



Villa Revedin Park - piazzale Bacchelli 4

From the beautiful gate between brick columns and lion statues, built around 1860 by Count Pietro Revedin, the large private park climbs the hillside to just under 200 m above sea level. A lovely lawn shaded by cedar trees gives way to a wooded area, artificially planted and now partly naturalised, which leads to the slope up to the villa and the imposing building of the Archbishop's Seminary of Bologna. The uphill slope leading to the villa runs partly alongside a high wall before turning into a veritable stairway (clearly visible in an 18th-century picture of the Capuchin convent of Monte Calvario). From 1554 until the Napoleonic suppression, the site known as 'Poggio Belvedere' was indeed the seat of an important convent and the adjoining church of Santa Croce, which experienced its moment of greatest development in the 18th century. This huge complex included, in addition to the convent, a church, pharmacy, laboratories, guest quarters, several workshops, and everything that might be needed for an almost self-sufficient life, as well as a botanical garden with many medicinal and exotic plants.

After the removal of the friars in the early 19th century, the convent was sold to private individuals and, after several changes of ownership and considerable building alterations, became a noble and holiday residence. In 1828, Count Filippo Bentivoglio turned it into 'a palace with a pleasant garden', then the complex passed to Cardinal Carlo Opizzoni, who made it 'one of the most beautiful villas among those adorning the enchanting hills'. Count Pietro Revedin purchased Villa Belvedere from the Cumulo della Misericordia in 1857 and dedicated himself to tastefully preserving and embellishing the place where he spent the summer with his family, taking special care of the park, which was described at the time as rich in trees of even rare species. In 1929, Villa Revedin was purchased by Cardinal Nasalli Rocca to erect the new archiepiscopal seminary next to the old stately home. After extensive work on account of the building's size, the seminary was inaugurated on 2 October 1932 and since then known to the Bolognese as the seminary of Villa Revedin.

On 15 August each year, the park hosts the traditional festival that was first promoted in 1955 by the archbishop of Bologna Cardinal Giacomo Lercaro, Ferragosto a Villa Revedin, a celebration for the whole citizenship. The villa's ornamental garden, abounding in century-old trees, is partly terraced on level ground and gently sloping on the north and west sides of the villa. Towards the west, the villa is elegantly stepped, with the main entrance opening under a loggia with four Ionic columns supporting a tympanum, while the north front is decorated with a large terrace. Surrounding the villa, amidst stone furnishings, two imposing bagolariums add to some towering pines, numerous cypresses, a large cedar of Lebanon with a forked trunk, and some old holm oaks.

Between the architectural complex of the villa and the Seminary, a small ceremonial garden is enclosed on three sides by the buildings. A column rises in the centre, surrounded by a few sculptures of cherubs on plinths between flowerbeds with a prevalence of evergreen species. Opposite the Seminary, a long avenue of hackberry trees runs to the entrance of an underground complex beneath the wooded hill. The anti-aircraft protection structure, built during the Second World War when the seminary was operating as a military hospital, has recently been recovered thanks to the intervention of the Associazione Amici delle vie d'acqua e dei sotterranei di Bologna, and is accessible with guided tours organised by the association in agreement with the Seminary.