneto Architecture.

By moving the main hall back to receive light from the courtyard, Palladio was able to create a cloister atrium.

The table in the Trattato (1570) makes the floor plan appear regular despite the fact the front of the palace follows the oblique angle of the street.



The main facade forms an immense architectural relief, which is particularly impressive when seen from a side perspective. It relates to the neighbouring buildings brilliantly; the structural pattern is suspended with six huge pilasters, held three metres from the ground, while two large statues stand ready to support the family emblem that would complete the work. Adorning the already highly developed frontage are four, high reliefs depicting scenes from Roman history (the work of Domenico Fontana).

Remaining unfinished till today, the Palace belongs to the late period of Palladio. Unlike the ideal as set out in Palladio's Quattro Libri dell'Architettura the building, raised over the foundation and using part of the main walls of an existing 4th Century building, incorporates variations that conform and harmonise with the structure of the site.



At the end of the courtyard (see map) to the side of the internal court there was another building block which included a stable.

A bomb attack on the 18th March 1945 destroyed this part of the Palace, shattering the roof and a large portion of the central hall.

In 1960 Vittor Luigi Braga Rosa bought the ruined palace from Valmarana's family and began the work of restoring and rebuilding the parts which were damaged during the war.

