



VILLA MEDICEA DI LILLIANO

TEN CENTURIES OF TUSCAN EXPERIENCE

Villa Medicea di Lilliano through the centuries

History of the Villa Medicea di Lilliano begins around the XI century, as a look-out tower, but was more precisely noted for its beginning in the XV century. During this period the Villa belonged to the Gianelli family under the emblem of Ferza and afterwards in 1480 became the property of the Guiducci and then finally the Capponi family. In 1646 the Villa was purchased from the Grand Duke Ferdinando II of the Medici, thus becoming a part of the Villa Reale di Lapeggi (the Royal Villa of Lapeggi) named the "Ristretto della Fattoria di Lapeggi". The Villa of Lilliano, at the time named "Il Palazzo della Fattoria", was initially used as a simple farm house for the neighbouring Villa of Lapeggi.

In 1667 it was assigned from the Grand Duke of Toscana Cosimo III to his brother Cardinal Francesco Maria of Medici, in which restorations began under the guidance of the architect Ferri. In this period the villa underwent restructuring and extensions which to this day owes its present design, decorated with fountains, baths, vases and lemon plants. The villa, transformed from the simple farm house to a country home in every way, entertained renowned guests including in 1709 the King of Denmark Frederick IV. In 1709, as desired by the Grand Duke of Cosimo III, Cardinal Francesco Maria married Eleonora di Guastalla in the end to ensure a descendent of the Medici family was not on its way to becoming extinct, but the Cardinal died in 1711 without any heirs and his assets were sold to pay the debts.

After various owners, in 1830 the Villa of Lilliano was bought by the Malenchini family. The main façade lies south in a very simple sixteenth design and is enclosed by two small towers preceded by a garden of water lilies. The prestigious fountain with statues was designed by the architect Foggini and is the twin of the more famous fountain located in the Boboli Gardens in Florence. On the left side of the garden is the lemon orchard. From the interior courtyard of the Villa, decorated by a circular central bath, there are two large symmetrical stairwells that lead up to the splendid terrace that directly faces Florence. The terrace opens into a large room that at one time was used as a granary or barn. Under the Villa, which is also a part of the Malenchini estate, can be found the cellar and the "orciaia", with the ancient jars pertaining from the kilns of Impruneta and Belmonte.

