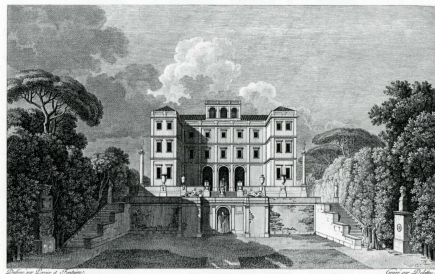


### Villa Altieri in the XVII and XVIII centuries

The construction of the villa dates back to the Seventies years of the XVIIth century, by the will of Cardinal Paluzzo Altieri, nephew of Pope Clement X (1670-1676). He commissioned the building to the architect Giovanni Antonio De Rossi, who also designed the "Palazzo Altieri al Gesù", the urban palace of the family.

This new suburban residence was located within a large estate on the site of a rustic farmhouse. The noble "Casino of delights", was approached by a monumental portal with long driveway on the via Felice (now S. Croce in Gerusalemme) and constituted only a small part, the *pars urbana*, of a vast area, which was originally surrounded by parks and gardens with fountains, tree-lined streets, vineyards and orchards (*pars rustica*), and accompanied by a wonderful labyrinth of boxwood hedges, still visible in the early XXth century.

Special features of the building are the architectural "U shaped" plan, taken from the typology of Renaissance villas, with the double semi-circular staircase, which put in direct communication the square in front of the Villa with the noble floor, the so called "Fountain of the Tritons" and the great "Loggia", open on three sides. A slender three-arches turret was surmounted by ancient statues and also many busts were positioned above the balustrade front.



VUE DE LA VILLA ALTIERI,  
par le Sr. de Turin, en l'an de la Liberté 9.

The apogee of the Villa took place between the late XVIIth and the late XVIIIth century, when it was equipped with a rich collection of ancient works of art, a period that also corresponds to the moment of greatest splendor and magnificence of the Altieri family.

### XIX and XX centuries

In 1857 Villa was sold by the Altieri family and became property of Cardinal Xavier De Merode (1862) and his heirs, and was destined to undergo many changes that have distorted the original architectural plan. It was first used as a correctional prison for women until 1897, then house for Dorothean nuns and finally a school until 2009, when restoration project started.

*a cura di Claudio Novello*


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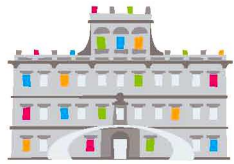
*P.O. Coordinamento Gestionale di Villa Altieri*  
dott.ssa Daniela Imperi

Villa Altieri: Viale Manzoni, 47 - 00185 ROMA  
tel. 06/67668090-4 - fax. 06/67667315  
[www.provincia.roma.it](http://www.provincia.roma.it)  
[gestioneculturale@provincia.roma.it](mailto:gestioneculturale@provincia.roma.it)  
[villaaltieriufficiogestione@provincia.roma.it](mailto:villaaltieriufficiogestione@provincia.roma.it)


**Villa ALTIERI**  
PROVINCIA DI ROMA

**Villa ALTIERI**

**Palazzo della Cultura**
**e**
**della Memoria Storica**

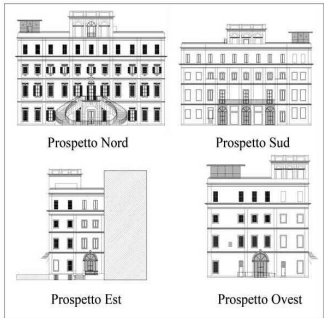


# Villa ALTIERI

PROVINCIA DI ROMA

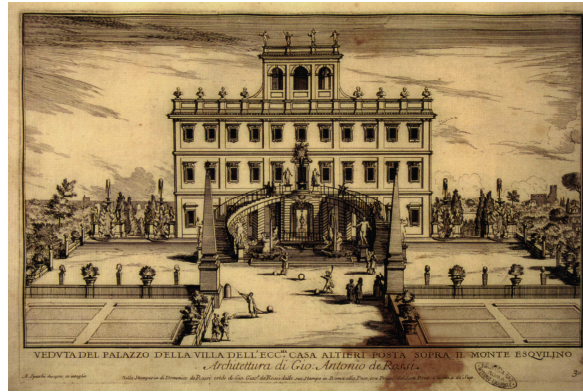
Built at the end of the XVIIth century in the heart of the Esquiline hill, Villa Altieri, suburban home of the noble Roman family, was inaugurated, after a long process of restoration and renewal, for the 150th anniversary of the Italian Unification (1861-2011), as the “Palace of Culture and Historical Memory” .

In the Palace are located the “Provincial Library” and the “Historical Archive”, a little Museum for a part of the ancient “Altieri collection”, the “Centro Pio Rajna” with the “Historical Library” dedicated to Dante’s works, a small archaeological site and other areas for exhibitions and cultural events.



## Historical Garden

The noble “Palace of delights”, as some other Villas of this part of the town, was completely surrounded by green areas, parks, fountains, vineyards, orchards and greens. There was also a beautiful “Labyrinth” consisting of boxwood hedges. Today remain only the great square, with the semicircular staircase embellished by the “Fountain of Tritons”, and a “Secret Garden”.



## Ground Floor

### Information services - Altieri Collection and archaeological area

A reception located in the *Atrium* leads directly to the big Lodge, open on three sides, in which are visible the original floor pavement, dated XVIIth century, and other archaeological evidences from Roman age to present. This area will be the Museum for all that remains of the prestigious Altieri’s collection of sculptures (statues of Asclepius, Athena, Muses, busts, an epigraphic section, ornaments and original furnishings of the Villa). Other rooms will be used for temporary exhibitions.



## First Floor

### Conferenc Hall and Foyer - Management Area

A big Gallery, originally the main room of the Palace and attained from the staircase in façade, now is a conference hall for 98 persons, available for conventions, meetings, workshops, studies, tutorials, conferences.



# Villa ALTIERI

PROVINCIA DI ROMA

## Second Floor

### Province Library and Historical Archive

The Library, originally located in Palazzo Valentini’s headquarters, displays a big collections of books on history, art, traditions and culture of the Province, including iconographic and documentary material on the history of Rome and the Papal State, like the engravings collection of the work of Bartolomeo Pinelli. The Historical Archive contains papers and documents relating to the administrative history of the Province of Rome.



## Third Floor

### Pio Rajna Center - “Biblioteca Storica Dantesca”

This Centre, an important Institute for the study of Italian Literature, Philology and for the study of Dante’s works, features a Library which contains the principal editions of Dante’s works, the works of Niccolò Machiavelli and Pietro Aretino and other library collections. Also compiles the BIGLI (an acronym for the General Bibliography of Italian Language and Literature).



## Fourth Floor

### Turret and Terrace

Before the XIXth century works there wasn’t a roof terrace but only a pitched roofs with many busts on the balustrade and statues above the turret. Today is a panoramic terrace from which can be seen the summit of St. John’s Cathedral and other monuments.

