

VILLA BEATRICE D'ESTE

Management Plan

For the future valorisation and
conservation of the heritage site
and its medieval ruins

D.T4.2.1





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FOREWORD

The present Management Plan was developed within the framework of the European project RUINS, funded by the European Territorial Cooperation Programme Interreg Central Europe.

The aim of the RUINS project is to give new life to medieval ruins in Central Europe, valorising them and identifying good practices for their sustainable management and for the development of productive activities that are in line with their cultural, historic and artistic values, in the perspective of their long-term conservation.

The monumental complex of Villa Beatrice d'Este was selected as a case study by the project due to the presence of medieval ruins on which, during the 17th century, the villa was built. The case study represents an opportunity to investigate how medieval heritage can make a strong contribution to the valorisation of a complex and stratified heritage site.

We thank the Province of Padua, owner of the site, and Enzo Moretto, president of Butterfly Arc Ltd, current manager of the Museum of Villa Beatrice, for the support provided in the collection of data and in the drafting of the plan.



INTRODUCTION

According to the UNESCO guidelines for the management of World Heritage sites, a management plan is a tool aimed to guarantee and provide coordination for the strategic protection of a heritage site in the long-term¹. It defines objectives, actions and management tools and guides the different phases of the management cycle (from planning, to implementation, to monitoring).

There is no single management plan model since such document should be adapted based on site specific context and characteristics. For this reason, the RUINS project selected six different case studies, including the one of Villa Beatrice d'Este in Italy.

The site of Villa Beatrice is today the property of the Province of Padua and is the location of the Provincial Museum on the Flora and Fauna of the Euganean Hills. The monumental complex is an example of a 17th-century Venetian villa, which was, however, built to incorporate an older medieval monastery, adapting its use. The Villa is named after the Blessed Beatrice of Este, who had founded the monastery in 1221 and to whom the history of the villa is tightly linked.

The management plan was built based on the guidelines developed by the RUINS project², which are based, in turn, on the UNESCO guidelines mentioned above, and on a methodology for the sustainable valorisation of cultural heritage sites implemented by the Venetian Cluster in the field³.

The document is organised into three parts:

1. The first part describes in detail the site, its history, its context, its state of conservation, and its characterizing values
2. The second part analyses the current protection and management system of the site, also taking into consideration stakeholders and providing recommendations for future management
3. The third part provides some suggestions for the introduction of productive activities that could valorise the site and its medieval heritage and ensure its economic sustainability (and so also its conservation in the long-term).

The purpose of the document is to provide the owner of the site, the Province of Padua, with a tool that could guide its future management and valorisation in view of its economic sustainability, thus ensuring its long-term conservation, in line with the values of the site and in compliance with the criteria of integrity and authenticity.

¹ ICCROM, UNESCO 2019

² RUINS 2019

³ RUINS 2018



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PART I – DIAGNOSIS: DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND ITS VALUES

1. Characteristics of the site

1.1 History

Villa Beatrice d’Este is located on top of the Mount Gemola, in the south-west area of the Euganean Hills, within the Municipality of Baone.

The architectural complex of the villa can be dated back to 1657. It was catalogued by the IRVV (Regional Institute for Venetian Villas)⁴ as an example of a 17th century Venetian villa and in 1971 it was registered by the Ministry of Culture as protected heritage site (at that time, as of law 1089 of 1939). The history of the villa, however, goes further back in time, as the structure was built on an earlier medieval monastery, and is part of a landscape with a long history of human activity.

The Mount Gemola is a 280-meters-high hill with a flat and elongated plateau on its top, suitable for settlement. Certainly also thanks to the presence of springs on its slopes, the hill area was interested by human presence since very ancient times, as demonstrated by a Roman rural structure found on the eastern slope⁵ and by other pre-Roman, Roman and Lombard finds in the area of Valle San Giorgio⁶.

Based on recent research studies conducted by the University of Padua⁷, which shed light on the historical use of the landscape of the Euganean Hills through a detailed analysis of the agricultural parcels and of both historical and contemporary topography (roads and toponymy), the presence of vineyards, olive groves and orchards in the area around the Gemola hill was confirmed since ancient times; the research also confirmed the presence of uncultivated areas and woods, which represented a fundamental component for the subsistence and economy of the local inhabitants⁸. Most likely, the area was exploited continuously, with ups and downs, throughout the early Middle Ages.

In view of the complex chronology and functional genesis of the villa, a brief summary of the different phases that have characterised its development is proposed hereunder, based on available research and studies.

10th – 12th century

According to medieval archive sources, the presence of a fortified structure, of which no material evidence was found, can be claimed on the top of Mount Gemola starting at least from the 10th century: a *Çemole de la Roca* (Fortress of the Gemola) is in fact mentioned in the year 1184, but “*roca*” could refer to an older structure, as the term is attested by literature to designate a type of fortification since the 10th century⁹. Most probably, such structure was erased by the following constructions and its building material was reemployed for this purpose.

⁴ Number 00002764 of IRVV inventory; Zucchello 2001, p. 45

⁵ Cogo 2017, p. 51; Quarena 2014, p. 155; CAV III, p. 108, n. 123

⁶ Cogo 2017, p. 51; Quarena 2014, p. 155; CAV III, p. 108, nn. 124-125

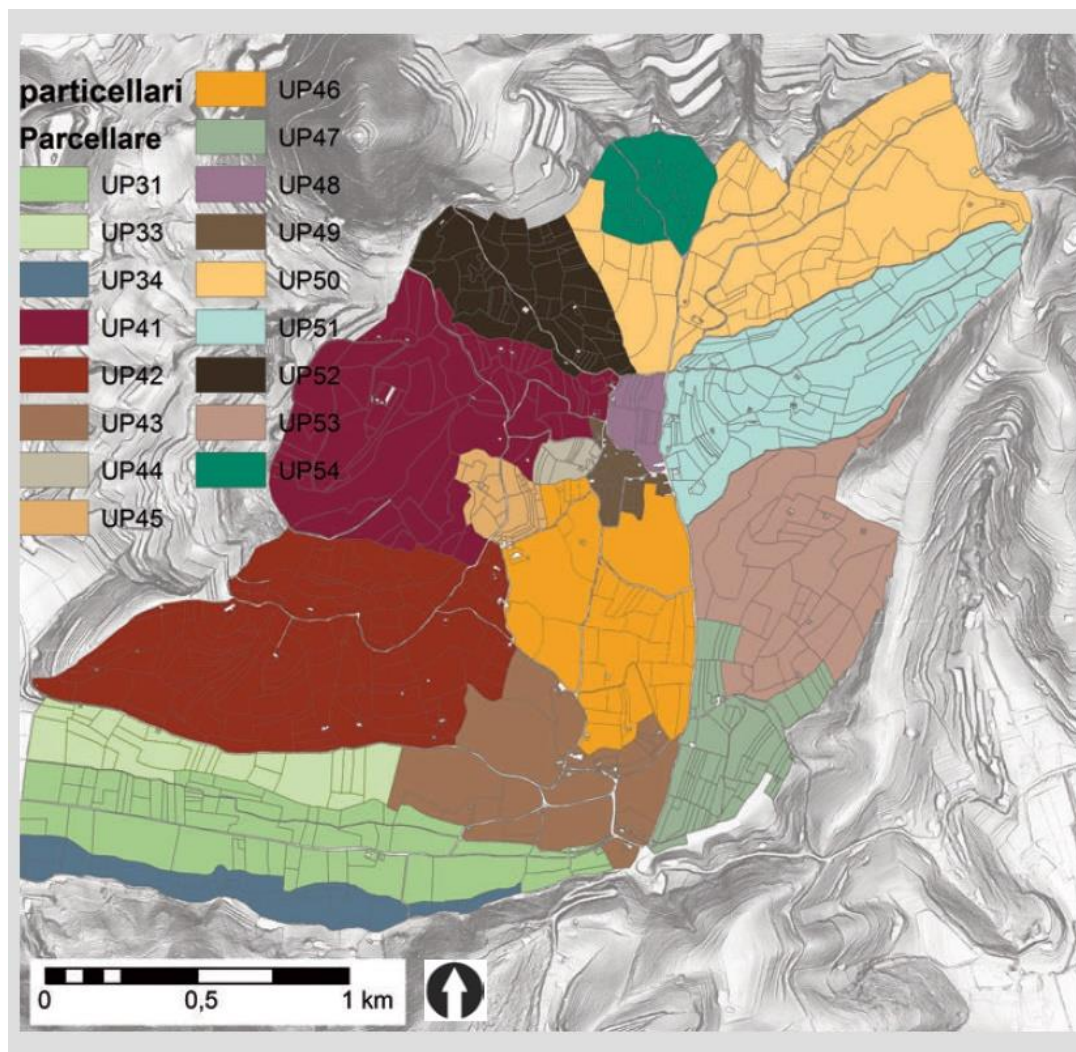
⁷ Brogiolo 2017; Quarena 2017; Quarena 2014.

⁸ Quarena 2017, p. 116: “*Le pendici più erte del monte appaiono destinate all’incolto; solo due grandi zone sono fittamente terrazzate rispettivamente a nord-est e nord-ovest della sommità, dove si conservano le possenti muraglie, probabilmente il recinto della grangia. La sistemazione in terrazze riprende con la diminuzione dell’acclività lungo il versante che scende a valle verso est in direzione di Tormene e verso sud fino ad un calto che divide il sopracitato P41 da P42. Sul fianco occidentale proliferavano i castagneti.*”

⁹ Quarena 2017, p. 116; Quarena 2014, p. 156; Cogo 2017, p. 52; Settia 2005, p. 133.



In the same year 1184, the existence of two chestnut woods near the village of Cornoleda and on the Gemola hill is attested by written sources¹⁰: the chestnut woods, which can still be found on the Gemola, represented an important economic resource for the local population both as source of wood and food, also for the animals.



Picture 1: View of agricultural parcels of the area of Valle San Giorgio and Mount Gemola (UP41) (Quarena 2017, fig. 24)

13th century

Based on archive resources, the presence of a male monastery on the top of Mount Gemola can be argued before 1215. A testament dated to 14 March 1215 from the archive of San Benedetto Novello in Padua refers to a monetary legacy by Pietro Grengola di Montagnone to a fraternity residing on the Gemola hill ("*dominus de Gemola*")¹¹.

¹⁰ Quarena 2017, p. 116; Cogo 2017, p. 52

¹¹ Cogo 2017, pp. 52-53



1215 – Foundation of the first monastery¹²

Archival sources attest the foundation of a church dedicated to Saint John the Baptist on the Mount Gemola in the year 1215 by a certain *Martino da Milano*. The document is preserved in the Modena state archive and was found in the 1980s and later published by the scholar Carlo Polizzi¹³. It reports the granting of the first stone by the Bishop Giordano to a “*domino Martino de Milano*”, “*super quem ipse Martinus debeat et possit edificare ecclesiam in monte de Cemula ad honorem Dei et Beate Virginis Marie et sancti Ioannis Baptiste*”.

Based on the text, which uses the term “*dominus*” to define Martino, Polizzi argued that Martino was a secular who, through the act of building the church, became the patron and new guide of the existing Gemola confraternity. Polizzi sees this as an early example of a non-codified hermit-monastery dwelling, comparable to the contemporary experience of the Salarola women’s community (where Beatrice of Este found refuge from 1220 to 1221), which also had a secular patron. Such conjecture would be confirmed by another document that quotes a “*dominus*” *Martino da Milano* as a vassal of the Marquises of Este, member of the body of dignitaries who travelled to Hungary for the stipulation of the marriage contract between Azzo VI and Alice of Châtillon (third wife of Azzo VI, father of the Blessed Beatrice) in 1204. Martino himself is also attested as owner of several lands in the area of the Gemola hill in 1215, probably in view of the construction of the new church.

1221 – Foundation of the new monastery by Beatrice of Este¹⁴

According to several sources, in May or June 1221 Beatrice of Este founded a new monastery on the Mount Gemola, which replaced the previous male monastery.

On 19 April of the same year, shortly before the foundation, a decision by the Bishop Giordano is reported to have suspended the right of dwelling in that site by the community of friars that had settled there, due to their misconduct. Shortly after, the Bishop agreed that Beatrice of Este, of the family of the Marquises of Este, could found a new community there, under the patronage of the Este Family.

On a documentary basis, however, it can be assumed that a male fraternity continued to live near the new monastery, at least throughout the 13th century, and that it was partly formed by the former disciples of Martino¹⁵.

Upon arrival of Beatrice and her procession, the buildings of the former monastery were found in poor condition and with no furniture, since everything had been removed by the friars who lived there previously (“They wandered among the huts that stood there, but they found them completely empty, so empty that it was not easy to find, outside of the bare earth, a place where they could sit. Some friars, far from earnest and respectable, despite not having any right on those buildings, had emptied them and stripped them of any useful furniture and any necessary furnishings”¹⁶).

Most likely, the Este family provided for restoring the building during the same summer of 1221, at the behest of Beatrice’s brother and marquis of Este Azzo VII. To accommodate a growing community, the monastery was restored and enlarged in the following years, thanks to donations from the Este family: in 1228 a radical

¹² Cogo 2017, pp. 53-54; Quarena 2014, p. 156; Polizzi 1992

¹³ Polizzi 1992

¹⁴ Cogo 2017, pp. 54-56; Quarena 2017, p. 116; Quarena 2014, pp. 156-157; Zucchello 2001, p.45

¹⁵ Cogo 2017, p. 54, pp. 56-57; Selmin 2004; Selmin 2000; Polizzi 1992

¹⁶ From the *Vita* of Alberto of Santo Spirito, English translation based on the Italian translation by Francesco Selmin, Selmin 2000



restoration or reconstruction of the church was conducted and the cemetery was re-consecrated; in 1247, as attested by a diploma of protection of Pope Innocent IV, the property came to include a *grangia* (a farmstead, rural building), as well as grazing lands, vineyards, pastures and woods¹⁷.

The same papal bull of 1247 refers to the membership of the monastery to the Benedictine rule. Most likely, the form had been already assumed before the death of the Blessed Beatrice in 1226, given the mention of an abbess called *Desiderata* or *Imiza* living Beatrice. The adhesion of the monastery to the Benedictine rule would demonstrate the influence of the bishop of Padua on the community, as well as of other leading exponents of the Paduan Church, such as Giordano Forzaté, founder of the *albi* monks of Padua (white monks); Alberto, prior of the monastery of Saint John the Evangelist on Mount Ricco; and Alberto of Santo Spirito, author of the first biography of Beatrice (characters who also had, according to sources, a direct influence the choice of the Blessed Beatrice to retire on the Salarola monastery in 1220).

In the following years the Gemola community reached a number of forty members. According to sources, the community was composed by mainly noble women and women from wealthy families who, like Beatrice, decided to retire to spiritual life. In 1239, the Queen of Hungary Beatrice, niece of the Blessed Beatrice, took also refuge there, after the death of her husband Andrea.

FACT SHEET 1: Life and worship of the Blessed Beatrice of Este¹⁸



Picture 2: Image of the Blessed Beatrice of Este from the *Iconografia Estense* (Code of the end of 15th century – Estense Library of Modena), from Cogo 2017, p. 95

Beatrice of Este was born in 1191 or 1192 from Azzo VI, marquis of Este, and from his second wife, Sofia of Savoy. Her father Azzo was one of the greatest personalities of Italian history of the beginning of the 13th century: he was imperial vicar over the whole Marca, mayor of several cities, head of a league of Guelph communes, and was appointed marquis of Ancona by Pope Innocent III, who also gave him lordship over the commune of Ferrara.

¹⁷ The extract is reported by Quarena 2014, pp. 156-157: *locum ipsum in quo prefactum monasterium situm est cum omnibus pertinentiis eius, grangiam iuxta monasterium cum pertinentiis suis (...) cum pratis, vineis, terris, nemoribus, usuagiis et pascuis, in bosco et plano, in aquis et molendinis, in viis et semitis e poco oltre ammonisce che auctoritate apostolica prohibemus ut infra clausuras locorum seu grangiarum vestrarum nullus rapinam seu furtum facere* (Polizzi 1991, p. 199)

¹⁸ Cogo 2017, pp. 13-41; Selmin 2004; Selmin 2000; Colombara, Mazzetti 1994; Polizzi 1992



The mother of Beatrice died in 1202, when she was only 10 years old. In 1204, her father married Alice of Châtillon, daughter of Prince Raynald of Antioch, from whom he had Azzo VII called *Azzolino*. Her father also died suddenly in 1212, following the alternate war events that had affected the Este family at the beginning of the 13th century, immediately after the defeat of Ponte Alto, near Vicenza. Due to these events, in 1213, Beatrice was forced to move from Este to the castle of Calaone with her stepmother Alice and her brother Azzo.

Beatrice lived her childhood and early youth at the splendid Este court, first in the Este castle and then in Calaone, where she came into contact with the cultural entourage of her father, who had surrounded himself by Provençal troubadours. Beatrice was praised in the verses of Aimeric de Peguilhan, who addressed her five songs, and by Lambertino or Rambertino Buvaelli from Bologna, who entirely dedicated to her a collection of seven songs. Some of these compositions represent precious examples of trobadoric poetry from northern Italy, anticipating in some cases the *Dolce Stil Novo* style¹⁹.

Beatrice's childhood and youth were certainly marked by the death of her mother and father, and by the transfer to the Castle of Calaone. Biographers see in these and other tragic events the origin of her radical spiritual choice. To this, others add the death of Marquis Guglielmo Malaspina in 1220, as she was associated to him in a song by Aimeric, which could imply a marriage project between the two. What emerges with certainty from the sources is that the Este family, and especially Beatrice's brother Azzo VI, were against her choice at the beginning: in fact, her retirement in the Salarola convent in 1220 is described by biographers as a kidnapping, in which she was accompanied by Giordano Forzatè, founder of the *albi* monks order (the *Ordo S. Benedicti de Padua*), and Alberto, prior of the monastery of Saint John the Evangelist on Mount Ricco.

Beatrice retired to the Salarola convent, near Calaone, in 1220, and she remained there for a year and a half. She did not wear the religious dress, but shared life with the sisters.

Given the proximity to the castle of Calaone, where her brother Azzo VII lived, in 1221 Beatrice decided to found, together with the abbess of the Salarola and some other sisters, a new monastery on the Mount Gemola. The transfer from the Salarola to the Mount Gemola was by foot, with a procession attended by Beatrice's stepmother Alice de Châtillon and the wife of her brother, Giovanna of Apulia, as well as her spiritual fathers Giordano Forzatè and Alberto of Mount Ricco (a climb that was "arduous and very tiring, especially for noble and delicate women, unprepared for such efforts"²⁰). This suggests a resolution of the conflict between Beatrice and her family, a fact that would also be confirmed by a written source, which reports of the sale of some lands around the Mount Gemola in the same year by Alice de Châtillon, in favour of Giordano Forzatè (perhaps a preparatory action for the refoundation of the monastery by Beatrice). All these events could also be read as a precise ideological and political project by the Este Family, remembering also that this kind of pauperistic movements were widespread in Italy at the beginning of the 13th century, also involving the aristocratic female world (the experience of Francis and Saint Clare of Assisi are contemporary).

That founded by Beatrice is a community made up of noble women and women of wealthy families, who are compared by Alberto of Santo Spirito, Beatrice's biographer, to precious gems: "many noblewomen found refuge in the fragrance of her perfumes on the Gemola, after refusing the pomp, the frivolities, the honours, the richness, the worldly flatteries and the pleasures of the flesh. And so, thanks to the multiplication of the

¹⁹ Selmin 2004

²⁰ From the *Vita* of Alberto of Santo Spirito, English translation based on the Italian translation of Francesco Selmin, Selmin 2000



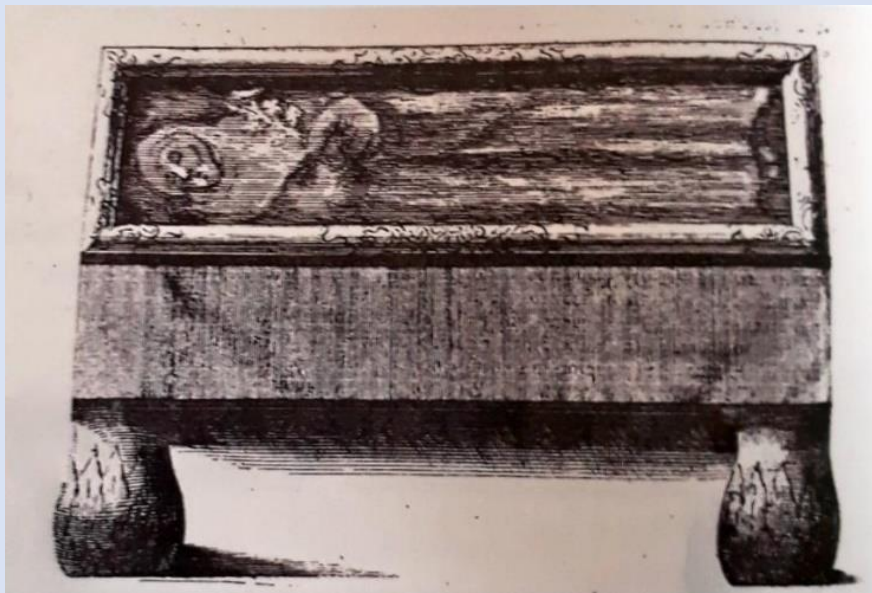
gems, on Mount Gemola a more intense and larger light shone from all sides. Ten of those women were daughters of counts. The others were daughters of wealthy and powerful noblemen”²¹.

Beatrice donated all her personal belongings located in Este and Montagnana for the sustenance of the new community. Probably, after an initial transition phase, the community followed the Benedictine rule, inspired by the reformed models of the Blessed Giordano Forzatè (*albi* monks). Beatrice refused to become the abbess, although she remained the spiritual inspirer of the new community.

The Blessed lived on the Mount Gemola for five years, until her death on 10 May 1226, as can be read in her tomb epitaph. The last years of her life were marked by a harsh ascetic practice, until the illness and death: “The Lord granted her intimate desire and did not deny her what her lips had asked for. To heal her, the hand of the Lord struck her with that serious disease which is called phthisis. He affected her affectionately in order to purify her”²². A few hours before her death, a white dove landed next to her and then flew away; this fact was interpreted as a prodigious sign, and as such was handed down through the ancient biographies: to describe it, Alberto of Santo Spirito used poetic words taken from the Canticle of Canticles. Starting from the 16th century, the dove became part of the distinctive iconographic symbols of the Blessed Beatrice, and we can find it in several paintings, also in the Villa Beatrice.

Immediately after her death, the body of Beatrice was placed in the common burial of the monastery (which was located in a crypt under the floor of the church); a few months later, it was transferred in a marble ark decorated with a dedicatory inscription, which was placed in a sacellum or sacristy next to the church. The epitaph is considered a very rare testimony of Latin poetry in the north of Italy.

The sarcophagus with the body and the inscription were transferred to the church of Santa Sofia in Padua in 1578 when the Gemola monastery was abandoned. The inscription is still preserved, while the tomb was dispersed at the end of 19th century²³.



Picture 3: Engraving of the burial of the Bless Beatrice published in 1767 by Brunacci (Cogo 2017, p. 72)

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*

²³ To read the inscription in Latin, see Selmin 2000, pp. 154-157



The body of Beatrice remained intact due to a natural mummification process thanks to the particular climatic conditions and to the deposition methods. It was soon worshipped by the Gemola sisters (who asked Alberto of Santo Spirito to write her life) and her cult spread in the area of the Euganean Hills and in Padua, until its solemn recognition by Pope Clement XIII in 1763²⁴.

Between the 17th and 19th century a public cult of the Blessed Beatrice developed in the town of Este, as well as in Modena and Ferrara. Between 1825 and 1831 an altar was dedicated to her in the Cathedral of Este, through the transformation of the previous altar dedicated to Saint John the Baptist. The altar was decorated with an altarpiece representing the Blessed in glory on the side of Saint John the Baptist, a few decades later replaced by a new one, as can still be seen today, with the Blessed, Saint John the Baptist and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In 1863 the archpriest of Este officially requested to grant the translation of the body of the Blessed Beatrice from Padua to Este. The translation was denied but in 1877 the bishop granted a body relic. After further requests, in 1957, the body of Blessed Beatrice was eventually transferred to the Cathedral of Este with a solemn procession and great participation by local communities. On 11 May 1957, the urn with the body was transported with a procession to the oratory of Villa Beatrice on the Mount Gemola, and people from the around hills came together to worship all day.

The body of the Blessed Beatrice is now preserved in an urn with a wooden base and crystal walls under the altar table dedicated to her in the Cathedral of Este. There are also preserved other precious relics, such as fragments of fabric and personal objects, which had been donated in 1819 by the former Abbess of Santa Sofia in Padua, after Napoleon had closed the convent. With Saint Tecla, the Blessed Beatrice is co-patron of Este and is celebrated every year on May 10th.

SOURCES ON THE LIFE OF BEATRICE: the ancient sources on the life of the Blessed Beatrice were collected in a volume published by F. Selmin in 2000²⁵. The oldest biography is the *Vita b. Beatricis* by Alberto of S. Spirito, “faithful friend and spiritual director” of Beatrice; according to what is reported in his biography, he wrote it upon request of the Gemola sisters, certainly before 1245, the last year in which we have information about him; he therefore based the document on direct information or on information available from people who had known the Blessed directly. Biographical notes on Beatrice are also reported by an anonymous 13th-century chronicler in the *Chronicon Marchiae Tarvisinae et Lombardiae (aa. 1207-1270)*. In 1560 B. Scardeonii traced a broad biographical profile in the *De antiquitate urbis Patavii*, with precise quotations from the life of Alberto of Santo Spirito. In the 17th century the biography of A. Monterosso, *Trionfal humiltà della B. Donzella di Christo Beatrice d’Este, fondatrice del monastero di Gemmola, co ‘l catalogo delle abbatesse di tempo in tempo e con alcune note storiche* (1650) and of Giacomo Filippo Tomasini, *Vita della B. Beatrice estense* (1652) were published almost simultaneously. Of 1767 is the fundamental work of B. Brunacci, *Della B. Beatrice D’Este Vita Antichissima Ora La Prima Volta Pubblicata Con Dissertazioni*, who first found and published the original text of the life of Alberto of Santo Spirito and its ancient vulgarization. The works of G. Nuvolato, *Storia di Este e il suo territorio* (1851-53) and P. Balan, *Memorie della vita della B. Beatrice I d’Este* (1878) are from the 19th century. It is important to highlight how, before the work of Brunacci, a “legendary life” of the Blessed Beatrice had developed between the 15th and 16th centuries and transmitted orally (references are to be found in the work of Tomasini and others, of which B. Cogo has provided a report in its 2017 publication²⁶). Despite their errors, the traditions provide interesting data and testify the intensity and continuity of the worship to the Blessed Beatrice for centuries.

²⁴ Cogo 2017, p. 33

²⁵ Selmin 2000

²⁶ Cogo 2017



FACT SHEET 2: The Beatrices of the Este Family²⁷

There are two other blessed named Beatrice in the Este family.

Blessed Beatrice II of Este, founder of the monastery of St. Anthony Abbot in Ferrara, niece of the Blessed Beatrice (daughter of her brother Azzo VII). Like her aunt, she chose the monastic life. She lived between 1230 and 1262. Her worship was approved in 1270 and has remained alive up to today. It was formally recognized by Pope Clement XIV in 1774.

Blessed Beatrice III of Este, queen of Hungary. Daughter of Aldobrandino (brother of Beatrice I – son of Azzo VI and his first wife) and niece of Beatrice I, she was probably born in Este in 1214 and lived at the Este court in Calaone. When 20 years old, she had married Andrew II of Apard, king of Hungary, who had died after about a year, in 1235. Widow and expecting a son, fearing the dynastic jealousies, she left Hungary and retired in Este. Her son Stefano, one of the legitimate heirs to the throne of Hungary, was born there. He was proclaimed king in 1270, but died in Venice in 1271, where he was buried. After entrusting her son Stefano to the care of the second wife of her brother Azzo VII, she retired to the monastery of Gemola in 1239, without taking vows, and died there between the end of 1244 and the beginning of 1245. Her body was buried in the common tomb of the monastery under the floor of the church but was forgotten and dispersed. The cult of the Blessed Beatrice III of Hungary is attested in the calendar of the Benedictine Saints in the mid-17th century and has continued until today in the dioceses of Ferrara, Modena, Piacenza and Tortona.

14th-15th century²⁸

The life of the monastery continued with ups and downs throughout the 14th and 15th century.

In 1413, the nuns had to leave the Gemola and take refuge in Este because of the war between Venice and the emperor Sigismund, which had led to uncontrolled looting by soldiers in the Euganean area.

In 1483, when it was visited by the Venetian historian and traveller Marin Sanuto, the monastery was still in good conditions, with well-kept olive groves and vineyards. The diplomat also mentions the ark of Blessed Beatrice and gives us testimony of some supernatural phenomena related to her body.

Between 1487 and 1499, written sources give a picture of the monastery in very critical economic and structural conditions: numerous episcopal interventions are reported to have attempted to mitigate the situation, which was attributed to the bad management of the abbess Elisabetta Zabarella²⁹.

The patronage of the Este family over the monastery continued at least until 1472, as it can be understood from some documents that testify the involvement of the family in the election of the monastery abbesses.

16th century³⁰

Between 1509/ 1510 and 1515, the nuns of the Gemola moved to Este because of the war of the Cambrai League against Venice, to escape the dangers of the German and Spanish soldiers.

During the same period, significant renovations were promoted in the monastery under the guidance of Abbess Maddalena Zacarota, as evinced by the 1510 inscription now preserved in Villa Beatrice d'Este under

²⁷ Cogo 2017, pp. 34-41

²⁸ Cogo 2017, pp. 57-66

²⁹ For a detailed description of these events, please refer to Cogo 2017, pp. 57-66

³⁰ Cogo 2017, pp. 66-68

the portico of the *barchessa* (rural annex). Other works are documented in the first half of the 16th century: in 1536 the hospice was rebuilt, in 1538 the dovecote was restored, in 1541 a new guesthouse was constructed, and in 1542 the cloister on the side of the church was rebuilt and completed with a four-sided portico.

A painting dated to 1504 – unfortunately dispersed but documented by a photograph and a copy preserved in Costozza (Vicenza) – represents the Gemola church in a basilica shape with three naves. The painting was a wooden frontal intended to cover the ark of the Blessed Beatrice, painted in 1504 for the abbess Maddalena Zacarota, as reported in the inscription on the central upper side.



Picture 4: Historic photograph of the 1504 painting representing Beatrice, in the centre, next to the Abbess Maddalena Zacarota, with the pastoral. Above, to the left, the Gemola monastery and its church are represented (from Cogo 2017, p. 100)

1578 – The monastery on sale

Following the Council of Trent, in 1566 the Bishop of Padua Francesco Pisani decided to transfer the Gemola community of nuns to Padua or Este, for security reasons. So, at the end of 1578, the monastery was abandoned, and the nuns were transferred to the monastery of Santa Sofia in Padua. The buildings of the monastery were put up for sale to cover the huge expenses for the arrangement of the Paduan monastery. However, everything remained suspended at least until the beginning of the following century.

There is a detailed written record of the transfer to Padua and of the translation of the body of the Blessed Beatrice in a book of chronicles of the monastery. In addition to furniture and personal items, the nuns transferred the body of Blessed with the marble ark and the dedicatory inscription – a very complex undertaking – in order to dedicate a new place of worship in the church of Santa Sofia in Padua. The original inscription is still preserved in the church of Santa Sofia, while the marble ark was dispersed in the second half of the 19th century (which is testified by an engraving published by Brunacci in 1767 in the book on the life of Beatrice).



17th century³¹

According to the records of a bishop visit to the church of Saint John the Baptist in 1614, the buildings and lands of the Mount Gemola were owned by Antonio Calaoni from Venice. The document provides a description of the church, which is said to be almost always closed and rarely officiated; the church had four altars, but only the main one was still consecrated. Following the visit, the Bishop ordered the demolition of the non-consecrated altars; however this intervention was not undertaken immediately.

In 1630 the conditions of the monastery are described in a report by two Health Officers of the Commune of Padua in charge of verifying its suitability as “*Lazaretto*” for the soldiers suspected of plague. The document provides a detailed description of the church and other monastery structures. The church was fifty footsteps long and ten wide, with an entrance on the western side (facing east); it was in good condition, but abandoned and not officiated, with some well-preserved furniture still in place. The 16th-century cloister was surrounded by a square four-sided porticus forty footsteps wide and had a well in its centre. The document also describes the kitchen, the cellar and the dormitory³². It is not known whether the building was actually used as a *lazaretto* and, if so, for how long it remained in use (the end of the plague was declared in 1631); certainly, some works to adapt the monastery to this use were undertaken, such as the closure of doors and windows through masonry. At the end of the plague, the property returned to the Calaoni family.

In 1649, the property was owned by Domenico Filoso, a wool merchant from Venice. The fact is reported by Giacomo Filippo Tomasini in his biography of the Blessed Beatrice of Este published in 1652³³. Tomasini provides a detailed description of the state of the monastery, which he defines as “reduced to a great deformity”: the church was not officiated, it had four altars with three paintings in a bad state of conservation and a confessional next to the main altar, also damaged. Inside there were two burials, one at the main altar, and one under the choir with an inscription (perhaps the burial of Beatrice Queen of Hungary, which will also be described by the Salomonio in the subsequent years). Next to the church was the oratory where once stood the ark of the Blessed Beatrice. Of the dormitory, only one cell was still visible. The author could see the inscription of the 1510 works conducted by the Abbess Maddalena Zacarota over one door (the inscription is still visible under the portico of the rural annex of Villa Beatrice). In one room, some frescos were visible. The water cistern was still functioning. A wide cellar with two rooms was still used by the farmers as wine storage. Around the monastery, there were olive groves, orchards and vineyards, surrounded by grazelands³⁴.

1657 – first construction of Villa Beatrice d’Este

In 1657, the monastery was owned by the Venetian goldsmith merchant Francesco Roberti. An epigraph in Latin documents the new property and testifies to the restoration of the old church by Roberti in that year. The inscription was seen by Salomonio around 1696 (see below) in the new oratory. Today it is located under the portico of the rural annex of Villa Beatrice.

The 1657 inscription testifies that, before the restoration, the medieval church was in a ruinous state (as also attested, few years earlier, by Tomasini). The restoration had to be very careful, because it brought the building back to its full use, as also confirmed by the reports of two visits of Bishop Gregorio Barbarigo in 1670 and 1680. The 1670 document describes the church with a single altar, where a priest chosen by Roberti

³¹ Cogo 2017, p. 68; pp. 192-200

³² Cogo 2017, p. 193

³³ Giacomo Filippo Tomasini, *Vita della B. Beatrice estense*, Udine, per Nicolò Schiratti, 1652

³⁴ Cogo 2017, pp. 194-195



celebrated mass and confessed, and held catechism to some local boys on Sundays (a fact that had raised concerns of the archpriest of Valle San Giorgio, the parish to which the church belonged).

The inscription does not mention the restoration of the other structures, but the change in the destination use of the overall structure and its adaptation to villa is placed at this time.

For the last two decades of the 17th century, we have no further evidence. In 1696, however, the Gemola church was neither visited nor mentioned on the occasion of a new visit by Bishop Barbarigo to the parish of Valle San Giorgio. This omission could testify to a change, which can also be confirmed by the work of Salomonio, who published a collection of inscriptions from the territory of Padua in the same year. The scholar reports the latest historical testimony to the church of Saint John the Baptist of the Gemola, and at the same time he is the first to report about a new oratory that replaced the church. This apparent contradiction could be explained by assuming that a change occurred around 1696, the year of his publication: the author may have had to make updates shortly before printing. Like Tomasini, he describes the sepulchre of the nuns under the church, renovated in 1561, where the uncorrupted body of Beatrice queen of Hungary, niece of the Blessed Beatrice of Este, was buried. He also reports of a burial with the coat of arms of the Roberti family in the centre of the central nave. Finally, he mentions the inscription commemorating the church renovation works by Francesco Roberti in 1657, which could be seen above the door of the “newly built oratory where the church used to be” (*ubi olim templum S. Jo.*). It can therefore be deduced that, by 1696, the medieval church had been demolished, and that in its place, in the part adjacent to the sacristy, where the burial of the Blessed Beatrice was located, a new oratory had been built, which also came to include the small bell tower.

This chronological reference is also confirmed by a 1710 letter from Father Paolo Perotti (see below), where he states that the church did not exist in that year, but he had been able to visit it a few years earlier. In the description, he mentions the presence of two niches decorated with paintings on the sides of the main altar.

18th century³⁵

In 1708 the owner of Villa Beatrice was Count Bartolomeo Bregolini, who undertook important renovation works in the oratory of Saint John the Baptist and in the property: as reported by a Latin inscription painted on wood and still visible inside the Oratory above its entrance door, Bregolini levelled the whole area in front of the villa, probably to smooth out the differences in height that had resulted from the demolition of the previous church and the cloister, and rebuilt the Oratory from its foundations (as we can see today).

In a letter addressed to the abbess of Santa Sofia in Padua by Father Paolo Perotti in 1710, the discovery of a 15th-century panel with the effigy of the Blessed Beatrice is reported on the Gemola. In his story, he provides some indirect references to the ancient medieval church, as he affirms that in that year it was already destroyed, but that a few years earlier he had been able to visit it.

The visit of the bishop to the parish of Valle San Giorgio in 1713 documents the existence of the Oratory and confirms the ownership of the villa to the Bregolini family. The Oratory had to be regularly officiated at least until 1747, when, following a visit by a delegate of Cardinal Rezzonico and the complaints of the archpriest of Valle San Giorgio (parish to which the Gemola oratory belonged), the confessional was removed and the possibility of celebrating the Mass was revoked, except by license from the archpriest. The report of the visit provides a brief description of the Oratory, with a single altar dedicated to Saint John the Baptist, as we can see it today.

³⁵ Cogo 2017, pp. 200-205



19th century

At the beginning of 19th century the villa was still owned by the Bregolini family, as evidenced by the tomb of Countess Beatrice Bregolini Prosdocimi de Panico, dated 1802, on the floor of the Oratory.

In the following years, starting from the second decade of the 19th century, the ownership of the villa passed to the Civic Hospital of Montagnana by testament, with a link to the memory of the Bregolini family.

In 1862, the property was rented by the same hospital to the Melati family, which was still present at the beginning of the 20th century.

20th century³⁶

The Melati family, who was leading the farmland and the villa, built the rural annex (*barchessa*) above the site of the foundations of the medieval church at the beginning of the century.

Starting from 1906, the property went to the counts Aventi Roverella from Ferrara. From the report of the 1921 bishop visit, it appears that three inscriptions were displayed inside the oratory of Saint Joh the Baptist: the one of 1657; the painted table with the inscription of the works by Count Bregolini in 1708; the plaque of 1510 and the coat of arms of the abbess Maddalena Zacarota. Currently, only the 1708 inscription is still displayed in the Oratory. The other inscriptions are placed under the portico of the restored *barchessa*.

In 1932 the area was the property of Count Pietro Bon di Este, who, according to the scholar Franceschetti, took great care of the old structures and collected the memories of Blessed Beatrice. The property is confirmed by the Bishop's visit of 1930.

During the Second World War, nobody lived in the manor house; the farmers and the tenants continued the cultivation of the agricultural properties.

In 1971, the complex was declared Venetian Villa and was bound under the law of 1939. Due to the bankruptcy of its owners, in 1972 it was auctioned and purchased with 20 hectares of land by the Consortium for the Valorisation of the Euganean Hills (*Consorzio per la Valorizzazione dei Colli Euganei*), who planned to restore it and make it accessible to the public.

Archaeological excavations were conducted before the restoration in 1976, highlighting the foundations of the ancient church nave, some tombs in the church area, the perimeter of the four-sided cloister, and some portions of medieval pavements under the villa ground floor.

The restoration, which was carried out with the support of the Regional Institute for Venetian Villas (IRVV), ended in 1989. In the same year, following the closure of the Consortium, the property passed to the Province of Padua, which established the Museum of the Flora and Fauna of the Euganean Hills in the southern wing of the villa to further valorise the complex.

Today

Villa Beatrice d'Este is still owned by the Province of Padua and hosts the naturalistic Museum of Flora and Fauna of the Euganean Hills. As stated in the introduction to the Guide to the Naturalistic Exhibitions of Villa Beatrice³⁷, "The problem today lies in the valorisation of the villa. 'If history and culture are combined with

³⁶ Cogo 2017, pp. 207-208; Colombara, Mazzetti 1994

³⁷ Colombara, Mazzetti 1994



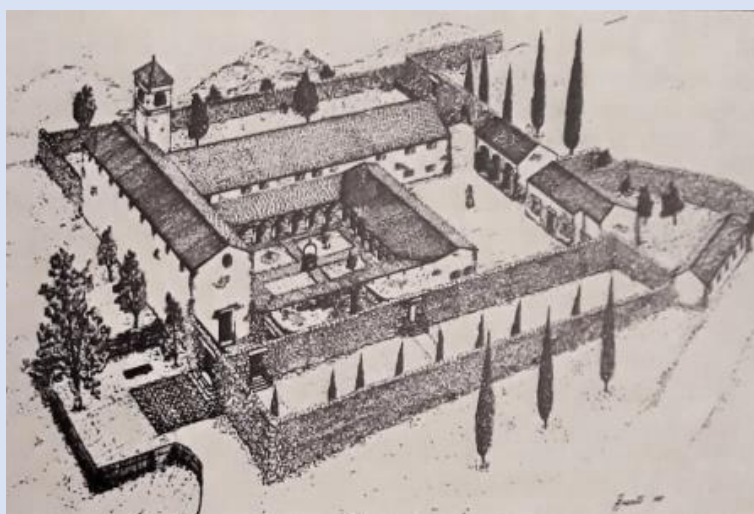
nature, Villa Beatrice can truly become a small great example of what the Euganean Hills are in bigger, a monument to the balance between Man and the Environment”.



the burial of the nuns, in use since the medieval period (the crypt is described by the sources; the excavations under the *barchessa*, which was built above the western part of the church at the beginning of the 20th century, also unearthed some burials, which are still partly visible under the floor of the structure). The plan of the church, long and narrow, can be explained by the possible presence of a wooden 12 meters deep choir on two floors as mentioned by the sources, which was meant to allow the older nuns to access the church directly from the dormitory, located at second floor. The bell tower was located to the right of the church axis, probably outside the nave. The cloister developed south of the church. It must have had a square plan (as confirmed by sources and archaeological investigations), with a square four-sided portico 27 meters long and 3.5 meters wide, which had to have 28 arches, seven on each side. At the centre of the cloister was the ancient 13th-century well, which is still visible today, connected to an underground cistern for collecting rainwater. Next to the church, along the southern side of the apsidal area, there must have been a sacristy or oratory, accessible from the church to the north, from the cloister to the west, and from the chapter room to the south (the sources do not mention a chapter room but speak about a large room next to the sacristy which, given its position, could be identified as such). Inside the sacristy, corresponding to the position of the current oratory, the ark of Blessed Beatrice was preserved until its removal in 1578. To the south of the Chapter, was the refectory, also open to the cloister and with three openings on the northern and southern sides (two southern openings are still visible in Room B of the villa). To the south it opened towards the production areas (laboratories), which took the name of “straw room” and “hay room” when the convent was transformed into a villa. Between these rooms was a wooden staircase that led to the first floor, where was the dormitory. This was a large space divided by wooden partitions to delimit the cells. The kitchen and the dining room must have been on the southern side of the cloister, therefore not far from the refectory.

The guesthouse was to be located in the southern area of the agricultural courtyard, next to the stable (of which a wall with windows is still visible), while the two-storey dovecote was supposedly located in the connection area between the courtyard and the *brolo*, where wall structures are still visible today. Sources also speak of a large cellar, whose position could not be identified.

The monastery was surrounded by vineyards, orchards, olive groves and pastures.



Picture 6: Possible reconstruction of the Gemola monastery in the 16th century (Cogo 2017, p. 69)

Further archaeological investigations would be necessary to date the existing wall structures and to determine the different construction phases of the complex. Investigations in the circumstances of the monastery would also allow to better understand how the agricultural part was developed.

1.2 The context

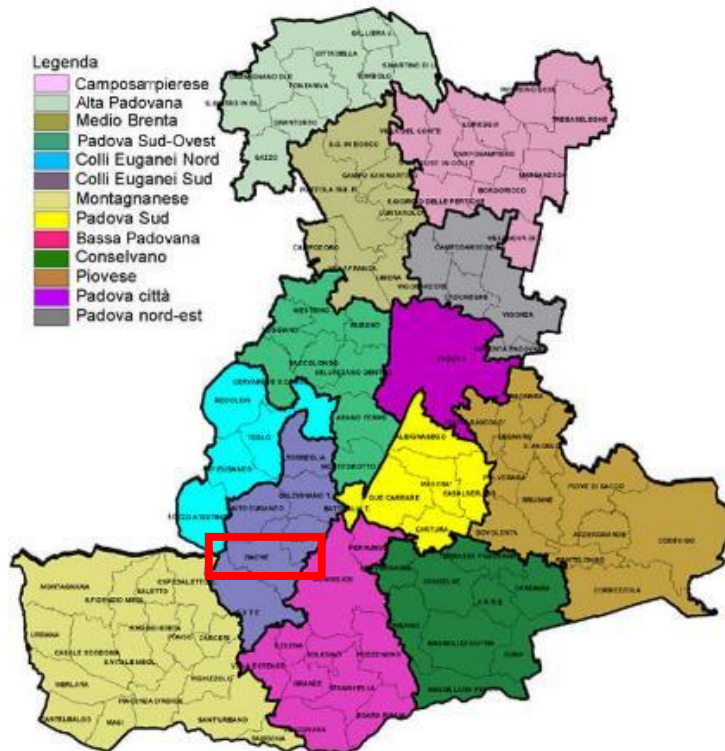
1.2.1 Location

Address: Via Monte Gemola, 35030, Baone
Provincia (NUTS 3): Padova
Regione (NUTS 2): Veneto
Coordinates: 45°16'37.97"N - 11°40'45.07"E

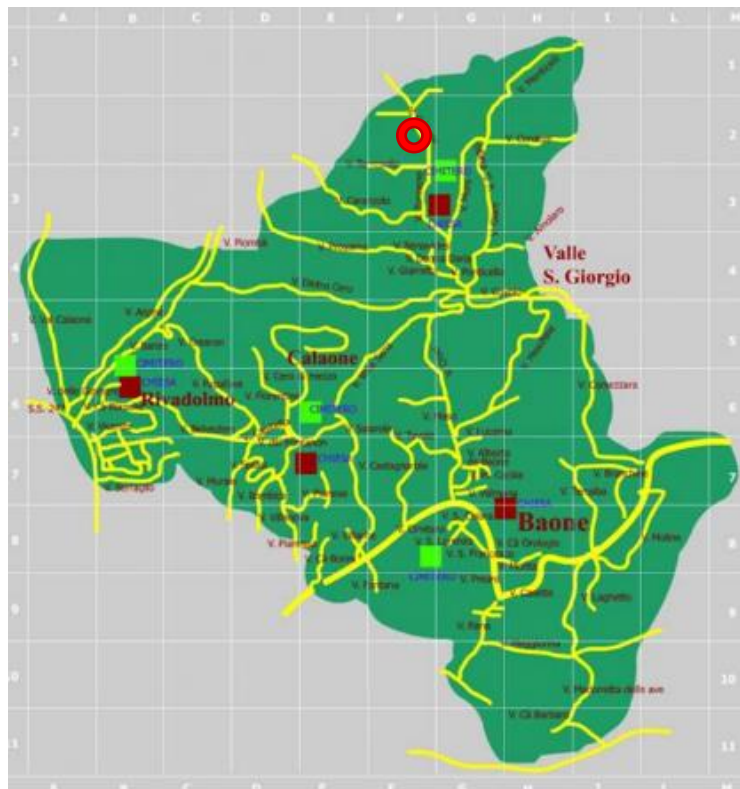
Villa Beatrice d'Este is located in the Veneto Region, in the south-western area of the Province of Padua, corresponding to the southern area of the Euganean Hills, in the territory of the Municipality of Baone (hereinafter "Municipality").



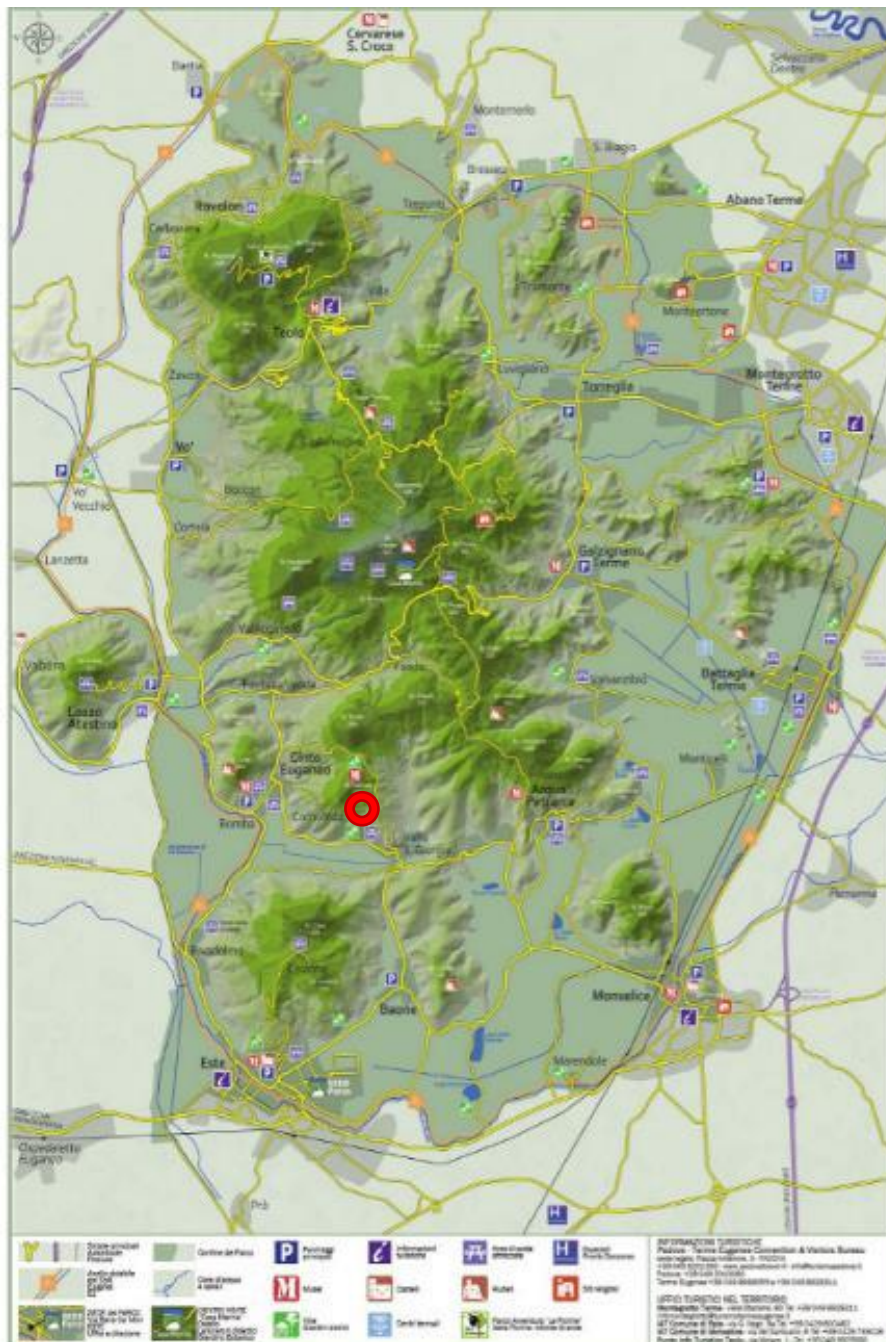
Picture 7: Villa Beatrice d'Este within the Veneto Region and the Province of Padua (Vonvikken – Public domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=11557339>)



Picture 8: Territory of the Municipality of Baone within the Province of Padua
 (<http://www.padovaoggi.it/cronaca/istat-dati-superficie-densita-abitativa-comuni-padovani.html>)



Picture 9: Municipality of Baone with position of Villa Beatrice d'Este (© Comune di Baone,
<http://www.comune.baone.pd.it/c028009/zf/index.php/servizi-aggiuntivi/index/index/idtesto/14>)



Picture 10: Area of the Euganean Hills Regional Park <http://www.parcocollieuganei.com/pagina.php?id=73>

The municipality is limited by the territories of the municipalities of Cinto Euganeo to the north, Galzignano Terme to the north-east, Arquà Petrarca and Monselice to the east, Este to the south-east and Lozzo Atestino to the east. It covers an area of 24.42 km² and has 3,157 inhabitants³⁹. The current area of the Municipality has resulted from the aggregation of three distinct villages: Baone, Calaone and Valle San Giorgio, to which Rivadolmo was later added⁴⁰.

³⁹ According to the data of the last 2013 census of available on the Municipality website:
<http://www.comune.baone.pd.it/c028009/zf/index.php/servizi-aggiuntivi/index/index/idtesto/13>

⁴⁰ Selmin 2009, p. 141



Villa Beatrice d'Este is located in the northern part of the municipal area, on the top of the Mount Gemola, near the centre of Valle San Giorgio, and near the municipality of Cinto Euganeo.

The Catholic parishes of the Municipality are four: San Lorenzo (Baone), San Giorgio (Valle San Giorgio), Santa Giustina (Calaone) and San Luigi Gonzaga (Rivadolmo); they are linked to the Diocese of Padua. In the area there are also other small churches or oratories, including that of Saint John the Baptist on the Gemola, which belongs to the parish of Baone.

The territory of the Municipality is the most mountainous among the municipalities of the Euganean Hills, with just 20% of flat area⁴¹. The economy is mainly agricultural, with a strong concentration of winemakers and wine producers. The proximity to the centres of Este and Monselice brought to a limited presence of commercial and industrial activities. Historically, the mining activity played a leading role, especially as regards the extraction of a type of rock locally called *scaglia*, used for the production of lime (the most important mining site was at Montebuso, today Ca' Barbaro). The activity continued for most of the 20th century.

Starting in 1989, the entire municipal territory became part of the Euganean Hills Regional Park, established in that year by the Veneto Region (Regional Law no. 38). The park, which covers an area of 5,200 hectares, is configured as a supra-municipal body for all that concerns the safeguarding and promotion of the territory, under the guidelines of its Environmental Plan.

1.2.2 Geographical and landscape context

The complex of Villa Beatrice is located on the top of Mount Gemola (281 m a.s.l.), a relief in the southern area of the Euganean Hills Park.

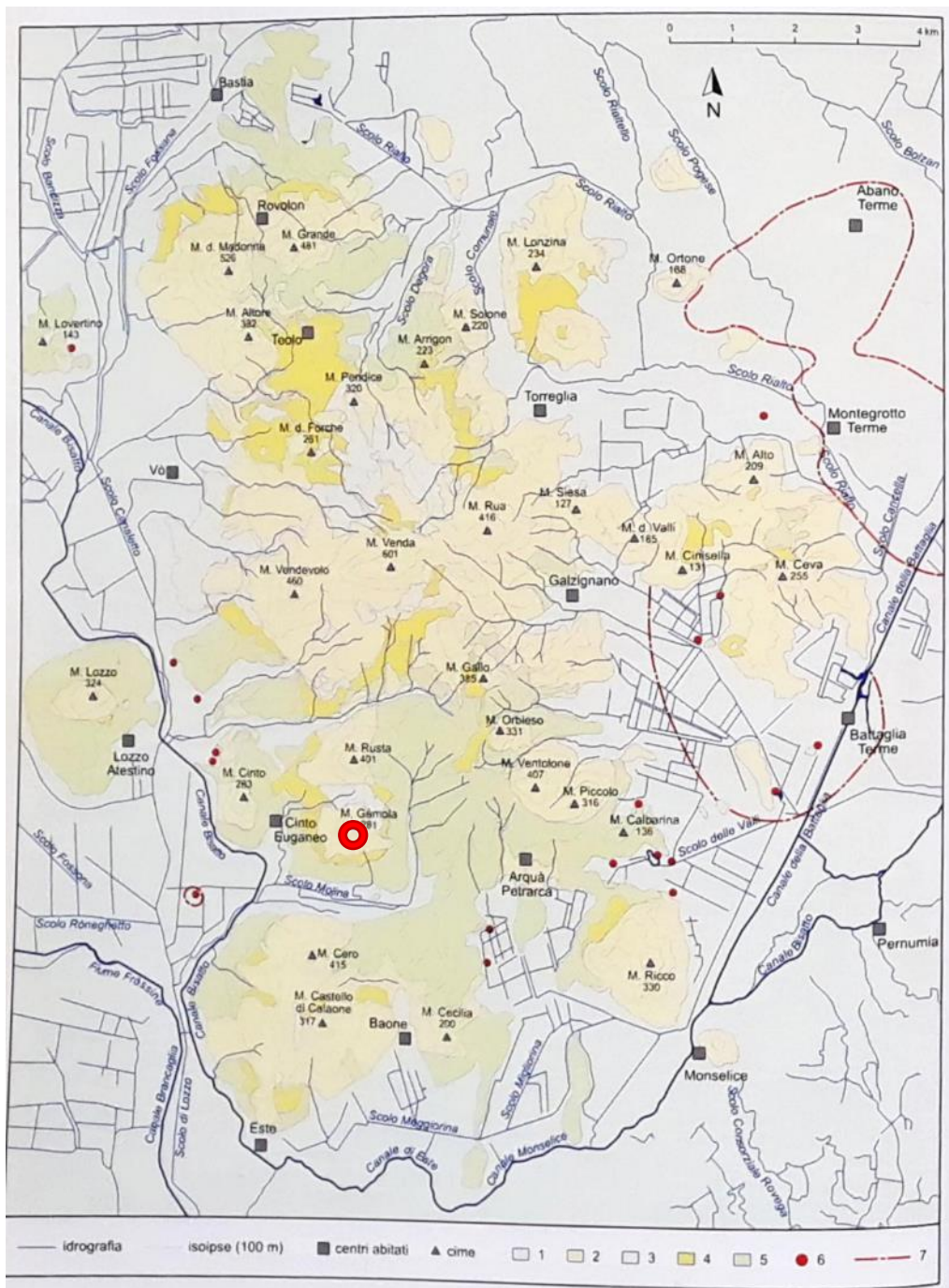
The park is located about ten kilometres south-west of Padua. It includes more than one hundred hills and it covers an area of about 150 square kilometres. The highest hills reach about 400-500 meters above sea level, and only Mount Venda reaches 600⁴². Thanks to their geological evolution, they have a characteristic conical shape and stand out on the surrounding plain "as islands in the sea"⁴³.

Mount Gemola is surrounded by the mountains Rusta (north), Cero and Castello (south), Ricco (south-east), Fasolo and Orbieso (north-east), Ventolone (east), Cinto (west) and is in visual contact with Rua and Venda (north-west), where there are two monasteries (the first still in use and the second in ruins).

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Selmin, Pettenella 2005, p. 17

⁴³ Mozzi 2005



Picture 11: The Mount Gemola within the context of the Euganean Hills (da Selmin 2005)

Hills morphology

The Euganean Hills are made of two types of rocks: the first are sedimentary rocks, originating from ancient marine deposits formed up to 30 million years ago; the second are effusive magmatic rocks, originating from different phases of submarine volcanic activity: the first, dating back to the upper Eocene (43 million years ago), is made up of basalts, effusive rocks originated from a fluid and poor silica lava, which went to pour and mix with the marine sediments; the second, dating back to the Oligocene (30-35 million years ago), is made up of rhyolites, trachites and latites originating from acid and viscous magmas that raised and modified the seabed, going up in bulk and rapidly solidifying. It can be assumed that following the second eruptions the

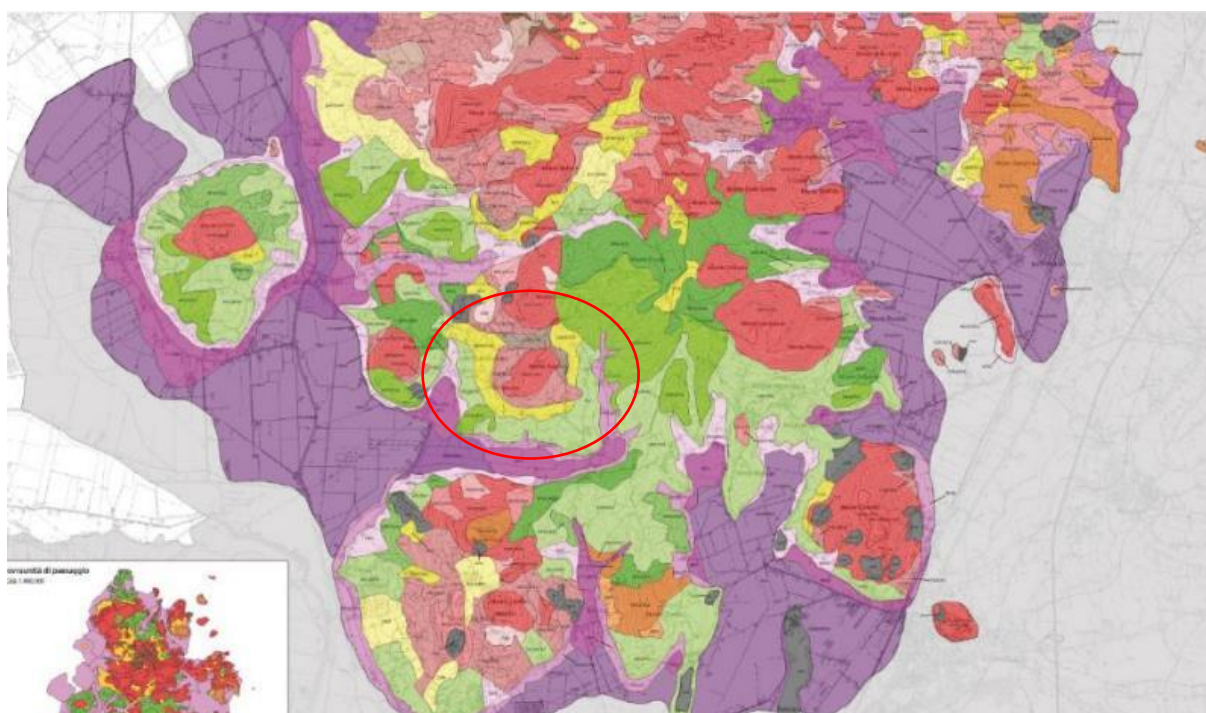
highest cones had emerged from the sea that covered the Po Valley, creating an archipelago. This configuration continued until the beginning of the Quaternary (about two million years ago), when the Po Valley originated, following the lifting of the sea basin, as well as due to alluvial phenomena. Following the emergence of the hills, erosion, associated with the heterogeneity of the geological substrate, contributed to the characteristic shaping of the hills, mainly conical and pyramidal with rounded edges⁴⁴.

Mount Gemola consists of a trachytic eruptive body of the second type, which lies on two different substrates: in the north on a basalt deposit deriving from the first volcanic activity; in the south on older marls.

Soil

The soils of the Euganean Hills have a wide variety, attributable to the geology and geomorphology of its reliefs. The different types of soil have contributed to determining the floristic variety of the park and have contributed to the development of agriculture, especially of the vine (see below). The variety of soils of the Euganean Hills has been widely described in the Soil Map of the Euganean Hills developed by the Regional Agency for Environmental Prevention and Protection of Veneto Region (ARPAV) and the Province of Padua.

Mount Gemola is a relief on trachyte and rhyolite rocks with acid reaction soils.



Picture 12: Southern portion of the Soil Map of the Euganean Hills (<http://cartadeisuoli.provincia.padova.it/download>). Mount Gemola, highlighted, is classified as a hilly relief on silicate, trachyte and rhyolite rocks, with acid reaction soils.

⁴⁴ For a detailed description, v. Mozzo 2005

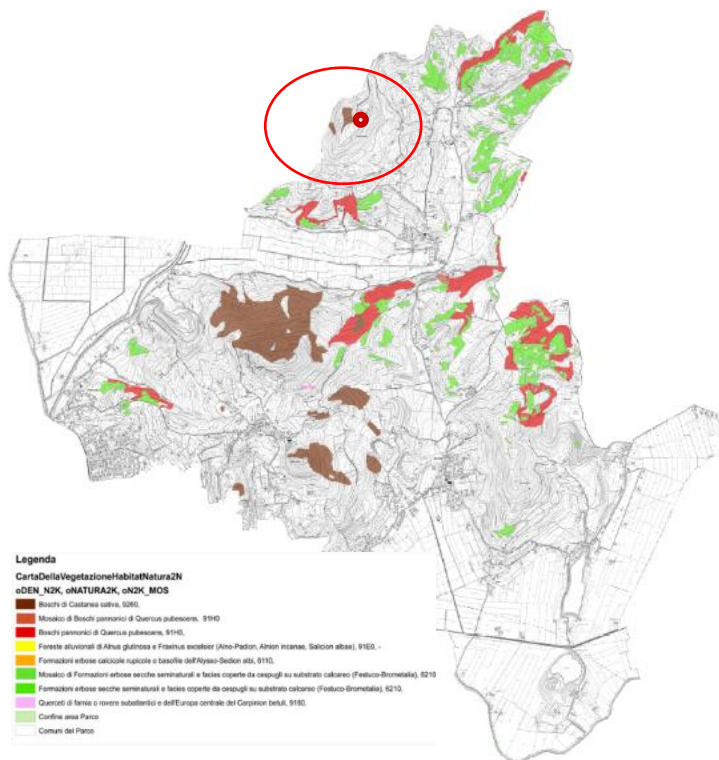
Environmental features of the hills area

Flora

The morphology and variety of soils of the Euganean Hills has allowed the development of a great floristic diversity and the presence of endemisms, such as the so-called *Ruta patavina*. In the Park area, different species live next to each other: those adapted to a hot climate, such as the Mediterranean maquis, which is found in the southern slopes of the sunniest hills (where there are also oak woods); and those of mountain or sub montane character, which are found on the northern slopes, such as chestnut, beech, birch, and, in the undergrowth, alpine epimedium and blueberry. In the southern area of the Hills, the so-called “vegri” can be found, consisting of arid meadows deriving from the abandoned crop fields or poorly productive pastures; the areas that have been abandoned for a long time can house pioneering bushes, such as hawthorn, thorny plum, dog rose, juniper, viburnum, broom. Few and precious are the stations of the *Ruta patavina* (*Haplophyllum patavinum*), the most important species of the Euganean Hills; over twenty are the species of spontaneous orchids with striking and bizarre shapes⁴⁵.

By virtue of some habitats deemed to be of priority at European level, part of the Park area has been included in the Natura 2000 Special Protection Zone Network with the code “IT3260017 Euganean Hills-Monte Lozzo-Monte Ricco”. The surface of the site is equal to 13,698.76 hectares over a total area of the Park of 18,694 hectares.

As can be read on the map of the priority habitats of the Euganean Hills Regional Park, Municipality of Baone, the western slopes of the Mount Gemola host two chestnut wood areas.



Picture 13: Map of priority habitats of the Municipality of Baone with Mount Gemola and Villa Beatrice marked in red

⁴⁵ <http://www.parcocollieuganei.com/pagina.php?id=39>. For details, v. Mazzetti 2002, 2005



Fauna

The Euganean Hills present a diversified number of species. Among the carnivorous mammals, the fox, the weasel and the marten can be found, as well as the badger; among small mammals, the hedgehog, the mole, the shrew, and the dormouse are common. Over time, the deer and the boar have been imported by men. As for birds, over 120 species are reported, including sedentary and migratory. Recently, the presence of the peregrine falcon at the site owned by the Veneto Region in Rocca Pendice and managed by the Park Authority, has led to the inclusion of the Euganean Hills Park in the Natura 2000 Special Protection Zone Network. Reptiles are also reported, including some species of lizards, the green lizard, some species of snakes and the freshwater tortoise, and amphibians. Finally, there are numerous species of butterflies, as well as numerous species of beetles, and, in the cleanest waterways, the crayfish⁴⁶.

Hydrography

The Euganean Hills are located between two large rivers of the Po Valley, the Bacchiglione and the Adige. In ancient times, the Adige used to flow further north, in correspondence with the centre of Ateste-Este (which is in fact named after the river). Within the Euganean area, there are no big rivers, but many small streams, the so-called *calti*, and natural springs raising along the slopes of the hills and originating from their peculiar geological nature.

The flat areas around the hills were marshy for long periods in history, due to their lower altitude compared to the outside plain (where a thick layer of alluvial sediments was deposited by the Adige and Brenta rivers). This situation was modified by man over the centuries through drainage works.

Another important phenomenon linked to water in the area is that of thermalism, due to the natural presence of hot and cold thermal springs in different areas of the hills. The best known are those of the eastern area, in correspondence with the centres of Abano and Montegrotto, but some some springs are also to be found in other areas, such as in Calaone, today within the Municipality of Baone.

On its slopes, the Mount Gemola has springs, a factor that must have influenced its settlement. Just south of the Gemola is a source called *Pissarotto del Tormene*, originated from the Gemola rainwater. The waters of the Gemola are also conveyed by the so-called *Molina* drain and by the *Rio Giare*, which flow south of the relief.

The landscape of the hills

Thanks to its peculiar geomorphology (hilly reliefs intersected by valleys and plains, rich in springs, with good variety of vegetal and animal species) and the central position in the Po valley system between two large rivers that facilitated exchanges, the area of the Euganean Hills has been continuously inhabited by man since ancient times. The Euganean landscape as we see it today is the result of centuries of interaction between man and the environment.

Settlements

The first signs of anthropic settlements in the Euganean Hills are very ancient and date back to the lower and middle Palaeolithic. During the Iron Age (starting from the first millennium BC), the first proto-urban (and then urban) settlements, Padua and Este, were established by the ancient *Veneti* civilization. However, the two centres are located at the edges of the Euganean area (to the north-east and to the south-west). In the same period, an extra-urban sanctuary is documented in the current centre of Montegrotto Terme, in the

⁴⁶ <http://oldportal.parcocollieuganei.com/index.php/it/ambiente-e-territorio/fauna>



eastern part of the hills, linked to the presence of thermal waters. The sanctuary had a continuity of worship at least until the beginning of the Roman period.

During the Roman period, Padua controlled the eastern Euganean area including the thermal springs, and Este controlled the south-western areas, which were widely occupied by a dense network of rural settlements, up to the Berici hills⁴⁷.

In the early Middle Ages, the centre of Este, which had already lost its centrality during the Roman period, definitively lost its urban role, which passed to the centre of Monselice, also located on the edge of the Euganean area. The reasons of this shift were both political and environmental (the riverbed of the Adige river had moved to the south). From the 11th century, when Este became the seat of the *Obertenghi* (who thereafter will be called “Este”), the centre resumed a key role within the Padua committee⁴⁸. During this period, several settlements developed in the area of the hills, such as fortified castles (during the 10th-11th century) and monasteries (since the 11th-12th century), around which the exploitation of the territory was organized⁴⁹. Such settlements were usually located near to the water sources and in a raised position on the top of the hills or on the slopes, to avoid the marshlands in the lower areas.

Such system was replicated in the 16th century by the Venetian villas, which spread in the whole Euganean area and which, in principle, were located on previous castle or conventual settlements, or represented singular episodes⁵⁰.

In light of these synthetic overview, it is interesting to highlight a common trend in the settlement system of the Euganean Hills: the area was never interested by the development of large urban centres, but always represented a “partially inaccessible, wild” area⁵¹, on which control was maintained through the organization of small settlements around some attractive poles, such as castles and monasteries first, and then the Venetian Villas. The hilly areas were the privileged ones, even at medium or lower altitude, in correspondence with water sources or at the junction of routes.

Villa Beatrice was built on the ruins of an ancient medieval monastery dating back to the 12th-13th century. The main urban centres near Villa Beatrice are Este and Monselice. Other smaller villages near the villa are Baone, Cinto Euganeo, Lozzo Atestino, Galzignano Terme and Arquà Petrarca.

Agricultural activity

The cultivation of the land has represented one of the main vectors of development for the Euganean area and has shaped its appearance over the centuries. The agricultural activity was already widespread during the Roman era and continued throughout the Middle Ages and during the Venetian rule, also thanks to the spreading of the Venetian Villas, up to today. This was possible thanks to the regimentation of the waters and the organization of the territory.

Since ancient times, the cultivation of vineyards has been the most widespread and valuable agricultural activity in the area of the hills, as it allows to take advantage of the hilly slopes and benefits greatly from the variety of soils in the area. The cultivation of vineyards and the production of wine have contributed greatly to the economic development of the area, especially during the last years.

⁴⁷ For more details, v. Zanovello 2005.

⁴⁸ Brogiolo 2017a

⁴⁹ Brogiolo 2017a; Settia 2005; Rigon 2005.

⁵⁰ Monti 2001

⁵¹ Selmin 2009



The cultivation of chestnut has also been practiced since old times, in particular for the production of the *marroni* (cultivated chestnuts), for centuries among the valuable agricultural products of the local economy. In the recent decades, the cultivation of chestnut had a sharp recession, partly due to socio-economic causes, partly due to the spread of a parasite that has decimated many specimens. About 2,400 chestnut trees have been surveyed recently, scattered in various small chestnut woods, for a total area of about 35 hectares⁵².

Other important crops in the area are olive trees and fruit trees.

The main cultivation attested around Villa Beatrice, on the Mount Gemola, is that of vineyards, although the cultivation of fruits and chestnuts is also attested by sources and through the toponym of Cornoleda.

Water management

The Euganean area is naturally scattered with many small streams and natural springs on the slopes of the hills, and by marshy areas in the flat areas around the hills.

Since the Roman period, in order to guarantee the agricultural production and the settlement of the territory, many efforts to manage the waters in the area were undertaken, so to drain the marshy lands and to supply water for the rural activities and the urban settlements. Remains of significant canalizations are left from the Roman period, as well as parts of the aqueduct that collected the waters from the hilly slopes and conveyed them to Este. The importance of water management is reflected by an epigraphic record, where a *curator aquarum* is attested in Este during the period of Emperor Claudius⁵³.

In the Middle Ages, the plain around the hills is described as a marshland by the sources. It is however difficult to say how much of this was caused by the rainy and cold environmental crisis of the 6th century and how much the situation looked like this already in the Roman period⁵⁴.

The drainage works of the marshy lands resumed in the communal period with the spread of the Benedictine monasteries and during the later Venetian rule in the 16th century, with the spread of the Venetian Villas⁵⁵. The choice of the locations for the settlements was often driven by the proximity of water sources or by the possibility of conveying water to cisterns, tanks or wells. Following the movement of the riverbed of the Adige river to the south, new artificial canals were built to maintain connections with Verona and the lagoon area.

Today the natural network of streams in the area is heavily altered due to the catchment basins to supply the municipal aqueducts.

In the eastern area of the hills, where there is the natural presence of hot springs, one of the most important thermal centres in the world developed around Abano and Montegrotto Terme. In this area the landscape appears highly urbanized due to the spread of hotels and thermal centres since the last century.

On Mount Gemola, a 13th century well built by the community of the Blessed Beatrice can still be found in the courtyard of the villa, next to a newer 17th century well.

Mining Activities

Mining has been an important part of the economy of the Euganean area since ancient times and has left striking marks on the landscape. The trachyte extraction activity is attested since the Roman period and has

⁵² Selmin 2005, pp. 75-78

⁵³ Zanovello 2005

⁵⁴ Brogiolo 2017a

⁵⁵ Selmin, Pettenella 2005



continued until today, with a peak in the post-war period. Following the establishment of the Euganean Hills Regional Park, the activity was partly blocked, even if it has not completely stopped.

The extraction and production of lime is attested in the area to the south of Mount Gemola by the toponym *Calcinare*⁵⁶.

Roads and canals

Many of the current road connections in the Euganean area date back to ancient times and are linked to the settlement of the area. Road junctions are often located where natural springs are channelled into fountains.

The area has also a network of navigable rivers, which is connected with the other areas of the region (in the Province of Padua there are 265 kilometres of navigable rivers). In the Euganean area, the network was strengthened following the movement of the Adige riverbed to the south in the early Middle Ages, in order to keep a water connection to Verona and the Venice lagoon. The Bisatto Canal is of great importance, as it surrounds the whole area of the hills, connecting Este to Vicenza, Padua and the Venice lagoon.

1.2.3 Cultural context

As previously mentioned, the area of the Euganean Hills was interested by human activity since ancient times, thanks to its climatic and environmental features (the oldest evidence dates to 35,000 years ago, to the lower and middle Palaeolithic⁵⁷). The position in the middle of the Po Valley, between the Bacchiglione and Adige rivers, had allowed commercial relations with the other areas of the Veneto region – in particular with the Berici Hills and Vicenza and the pre-Alpine areas – but also with central Italy and the Mediterranean, especially starting from the Iron Age, with the ancient *Veneti* civilization. Thereafter, and following the Romanisation of the region, the human occupation of the area continued seamlessly up to the present day.

Medieval heritage: castles, monasteries and hermitages

The Euganean area includes medieval fortifications, ancient stone villages, hermitages and monasteries inserted in the natural context of the Euganean Hills Park.

Starting from the 10th-11th century, the area saw the rise of castles built in elevated positions (among the best preserved are those of Baone and Mount Cero)⁵⁸. In the 12th century there was an expansion of religious settlements, also often located in an elevated position, together with significant castle settlements; some of them disappeared, such as the fortress of Barbarossa in Rocca Pendice, and some others are still used, such as that of Cervarese Santa Croce⁵⁹. The development of these settlements involved an integrated exploitation of the surrounding agricultural and uncultivated areas, complemented by crafts and trading activities⁶⁰.

The first religious settlements, such as that of Salarola in Baone or that of the Gemola, did not have a codified form and were born from the impulse to the hermit life of their founders. Starting from the second half of the 13th century, many of these phenomena were codified into the Benedictine Order of Padua (*albi* monks), which had spread among the Euganean Hills⁶¹. These were small and medium-sized monasteries, with the

⁵⁶ Quarena 2014, p. 159

⁵⁷ Zanovello 2005, p. 87

⁵⁸ Brogiolo 2017a

⁵⁹ Monti 2001

⁶⁰ Brogiolo 2017a

⁶¹ Rigon 2005



exception of that of Praglia, built as functional structures to the prayer and work activities: churches, cloister, outer parlour, refectory, dormitory, infirmary, but also warehouses, stables, and sometimes workshops⁶². The first works of transformation of the Euganean landscape are due to the spread of the Benedictine monasteries and their drainage and deforestation works of the flat areas, especially to the south of the hills. An example is the area to the south of Baone, where in the 13th century there was an intense drainage activity, which stopped between the 13th and 14th century⁶³, or the area to the south of Monselice⁶⁴. From the 14th century there was a phase of decline in the expansion of religious settlements and a progressive abandonment of many of them, with their consequent ruin: during the 14th century 11 monasteries became extinct and, during the 14th and 15th centuries, more than half of the over 60 monasteries that existed at the end of the 13th century disappeared⁶⁵.

The area of Baone was home to castles and fortified structures linked to the Este family since the 11th century. Religious settlements developed in the same area, such as that of Salarola, where the Blessed Beatrice found refuge before founding a new monastery on the Mount Gemola.

There are some remains of the medieval heritage of castles and religious settlements in the hills, as in the case of Rocca Pendice or the Venda monastery. In other cases, there was continuity of life and use, so the medieval structures were incorporated and reused by changing function and / or shape, as in the case of the monastery of the Mount Gemola or that of Salarola. In some cases, medieval villages have continued to live up to this day, such as Arquà Petrarca, known for its history linked to the poet Francesco Petrarca. There are examples of medieval castles in the context of urban centres that have continued to live, such as Monselice, Lozzo Atestino and Este. Finally, there are cases of monasteries that have continued to have this function until today, such as the Abbey of Praglia, the Hermitage of Mount Rua in Torreglia, the Monastery of San Daniele in Abano Terme.

The Monastery of the Blessed Beatrice on Mount Gemola, which was incorporated into a Venetian Villa during the 17th century, represents an example of a medieval religious settlement on the Euganean Hills that combines hermit life with land management.

The Venetian Villas

The spread of Venetian Villas affected the whole territory of Veneto Region starting from the 16th century, in a historical phase where the Venetian aristocracy had transferred its interests from the maritime trade to the property and exploitation of lands. The Venetian nobles built their impressive residences, which gradually replaced the monastic settlements in the agricultural management of the territory, of which they had purchased land and goods⁶⁶. In some cases, the villas were built right on the ruins of medieval settlements such as monasteries, others were organized as singular episodes⁶⁷.

Thanks to the spread of villas, the transformation of the marshy valleys into agricultural lands that had been started by the Benedictines continued with great intensity thanks to important drainage works.

Among the Venetian Villas in the Baone area, the 17th-century villa Borini can be mentioned, as well as Ca' Orologio, Villa Mantua Benavides in Valle S. Giorgio, and Ca' Barbaro.

⁶² Rigon 2005

⁶³ Vigato 2005

⁶⁴ Rigon 2005

⁶⁵ Rigon 2005

⁶⁶ Monti 2001; Vigato 2005

⁶⁷ Monti 2001



- **Roman theatre and thermal complex of Viale Stazione/ Via Scavi in Montegrotto Terme:** the archaeological area includes the remains of a Roman monumental complex dedicated to wellness and entertainment, including a small theatre, a thermal structure and a *nymphaeum*⁷¹.

Museums

There are many museums in the area of the Euganean Hills. An overview is provided below:

Municipal Museums:

- **Petrarca's House in Arquà Petrarca:** inherited by the Municipality of Padua in 1875, this museum is the house where the poet Francesco Petrarca lived at the end of his life.
- **Museum of River Navigation in Battaglia Terme:** located in the former slaughterhouse of the municipality of Battaglia, the museum collects over 4,000 artifacts including stories, materials and memories about river navigation.
- **Palazzo Vicari - Museum of Contemporary Art "Dino Formaggio" in Teolo:** located in the 16th-century building of Palazzo Vicari, the museum houses the collection of contemporary art pieces donated by Professor Dino Formaggio (1914-2008).
- **Civic Museum of the Missing Villages of Padua in Villa Estense:** the museum displays a vast documentation of finds, writings, aerial photos of those villages of the Lower Paduan area, which despite having had an interesting role in the local area in antiquity, disappeared towards the 14th-15th century.
- **Shoah and Landscape Museum in Vo' Vecchio:** located in Villa Contarini, Venier, Emo Capodilista, one of the symbolic places of the holocaust – it was the site of a concentration camp between 1943-1944 – the museum houses the remains of the kitchens used by Jewish internees with descriptive panels and an exhibition of documents on the ground floor, and an exhibition of copies of ancient maps of the area on the noble floor, while the second floor is dedicated to the setting up of temporary exhibitions.

Provincial Museums:

- **Museum of the Flora and Fauna of the Euganean Hills in Baone:** the museum is located on the ground floor of Villa Beatrice d'Este and illustrates the environmental features of the Euganean Hills: flora and vegetation, fauna divided by environments and mushrooms.
- **Geo-Paleontological Museum of Cava Bomba in Cinto Euganeo:** the museum is located at the foot of Mount Cinto in the site of an old kiln for the extraction of lime. In 1987, following the discovery of a large sediment of fossils, the Province of Padua made the structure a geo-paleontological museum, inserting in its premises two different mining collections donated by the painter Delmo Veronese and by Count Nicolò Da Rio. Near the museum there is also one access to the panoramic walks leading to the so-called "Busa dei Briganti" and a columnar rhyolite quarry.
- **San Martino Castle - Archaeological Museum of the Bacchiglione River in Cervarese S. Croce:** the museum is located in the Castle of San Martino della Vaneza and preserves numerous archaeological finds coming from the area of the Bacchiglione River and its surroundings.
- **Provincial Museum of Thermal Machines Orazio e Giulia Centanin in Monselice:** housed in a large 1950s building originally destined to the fruit and vegetable market, the museum showcases the collection of

⁷¹ http://www.archeoveneto.it/portale/?page_id=131&recid=49



the Centanin family, consisting of fixed and self-propelled steam and diesel engines and various machines dating back to the period between the late 19th and early 20th centuries; these machines were used in the agricultural mechanization sector and in closely related sectors such as the drainage of marshlands.

Regional Museums:

- **Castle of Monselice:** it is the most famous monument of the city. It consists of several buildings divided into four nuclei (erected between the 11th and 16th century). In addition to the finely furnished rooms, the *Palazzo della Biblioteca* houses the Lombard *Antiquarium*, a small museum that houses the finds from the top of the Rocca hill, which testify to the presence of a necropolis of the 7th century, and the Museum of Rarities “Carlo Scarpa”.

State Museums:

- **National Museum of Este:** located in Palazzo Mocenigo, a 16th-century monumental building built on part of the walls of the Este Castle, the museum illustrates all aspects of the ancient *Veneti* civilization, which had in Ateste-Este one of its most important and flourishing centres.

Private museums:

- **Museum of Ancient Pianos in Arquà Petrarca:** the museum is housed inside Villa Centanin and exhibits a collection of 18th and 19th century pianos by famous German, English, French and Italian manufacturers.
- **Museum of Rural Life in Carceri:** the museum is located on the first floor of the large 16th century cloister annexed to the Abbey of Santa Maria in Carceri (Agostiniana then Camaldolese). It offers an overview of the uses and customs of the rural world, by means of an exhibition that concerns the working of the land, the sowing, the harvesting of wheat, corn and beet, the stable environment, the memory of the “rogations” and the blessing of the stables.
- **Air Museum in Due Carrare:** inaugurated in 1980, the museum is part of Villa Zaborra, also known as “Castle of San Pelagio”, from which Gabriele D’Annunzio departed for the flight over Vienna, where he accomplished the famous launch of thousands of leaflets praising the surrender over the capital. The museum traces the entire history of human flight by pivoting on D’Annunzio’s enterprise; the main part of the Museum is dedicated to his flight, with the rooms inhabited by the poet in the period 1917-1919. The museum itinerary is completed by rooms dedicated to Leonardo, Montgolfier, Wright, Ferrarin, Lindbergh, Nobile, Balbo, Forlanini, Gagarin and Armstrong.
- **Veneto Toy Museum in Mandria:** the museum houses the largest collection of toys in the Veneto region, an important artistic and artisan testimony, with unique pieces produced in Italy and abroad that trace the history of toys from the late 19th century to the seventies of the 20th century.
- **Butterfly House in Montegrotto Terme:** this is the first Butterfly House built in Italy and one of the first in the world. Visitors can follow a path along the rain forests of the Amazon, Africa and Asia, where hundreds of butterflies from all over the world fly free and where they can get in touch with many other tropical animals. In the external area is the Fairy Wood, a mythological park where ancient legends of Celtic and Venetic origin are revived: elves, fairies, gnomes and other characters. The Butterfly House is one of the most popular and well-known parks in the Province of Padua.



1.2.4 Tourist destination Thermae and Euganean Hills⁷²

Villa Beatrice is part of the tourist destination “Thermae and Euganean Hills”, identified in 2016 pursuant to article 9 of Regional Law no. 11/2013. The destination is managed by the Destination Management Organization (DMO) “Thermae and Euganean Hills”, which is made up of public and private entities. The Destination combines the thermal areas of prestigious tourist tradition and great accommodation capacity, with the youngest Euganean Hills destination, which has only recently established itself as a travel destination, also thanks to the values of the walled cities of Este and Monselice and to the widespread of smaller hospitality services in the area.

Although it was made official in 2016, the destination “Thermae and Euganean Hills” has been a destination for tourism since ancient times, thanks to the presence of thermal waters and mud, which are particularly abundant in the municipalities of Abano, Montegrotto, Battaglia, Galzignano and Teolo, and which have made this area the largest thermal destination in Europe.

Recently, as a consequence of the changes in the tourism market, attention has increasingly shifted towards the territory of the hills, which represent a newer market. The tourism data of the Veneto Region show a strengthening, both for the spa area and for the hills, of the Italian market, and, on the other hand, a decrease in the average stay compared to the past, thus indicating a growing interest in services related to the relaxation and well-being rather than medical and therapeutic ones. In the case of the Euganean hills, the German and Austrian markets are found, albeit with a percentage lower than 50%.

1.2.5 Connections

Plane

The nearest airports are those of Venice Marco Polo, Verona Catullo, Treviso Canova.

Train

The railway stations are located around the park area. The closest are the stations of Battaglia Terme, Monselice and Este. The Battaglia Terme and Monselice stations can be reached directly from Padua and Bologna, on the Padua - Bologna line. The Este station can instead be reached directly from Monselice and Mantua, with the Mantua - Monselice line.

Car

The Euganean Hills can be reached by car from the following highways:

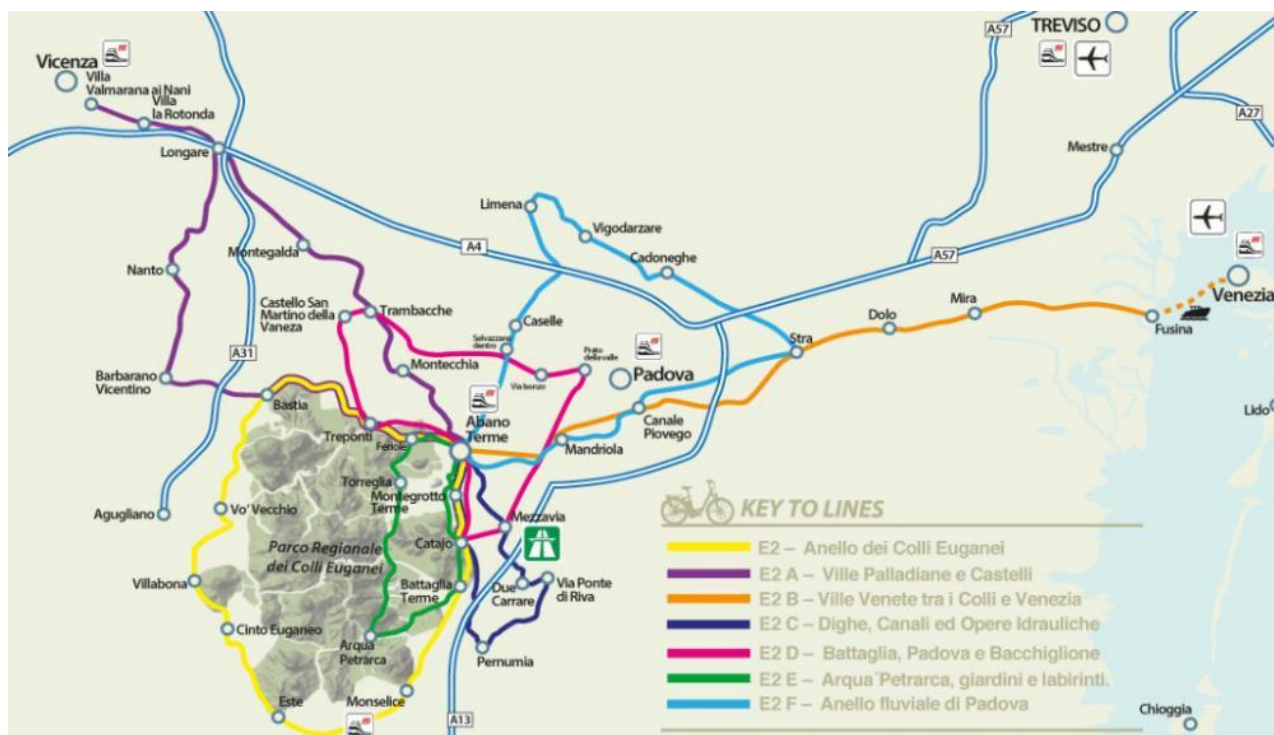
- FROM MILAN AND FROM BRENNERO: A31 Piovene Rocchette - Rovigo, Agugliaro exit
- FROM BOLOGNA: A13 Bologna Padova - Monselice exit
- FROM VENICE AND FROM THE NORTH-EAST: A13 Bologna Padova - Monselice exit

⁷² OGD 2018



Walking, bike, horse

Thanks to the dense network of trails of the Euganean Hills Regional Park, the area is suitable for hiking, walking, Nordic walking, horseback riding, and mountain biking.



Picture 15: Bike paths in the area between Vicenza and Padua. The ring of the Euganean hills is indicated in yellow, passing through Cinto Euganeo, therefore near Villa Beatrice. The map also shows the connections to the railway stations.

There are numerous cycling routes, first of all the cycle ring of the Euganean Hills, included in the offer of regional cycle routes and from which it is easy to connect to the Ring of the Walled Cities. There are also numerous walking routes, organized in trails by the Park Authority of the Euganean Hills.

Among the trails of the Euganean Hills Park that pass near the Mount Gemola and Villa Beatrice:

- Trail no. 1 - Altavia dei Colli Euganei: circular, from Villa di Teolo.
- Trail no. 3 - Atestino path: circular, from Arqua Petrarca.
- Trail no. 12 - Monte Fasolo: circular, from Faedo.

Water

The area is also connected by water through a network of navigable canals between Lozzo Atestino, Vo' Euganeo, Baone, Este, Monselice, and Battaglia Terme.

Villa Beatrice is not connected to the regional public transport network. It can be reached from the south, passing through Monselice or Este, or from the north, passing through Lozzo Atestino. The road is paved and accessible by car. Alternatively, the villa can be reached on foot, by bicycle or horse.



1.3 Formal description

External area

The monumental complex of Villa Beatrice covers a flat area of about one hectare on top of Mount Gemola. The complex consists of the main body of the villa, which extends longitudinally in a north-east south-west direction and overlooks a courtyard, to which two gardens are connected at lower levels: one on the western side (corresponding to the ancient cemetery area), one on the eastern side (corresponding to the ancient *brolo*). Another large meadow area surrounded by walls is located on the southern side of the complex.



Picture 16: Aerial view of the complex of Villa Beatrice, with the main body of the villa, the barchessa, the courtyard, the gardens, the two southern and northern entrances, the enclosure walls



Picture 17: Aerial view of the monumental complex of Villa Beatrice (© Google 2020)



The villa can be accessed from a monumental portal with tympanum and with display of the Roberti family coat of arms. The portal is located along the path that goes up to the villa on the northern slope of the hill, which gives access to an ancient paved ramp leading to the two entrances to the courtyard: the northern one, next to the *barchessa*, and the southern one, to the side of the ruins of the ancient stables. Going up, the ramp flanks the imposing medieval containment walls below the western garden (ancient cemetery), and is in turn delimited, towards the valley, by another wall, also from the medieval period.



Picture 18: Monumental portal giving access to Villa Beatrice



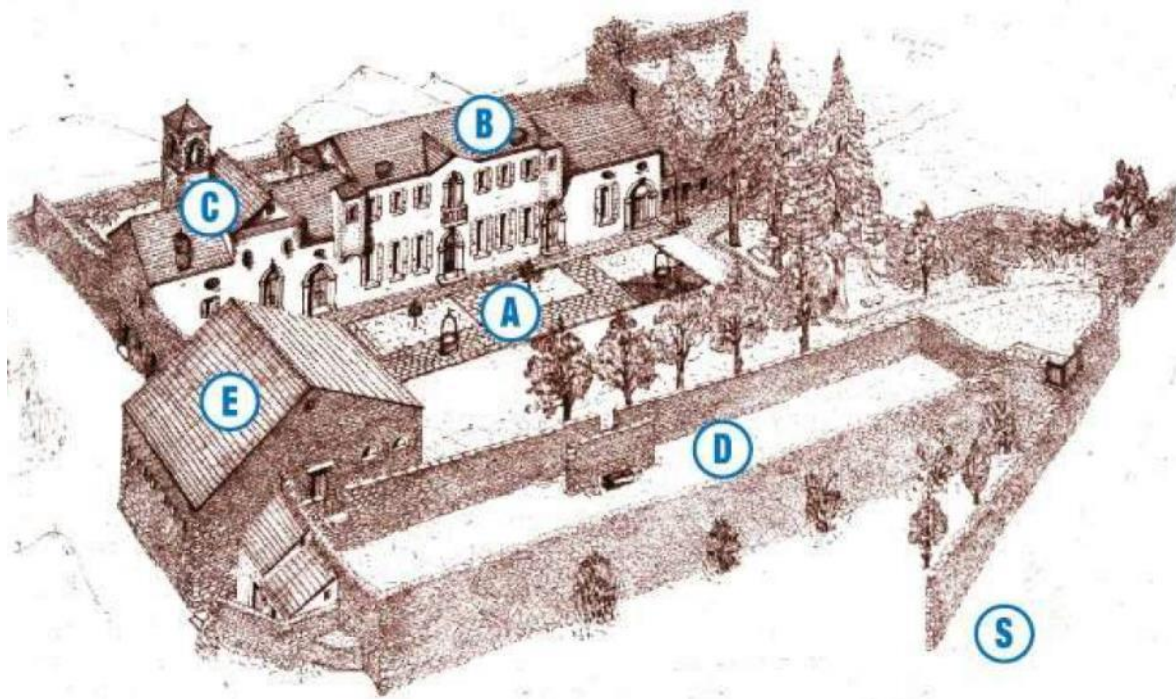
Picture 19: View of the access ramp from above, showing the medieval walls and the portal on the bottom



As shown by the aerial view of the villa and from the different levels of its roof, its construction is the result of several interventions meant to adapt the remains of the medieval monastery to the new use⁷³. The villa has two elevations: one to the west, towards the courtyard, with access at the ground level; and one to the east, towards the ancient *brolo*, where the difference of level is filled with a staircase⁷⁴.

The following components can be identified from the western elevation overlooking the courtyard.

The block of the manor house is in the centre. It is a two-storey building with a central triangular tympanum raised on the corona; underneath the tympanum, there is a balcony with archivolt on the noble floor, and the main access door, also with archivolt, based on two steps on the ground floor. In correspondence with the entrance, is the central hall of the villa. On both sides of the tympanum, there are three symmetrical rectangular windows with a stone frame (six on the ground floor and six on the noble floor, smaller in size). On the noble floor, two symmetrical protruding chimneys conclude the façade⁷⁵.



Picture 20: Drawing of the complex of Villa Beatrice with identification of its components: A. Courtyard; B. Main building; C. Oratory; D. Western garden; E. Barchessa; S. Portal and access ramp

To the left of the main building, is a single-storey longitudinal body developing northwards up to the boundary wall, with two round arches (the left one was walled and later re-opened in a window); the oratory dedicated to St. John the Baptist is inserted orthogonally in its centre. The latter has a front with tympanum surrounded by a brick frame that slightly exceeds the height of the roof, and differs from the main body of

⁷³ Baraldo 2012

⁷⁴ Baraldo 2012

⁷⁵ Zucchello 2001, p. 45

the villa for the presence of two elliptical oculi alongside the arched portal and an additional oculus in the centre of the tympanum⁷⁶.



Picture 21: Façade of the main body of Villa Beatrice



Picture 22: Façade of the oratory of Saint John the Baptist

⁷⁶ Baraldo 2012; Zucchello 2001, p. 45



Picture 23: The "Caretaker's House", in the northern part of the main villa building. On the left, is a portion of a medieval wall with a niche, possibly corresponding to the northern wall of the ancient church of the monastery

To the right of the central body (south) is a one storey adjacency with a window and a door that was inserted in a walled round arch similar to that of the left wing. A subsequent slightly lower body completes the elevation of the building, while continuing with the surrounding wall of the garden behind⁷⁷.



Picture 24: Image of the eastern elevation of the villa with the eastern garden, ancient brolo, and the meadow area delimited by walls to the south

⁷⁷ Zucchello 2001, p. 45

The eastern elevation overlooking the garden is similar to the previous one, but it shows the massive buttress of the bell tower alongside the chapel and partially incorporated in the longitudinal building. The different land elevation between the garden and the building is resolved by a staircase with two symmetrical ramps giving access to the central hall of the villa⁷⁸.

To connect the courtyard to the eastern garden (ancient *brolo*) is an open space surrounded by medieval walls, which has been interpreted as the remains of the ancient dovecote⁷⁹.



Picture 25: Open space surrounded by medieval walls on the southern side of the villa, connecting the courtyard to the eastern garden or brolo. The area has been interpreted as the remains of the ancient monastery dovecote attested by written sources

In the courtyard of the villa are two wells. The northern one dates back to 1264 and is evidence of the ancient medieval monastery; the southern one, more recent, dates back to the time of construction of the villa and must have been built to restore symmetry, following the demolition of the medieval cloister.

On the western side of the courtyard, at a lower altitude, is an enclosed garden, corresponding to the ancient cemetery of the medieval monastery.

⁷⁸ Zucchello 2001, p. 45

⁷⁹ Fontana 1982

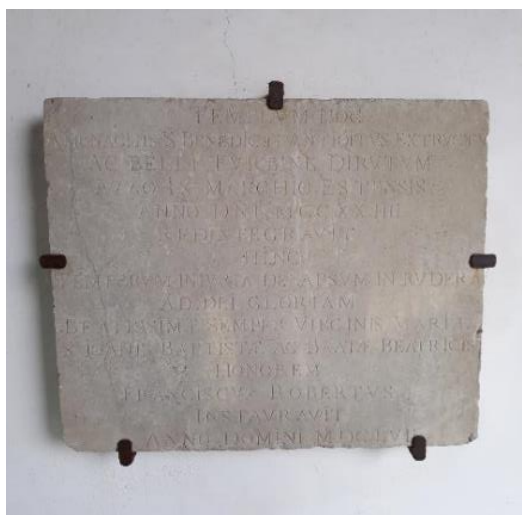


Picture 26: 13th century well in the courtyard of Villa Beatrice. The well was located in the centre of the monastery cloister



Picture 27: Detail of the western garden of Villa Beatrice, corresponding to the ancient cemetery of the medieval monastery. The garden, here photographed in its northern part, covers a longitudinal zone that flanks the courtyard and is located at a lower level

On the northern side of the courtyard is a 20th-century rectangular-shaped *barchessa* (rural building) with one large open arch on its short side towards the courtyard⁸⁰. Under its portico there are some epigraphs that testify to the history of the monumental complex: the 1657 inscription that reports the restoration works of the church carried out by Francesco Roberti; the inscription of the monastery restoration works commissioned by the abbess Maddalena Zacarota in 1510 and the coat of arms of the same abbess. Below the floor, the remains of the foundation of the ancient medieval church are also visible, as well as some burials highlighted during the excavations and restoration works of the 70s and 80s of the last century.



Picture 28: Stone inscriptions preserved under the portico of the *barchessa*. On the left, the 1657 inscription, which recalls the restoration works by Francesco Roberti; on the right, the coat of arms of the abbess Maddalena Zacarota and the inscription recalling the works that she commissioned in 1510.



Picture 29: Detail of the northern wall of the monumental complex, which has been identified as the northern wall of the ancient medieval church of the monastery. In the wall, a niche and a walled door are visible.

⁸⁰ Zucchello 2001, p. 45



Between the *barchessa* and the main body of the villa, there is a wall opened into the northern entrance. Part of this wall has been identified as a remain of the northern wall of the medieval church. In the wall, a niche and a walled door are still visible.

On the southern side of the courtyard are the remains of a wall with barred windows that were interpreted as part of the ancient monastery stables⁸¹.



Picture 30: remains of the wall of a medieval structure on the southern side of the courtyard, which were identified as part of the medieval monastery stables

Beyond the ancient stable, it is a hilly meadow area bordered by the monastery walls, which seems to be of artificial origin. The area would need to be further examined to better understand its insertion in the context of the medieval monastery.



Picture 31: large meadow area enclosed within walls to the south of the complex

⁸¹ Fontana 1982

The central hall has a double height, with an 18th-century wooden balustrade that delimits a balcony, which was used for musicians during events. A precious Murano glass chandelier hangs from the ceiling. In the hall there is a canvas of the Blessed Beatrice dating back to the second half of the 17th century, which represents the Blessed in prayer in front of a crucifix and an open book, above which is a dove with spread wings, a typical element of her iconography. According to the cartouche painted on the same canvas, the painting was originally exhibited next to the tomb of the Blessed in the church of Santa Sofia in Padua⁸².

On the two sides of the hall, there are four symmetric side rooms, two on each side (Room A, B, C, D). The rooms have a Sansovino ceiling⁸³. Inside there are some material evidences of the ancient medieval monastery that were highlighted during the restoration works of the 70s and 80s: portions of terracotta flooring under the floor level; niches in the north wall of "Room B", probably corresponding to the entrances of the ancient refectory; a stone with inscription reused in the construction of the same wall. In the rooms there are also two fireplaces and a hand basin made of carved stone.



Picture 34: Northern wall of Room B, where the remains of the ancient entrances to the medieval monastery refectory are visible. Below the floor level, it is a portion of the ancient medieval floor (on the left)



Picture 35: detail of a stone with inscription reused in the northern wall of Room B.

⁸² Cogo 2017, pp. 209 and following

⁸³ *Ibid.*



Between the northern side rooms and the oratory, is the so-called “carriage room”, with a modern wooden mezzanine that can be accessed by a staircase. The room is located in the possible position of the medieval monastery Chapter Room. On the back of the room there is a small functioning bathroom.



Picture 36: “carriage room” with modern wooden mezzanine

The oratory has a single nave with rectangular in shape, covered by a wooden ceiling. The style is simple, without architectural elements. On the floor are three underground tombs: that of Count Pietro Bregolini, son of Bartolomeo, who died young in 1746 at the age of 33, as stated in the epigraph; next to it is the tomb of his son Bartolomeo, who died in 1733 of just nine months; the tomb of Countess Beatrice Prosdocimi Bregolini de Panico, who died in 1802.

The altar table is on top of a step, is decorated with marble mirrors and has a tabernacle and a raised low back, on which there are three statues: Saint John the Baptist with the Lamb in the centre; Saint Francis of Assisi on the left; the Blessed Beatrice in a contemplative attitude on the right. The statues can be dated to the second half of the 17th century, and therefore can be attributed to the works to the monastery church carried out by Francesco Roberti between 1660 and 1680⁸⁴. It is possible that the altar belonged to the church restored by Roberti during the 17th century and that it was recovered and rearranged in the new oratory at the end of the 17th century, and then maintained in the subsequent restorations.

On the right side of the nave there is a large altarpiece that was originally located on the back wall; there are depicted the Madonna and Child, Saint John the Baptist, Saint Francis and the blessed Beatrice. This painting is also to be dated to the same years as the altar and so it must have been originally placed in the apse of the medieval church⁸⁵.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

Above the door of the oratory there is a painted Latin inscription that attests to the rebuilding of the oratory and the levelling of the courtyard area in 1708 by Count Bartolomeo Bregolini (the inscription also reports that the oratory is located where the Blessed Beatrice used to pray and where her ark was preserved for 300 years)⁸⁶. On the wall next to the altar there is a modern plaque commemorating the great event of 1957, when the body of Blessed Beatrice was transported to Este and was exposed for a whole day inside the oratory.

The southern rooms of the complex house the naturalistic Museum of the Flora and Fauna of the Euganean Hills and a small shop and café area. They must correspond to the old kitchen and cellar of the villa.

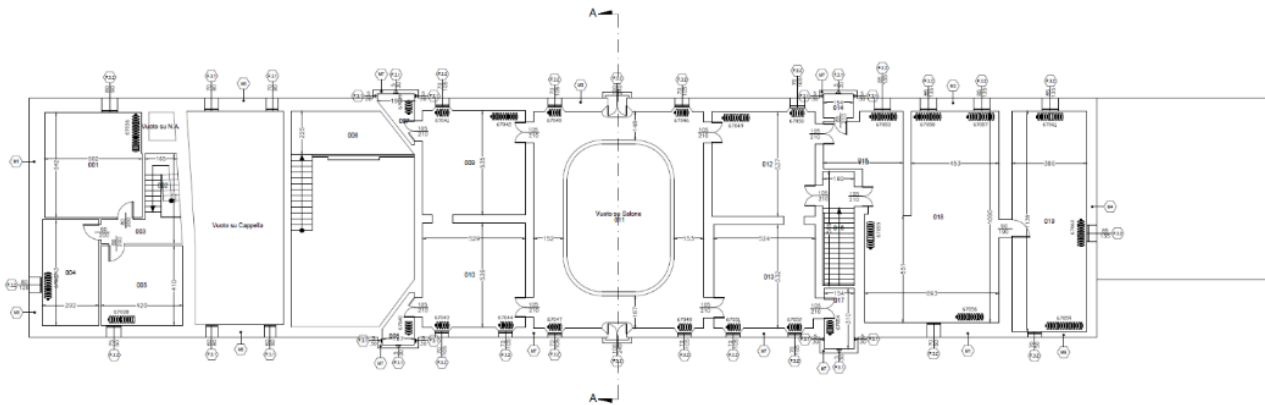


Picture 37: Room of the Museum of the Flora and Fauna of the Euganean Hills and some elements of its exhibition



⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

The upper floor of the villa (noble floor) is accessed by a staircase located south of room A, with access also from the courtyard. The rooms on the upper floor follow the same plan of the ground floor. To the side of the northern side rooms, there are two small triangular-shaped bathrooms (whose functioning could not be ascertained).



Picture 38: Plan of the noble floor of Villa Beatrice (Provincia di Padova)

The *barchessa* in the courtyard is structured on two floors. The upper part has been restored and set up as a conference room. The upper floor is accessed via a staircase, or with an elevator, which is currently not functional. The bathrooms are located on the back.



Picture 39: The barchessa seen from the courtyard



At the beginning of the 17th century, when the monastery had already been abandoned, the structure took the function of a lazaret to house the soldiers suspected of plague, probably for a very short time. According to documentary sources, the structures were even adapted for this purpose.

Starting from the second half of the 17th century, the monastery was transformed into a villa, thus changing its function, which became residential on the one side, and agricultural and productive on the other. As other Venetian Villas, the complex had a manor and representative living area, the actual villa, and rustic and productive areas, which included a room for carriages, barns, a kitchen, a cellar; at the beginning of the 20th century, the rustic *barchessa* was added on the northern side of the courtyard.

Today

Villa Beatrice d'Este is currently the venue of the Naturalistic Museum of the Flora and Fauna of the Euganean Hills of the Province of Padua. The museum is located on the ground floor of the villa, in the southern rooms. Next to the museum, in the space of the so-called "guesthouse", is a reception and coffee area with a small bookshop.

Alongside the museum's activities, workshops and educational activities are organized for both adults and school children.

The villa complex is also used for the organization of events, such as weddings, conferences, and historical re-enactments (but other types of events have also been organized, such as outdoor cinema and enogastronomy events). The spaces used for events are the central hall and side rooms, the courtyard and the eastern garden, the oratory (still consecrated), the *barchessa*, the other outdoor spaces.

The *barchessa* has been organized to host conferences, with an elevator and the availability of a projector, even if currently it is no longer in use.

The northern part of the complex is the caretaker's house.

The agricultural function of the villa is maintained by the presence of vineyards around the structure (owned by the Province of Padua), currently entrusted to a local winery.

The current functions of the villa are not in conflict with its historical values but could be enhanced to better valorise its attributes. At present, medieval ruins are not valued for example. The upper floor of the villa and the *barchessa* are also not used.



Picture 41: The courtyard and the barchessa during an event



Picture 42: Above, central hall during a wedding; below, external setting.



Picture 43: Event in the eastern garden, ancient brolo

2. State of conservation of the site

The structure of the villa is made of mixed stone and brick walls, which have undergone several structural and consolidation interventions over time. The surface of the walls is plastered and was consolidated and renovated also aesthetically during the restoration works of the 70s and 80s. The internal part of the building is in good condition. The Venetian floors have some gaps, and there are some humidity problems where the medieval floors were highlighted and were covered by a glass panel following the archaeological excavations. The *barchessa* seems to be in a state of neglect, but the condition of its walls, windows and systems appears to be functional and in a good state.

The masonry structures around the villa are made of stone blocks and in some cases show structural movements. In the past, consolidation works were undertaken by adding mortars between the stones, but such work has not been carried out on all walls. The movement of stone blocks could be an issue for the safety of visitors.

Another problem for all the buildings linked to the villa complex and their external structures are the attacks by biological agents (vegetation, including roots). On the other hand, there are no obvious problems caused by air pollution, as the area is isolated and hilly, and surrounded by green areas.

A general problem of the areas around the main building is the water flow. The uncontrolled flow of water can cause damage to the stone walls and the collapse of some parts. To this, the logistics related to the flow of visitors shall be added, and that of the safety of structures with respect to accidental damage.

The structure as a whole needs consolidation of the stone walls and a maintenance of the surfaces (old plaster), respecting the original materials. Around the main building, this intervention can be performed punctually, using pigmented hydraulic plasters. Stone walls can be preserved through breathable plasters that could prevent the formation of cracks on the walls.

Concerning the external areas, it may be useful to conduct periodic maintenance to avoid the propagation of vegetation that could damage the walls. First, it is recommended to remove the vegetation manually, and then to apply inhibitors at least every six months. As for the problem of water runoff, it is recommended to intervene by cleaning gutters and drains (which should also be covered with grates to ensure the safety of visitors), so as to channel the flows and prevent them from flowing.

As for the interiors, the grouting of the Venetian floors is recommended in the central body of the villa. It is also recommended to study a more breathable cover to better highlight the fragments of the medieval pavements in the ground floor, now not clearly visible due to humidity problems.



Picture 44: Detail of the Venetian floor and of one Medieval floor spot



3. Site values

3.1 Historical value: site specificity and ideological context

Villa Beatrice d'Este is an example of 17th-century Venetian Villa, and therefore is a testimony to the development of villas in the Veneto region, as part of the historical, social, economic and cultural context of the Republic of Venice during the 1500s and 1600s.

Within the framework of the Venetian Villas in the Province of Padua⁸⁷, Villa Beatrice can be included in the subgroup of buildings that replaced previous religious settlements. Starting from 1656, many former convents and religious settlements were in fact suppressed by the Republic of Venice and sold to private individuals, in order to raise funds and reduce the debts caused by the many wars of the first half of the 17th century. In the area of the Euganean Hills, the following examples belong to this group: *Villa Italia*, called *Castello di Lospida*, in Monselice; *Villa Cromer, Saggini, Buzzaccarini* in Monselice; *Villa Berlendis, Kunkler* in Este; *Villa Widmann* in Bagnoli; *Villa Todeschini*, today Benedictine Monastery of San Daniele, in Abano Terme (in the latter case, the monastery was first transformed into a villa, and then resumed its function as a monastery during the 20th century)⁸⁸. The case of Villa Beatrice differs from these examples, as the Gemola monastery had been abandoned and put up for sale previously, and for different reasons. The community of the Gemola, in fact, had to move to Padua in 1578, for an internal decision of the Diocese of Padua. Regardless of the causes, Villa Beatrice represents an example of adaptation and continuity of use of pre-existing religious structures during the development of Venetian Villas in the Euganean Hills area.

To this factor, we must add the historical importance of the medieval monastery that precedes the villa. It was founded in 1221 by the Blessed Beatrice of the Este family, one of the most influential families in northern Italy at that time. The foundation of a monastery by a young noblewoman in search of spiritual life is part of the phenomenon of the pauperistic movements of Italy in the early 13th century, which largely involved the aristocratic female world (the experiences of Francis of Assisi and Saint Claire are contemporary). Furthermore, the patronage of the Este family over the monastery testifies to the political balance of that specific historical context.

3.2 Social and symbolic values

The social and symbolic values of Villa Beatrice are linked to the figure of the Blessed Beatrice, after whom the villa is named. Beatrice of Este had founded the monastery on which the villa was later built. The memory of the Blessed Beatrice remains not only in the name of the monumental complex, but also in a series of material and historical memories that link the site to the surrounding area.

The oratory of the villa, dedicated to Saint John the Baptist, maintained a direct link with the history and figure of Beatrice over the centuries: it is in fact dedicated to Saint John the Baptist, as the monastery founded by the Blessed, and it stands right on the site of the ancient sacristy where the body of the Blessed had been preserved after her death and before it was transported to Padua, when the monastery was abandoned.

The memory of the Blessed Beatrice and her story have been transmitted in the religious and popular culture of the Province of Padua and the Euganean Hills for centuries, up to the present day. This tradition led to the official declaration of the cult of the Blessed during the 18th century. Emblematic example of the importance

⁸⁷ Di cui si ha un catalogo dettagliato in Zucchello 2001

⁸⁸ Baraldo 2012



of the figure of Beatrice for the local culture was the large participation to the procession that accompanied the body of the Blessed from the church of Santa Sofia of Padua to the Cathedral of Santa Tecla in Este in 1957. On that event, the body of the Blessed stayed for a day on the Gemola, and this memory is testified by a plaque inside the Oratory.

3.3 Architectural value

As previously mentioned, the complex of Villa Beatrice is one example of the 17th-century Venetian Villas in the Province of Padua. From an architectural point of view, the villa is sober and simple. It has a typical tripartite plan with a central hall, with a beautiful wooden balcony and a coffered ceiling.

From an architectural point of view, Villa Beatrice differs from other contemporary examples for being built on the ruins of a previous medieval monastery, reusing its main structures. The excavation and restoration works carried out in the 70s and 80s of the last century, allowed to better understand how the structure of the monastery was integrated into the villa, and even to highlight some elements of the old structures. Furthermore, the massive enclosure and containment walls of the ancient monastery are still preserved and strongly qualify the external look of the monumental complex. As seen above, there are other examples of villas built on ancient monasteries, but, unlike these examples, Villa Beatrice retains a more accentuated sobriety, and preserves more extensive parts of the original medieval architecture.

3.4 Archaeological value

The villa was built on an ancient medieval monastery dating back to the 13th century, thus integrating and reusing part of its structures. Archaeological investigations were conducted in the 70s and 80s of the last century when restoration works were undertaken in view of opening the complex to the public: both the area of villa and the area of the 20th-century *barchessa* were investigated. Thanks to this research, material information on the ancient medieval monastery is available, and some remains are visible *in situ*, although not fully valorised. Villa Beatrice has therefore an archaeological value, as a material testimony of an ancient medieval monastery. Medieval archaeology is a relatively recent discipline; the remains of Villa Beatrice have an important value for reconstructing the early medieval history of the Euganean Hills and providing information that otherwise would not be available solely through written sources. Further investigations in the area around the villa and further analysis of the wall stratigraphy would be very useful to better understand the different construction phases of the monastery and the villa and to frame them in the agricultural and production context of the Euganean Hills.

3.5 Natural and landscape values

Villa Beatrice is located on the top of Mount Gemola, with a 360° view of the surrounding landscape. It is in visual connection with the Mount Rua, where there is still a hermitage, and the Mount Venda, where once used to stand a monastery, now ruined. The position in the context of the Euganean Hills Park and the view on the landscape are a unique feature of the villa compared to other sites of cultural interest in the area.

The Mount Gemola has a large woods on its sides, flanked by the cultivation of vine, testifying to a centuries-old interaction between man and the environment. In the medieval economy, woods and uncultivated areas had a great economic importance, as they provided resources for both food and sustenance. Villa Beatrice, which stands on the site of an ancient medieval monastery, represents an ideal location in the context of the



hills: raised above the plain, near water sources, surrounded by woods and cultivable areas, easily defensible. The monumental complex of Gemola has a landscape value as a testimony of a typical medieval settlement, which contributed to shaping the surrounding landscape.

3.6 Educational value

Villa Beatrice is the premises of the Naturalistic Museum of the Flora and Fauna of the Euganean Hills of the Province of Padua. The museum represents an added value to those already listed, as it offers the opportunity to educate visitors on the natural value of the site and, more generally, of the Euganean Hills. The museum could also be better integrated with the history of the villa, in particular through the theme of man-nature interaction and integration over the centuries (for example, by elaborating on the use of plants by monks, or on old agriculture and productive activities and practices).

3.7 Authenticity and integrity

Both conditions of authenticity and integrity are well represented in Villa Beatrice.

The complex of the villa is in a good state of conservation and is intact in all its parts. The medieval monastery was incorporated into the villa, and therefore is part of it. The historical phase that precedes the 17th-century villa should be better valorised to allow visitors to fully understand the values of the site.

As for the authenticity, the villa, despite having changed function over the centuries, has maintained a strong spirituality and sense of meditation. The construction of the villa has externally maintained the austere aspect of the previous religious building, with a parsimonious use of decorative elements. Visitors will still find a place of peace and tranquillity, surrounded by the nature of the Euganean Hills.



Picture 45: Evocative panorama from Villa Beatrice

PART II – PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SITE

4. Protection and management components

4.1 Ownership of the site

Villa Beatrice is a public property owned by the Province of Padua. It became property of the Province in 1989, following the closure of the Consortium for the Valorisation of the Euganean Hills (*Consorzio per la Valorizzazione dei Colli Euganei*) that had bought it in 1972.

Following the restoration works carried out in the 70s and 80s, the complex was opened to the public, with the establishment of the Naturalistic Museum of the Flora and Fauna of the Euganean Hills in the southern wing of the villa.

The property includes the main body of the villa and the rustic annex (*barchessa*), and about 20 hectares of land.



Picture 45: Cadastral map of Villa Beatrice d'Este (Province of Padua)

4.2 Protection, valorisation and competent authorities

The monumental complex of Villa Beatrice was bound in 1971 pursuant to law 1089 of 1939, then replaced by the legislative decree of 29 October 1999, n. 490, and by the Legislative Decree of 22 January 2004, n. 42, the Code of cultural and landscape heritage and subsequent additions.



The competent authority is the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Tourism, represented locally by the *Superintendency of Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape for the metropolitan area of Venice and the provinces of Belluno, Padua and Treviso*, based in Padua.

According to the Code of Cultural Heritage, Villa Beatrice is a “monumental complex”, defined, according to Art. 101, 2, as “an ensemble formed by a plurality of buildings built also in different periods, which over time have acquired, as a whole, an autonomous artistic, historical or ethno-anthropological relevance”. The property also represents an “archaeological area” pursuant to Art. 101, 2, d, since it is “a site characterized by the presence of fossil remains or prehistoric or ancient artifacts or structures”.

As such, the villa is subject to **protection** obligations by the Ministry, in particular:

- The Ministry monitors its state of protection, in coordination with the owner (Art. 18, 2)
- The property cannot be destroyed, deteriorated, damaged, or used for uses that are not compatible with its historical and artistic character or that could compromise its conservation (Art. 20, 1)
- The property cannot be alienated without authorization from the Ministry (Art. 56)
- The execution of works of any kind on the complex is subject to the authorization of the Superintendency, as well as any changes in the intended use (Art. 21, 4). Since the villa is a public property owned by a territorial public body, this authorization can be expressed in the context of agreements with the Ministry (Art. 24, 1). It is also forbidden to remove any “frescoes, coats of arms, graffiti, tombstones, inscriptions, tabernacles and other decorative elements of buildings, exposed or not in public view” without authorization from the Superintendency (Art. 50, 1)
- The public owner has the obligation to guarantee the safety and conservation of the complex (Art. 30, 1), “ensured through a coherent, coordinated and planned study, prevention, maintenance and restoration” (Art. 29, 1)
- The Ministry can impose conservation interventions, or undertake them directly (Art. 32, 1). Being the property owned by a local public body, this can be based on agreements between the body and the Ministry, and generally based on preventive programmatic agreements (Art. 40)
- The Ministry has the right to “prescribe distances, measures and other directives aimed at preventing that the integrity of the immovable cultural heritage components is endangered, that its perspective or light is damaged or that its environmental conditions and decorum are altered” (Art. 45, 1)

Concerning **valorisation**, the Code gives the following directives, which are relevant for Villa Beatrice:

- In compliance with the principle of public use of the villa (Art. 101, 3), the owner, which is public, must guarantee its valorisation (Art. 112, 1 and 6)
- The access to the villa can be free or paid (Art. 103, 1). The proceeds from the sale of tickets must be used for the valorisation of the asset (Art. 110, 4)
- Valorisation activities can be carried out with the cooperation or participation of private subjects (Art. 111, 1). Valorisation on a private initiative is a socially useful activity (Art. 111, 4)
- The activities of valorisation of public cultural assets can also take place indirectly through concessions to third parties, also in joint and integrated forms (Art. 115, 3), and through a service contract (Art. 115, 5). In this case, the protection functions remain with the Ministry (Art. 116, 1)



- The villa can be granted to individual applicants for purposes compatible with its cultural destination (Art. 106, 1).

4.3 Current management system

The management of the services linked to the museum of the Flora and Fauna of the Euganean Hills and the Villa has been entrusted to a third party by the Province of Padua since about ten years.

This current arrangement is based on the following division of tasks:

Manager	Province of Padua
Opening / closing of the museum two Sundays per month	Costs of electricity, water, gas, heating and garbage services
Supervision and custody during opening hours	Ordinary and extraordinary maintenance of the whole building and its surrounding areas
Supervision and control of visitors	
Management of ticketing services and keeping of daily visitors' records	
Information services for the public	
Management of guided tour reservations	
Development and promotion of the museum	
Planning and organization of educational activities	
Management of the museum website	
Creation of "promotional packages"	
Organization and management of ceremonies, events and other cultural initiatives and promotion of local food and wine	
Sale of publications and/ or local products	
General and periodic cleaning of the premises	
Expenses related to telephone services, Internet connection and installation/ management of cash registers	

Currently, the company Butterfly Arc Ltd. is the site manager. The same company is also in charge of the management of the other museums of the Province of Padua and of the Butterfly House in Montegrotto Terme, of which the company was the founder.

The Province has recently launched a call for expression of interest to participate in the procedure for the assignment of the management, valorisation, and promotion services of the property⁸⁹. The call closed on 15 February 2020 and will likely be followed by a new call for awarding the management tasks in the coming months.

According to what reported in the same announcement, the assignment will have a duration of three years and will involve a fixed fee of maximum of 9,000.00 euros per year; moreover, the manager will be entailed

⁸⁹ Provincia 2019



to the profits from the entrance tickets and the educational activities, and of any new activities and events proposed and implemented. The management of the income deriving from events and weddings, previously shared between the owner and the managing body by 50%, is not explicitly mentioned in the document.

A caretaker lives in the north wing of the villa. The relationship with the caretaker is managed directly by the Province of Padua.

The agricultural land around the villa is rented to a local farm and winery. According to what was reported by the Province of Padua, the farm is “Le Volpi”, which is based in Baone within one kilometre from the villa.

4.4 Services and facilities

Based on the management system described above, the services and facilities currently available at Villa Beatrice, which are entirely managed by Butterfly Arc Ltd., can be listed as follows:

Current services	Structures involved
1. Guided tours	
Self-guided visit of the museum Entrance ticket 2€ per person	Museum and bookshop
Guided tour of the museum 1h - 40 € + 1 € per person	Museum and Bookshop
Guided tour of the museum and the villa 1.5 h - 60 € + 1 € per person	Museum and Bookshop Central hall and side rooms Oratory Outdoor courtyard and gardens
2. Guided walked tours in the surrounding areas	
Chestnut wood 1h – 60 €	-
Mount Gemola and village of Cornoleda 3 h – 120 €	-
Mounts Gemola, Rusta and Fasolo 5 h – 180 €	-
3. Didactic workshops and interactive itineraries	
<i>Naturalia</i> : recognition of plants and observation of biodiversity in the Euganean Hills 1,5 h – 5 € per child	Villa, museum, and outdoor spaces
The inhabitants of the Gemola: interactive guided tour of the villa to discover the medieval history and archaeology of the villa and who inhabited it through the centuries 1,5 h - 5 € per child	Villa and outdoor spaces
Let's not lose the compass: interactive activity to learn how to use maps and compass 1,5 h - 5 € per child	Villa and outdoor spaces
My tree: walked tour and interactive activity to discover the tree varieties 1,5 h - 5 € per child	Villa, museum, and outdoor spaces



4 Events	
Weddings Central hall: 1.000 € Central hall and side rooms (including the <i>brolo</i>): 2.000 € External spaces: 350 € <i>Barchessa</i> : 250 €	Central hall and side rooms Toilet External courtyard and gardens <i>Barchessa</i> Carriage room for the catering services
Private events and meetings Central hall: 1.000 € External spaces: 350 € <i>Barchessa</i> : 250 € Prices are based on five continuous hours. The cost of additional hours is extra 30 €. The cost for extra hours for set-ups is extra € 20 per hour.	Central hall and side rooms Toilet External courtyard and gardens <i>Barchessa</i> Carriage room for the catering services
-	Parking lots: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lower parking, outside the monumental portal, also suitable for buses - Higher north parking, next to the northern entrance of the villa, usually reserved for internal staff The courtyard of the villa is not normally used as a parking lot but it can accommodate vehicles.

Despite having been restored and equipped as a conference room on the first floor, the *barchessa* is currently used only in its outdoor spaces, mostly for events such as weddings. The internal space is in a state of neglect.

The second floor of the villa is currently not used but its state of conservation is good.

Within the complex, there are no kitchen facilities. Currently, during events, the catering services use the carriage room as a base for logistics, but everything is prepared in advance.

An apartment for residential use was created in the northern wing of the villa. The apartment is the house of the villa caretaker.

4.5 Visitor flows

According to the data provided by Butterfly Arc Ltd., the number of visitors to Villa Beatrice and its museum can be estimated as follows:

Annual average over the past four years (Butterfly Arc management):

Visitors 2€	Schools	Free entrances	Events	Total
800	450	50	600	1,900

To these numbers, the non-paying visitors to the external areas should be added, which were estimated to be around 20,000 per year.



In the past, the most important event held at the villa was represented by “Calici di Stelle” (an event related to wine): during the 2015 edition, the event brought to Villa Beatrice around 8,000 visitors. Unfortunately, the organizers decided to concentrate the event entirely in Arquà Petrarca. Despite this, in 2019, many visitors came to Villa Beatrice as Arquà Petrarca was overloaded (over 20,000 visitors estimated in three evenings).

“Maggio in Gemola” is another annual event, which brings about 300-400 visitors to Villa Beatrice.

The data suggest that a more holistic management and the organization of events, could lead to an increase in the number of visitors. The potential can be seen by analysing the tourist flows in the Destination “Thermae and Euganean Hills”: 3,261,032 total presences in 2017, of which 32,066 in Arquà Petrarca, Baone, Cervarese Santa Croce, Cinto Euganeo, Vo’, Lozzo Atestino, Rovolon⁹⁰.

In this regard, it is also interesting to analyse the tourism data at the regional level, where, in 2017, more than 65% of the revenues for international leisure tourism were based on cultural reasons, primarily of a traditional type (61.8% linked to the visit to the main cities of art), and also of an experience type (4.4%). Furthermore, the cultural holidays registered the highest per capita expenditure on international tourism⁹¹.

As regards the target groups, at the moment there are no data on the percentages of Italian and foreign visitors to the villa. According to observation, visitors are mostly Italian. Data are available at destination level and at regional level. In the first case, the Italian market has a higher share compared to the foreign one (the most represented foreign nationalities are German and Austrian⁹²). In the second case, the foreign market is the most important one, with a growing trend⁹³.

5. Stakeholder analysis

Province of Padua

The Province of Padua is the owner of the villa, responsible for its protection and valorisation. The villa, with its museum, is part of the Provincial Museum System, which also includes the other following museums: the Geo-Paleontological Museum of *Cava Bomba* in Cinto Euganeo; the Provincial Museum of the Bacchiglione river of the Castle of *San Martino della Vaneza* in Cervarese Santa Croce; the Provincial Museum of Thermal Machines “*Orazio e Giulia Centanin*” in Monselice; the Living Museum of Insects *Esapolis* in Padua; the Museum of History of Medicine and Health *MUSME* in Padua; the Museum of *Palazzo Santo Stefano* in Padua.

As owner, the Province of Padua is interested in promoting and valorising the monumental complex of Villa Beatrice, and in ensuring its protection and conservation in a perspective of economic sustainability. On the other hand, with reference to the museum and archaeological heritage of the villa, the Province is interested in promoting “the study, documentation, valorisation of the flora, fauna, geology and palaeontology of the provincial territory, also in terms of environmental education”, and to “collect, preserve, document and valorise the testimonies and materials related to the history and archaeology of the provincial territory, also in relation to education”, as expressed in the Museum System Regulation⁹⁴. Although the Provincial Museum

⁹⁰ OGD 2018

⁹¹ Regione Veneto 2019

⁹² OGD 2018

⁹³ Regione Veneto 2019

⁹⁴ Provincia 1994



System is currently in a transition phase following the recent reform of the provincial system in Italy, there is an interest in continuing these activities in cooperation with the Region and the Municipality of Baone.

Veneto Region

Villa Beatrice is part of the cultural heritage of the Veneto Region. Through its policies and activities related to culture, the Region is interested in promoting the regional cultural heritage, also in terms of tourism.

Recently, the Region has launched a new online portal named “Cultura Veneto”⁹⁵, an innovative tool that connects and promotes all the resources, data and services in the cultural field in the region. The platform covers extensively the cultural sector, from the tangible and intangible heritage, to the places of culture, the performing arts, and the audio-visual sector. An interactive map gives an overview of museums, archives, libraries, theatres, Venetian Villas, and events in the region, and gives the opportunity to create itineraries and routes.

From the tourism point of view, the Region has recently published the Strategic Plan for Tourism in the Veneto Region⁹⁶. The document describes the strategic axes of the regional tourism, starting from data on tourist flows and from an analysis of tourist demand, which led to a definition of tourism products. The slow tourism valorising the local cultural heritage and based on high quality products, is among the priority axes.

Municipality of Baone

The Villa is located within the Municipality of Baone. The municipality is therefore interested in promoting its heritage within its wider territorial offer. Within the Municipality of Baone, there are other heritage sites, some of which are directly connected with the history of Villa Beatrice, such as the Salarola area, where an ancient monastery was located and where the Blessed Beatrice had first retired; and the area of Calaone, where two castles of the Este family used to be located and where Beatrice lived with her family before her spiritual choice. The Municipality is interested in valorising the villa in the context of the municipal heritage and therefore in creating synergies with other activities.

Superintendency of Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape

The *Superintendency for the metropolitan area of Venice and the provinces of Belluno, Padua and Treviso* is the decentralized body of the Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Tourism in charge of the protection and conservation of the cultural heritage of the Province of Padua. In the case of Villa Beatrice, the Superintendency liaises with the Province of Padua, a public body and owner of the site, to agree on the maintenance and conservation works and to approve any works aimed at making the complex functional. The Superintendency has an interest in supporting activities that would ensure the long-term conservation of the property and its use by the public.

⁹⁵ <https://www.culturaveneto.it/it/>

⁹⁶ Regione Veneto 2019



Regional Institute for Venetian Villas (IRVV)

Born in 1979 on the initiative of the Veneto Region and the Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region, the institute is committed to promoting knowledge and best use of the Venetian Villas, through cataloguing, restoration and valorisation activities.

Euganean Hills Park Authority

The Euganean Hills Regional Park was established in 1989. The Park, which covers an area of 5,200 hectares, is the super-municipal body for all that concerns the safeguarding and promotion of the territory, establishing guidelines through its Environmental Plan. The Park Authority is also responsible for the maintenance, signage and promotion of cycling trails and walking itineraries within the park area. Synergies with the Park are desirable both as regards tourism promotion and environmental valorisation and educational activities on the local flora and fauna, given the presence of the provincial museum in the premises of Villa Beatrice.

Destination Management Organization Thermae and Euganean Hills

The Euganean Hills area is part of the “Thermae and Euganean Hills” tourist destination, managed by the Destination Management Organization (ODG) with the same name, established in 2016 pursuant to Regional Law no. 11/2013. The ODGs are tourist management structures to which the Veneto Region recognizes the functions of information, tourist reception, promotion, and marketing. Public and private components, including the Municipality of Baone, are part of the ODG “Thermae and Euganean Hills”.

The ODG is managed under the guidance of a management team and a steering committee. The management team is made up of the municipalities of Montegrotto Terme, Abano Terme, Monselice, Battaglia Terme, and Torreglia, the *Terme Euganee* Consortium, the *Veneto Acqua e Terme* Consortium, *ASCOM Confcommercio*, *Confesercenti*, *Confagricoltura Agriturist Veneto*, the Chamber of Commerce of Padua, from *Confindustria Padova*. The steering committee is composed by the municipalities of Abano Terme, Battaglia Terme, Due Carrare, Galzignano Terme, Montegrotto Terme, Arquà Petrarca, Baone, Cervarese Santa Croce, Cinto Euganeo, Este, Lozzo Atestino, Monselice, Rovolon, Teolo, Torreglia, Vo’, the *Pietro d’Abano* Thermal Study Center, the Padua Chamber of Commerce, *Confindustria Padova Consorzio Terme Euganee - Consorzio Veneto Acqua e Terme*, *Federalberghi Terme* Abano and Montegrotto, the Padua LAG, the Euganean Hills Regional Park, *Ascom Padua - A.P.P.E. Padua - Confesercenti Padua*, *U.P.A. Padua - C.N.A. Padua*, *Coldiretti Padua - Confagricoltura Agriturist Veneto - C.I.A. Padua*, the Voluntary Consortium for the Protection of Euganean Hills Wines, the Euganean Hills Wine Route, Single Management of the Homogeneous Hydromineral Basin of the Euganean Hills, *Confartigianato Padova*, *Fiavet Padova* (Italian Federation of Travel and Tourism Agencies).

Following its establishment in 2016, the ODG approved a Destination Management Plan (DMP), which defines the strategy and direction of the ODG and then worked, through a participatory process, on a Start Up Plan, which clarifies the organizational, operational and functional aspects complementary to the management plan⁹⁷. As a result of this process, the ODG has also a territorial marketing body, which has led to the adoption of the common brand “Thermae Abano Montegrotto - Euganean Hills Natural Park”, linked to the website www.visitabanomontegrotto.com. Based on the market analysis conducted by the ODG, the brand values were identified as genuineness, healthiness, evocativeness and ancestrality, wisdom, vitality.

⁹⁷ OGD 2018



Picture 46: Logo of the tourist destination Thermae and Euganean Hills

Padua LAG

It is the Local Action Group promoted by the European Union to develop and improve rural communities in the area of the Euganean Hills Park. It is composed of both public and private entities. The designated territorial area of the LAG consists of 44 municipalities, also included in the southern area of the Euganean Hills. In collaboration with the University of Padua and the IUAV of Venice, the LAG promotes valorisation and research activities on the rural heritage. The synergies with the LAG may concern the valorisation of the territory and its food and wine excellences, also in connection with the intangible heritage.

Diocese of Padua

The oratory of Villa Beatrice is still consecrated, and therefore is under the sphere of the Diocese of Padua, represented locally by the Parish of Baone. In addition, the history of the villa has a strong link with the Blessed Beatrice of Este, officially recognized as such by the Church since 1763. The Cult of the Blessed Beatrice is spread throughout the Hills area, and especially in the city of Este, where her body is preserved and where the Blessed is the patron of the city together with Santa Tecla, celebrated every year on 10 May. It is therefore in the interest of the Diocese to valorise the figure of the Blessed Beatrice and the tangible and intangible cultural heritage linked to her story. Some of the most recent publications on the Blessed came from the ecclesiastical environment, such as that of Don Bruno Cogo⁹⁸, Director of the Diocesan Office for Sacred Art and Ecclesiastical Cultural Heritage of the Diocese of Padua and Vicar at the S. Tecla Cathedral of Este.

Associations in the Park area

There are many associations in the area of the Euganean Hills Park that conduct promotion and valorisation activities focused on the cultural and natural heritage of the area. Among them, we can mention:

- **The Wine Route:** it is an association bringing together wineries, farms, accommodation facilities and restaurants with the aim to promote the Euganean Hills territory to travellers and tourists. Started in 2002, it is today a point of reference for the valorisation of the local cultural heritage and food and wine specialties.
- **Fund for the Italian Environment (FAI):** FAI is a non-profit foundation born in 1975, on the model of the English National Trust, with the aim of protecting and valorising the Italian historical, artistic and

⁹⁸ Cogo 2017



landscape heritage. The FAI has been the owner of Villa Olcese since 2005, following a donation. It manages the space by organizing a series of activities, also in cooperation with other associations and private bodies in the area.

- **Terra di Mezzo Cooperative:** it brings together a group of naturalistic guides, educational operators and collaborators who organize experiences to promote the natural heritage and valorise the territory of the Hills to the greatest number and variety of people. The main activities include environmental education for different age groups. The cooperative also manages two hostels in the and the adventure park *Le Fiorine*.

6. Management recommendations

6.1 Management system

The current management system, where the public owner has established a close cooperation with a private body for the management of the site, is positive and is recommended to be adopted also in the future. To improve the valorisation of the villa as a whole and ensure its long-term conservation in a key of economic sustainability, the following recommendations are offered:

- It is recommended to increase the duration of the contract with the private partner in a medium/ long-term perspective, according to the models of the Public-Private Partnerships (PPP). According to the Green Paper on Public-Private Partnerships, PPP contracts are defined as “forms of cooperation between public authorities and the world of business which aim to ensure the funding, construction, renovation, management or maintenance of an infrastructure or the provision of a service”⁹⁹. In this sense, this type of contract has a long duration, and entails a distribution of risks between the public and the private sector, with investments coming from both parties¹⁰⁰.
- Based on the type of contract, it will be possible to establish the number and type of investments, the related time frame and the extent of the involvement of the owner and the private manager.
- It is expected that a medium/ long-term perspective would lead to strengthen the human resources currently employed for the management of the site, which is currently open to the public only two Sundays per month and for events (and hence make the site more open and accessible).
- The contract should involve the public owner through a monitoring plan, with periodic inspections and coordination meetings.
- In order to draft the contract, it is advisable to seek support of experts who could help the owner in fixing the terms of reference and to align all aspects with the Italian regulatory framework, both in terms of public contracts and the specific requirements for cultural heritage protected sites. This path is possible according to the Italian law.
- Regarding the management activities entrusted to the private party, it is recommended:
 - o To add a series of basic services for visitors who reach the site by foot, bicycle, or horse, such as functioning toilets, a charging station for electric bicycles, station for stopping horses, a

⁹⁹ EC 2004

¹⁰⁰ For an overview of PPP contracts applied to the cultural heritage sector, refer to Macdonald, Cheong 2014



refreshment point with typical km 0 products, the possibility of conducting a self-guided visit of the site through panels and modern digital technologies.

- To create a brand identity for the villa to make it recognizable through marketing and promotion.
- To include local high-quality products in the museum shop and improve the display according to the new brand identity. This action can involve other local productive activities and therefore develop interest, awareness in the local communities and economic opportunities.
- To increase the number of events, also in cooperation with the other stakeholders of the area.
- To fix an entrance ticket also for visitors of the outside areas and based on the above services.
- To consider the possible inclusion of extra services, as analysed in the Part III of this document.
- To undertake extra maintenance activities, including the outside green areas (which could be more valorised).

6.2 Strategic objectives and action plan

Below is a table of protection and valorisation objectives and related actions in the short, medium and long term that could provide guidance for the management of Villa Beatrice in the coming years.

The objectives were identified based on the data collected in this document. Regarding the objective of introducing new productive activities, this has been further explored in Part III of the document, to support the owner in selecting possible activities and their time sequence.

Strategic objective	Action		Who	Time			Priority
	N.	Description		Short term (1-2 y.)	Medium term (3-5 y.)	Long Term (5+ y.)	High Medium Low
1. Conservation	1.1	Annual maintenance plan	Province of Padua				High
	1.2	Monitoring plan	Province of Padua				High
	1.3	Risk management plan	Province of Padua				High
	1.4	Consolidation of stone walls	Province of Padua				High
	1.5	Maintenance of antique plasters	Province of Padua				High



PART III – INTRODUCTION OF NEW PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES

7. Methodology

The methodological approach applied in the definition of the production activities and in the study of their feasibility was developed and tested in the field on other local and European case studies by the Venetian Cluster (such as the restructuring projects of the Filanda Bettini in Rovereto and Villa Zileri in Monteviale).

The methodological approach is developed in the following phases:

A. INITIAL AUDIT

1. Cognitive analysis of the building:

- Conservative state of the building
- Materials
- History
- Disposition of rooms and facilities.

2. Owner's wants:

- Expectations
- Investment capacity
- Product types.

3. Evaluation and territorial and intermodal analysis of the context by geographical areas.

B. INTEGRATED PROJECT FOR RESTORATION AND ENERGY / STATIC ADAPTATION

1. Energy and environmental comfort audit. Environmental and material diagnostics and analysis.

2. Project:

- Verification of technical, procedural and economic feasibility (rough estimate)
- Complete design and definition of the specifications
- Projection of costs and results
- Optimization of intervention costs; paperwork.

C. IDENTIFICATION AND START UP OF PRODUCTION ACTIVITIES

1. Evaluation of compatible production types in the context of the building

- Analysis of operational and conservative compatibility

2. Analysis of entrepreneurial activities

- What could be done
- What was previously done in the territory



-
- Regional, National, and International.
3. Verification of legislative and implementation instruments.
 4. Verification of economic and financial instruments.
 5. Identification of production and valorisation activities; project definition.
 6. Business plan; pre-feasibility study.
 7. Executive and operational coordination between owner and companies.
 8. Promotional planning.
 9. Promotion and selection of companies; creation of valorisation contents.
 10. Contracting.
 11. Finalisation.

In the case of Villa Beatrice, and in the context of the present Management Plan, only part of the above methodology has been applied, namely the identification of new productive activities and the preliminary economic feasibility study. Many parts referring to point A have been treated in the previous sections, excluding the analysis of the environments and the distribution of the fixtures. The implementation part (points 7-11) falls outside the purposes of this document and will be implemented by the owner once the productive activities have been selected, according to the recommendations herewith provided.

8. Identification of new productive activities

8.1 Owner's wants

The Province of Padua has expressed interest in valorising the entire complex of the villa, which is currently not used in its whole. There is an interest in extending the management from the sole museum and events services to the whole building and its annexes.

As previously mentioned, the Province does not wish to deal directly with the management of the building, but it intends to entrust this task to a third party. Compared to previous experiences, there is a growing interest in making the conservation and maintenance of the villa and its public fruition an economically sustainable activity.

To this end, the Province has expressed its willingness to invest for the recovery of the areas that are currently not used and for an improvement of the electricity system, provided that these are not prohibitive investments. This effort could be shared with the new manager in a longer-term management perspective and following a timeline.



8.2 Analysis of the productive activities of the territory

The analysis involved the productive activities in the territory of Villa Beatrice carried out at concentric centres from the position of the villa (1 km, 10 km, 30 km).

Based on the values of the site, the wishes of the owner and the recent market analyses on the tourism segment carried out by the OGD “Thermae and Euganean Hills”¹⁰¹, the field was restricted to the following groups of activities:

1. Hospitality
2. Slow Tourism services and experiential tourism
3. Restaurants
4. Wine bars, tastings, wine shops
5. Sale of local food and wine products
6. Yoga and meditative sports
7. Wellness centres, massages, naturopathy
8. Team building
9. Creative craftsmanship

The primary sources used for the research were Google and some specific websites on the Euganean Hills area, such as that of the Wine Route¹⁰² or that of the Euganean Hills Regional Park¹⁰³.

For activities within 1 km, the analysis went into detail; for activities within a 10 km, only a representative sample of the activities was taken into consideration, and details were examined within the sample. For the area within 30 km, the details of the individual activities were not considered, but their areas of concentration were taken into consideration.

In addition to the above, the Venetian Villas in the area of the Thermae e Euganean Hills Tourist Destination were analysed, in order to check what the main services offered are (those villas are compared to Villa Beatrice as type of buildings).

¹⁰¹ OGD 2018: according to the study, the most significant market trends for the destination concern: Slow motion - slow food; Nostalgia - retro, search for tradition and authenticity; Wellness - healthness - fitness, from physical to mental health; Nature feel good consume, ethical and ecological consumption; upgrading, quality products; safety; attention and welcome; Hygge, not being reachable digitally; intact nature and search for retreat, silence. To these trends, we can add the four defining themes that have been identified for the area: spas; nature; heritage; food and wine. For each of these, market trends were analysed. All have a connection with Villa Beatrice. The most interesting concepts for Villa Beatrice concern the idea of a slow and genuine tourism, where services are of high quality, and where the tourism experience is authentic. The idea of mixing slow hiking, gastronomy and spas is also interesting. A strong product is that of hiking and cycling, facilitated by the network of walking trails and the cycling ring of the Euganean Hills Park.

¹⁰² <http://www.stradadelvinocollieuganei.it/>

¹⁰³ <http://www.parcocollieuganei.com/>



Activities within 1 km

The area within one kilometre corresponds to the Mount Gemola, covering limited areas of the Municipalities of Baone and Cinto Euganeo.

Hospitality

Location	Name	Category	Type of building	Space/ services offered	Price range
Baone	Le Volpi	Agritourism	Rustic, fine and elegant furnishings	Bedrooms Breakfast Infinity pool Solarium	Double 90 €
	Casa del Santo	Tourist Location	Rustic, recently renovated	House	80 €
	Luna di miele	Tourist Location	Rustic	House Outdoor space Swimming pool	80€
Cinto Euganeo	Home Life Bed Colli Euganei	Tourist Location	Rustic	House Garden Barbecue area Solarium	Not available
	Tra Cielo e Terra	Tourist Location	Rustic	Garden	Not available

Wine bars, tastings, wine shops

Location	Name	Category	Type of building	Peculiarities
Baone	Le Volpi	Farm and agritourism	Rustic	Tasting of organic wines and oil of own production, tasting of typical local foods. Visits to vineyards and cellar

Sale of local food and wine products

Location	Name	Category	Type of building	Products offered
Baone	Le Volpi	Farm and agritourism	Rustic	Wine Oil Distillates All organic



Activities within 10 km

The area roughly corresponds to the territory of the Euganean Hills Park and to a large part of the Tourist Destination “Thermae and Euganean Hills” (hence, the centres of Abano and Montegrotto Terme were also included in the analysis, although slightly outside the radius).

Hospitality

The examples taken into consideration are a part of the several hospitality and tourist reception activities in the area, which in fact are thriving, namely thanks to new online platforms such as Booking and Airbnb, especially as regards the rental of apartments. They represent an indicative sample, which demonstrates a homogeneous widespread of small tourist structures such as B&Bs and agritourism hospitality services throughout the area. The Baone area, the municipality where Villa Beatrice is located, has a high density of tourist hospitality activities.

The analysis did not take into account the urban centres of Este and Monselice and those of the Euganean thermal areas, where the offer is very wide, but located in a more urban and non-rural context (therefore not comparable to that of Villa Beatrice), and structured more on the hotel typology; for these centres, however, activities located in historic houses or Venetian Villas were taken into consideration.

Location	Name	Category	Type of building	Space/ services offered	Price range
Arquà Petrarca	Il Canzoniere – Villa del Poeta	Restaurant Hotel	Modern, rustic stype	Bedrooms Park and panoramic terrace	Double 75 – 80 €
	Franciscus (at Enoteca da Loris)	Agritourism	Rustic	Bedrooms	Double 80 €
	Holiday House Petrarca	Holiday houses	Rustic	Detached houses Barbecue area Garden	Double 89 €
	Locanda Viridarium	B&B	Rustic	Bedrooms Outdoor bar service Panoramic terrace Cellar with selection of wines and typical products	Double 90 €
	Casa Zorzi	Holiday houses	Ancient rural stone building carefully restored	Two-room apartments Garden Extra breakfast at the Guerriero tavern	Double 100 €
Baone	Alba	Agritourism	Rustic	Bedrooms Apartments Agri-camping Barbecue area Pool E-bike charging station	Double 75 – 80 €



	Ca' Orologio	Agritourism	16th century Venetian Villa	Bedrooms Apartments Outside pool Garden	Double 80 €
	La Casa del Riccio	B&B	Rustic	Bedrooms Garden Panoramic terrace	Double 45 €
	Ai Filari	Holiday house	Rustic with modern restoration of the internal rooms	Bedrooms	Double 65 €
	La Finestra sui Colli	B&B and Naturalistic Centre	Rustic	Bedrooms Vegetable garden Excursions	Double 60 €
	I Grilli	B&B	Rustic	Bedrooms Garden Kitchen	Double 70€
	Luna di Miele	Tourist location	Rustic	Apartment Solarium Picnic area Outside pool Excursions Play area, strollers, and board games	Double 90 €
	Maeli Wines	Winery house and B&B	Rustic and modern	Rustic rooms furnished with taste and modern comfort	Double 110 €
	Agli Ulivi	Holiday house	Rustic with modern restoration of the interiors	Detached house	63 €
Battaglia Terme	Villa Egizia	Agritourism	17th century villa and modern rustic annex	Bedrooms	Double 70-100 €
Cervarese Santa Croce	La Buona Terra	Agritourism	Rustic	Bedrooms Agri-camping Pool	75 – 135 €
Cinto Euganeo	Alto Venda	Agritourism	Rustic	Bedrooms	Double 69 €
	Podere Villa Alessi	Agritourism	Rustic, next to an historic villa of the 14th century	Bedrooms Kitchen and common living room	Double 75 -95 €
	Locanda Trattoria al Rio	B&B	Modern, simple style	Bedrooms	Double 60 €



Este	Agriturismo Barchessa	Agriturismo	18th century <i>barchessa</i> of Villa Contarena	Apartments	Double 80 €
Galzignano Terme	Convivium ai Colli – Resort Belvedere	Hotel	Modern	Bedrooms	Double 70-100 €
	Villa Barbarigo, Pizzoni Ardemani, giardino monumentale di Valsanzibio	Tourist location	Villa and monumental garden of the 17th century	Manor house Pool Monumental garden E-bike charging station	-
Monseice	Castello di Lispida	Wine resort	18th century villa on an ancient 11th century monastery	Apartments Rooms Wine store	Double 155 €
Rovolon	Frassanelle	Agriturismo	Historical complex	Apartments Detached houses Pool Garden Cooking courses Events of Yoga and meditation Events Weddings	They vary according to the type
	Il Bucaneve Country House	B&B	Rustic	Bedrooms E-bike charging station	Double 70 €
Teolo	Fattoria Busa dell'Oro	B&B	Rustic	Bedrooms	Double 75 €
	La Mugletta	B&B	Moderno	Bedrooms Garden Pottery workshop	Double 175 €
	Villa Braga Rosa	Tourist location	18th century Venetian Villa	Apartments	From 90 €
Torreglia	Calto della Scala	B&B	Rustic	Bedrooms	Double 50 €
	Piccolo Marte	Hotel Ristorante	Modern, simple rooms	Bedrooms	Double 80€
	Villa Pollini	Agriturismo	Villa of the early 20th century	Bedrooms	-
	Villa dei Vescovi	B&B	16th century Venetian Villa	Apartments Glamping and yoga events Events and weddings	200 €



Vo'	Bacco e Arianna	Agritourism	Rustic	Bedrooms E-bike charging station	Double 60 €
	Cà Lauro	B&B	Rustic	Apartments Family services: playroom and baby-sitting Electric bikes	80 €
	Fattoria Eolia	B&B	Rustic	Apartments	100 €

Below is a further analysis of the services offered by the hospitality activities listed above, based on the available data:

Context	Bedrooms	House/ apartments	Camping	Bike services	Yoga, meditation
Rustic	14	6	2 (camping)	4	-
Modern	5	-	-	-	-
Historic	2	8	1 (glamping)	1	2
TOTALE	21	14	3	5	2

The analysis shows that most of the hospitality activities considered offer bedrooms rather than houses or apartments. However, as regards historic buildings, the situation is the opposite. There are few campsites and glamping is absent (only in one case, glamping was offered as an experience). Few activities offer specific services for those who move by bike. Of these, only one is a historic building. None of the activities analysed offers services related to meditative sports such as yoga, if not occasionally (only in two cases). These aspects will be further explored in the analysis of the Slow Tourism sector and the yoga and meditation sports.

Slow Tourism services and experiential tourism

The analysed activities concern the services related to slow and experiential tourism in the territory of the hills, like walking itineraries, itineraries by bicycle and on horseback, and experiences related to the cultural, eno-gastronomic, historical, and natural heritage of the area.

Location	Name	Category	Services offered
Abano Terme	Atletica VIS Abano	Sports Association	Nordic walking excursions
	Lovivo Tour Expérience	Tour Operator	Experiential tours about culture, food and wine, sports, and crafts Bike tours Medieval themed trips Yoga classes in the Euganean Hills



	Sentieri e cavalli, Associazione Sport Equestri	Equestrian Sports Association	Riding school Horseback riding
	Veneto Emotion	Tour Operator	Electric bike rental with GPS navigation Bike tours
Arquà Petrarca	L'Enoteca di Arquà	Wine shop	E-bike charging station
	La Montanella	Restaurant	E-bike charging station
	Ristorante Val Pomaro	Restaurant	Cooking courses
Baone	La Finestra sui Colli	B&B and Naturalistic Centre	Excursions and cooking courses with aromatic herbs
Battaglia Terme	Circolo Remiero "El Bisato"	Sports Association	Boat trips along the Battaglia Canal
	Gruppo Escursionisti Battaglia Terme	Hikers group	Walking trips
Cervarese Santa Croce	Circolo Ippico Villa Trento	Riding school	Horseback riding
Cinto Euganeo	Ca' Lustra Zanovello	Farm	E-bike charging station
Due Carrare	Vigne del Pigozzo	Cantina	E-bike charging station
Este	CAI di Este	Association	Guided trekking tours
Galzignano Terme	Officina Gaffo	Cycle and motorcycle workshop	Bike and electric bike rental Bike wash E-bike charging station
Monselice	La cucina di Pamela	Cooking school	Cooking classes
Montegrotto Terme	Centro equestre Montagnon	Riding school	Horseback riding
	Strada del Vino dei Colli Euganei	Association	Guided food and wine walking, bike and boat tours
	Viaggiare Curiosi	Tour Operator	Bike and boat tours Tour of the Venetian Villas
Rovolon	Frassanelle	Agritourism	Cooking classes
Teolo	A Passo Lento	Sports Association	Trekking and walking with donkeys
	Ciclo turismo Euganeo	Tour Operator	Cycling and mountain bike tours, including thematic tours
	Stefanelli Bike Shop	Bike shop	Electric bike rental and guided tours
	Terra di Mezzo	Cooperative	Night tours Guided walking tours



			Sound Paths: excursions, music, and local products <i>Le Fiorine Adventure Park</i>
Torreglia	Star's Ranch	Riding school	Horseback riding
	Villa dei Vescovi	16th century Venetian Villa	Thematic events: yoga, glamping, art and architecture courses, vine harvest
Vo'	Il Bucaneve Country House	Restaurant	E-bike charging station

The most common activities concern: tours by bicycle, horse-riding, or walking; food and wine tours; cultural and thematic tours; cooking courses.

Restaurants

Also for restaurants, given the large number of activities, a smaller sample was examined in the area of the Euganean Hills Park (thus excluding the Euganean thermal areas).

Location	Name	Category	Type of building	Peculiarities	Price range
Arquà Petrarca	Il Canzoniere – Villa del Poeta	Restaurant Hotel	Modern, rustic style	Traditional cuisine Grilled meat specialties	30 – 35 €
	L'Enoteca di Arquà	Tavern	Rustic	Traditional cuisine	-
	Osteria Al Guerriero	Tavern	Rustic	Traditional cuisine	-
	La Montanella	Restaurant	Modern	Traditional cuisine Menu of the day and company menus E-bike charging station	40 €
	Val Pomaro	Restaurant	Rustic	Traditional cuisine Receptions	35 €
Baone	Alba	Agritourism	Rustic	Typical cuisine based on farm products Weddings Events	-



Cinto Euganeo	Alto Venda	Agritourism	Rustic	Traditional cuisine Panoramic terrace Themed events and evenings	35 – 40 €
	Ca' Bianca	Farm	Rustic	Traditional cuisine	-
	Le Ginestre	Agritourism	Rustic	Traditional cuisine	-
	Podere Villa Alessi	Agritourism	Rustic, next to a historic villa of the 14th century	Traditional cuisine Weddings and meetings	25 €
	al Rio	Tavern	Modern, simple style	Traditional cuisine Meat specialties Themed nights	30 €
	La Roccola	Agritourism	Rustic	Traditional cuisine	25 – 35 €
Galzignano Terme	Convivium ai Colli – Resort Belvedere	Restaurant	Modern	Traditional cuisine Themed events	35 €
Lozzo Atestino	Tolin Macelleria con Cucina	Tavern	Rustic	Meat specialties	-
Monselice	Tavern di Villa Corner	Restaurant	17th century Venetian Villa	Fish specialties Events Weddings	40 €
Torreglia	Afazenda	Restaurant	Rustic	Traditional cuisine Events Weddings	30 – 45 €
	Antica Trattoria Ballotta	Tavern	Historic tavern	Traditional cuisine Events Weddings	25 – 40 €
	Piccolo Marte	Hotel Restaurant	Modern, simple style	Traditional cuisine Fish Pizzeria Summer terrace Weddings and events	-
	Al Piriò	Tavern	Rustic	Traditional cuisine	35 €



				Panoramic terrace	
	Villa Pollini	Restaurant	Villa of the early 20th century	Reinterpreted traditional cuisine Weddings and events	-
	San Daniele da Serafino	Tavern -wine shop	Rustic	Traditional cuisine	30 €
	La Tavolozza	Tavern	Rustic	Traditional cuisine Listed in the 2018 Guide on the Italian Taverns	30 €
Vo'	Bacco e Arianna	Agritourism	Rustic	Traditional cuisine	-
	Al Laghetto Del Venda	Tavern	Rustic	Traditional cuisine	-
	Il Bucaneve Country House	Restaurant	Rustic	Traditional cuisine	30 €

The analysis of the sample shows how the area of the Euganean Hills is disseminated by restaurants, taverns and agritourisms, and how, in general, they are mainly of rustic style with an offer of local traditional cuisine. There are only two cases of restaurants inserted in the context of a villa, but both are not comparable to the context of Villa Beatrice: one, in fact, is located in Monselice, therefore in a urban context, the other is a villa of the first of the 20th century, therefore with a much more recent history. High-level restaurants are absent.

Wine bars, tastings, wine shops

Also for this category, the examples analysed do not cover the entire offer of the Destination Thermae and Euganean Hills, which is very wide, also given the high presence of wineries and farms in the area. A sample of activities was taken into consideration, using the website of the Wine Route as a reference.

Location	Name	Category	Type of building	Peculiarities
Arquà Petrarca	L'Enoteca di Arquà	Wine shop	Rustic	Tastings with local products. Euganean Spritz specialty
	Enoteca da Loris	Farm and winery	Rustic	Wine tasting with cheeses and desserts
	Loreggian Vini	Farm and winery	Modern, rustic	Wines with local charcuterie and cheeses
	Vignalta	Winery	Modern, rustic	Tastings upon reservation.



				“Gemola” wine label
Baone	Ca’ Orologio	Farm	16th century Venetian Villa	Wine Resort Tastings upon reservation
	Il Filò delle Vigne	Winery	Rustic	Tastings upon reservation
	Maeli Wine	Winery house	Modern, rustic	Boutique winery in a recently restored traditional rustic building. Tastings upon reservation
	Il Mottolo	Farm and winery	-	Guided visits and tastings
	Vignale di Cecilia	Farm and winery	Rustico	Tastings upon reservation
Battaglia Terme	Villa Egizia	Agritourism	17th century villa and modern rustic annex	Tastings upon reservation
Cinto Euganeo	Ca’ Bianca	Farm	Rustic	Tastings upon reservation
	Ca’ Lustra Zanovello	Farm	Rustic	E-bike charging station
	Fattoria Monte Fasolo	Farm	Rustic	Tastings upon reservation
	Le Ginestre	Farm and agritourism	Rustic	Tastings upon reservation
	Podere Villa Alessi	Farm	Rustic, next to an historic villa of the 14th century	Various tasting offers for up to one hundred people with tastings of typical products
	La Roccola	Farm	Rustic	-
	Veronese	Farm	Rustic	Tastings, activities for visitors and workshops
Due Carrare	Cantina La Mincana – Dal Martello	Winery	17th century Venetian Villa	Tastings and guided tours upon reservation
	Salvan Vigne del Pigozzo	Farm	Rustic	Visits to the vineyards and guided tastings upon reservation Tasting courses Vineyard activities



Este	Salumificio Fontana	Historical charcuterie production workshop	Modern	Tastings upon reservation, min. ten people, guided tours
Galzignano Terme	Bio Forno Colli Euganei	Organic bakery	Modern	Tastings upon reservation
	Il Pianzio	Winery	Rustic	Tastings during opening hours with local gastronomic products (without reservation)
Lozzo Atestino	Tolin Macelleria con Cucina	Meat shop and tavern	Rustic	Meat shop offering tastings
Monselice	Borin Vini&Vigne	Winery	Modern	Tastings upon reservation
	Castello di Lispida	Wine resort	18th century villa on an ancient 11th century monastery	Tastings upon reservation and visits to the vineyard
Montegrotto Terme	Giacomo Salmaso	Farm	Rustic	Tastings upon reservation
Teolo	Boscalbò	Farm	Rustic	Tastings upon reservation
	Sengiari	Winery	Rustic	Tastings upon reservation and guided tours
	Vinoteca Tito Livio	Wine shop and tavern	Rustic	Tastings accompanied by typical products
Torreglia	Bernardi Giovanni	Winery	Ancient Benedictine court of the 15th century	Visit to the vineyards Tastings upon reservation
	Quota 101	Winery	Rustic	Tasting combined with a song, a movie, an unusual recipe; upon reservation
	San Daniele da Serafino	Wine shop, tavern	Rustic	Tastings and local products
	Villa Pollini	Wine shop	Villa of the early 20th century	Tastings upon reservation
	Villa dei Vescovi	Wine shop	16th century Venetian Villa	Tastings of the products on sale Local wines



Vo'	L'alveare	Agritourism	Rustic	Tastings upon reservation
	Bacco e Arianna	Winery	Rustic	Tastings upon reservation
	Colle Mattara	Winery	Rustic	Tastings upon reservation
	Parco del Venda	Winery	Modern	Tastings upon reservation
	Vigna Roda	Winery	Rustic	Tastings upon reservation
	Villa Sceriman	Farm and wine shop	16th century Venetian Villa, minor work of Palladio	Tastings during opening hours

As shown by the data, the activities that offer tastings of wines and typical products are widespread throughout the area. However, these are mainly farm and agritourism activities, which offer these services mostly upon reservation. At the level of Venetian Villas or historic buildings, there was a good presence of this type of activities, with eight appearances. In almost all cases, these are wineries or farms with their premises in the historic buildings, only in one case there was a wine bar.

Sale of local food and wine products

Given the agricultural vocation of the Euganean Hills, especially in relation to the cultivation of vine, there are many points of sale of food and wine products in the area. Many are located within the farms and wineries. Hence, a small and representative sample of the overall activities was taken into consideration. The references were Google, the website of the Wine Route and other online guides on the Euganean Hills.

Location	Name	Category	Type of building	Products offered
Arquà Petrarca	L'Enoteca di Arquà	Wine shop	Rustic	Wine and typical products
	Enoteca da Loris	Farm and winery	Rustic	Wine and olive oil
	Scarpon	Farm	Rustic	Olive oil Jams Under oil/ vinegar Fruit in syrup Olives Honey Distillates
	La Montanella	Restaurant	Modern	Jams Sweet bakery products Rosolio liqueur
Baone	Maeli Wine	Winery house	Modern, rustic	Wines and distillates
	Il Molino degli Euganei	Farm	19th-century <i>barchessa</i> , service	Stone ground flours



			annex to the Villa Ca' Dottori (17th century)	
Battaglia Terme	Villa Egizia	Agritourism	17th century villa and modern rustic annex	Wine Oil Distillates Honey
Cervarese Santa Croce	La Buona Terra	Agritourism	Rustic	Eggs, charcuterie, bread, pasta, vegetables, jams, all organic
Cinto Euganeo	Le Ginestre	Farm and agritourism	Rustic	Wine, charcuterie, olive oil
	Podere Villa Alessi	Farm	Rustic, next to an historic villa of the 14th century	Olice oil, honey, jams, biscuits, distillates, vineyard
	La Roccola	Farm	Rustic	Wines and distillates
Este	Salumificio Fontana	Historical charcuterie production workshop	Modern	PDO ham
Torreglia	Bernardi Giovanni	Winery	Ancient Benedictine court of the 15th century	Wine and local products
	Quota 101	Winery	Rustic	Wine Olive oil
	Villa dei Vescovi	Wine shop	16th century Venetian Villa	Local wine, olive oil, organic bakery products and artisan charcuterie
Vo'	Parco del Venda	Winery	Modern	Wine Olive oil
	Villa Sceriman	Farm and wine shop	16th century Venetian Villa, minor work of Palladio	Wine Olive oil Honey Distillates

Yoga and meditative sports

There are several centres and schools of yoga and other oriental practices, concentrated in the centres of the Euganean Spas and in the urban centres of Este and Monselice. In addition to these, there is a number of associations/ entities that organize events related to yoga and meditation in the area of the Euganean Hills and the Euganean Spas. Some of these also offer slow tourism services, as described below.



Location	Name	Category	Activities
Abano Terme	Chandra Itinerari Yoga	Cultural Association	Yoga courses
	Lovivo Tour Experience	Tour Operator	Yoga and meditation experiences and spiritual retreats in the Euganean Hills area
Cervarese S. Croce	Pranic Energy Healing	Cultural Association	Energy and meditation courses and treatments
Este	Aikidoeste	Aikido School	Aikido courses in Este and Villa Estense
	Eszendo	Cultural Association	Hatha Yoga and Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga courses, Yoga Therapy
	Ninjutsu Bujinkan	Cultural Association	Kawasemi Dojo courses and self-defense
Galzignano Terme	Arteuganea.net	Cultural Association	Yoga, meditation, oriental disciplines in the Euganean Hills area
	Ballet Yoga Pilates	Yoga e pilates school	Yoga and Pilates courses
Monselice	A.S.D. GOJU-KAI - MONSELICE	Karate school	Karate courses
	Loto Centro Yoga	Yoga school	Yoga classes in different styles
Montegrotto Terme	Anata Yoga	Yoga school	Yoga courses and in-depth courses
	Energheia	Cultural Association	Yoga and meditation courses
	Hotel Terme Bellavista	Hotel	Yoga courses in thermal water organised by Mappa Mundi yoga Padova
	Yoga Factory	Sports Association	IYENGAR® Yoga courses
Pernumia	Yoga Sathya Deva	Sports Association	Yoga courses
Teolo	Terra di mezzo	Cooperative	Yoga experiences in collaboration with schools in the province

Wellness centres, massages, naturopathy

The analysis took into consideration only the activities located outside the Euganean Spas basin, where all thermal structures offer also a wide range of wellness-related services – a direction that is gradually prevailing over the more traditional medical and curative activities.



Location	Name	Category	Activities
Baone	Hermes Scuola di Naturopatia	Training institute in Naturopathy	Training courses in naturopathy, kinesiology and anthroposophy, organization of seminars
Cinto Euganeo	Associazione Culturale Giardino di Luce	Cultural Association	Shiatsu Massage School
Este	Elena Faccani	Sports massager	Sports massages
Monselice	Studio CEM	Wellness centre	Massages
	Studio D.A.R.	Massages centre	Massages

Team building

Location	Name	Category	Peculiarities
Abano Terme	Lovivo Tour Experience	Tour Operator	Treasure hunt with wine tasting in the Euganean Hills
	AbanoRitz Spa Wellfeeling Resort	Hotel	Conference rooms and team building activities
Este	Eszendo	Cultural association	Yoga team building
Montegrotto Terme	Great Escape	Escape Room	Escape room
	Hotel Mioni Royal San	Hotel	Spa day team building
Teolo	Terra di mezzo	Cooperative	Team building activities in the managed hostels and in the Fiorine Adventure park
Torreglia	Villa dei Vescovi, FAI	Cultural association	Team building activities of different types

Creative craftsmanship

Among the typical handicraft productions of the Euganean Hills area, we can mention the production of pottery in the Este area, the goldsmith and silverware manufacturing, the leather processing, and the weaving. These activities are mainly concentrated in the urban areas on the edge of the park.

The activities within 10 km from Villa Beatrice are numerically representative, especially for some sectors, such as hospitality, catering, wine bars and wine shops, and the sale of typical food and wine products, while for other sectors, they are almost or completely absent. The analysis therefore confirms how the vocation of the area is mostly agricultural and touristic, with a differentiation between the area of the Euganean Spas, where the approach is more focused on thermal tourism.



Activities within 30 km – Trends

The area within 30 km covers is more varied, coming to include entirely the city of Padua, the area of the Berici Hills up to the southern area of Vicenza, the centres of Cologna Veneta and Montagnana, the area south of the Euganean Hills, down to Rovigo, the area south-east of Padua and the area between Padua and Vicenza. The activities in the area are more widely represented, with concentrations in the urban centres. The analysis carried out did not go into detail but could spot attracting poles for the activities in the centres of Padua and further south in Rovigo. The area of the Berici Hills represents a similar but distinct hilly system from that of the Euganean Hills; it is therefore interesting to compare it with the Euganean Hills system.

Activity groups	Peculiarities and trends
1. Hospitality	The Berici Hills area includes a variety of farmhouses and B&Bs similar to that of the Euganean Hills. Then there is the urban area of Padua, which however is a very different context to that of the rural hills.
2. Slow tourism services and experiential tourism	There are many tour operators in the Padua area that organize tours and experiential tourism activities, in the Euganean Hills area and at the regional level.
3. Restaurants	There are many Michelin-starred high-level restaurants in the area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Le Calandre, Rubano (PD) *** - Antica Osteria Cera, Lughetto di Campagna Lupia (VE) ** - La Peca, Lonigo (VI) ** - Lazzaro 1915, Pontelongo (PD) * - Love Stories, Borgoricco (PD) * - La Montecchia, Selvazzano Dentro (PD) * - Aqua Crua Barbarano Vicentino (VI) * <p>Among these, <i>La Montecchia</i> restaurant is located within a Venetian Villa complex.</p>
4. Wine bars, tastings, wine shops	There are many bars and wine bars all over the area. In rural areas they tend to be linked to wineries, in particular in the Berici Hills area.
5. Sale of local food and wine products	Similar trend to the above one.
6. Yoga and meditative sports	There are various offers, especially in the urban context of Padua.
7. Wellness centres, massages, naturopathy	There are various offers, especially in the urban context of Padua.
8. Team building	There are various offers, especially in the Padua area. They range from culinary, to music, sports team building activities, escape rooms.
9. Creative craftsmanship	The main sectors are the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tailored clothing - leather and upholstery - decorations - photography, reproduction of drawings and painting - wood processing - working of common and precious metals and precious stones - manufacture of musical instruments - glass and ceramic working - papermaking and processing



Activities inserted within Venetian Villas

To conclude the analysis, the activities included in other Venetian Villas in the context of the Destination “Thermae and Euganean Hills” were taken into consideration.

Location	Name of the villa	Chronology	Ownership	Productive activities	Radius
Arquà Petrarca	Villa Centanin	To be verified	Private	Museum of ancient pianos, home of the <i>Masiero e Centanin Music Foundation</i>	10 km
Abano Terme	Villa Todeschini Monastero Benedettino San Daniele	18th century villa built on an ancient monastery of the 11th century	Ecclesiastical	Monastery. Guided tours and point of sale natural cosmetic products and herbal teas, herbal infusions and honey	30 km
Baone	Villa Mantua Benavides	End of the 16th century	Municipality of Baone	Venue for conferences, exhibitions, cultural activities	10 km
	Ca' Orologio	17th century	Private	Agritourism and wine resort	10 km
Bagnoli	Villa Widmann, Borletti	17th century villa built on an ancient 10th century monastery	Private	Farm; hospitality, organisation of events and meetings	10 km
Battaglia Terme	Castello del Catajo	16th-century villa /castle with subsequent extensions	Private	Guided tours; weddings; corporate events and receptions; seasonal themed events; panoramic aperitifs; educational section for children; summer centres; theme visits on the legend of the ghost of Lucrezia Obizzi.	10 km
	Villa Selvatico, Emo Capodilista	16th century	Private	Not available	30 km
	Villa Egizia	17th century	Private	Hospitality, farm, tastings	10 km
Carceri	Villa Carminati, Abbazia s. Maria di Carceri	18th century villa built on an ancient monastery of the 11th	Ecclesiastical	Museum of peasant civilization. Guided tours, educational workshops, perfume	30 km



		century, abbey from the 15th century		garden with medicinal herbs.	
Due Carrare	La "Mincana"	17th century	Private	Winery; guided tours; tastings	10 km
	Villa Zaborra, detta "Castello San Pelagio"	14th-15th century villa with subsequent modifications	Private	Air Museum linked to the figure of Gabriele d'Annunzio; guided tours. Weddings, events, and educational activities; summer centres; historic and rose garden.	30 km
Este	Villa Vigna Contarena	16th century villa and 18th century <i>barchessa</i>	Private	Hospitality, parties and events	10 km
Galzignano Terme	Villa Barbarigo, Pizzoni Ardemani, giardino monumentale di Valsanzibio	Villa and monumental garden of the 17th century	Private	Hospitality, dinners in the villa, aperitifs, guided tours of the monumental garden, romantic labyrinth, corporate events, private parties, films, short films, videos, advertisements and photographic sets, on-site and online shop, e-bike charging station	10 km
Monselice	Villa Italia, detta "Castello di Lispida"	18th century villa built on an ancient 11th century monastery	Private	Hospitality in apartments and rooms, Wine Resort, events and weddings, natural wines, bicycles	10 km
	Villa Corner	18th century	Private	<i>Tavern</i> restaurant, events, weddings	10 km
	Villa Cromer, Saggini, Buzzaccarini	18th century villa built on ancient monastery	Ecclesiastical. Park of the Municipality of Monselice under private management.	Summer centres, concerts, workshops for adults and children, party space, grill rental, beer taps rental, Km 0 pizzeria, aperitifs, sports field, playground, dog area, stage, tables in the	10 km



				greenery, botanical garden	
	Villa Duodo, Balbi Valier, Ca' Marcello Castello di Monselice	From the 10th century with subsequent interventions	Veneto Region	Museum and educational activities, events and weddings	10 km
Rovolon	Frassanelle	Historical complex	Private	Hospitality, weddings and events, cooking classes, yoga and meditation events	10 km
Selvazzano Dentro	Castello Emo Capodilista, la "Montecchia"	16th century	Private	Farm, houses and apartments, stay in villa, affiliated prices with the golf club, e-bike charging station, Michelin-starred restaurant	30 km
Teolo	Palazzo dei Vicari	16th century	Municipality of Teolo	Museum of Contemporary Art, Pro Loco headquarters	10 km
	Villa Braga Rosa	18th century renovation of a 16th century villa	Private	Apartments for holidays, weddings and events, photo sets	10 km
Torreglia	Villa Olcese detta dei Vescovi	16th century	Private, FAI	Wine bar, hospitality (managed by the Landmark Trust), guided tours, educational activities, weddings and events, exclusive lunches and dinners, events such as yoga, glamping; team building, business meetings; photographic and film sets; food and wine, cultural and naturalistic visits; art and architecture courses, harvest in the villa.	10 km
	Villa Pollini	Villa of the early 20th century	Private	Wine shop, hospitality, events, weddings	10 km



Vo'	Villa Contarini, Venier, Emo Capodilista	16th century	Municipality of Vo', private management	Shoah Museum and Landscape Museum, temporary exhibitions, guided tours, civil wedding celebration	10 km
	Villa Sceriman	16th century Venetian Villa, minor work of Palladio	Private	Farm, wine shop, sale of wines and agricultural products	10 km

The above activities were further analysed to verify how many Venetian Villas within 30 km from Villa Beatrice have developed activities in the identified productive sectors, and which they are.

Activity groups	Villas	Comments
1. Hospitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ca' Orologio, Baone - Villa Widmann, Borletti, Bagnoli - Villa Egizia, Battaglia Terme - Villa Vigna Contarena, Este - Villa Barbarigo, Pizzoni Ardemani, giardino di Valsanzibio, Galzignano Terme - Villa Italia, "Castello di Lispida", Monselice - Frassanelle, Rovolon - Castello Emo Capodilista, la "Montecchia", Selvazzano Dentro - Villa Braga Rosa, Teolo - Villa Olcese detta dei Vescovi, Torreglia - Villa Pollini, Torreglia 	Almost all the examples offer high-level tourist apartments. Only some of them are equipped with specific services for cyclists and none are equipped with specific services for those who ride horses.
2. Slow tourism services and experiential tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Castello del Catajo, Battaglia Terme - Villa Carminati, Abbazia s. Maria di Carceri, Carceri - Villa Barbarigo, Pizzoni Ardemani, giardino di Valsanzibio, Galzignano Terme - Villa Italia, "Castello di Lispida", Monselice - Frassanelle, Rovolon - Castello Emo Capodilista, la "Montecchia", Selvazzano Dentro - Villa Olcese detta dei Vescovi, Torreglia 	Among the services offered are cooking classes, the grape harvest in the villa, yoga, charging for electric bicycles.
3. Restaurants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Villa Barbarigo, Pizzoni Ardemani, giardino di Valsanzibio, Galzignano Terme - Villa Corner, Monselice - Castello Emo Capodilista, la "Montecchia", Selvazzano Dentro 	In two cases these are restaurants, one of which is a Michelin-starred restaurant; in two other cases high-level dinners and lunches are organised by reservation.



<p>4. Wine bars, tastings, wine shops</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Castello del Catajo, Battaglia Terme - Villa Egizia, Battaglia Terme - La “Mincana”, Due Carrare - Villa Barbarigo, Pizzoni Ardemani, giardino di Valsanzibio, Galzignano Terme - Villa Olcese detta dei Vescovi, Torreglia - Villa Pollini, Torreglia - Villa Sceriman, Vo’ 	<p>In some cases, the tastings are linked to the agricultural activity still connected to the villa. In other cases, the wine bar activity is managed by outsiders.</p>
<p>5. Sale of local food and wine products</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Villa Todeschini Monastero Benedettino San Daniele, Abano Terme - Villa Barbarigo, Pizzoni Ardemani, giardino di Valsanzibio, Galzignano Terme - Villa Italia, “Castello di Lispida”, Monselice - Villa Olcese detta dei Vescovi, Torreglia - Villa Sceriman, Vo’ 	<p>In some cases, the sale of products is linked to the agricultural activity still connected to the villa. In other cases, the activity has been introduced.</p>
<p>6. Yoga and meditative sports</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Frassanelle, Rovolon - Villa Olcese detta dei Vescovi, Torreglia 	<p>In no case are there spaces specifically dedicated to yoga and meditative sports. The villas have occasionally been the location of events dedicated to these activities.</p>
<p>7. Wellness centres, massages, naturopathy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 	<p>The research does not show any villas where services dedicated to wellness and massages are provided.</p>
<p>8. Team building</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Villa Olcese detta dei Vescovi, Torreglia 	<p>Many villas have spaces for corporate conferences and meetings, but only one has activities explicitly dedicated to corporate team building activities.</p>
<p>9. Creative craftsmanship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 	<p>Some villas have museums, but none of them has spaces dedicated to creative craftsmanship activities.</p>



8.3 SWOT Analysis

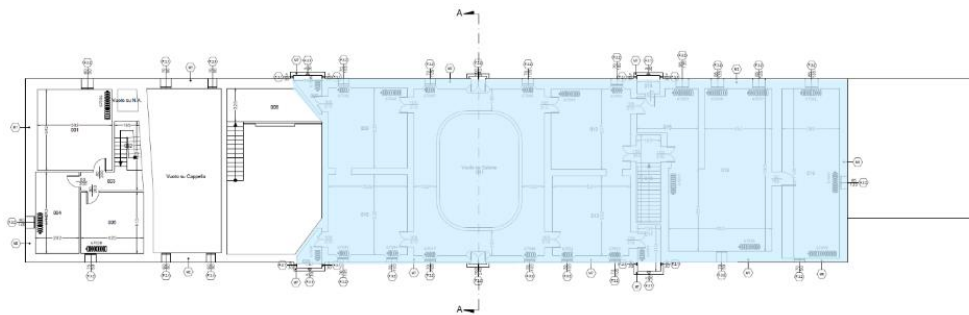
<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historical house Panoramic position at 360 ° Strong symbolic and spiritual value Great tranquillity and distance from urban centres Medieval archaeological heritage Natural heritage Location for events 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult connections with the transport network Lack of basic visitor services In winter, the road may have problems of practicability High operating costs Difficulty in heating in winter Few toilets Lack of a kitchen Lighting system not suitable for events Lack of an audio system Upper floors not accessible <i>Barchessa</i> not used
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connection to slow tourism (walking, bike, horse) Inclusion in natural or cultural itineraries Tangible and intangible medieval heritage to be valorised Use of new technologies Collaboration with stakeholders for the organisation of thematic and eno-gastronomic cultural events Collaboration with local farmers and producers, such as <i>Le Volpi</i>, which is also the farm managing the land owned by the Province of Padua, or <i>Vignalta</i>, which has a wine label called "Gemola" Possibility to use the spaces that now are inaccessible, such as the second floor of the villa and the <i>barchessa</i>, or the carriage room Experiential tourism Connection with local food and wine Introduction of a ticket to access the outside areas Introduction of activities related to meditation /meditative sports 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Force majeure Variability of the tourism sector Less flow in the winter months Competition



9. Possible productive activities and economic feasibility

A hypothesis of some productive activities that could be included in the villa is provided below, which may be of support in the future planning and decision making by the owner and/ or manager. The hypotheses are followed by a preliminary economic feasibility plan, starting from the metric calculation of the villa spaces described above and based on a cost estimate per square meter for the restoration works, including systems and set-up.

1. **B&B:** the activity could be inserted in the spaces of the main villa and *barchessa* that are currently not used. The activity should be tailored so to differentiate it from the wide offer of the Euganean area, for example by targeting the slow and experiential tourism market. The preliminary economic feasibility plan was based on the estimated costs of restoration, renovation, and systems installation, including also the possible installation of technical fittings (kitchen).



2. **Glamping:** the southern external area could host a glamping activity, currently not present in the Euganean Hills area, if not occasionally. However, the area presents possible criticalities related to the archaeological value and the possible presence of archaeological material evidence. A possible project should therefore be carried out based on an accurate preliminary research and evaluation studies to minimize the impact. In any case, the activity should be agreed and planned with the Ministry. Alternatively, the northern outer area could be considered.



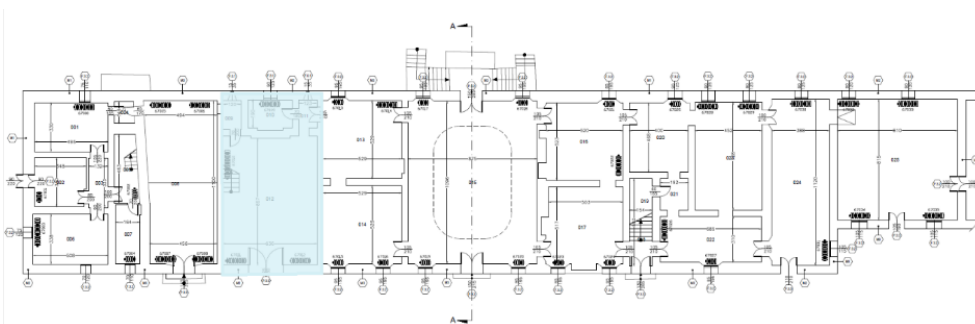


3. **Yoga and meditative sports:** the activation of a gym service for meditative sports such as yoga or other oriental disciplines. This service could be located inside the first floor of the *barchessa*, which could be adapted for this purpose (with the creation of a dressing area and the addition of a bathroom). Furthermore, in the area of the oriental garden, a wooden platform may be placed for practice in the summer months. The activity could also be proposed as team building and, in synergy with the B&B, as a centre for specialized retreats and seminars. In the economic feasibility analysis, this activity was included in the table related to the productive activities.

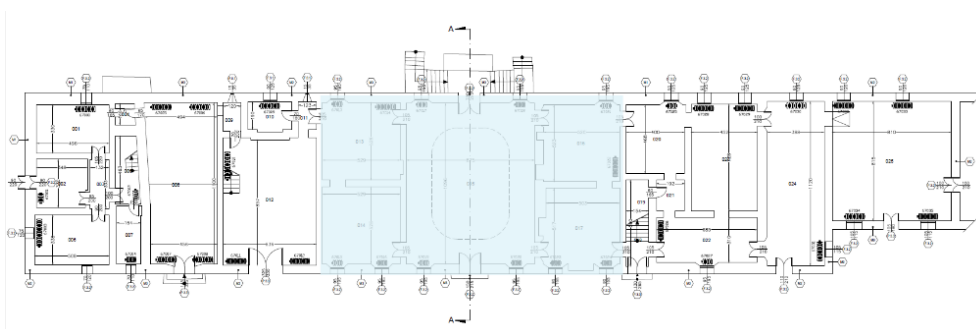


4. **Wine bar:** a wine bar activity with the use of high-quality, zero-kilometre food and wine products could be offered in the eastern garden of the villa in the summer months. The carriage room with its wooden mezzanine could later be prepared to host this activity even in the winter months, but this proposal should be evaluated in the light of a more detailed market study (69.76 m²). Even the unused spaces of the *barchessa* could be considered.





5. **Escape room:** the activity could be proposed in the central body of the villa as a recreational or team building service with a link to the history and archaeology of the villa and the monastery (204.85 m²). In the economic feasibility analysis, this activity was included in the table related to the productive activities.



In complementarity with the above described activities, and as already highlighted in chapter 6 of this document, it is recommended to enhance the functions already active in Villa Beatrice, equipping the outdoor spaces for the needs of slow tourism travellers, in particular:

- **Toilets:** functioning toilets should be placed in the external area, also restoring those already in site in the rear area of the *barchessa*. The estimated costs of this intervention were included in the tables related to the considered activities.
- **Bike charging station:** one or more charging stations for e-bikes could be organised in the space of the main courtyard.
- **Space for horses:** a space for stopping and resting with horses could be organised in the northern or southern garden of the villa.
- **Typical products at the store:** the existing store could be enhanced aesthetically and by expanding the offer of typical products, in partnership with local farms and wineries. The estimated cost of this intervention was included in the table related to the productive activities.

Alongside the proposed activities, the museum's educational activities, events such as weddings, meetings, and cultural and eno-gastronomic events can continue. The proposed activities can go together with them. The activities can also enter in synergy with each other. For example, the B&B could be used in the case of team building activities lasting several days, or in the case of yoga or meditation retreats or seminars.



RESTAURANT AREA INCLUDING EQUIPMENT SUPPLY								
	Renovation area	Total square metres	Renovation and set-up cost in square metres	Overall cost	Monthly rent	Monthly net revenue	Annual net revenue	Breakeven point in years
HP 1	Villa	200	900	180.000	1.500	900	10.800	16,67
HP 2	Villa	200	900	180.000	1.200	750	9.000	20,00
HP 3	Villa	150	900	135.000	1.000	600	7.200	18,75
HP 4	Outbuildings	200	750	150.000	900	550	6.600	22,73
HP 5	Outbuildings	150	750	112.500	800	500	6.000	18,75

RESTAURANT SPACE SUPPLY								
	Renovation area	Total square metres	Renovation and set-up cost in square metres	Overall cost	Monthly rent	Monthly net revenue	Annual net revenue	Breakeven point in years
HP 1	Villa	200	700	140.000	1.300	867	10.400	13,46
HP 2	Villa	200	700	140.000	1.000	667	8.000	17,50
HP 3	Villa	150	700	105.000	900	600	7.200	14,58
HP 4	Outbuildings	200	500	100.000	800	533	6.400	15,63
HP 5	Outbuildings	150	500	75.000	700	467	5.600	13,39

B&B												
	Renovation area	Total square metres	Square metres per room	N. of rooms	Renovation and set-up cost per room	Overall renovation cost	Gross income per room per night	Net income per room per night	Average number of nights per room per year	Annual net revenue per room	Overall annual net revenue	Breakeven point in years
HP 1	Outbuildings	250	30	7	22.000	154.000	70	25	180	4.500	31.500	4,89
HP 2	Outbuildings	250	30	7	22.000	154.000	80	35	180	6.300	44.100	3,49
HP 3	Outbuildings	250	25	9	20.000	180.000	70	25	180	4.500	40.500	4,44
HP 4	Outbuildings	250	25	9	20.000	180.000	80	35	180	6.300	56.700	3,17
HP 5	Villa	250	30	7	36.000	252.000	90	35	180	6.300	44.100	5,71
HP 6	Villa	250	30	7	36.000	252.000	100	40	180	7.200	50.400	5
HP 7	Villa	250	25	9	30.000	270.000	90	35	180	6.300	56.700	4,76
HP 8	Villa	250	25	9	30.000	270.000	100	40	180	7.200	64.800	4,17



PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES (yoga, escape room, selling point)

	Renovation area	Total square metres	Renovation and set-up cost in square metres	Overall cost	Monthly rent	Monthly net revenue	Annual net revenue	Breakeven point in years
HP 1	Villa	200	500	100.000	1.300	867	10.400	9,62
HP 2	Villa	200	500	100.000	1.100	733	8.800	11,36
HP 3	Villa	150	500	75.000	900	600	7.200	10,42
HP 4	Outbuildings	200	300	60.000	800	533	6.400	9,38
HP 5	Outbuildings	150	300	45.000	700	467	5.600	8,04

GLAMPING

	Cost per tent	Gross revenue for one week	Gross revenue for meals	Net revenue for tent	Estimated number of stays per month	Monthly net revenue	Annual net revenue	Breakeven point in years
HP 1	50.000	3.500	500	1.250	2	2.500	30.000	1,67
HP 2	45.000	3.000	500	1.000	2	2.000	24.000	1,88
HP 3	40.000	2.500	500	750	2	1.500	18.000	2,22
HP 4	35.000	2.000	500	500	2	1.000	12.000	2,92
HP 5	30.000	1.500	300	450	2	900	10.800	2,78

WINE BAR

	Renovation area	Total square metres	Renovation and set-up cost in square metres	Overall cost	Monthly rent	Monthly net revenue	Annual net revenue	Breakeven point in years
HP 1	Villa	150	350,00	52.500	800	533	6.400	8,20
HP 2	Villa	130	350,00	45.500	700	467	5.600	8,13
HP 3	Villa	150	350,00	52.500	600	400	4.800	10,94
HP 4	Outbuildings	150	350,00	52.500	500	333	4.000	13,13
HP 5	Outbuildings	130	350,00	45.500	400	267	3.200	14,22

E-BIKE CHARGING STATION

	Cost per station	Gross revenue for charging per customer	Net revenue	Estimated number of charging per month	Monthly net revenue	Annual net revenue	Breakeven point in years
HP 1	3.200	7	2	30	60	720	4,44
HP 2	2.800	7	2	30	60	720	3,89
HP 3	2.800	6	1,5	30	45	540	5,19
HP 4	2.400	5	1,5	30	45	540	4,44
HP 5	2.200	6	1,5	30	45	540	4,07



CONCLUSIONS

This document is intended as a useful tool for the planning and verification of the management contents of Villa Beatrice d'Este heritage site, including the calculation of the related investments, their timing and types of activities (productive, social, cultural, etc.), in order to support the future actions of the Province of Padua. The management plan, collected in this text, is to be implemented through the considerations of the Province of Padua, and of the site Manager entity, together with the public and private stakeholders who are interested in building on the basis of the results obtained so far. If the explicit purpose of the document is to maintain the original identity of the prestigious building and its link with the territory, valorising the link to the cultural and historical productive activities to combine cultural and social purposes with a new business perspective and new methods and technologies, the expressed methodological approach provides support to deal with the future activities and choices at the site consciously and with a limited degree of risk.

To complement this tool, careful consideration should be given to the post-COVID-19 pandemic situation (which erupted in March 2020), which is currently difficult to predict.



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