His retreat was only accessible by two removable wooden ramps. The canal was bordered by a portico, while the high circular wall enclosing the little "domus" made it even more inaccessible.

The Baths with Heliocaminus (13)
These are the oldest baths in the Villa. The vault of the circular room has a central oculus which was fitted with an adjustable round bronze cover. It was thus possible to increase or diminish the quantity of water vapour heating the room which, with its south-west facing windows, was suitable for afternoon sun-bathing.

Hospitalia (14)
This complex occupies one of the shorter sides of the Courtyard of the Libraries to which it is linked by a flight of steps. It was used to lodge Praetorian officials or unimportant guests. There was a double row of rooms, each with three beds, which opened on to a wide central corridor with a black and white mosaic floor.

The Greek and Latin Libraries (15)
The Greek and Latin libraries stand on an artificial raised plateau which was turned into a garden. The two buildings are linked by a portico. The Greek Library has three floors: the second floor was given over to domestic service, while the third boasted a heating system. Hadrian may have resided here in winter, which would explain why there is an external staircase linking the third floor with the "domus' of the Maritime Theatre. The Latin Library has two floors and is similar to the other. Both have a series of rooms set out along the same axis.

The Philosophers’ Room (16)
This large rectangular room has a wide semi-circular apse featuring seven niches. Both the Pecile and the Maritime Theatre are very close and can be reached via the room's two entrances. The Philosophers’ Room thus served as a link between buildings. Some think it was used as a library, others that it was used as a Council Chamber. There is also disagreement as to what the niches held: some suggest books, others think they may have contained seven statues of philosophers or perhaps statues of members of the Imperial Family.

The Temple of Venus (17)
This circular temple in the Doric style was situated in the centre of a semi-circular nymphaeum overlooking the Vale of Tempe. Strong supporting substructure (which incorporated a paved underground road used by servants and carts) made it possible to create the vast plain on which the complex was built. The Temple held a replica of the Aphrodite of Knidos by the famous ancient Greek sculptor Praxiteles, today in the Antiquarium. The plaster copy of the statue together with the four remaining columns and the magnificent entablature give special charm to the ruins.

The Greek Theatre (18)
The modest size of this theatre can be explained by the fact that it was only frequented by members of the Imperial Court. It has the semi-circular shape of Roman theatres. The terraces of the amphitheatre exploit the natural hilly morphology of the local tuff. A wide terrace half way up divides the seating into two sections. It is not yet clear whether the construction which overlooks the terraces was reserved for Hadrian or whether it was a small temple dedicated to a divinity. At the bottom of the terraces, however, the "orchestra " (where the chorus stood) is still clearly visible. The "proscenium" (stage) has been partly preserved, but the "frons scenae" (the "backdrop"), provided by columns for example, has disappeared.

The Palestra (Gymnasium) complex (19)
The complex consists of six buildings and is situated in what the Emperor called the "Vale of Tempe" in homage to a place (in Tessaglia) which had charmed him during his travels in Greece. The introduction of the Italian term "Palestra" is credited to 16th century painter and architect Pirro Ligorio. Ligorio worked for Cardinal Hyppolitus II d’Este, who had given him the task of finding Roman statues to decorate the gardens of Villa d’Este. When he found statues he thought to be of athletes in the Vale of Tempe, he concluded that the ruins must be those of a gymnasium. In actual fact, the complex was to have been dedicated to the goddess Isis.
The Villa, UNESCO World Heritage Site
Hadrian’s Villa is the largest imperial Roman villa ever built with a complex covering about 100 hectares. It was built between 118 and 133 A.D. as a result of the centralization of government and evolved into a veritable city as Hadrian expanded it from the pre-existing 2nd - 1st century B.C. late Republican villa which had been part of his wife’s dowry. The Villa was only 17 miles from the Esquiline Gate and was also easily accessible from Rome via the Via Aniene.

Construction in two phases
Hadrian constructed the Villa in two successive phases between 118 and 133 A.D.
Phase 1 (118-125): Libraries; north complex of Eastern Palace; Hospitalia (sleeping accommodation); garden SE of Palace, Pavilion NE of Piazza d’Oro (Golden Square); Heliocaminus Baths; Maritime Theatre; Stadium; Firemen’s Headquarters; Large Baths.
Phase 2 (125-133): Small Baths; central complex of Eastern Palace; Western Palace; Piazza d’Oro; Praetorium Vestibule (Entrance); Cento Camerelle (100 Chambers) and Pecile; Pavilion near Vale of Tempi; Canopus; Courtyard east of Stadium.

Hadrian’s project
Hadrian had travelled widely in Rome’s Eastern provinces and he reproduced architectural styles and building he had seen, adapting them to his personal taste. He connected the different zones of the Villa by constructing an underground network of roads and pedestrian passageways to be used by the servants, without encroaching on open spaces, the other more had more enclosed areas (the north-facing rooms were used for summer banquets).

The Praetorium
In 2002, a temple dedicated to Antinous was discovered alongside the path leading to the Main Vestibule. Antinous was Hadrian’s young lover, who drowned in the Nile in 130 A.D., and was honoured after his death in the same way as the gods Baal, Dionysus and Isis. As well as being the Eponymous Egyptian city of Antinoopolis after him, the Emperor dedicated this edifice to him as a memorial site. It was to be the last major building constructed in Hadrian’s Villa.

Publius Aelius Hadrianus
He was born in Italica (Spain) in 76 A.D. and adopted by his uncle, Trajan, whom he succeeded in 117 thanks to the support of Trajan’s widow Plotina (who may have been his minнос) on the strict condition that he should marry Vibia Sabina. Hadrian was well educated and versed in philosophy and poetry. He also showed political astuteness, travelling far and wide over long periods to visit and inspect the Provinces of the Empire. He never gave coherence to the legislative system but alienated the Senators in the process. Between voyages he stayed at Tivoli, supervising the various building projects. In Rome, among other things, he organized the construction of the Pantheon (which had been destroyed by fire), as well as the construction of the Temple of Venus and the Mausoleum (now the Castel Sant’Angelo), which was to be his own tomb. On the death of his wife Vibia in 137 A.D., Hadrian was accused of uxoricide by the populace. Disenchanted and isolated, he committed suicide in 138. His successor, Antoninus Pius, overcame the hostility of the Senate and deified him.

The Building with Three Exedrae
This was a service vestibule for the Building with a Fishpond, Hadrian’s private residence, also known as the Winter Palace.

The Small Baths
The Small Baths were built as part of a phase of enlargement of the Villa between 121 and 126, at the same period as the Large Baths, but after the Baths with Heliothermy, Antinous’ project, had been destroyed by fire. They were situated on the road leading to the Canopus and were serviced via underground tunnels. As they were linked to the Palace and were near the Building with a Fishpond, they may have been used by the Emperor himself or else reserved for women.

The Large Baths
The Large Baths could be reached by crossing a vast square to the east of the Palace complex. They are architecturally less original than the Small Baths and possess all the usual characteristics of Roman baths: sudatorium, calidarium, tepidarium, frigidarium, swimming pools and gymnasium.

The Praetorium
The frequently given explanation that the Praetorium served to lodge the Praetorian Guard, who guarded the Emperor’s bodyguards, is untrue. The structure of the building has two distinct parts. The lower part, composed of three floors of substructions (servants’ lodgings), supported the richly decorated upper part, reserved for distinguished guests. The upper part was on the same level as the Building with a Fishpond and thus enjoyed direct access to the parts of the Palace frequented by the Emperor.

The Canopus
This was inspired by the Canopus Canal which linked the eponymous Egyptian town with nearby Alexandria. Hadrian built his canal in a narrow valley. To the south it is dominated by the Serapeum, a nymphaeum with an exeda, used for summer banquets. On the east side there was a double colonnade supporting a pergola. The west side was bordered by a single colonnade. Half way along there are plaster copies of six statues which once stood there: four female caryatids and two bonus figures carrying baskets instead of capitals. At the north end you will see copies of statues of Pallas Athena, Ares, Hermes and two wounded Amazons. There are also copies of fine statues personifying the Nile and the Tiber and a splendid crocodile.

The Roccabruna Tower
This was inspired by the tower of the Athens Academy. To reach it, take the path from the exhibition building near the Canopus. The Tower originally had three floors and may have been used by Hadrian as an astronomical observatory as well as being a belvedere.

The Piazza d’Oro
The name means “Golden Square” and was no doubt inspired by the architectural and sculptural richness of the building, which was plundered and stripped from the sixteenth century on. Passing through the octagonal vestibule (entrance) with its ribbed vault, the visitor found himself in a large garden enclosed by a portico, with a rectangular pool in the centre. Round the pool there was an arrangement of flowerbeds and small basins. The Great Hall directly opposite the garden, with a wide nymphaeum behind it, may have been used for summer banquets.

The Hall of the Doric Pilasters
The building owes its name to a porticoed peristyle with fluted pilasters which support a Doric entablature. It was not Hadrian’s throne room but rather a structure intended to connect the different zones of the Palace. It was used by the Praetorium Guard, the Emperor’s bodyguards, as an exhibition building near the Canopus. The Roccabruna Tower was connected to the Canopus by a canal, and the Emperor used to go swimming.

The Maritime Theatre
This is a small, artificial island which Hadrian used to go swimming. It stands a miniature, circular “domus” complete with atrium, triclinium, cubiculum, small baths and latrines. The island was surrounded by water from a canal, and the Emperor used to go swimming.

The Canopus
This rectangular, highly articulated complex was a service vestibule for the Building with a Fishpond, Hadrian’s private residence, also known as the Winter Palace.

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