

## PROVA LINGUA INGLESE

1 - The city of Vicenza and the Palladian villas of the Veneto is a serial site including the city of Vicenza and twenty-four Palladian villas scattered in the Veneto area. Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1994, the site initially comprised only the city of Vicenza with its twenty-three buildings attributed to Palladio, as well as three villas *extra muros*.

2 - Twenty-one villas located in several provinces were later included in the 1996 site extension. Founded in the 2nd century BC in northern Italy, Vicenza prospered under Venetian rule from the early 15th to the end of the 18th century. The work of Andrea Palladio (1508–80), based on a detailed study of classical Roman architecture, gives the city its unique appearance.

3 - The definitive Palladian country villa synthesizes, both figuratively and materially, the functional aspects of management of the land and the aristocratic self-glorification of the owner. Its core is the house-temple, embellished with a monumental staircase and crowned by a pediment supported by columns of the loggia. Porticos extend alongside the wings starting from the main building, and often end with towers.

4 - Vicenza is widely, and with justification, known as *la città di Palladio*. However, he was the central figure in an urban fabric that stretches back to antiquity and forward to Neoclassicism. As such, Vicenza has acquired a world status that has long been recognized and reflected in the literature of architectural and art history. Basing his works on intimate study of classical Roman architecture, Palladio became the inspiration for a movement without parallel in architectural history.

5 - Vicenza, birthplace of this movement, retains many of Palladio's original buildings and as such is a unique survival of a total humanist concept based on a living interpretation of antiquity. The property extends the recognition of the Outstanding Universal Value of the work of Andrea Palladio to the other manifestations of his creative genius in the Veneto region, covering his versatility in applying his principles to rural as well as urban contexts.

6 - Vicenza represents a unique artistic achievement in the many architectural contributions of Andrea Palladio, integrated within its historic fabric and creating its overall character. Scattered in the Veneto, the Palladian villas are the result of this Renaissance master's architectural genius. The numerous variations of the villa pattern are evidence of Palladio's constant typological experimentation, carried out by means of the reworking of classical architecture patterns.

7 - Palladio's works in the city of Vicenza and in the Veneto, inspired by classical architecture and characterized by incomparable formal purity, have exerted exceptional influence on architectural and urban design in most European countries and throughout the world, giving rise to Palladianism, a movement named after the architect and destined to last for three centuries.

8 - The property is composed of several elements, all showing its exceptional value: the perimeter includes the city of Vicenza with its twenty-three most representative Palladian buildings erected in the urban area and twenty-four of the most representative extra-urban villas. The 21st-century industrial development resulted in a strong transformation of the areas surrounding the city, affecting the original relationships between city and countryside.

9 - The villas have kept their integrity and are well preserved, within a territorial context which underwent several changes and for this reason was excluded from the site perimeter. Various parts of the property have been exposed to development pressures and the impact of agricultural and forestry regimes. There is some risk of flooding but these issues are being addressed by the property managers.

10 - When applied to an urban area, authenticity includes a consideration of the urban structure, the form of the individual buildings that make up the townscape, the use of traditional building materials and techniques, and the functions of the buildings. In these terms Vicenza as a whole has preserved its authentic character, especially in relation to *la città di Palladio*. The form of Palladio's buildings is documented in his *Quattro Libri dell'architettura* (1570) and it has changed relatively little since they were constructed in the 16th century.

11 - The function of many of the palaces in Vicenza has changed from domestic to commercial, with consequent internal changes. The urban fabric of the city has undergone remarkably little change, and still retains the historic townscape known from early engravings. The authenticity of the villas is also high. Detailed archival, technical and scientific studies have aimed at identifying the original forms of the villas.

12 - The protection of the site is guaranteed by several legal measures of protection. The Palladian buildings in Vicenza and the Palladian Villas listed in the property are all protected under the Decreto Legislativo 42/2004, Codice dei Beni Culturali e del Paesaggio: a safeguarding measure which ensures any activity on the site must be authorized by the relevant *Soprintendenza* (local office of the Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities).

13 - Special protection plans applied to all the buildings ensure careful preservation, according to the theoretical principles of restoration works. The urban planning tool for the city of Vicenza has defined some special measures for the preservation of the twenty-three Palladian buildings located in the historic centre. The site Management Plan was developed by several public and private institutions.

14 - The UNESCO office, set up inside the Municipality of Vicenza, takes care of technical and administrative aspects and is charged with the monitoring of the site Management Plan. Given the site's complexity, the general coordination is shared between the Ministry of Culture and the Veneto Region, while the Province of Vicenza coordinates provinces and municipalities. The coordination system aims to overcome the fragmentation of initiatives, fostering synergetic relationships between institutions.

15 - The principal aims of the Management Plan are to recover and revitalize the urban image, characterized by a strong Palladian mark, through the definition of intervention priorities inside the historical centre and the buffer zone, to restore and preserve the villas and the surrounding open spaces, and to define a study for identifications of buffer zones around the villas. It encourages the growth of awareness of heritage value in the local population by means of spreading knowledge and allowing participation in the choices and the management of the heritage.

16 - [Eighteen Renaissance villas](#) by the architect Andrea Palladio survive today in the Veneto area around Venice, Italy. Many of them are open to the public. They are visited each year by thousands of architects, art historians, tourists and others who want to

admire their beauty, feel closer to history and better understand the foundations of the modern world. Palladio's Villas revolutionized Western architecture in the 17th and 18th centuries, produced the school of Southern architecture in the 19th century, and changed the way homes look in our contemporary world.

17 – Palladio's villas represent Palladio's response to the unique needs of his contemporary world. In the villas Palladio re-worked what he perceived to be timeless and universal principles newly re-discovered from the past. Fortuitously, the needs of his time have remained needs of the modern world. As a result, Palladio's architectural insights and solutions remain vital and relevant.

18 - About 500 years ago, in the twilight of the period we call the Renaissance, there began to appear near the coast of the Northern Adriatic around the present city of Venice, Italy, a group of country houses unlike any homes ever seen before. They were all within a radius of about 50 miles, and they were all the work of a single architect. Toward the end of his career, that architect used the new technology of movable type -- then about 100 years old -- to produce a four-volume illustrated catalog of his work with a commentary on his principles and methods.

19 - Andrea Palladio's personal history would seem beyond the imagination of even Horatio Alger. Beginning as a 13-year-old apprentice to a stonemason, he grew up to become the sought-after companion of aristocrats and intelligentsia, as well as the political, military and business leaders, of his day -- the dominant figure in his field, not just in his own lifetime, not just in the lifetime of those who knew him, but now -- more than 400 years later.

What can explain this? It seems to me that there's only one possible explanation, namely, that he did just what he set out to do.

20 - Let us begin by looking at the needs of his time. In Palladio's time Venice was not just a city. It was the center of a vast empire with military and commercial enclaves all around the Adriatic and Eastern Mediterranean. In fact, at its height, Venice was one of the greatest military and commercial powers on earth. In population, four times the size of Rome and London combined. Venice's power came from the fact that its forces stood astride both of the great East-West trade routes of the day: the Northern or land route to Asia and the Orient, and the Southern or sea route.

21 - Venice rose to power in the 1100s by developing an advanced system for constructing war galleys. In fact, Venice originally was entirely a sea power. Based on a group of small islands in an Adriatic lagoon several miles from the mainland, the mighty Venice had no land at all on the Italian mainland until the mid 1300s. Military expansion on the Italian mainland then continued until the early 1500s. By then three dramatic events had set in motion a land rush for the vast undeveloped areas of the European mainland west of Venice.

22 - Fortunately, after hundreds of years of fighting, peace had broken out on the mainland. The mainland areas near Venice finally had the security necessary for large-scale agriculture and for transporting those harvests to the population centers. There was also a new crop to plant -- corn from the New World. (Remember that Columbus' voyage -- that crippling event for Venice -- was a current event, only about 50 years earlier.)