

# HISTORY of PALAZZO BACCHINI delle PALME



Palazzo Venart

HOTEL VENEZIA



Calle Tron 1961, Santa Croce, 30135 Venice, Italy

+39.041.5233.784 [info.venart@ldchotels.com](mailto:info.venart@ldchotels.com)

*palazzovenart.com*



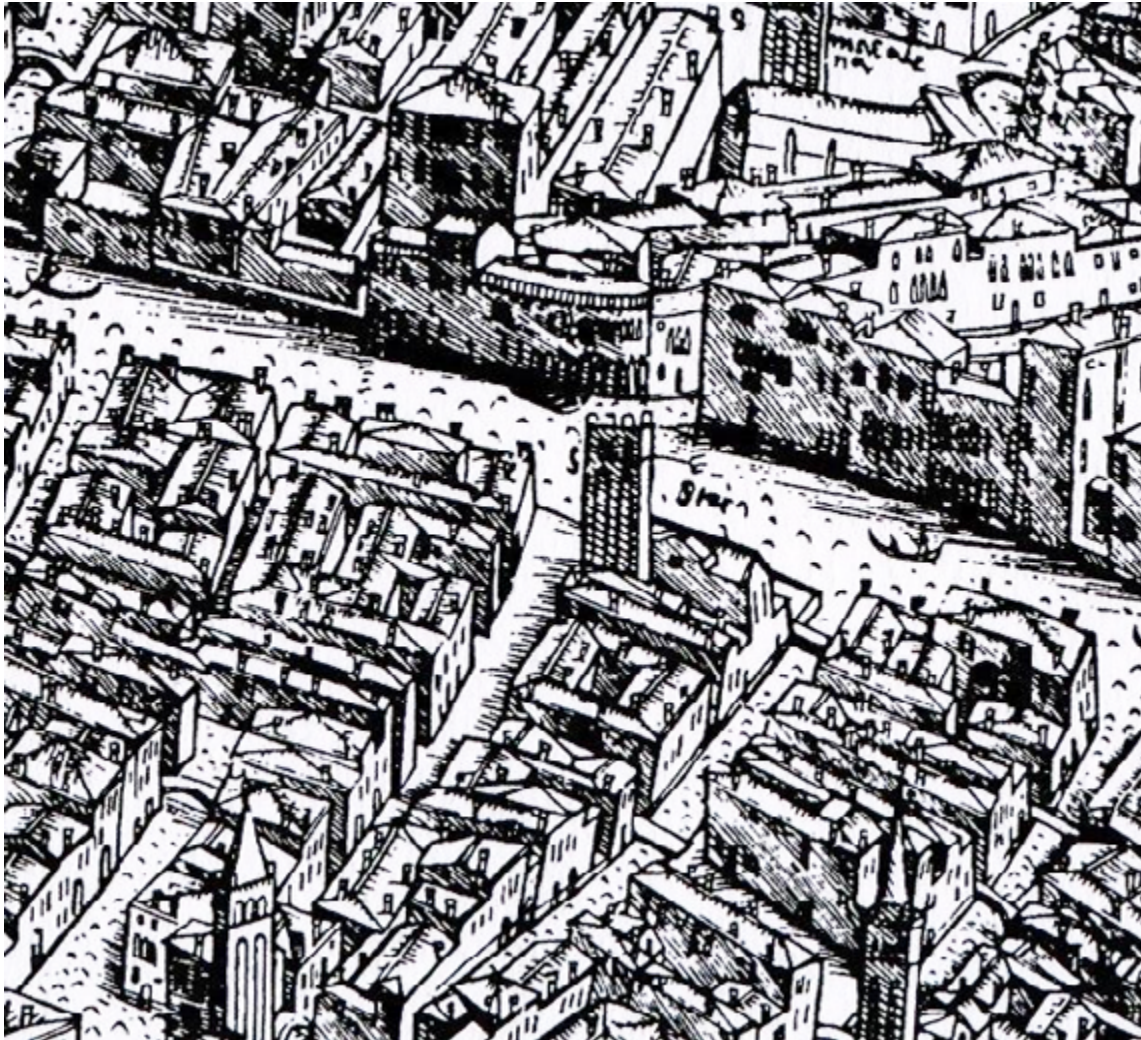
Palazzo Venart, Venice | A.Roma Lifestyle Hotel, Rome

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After many years of neglect and abandonment, *Palazzo Bacchini delle Palme* has regained its former glory through a careful restoration of its decorative features that was completed in 2016.



*Detail De' Barbari 16th century*

Palazzo Bacchini delle Palme has been part of the thousand year history of Venice since its very beginning and many remarkable personalities have passed through its halls. Once owned by the Lion family, then passed to the Venier's, in the 15th century it was inhabited by the famous warlord Pandolfo Malatesta, landlord of Rimini and patron of the arts, who found shelter here after his excommunication and sentence to be burned to death for his uncontrolled greed of glory and money.

Also the ill-fated Francesco da Bussone aka "Il Carmagnola" lived here. He was accused of treason and beheaded in Piazzetta San Marco, between the two columns. Afterwards, this beautiful palace was bought in 1433 by the Vitturi's noble family, who then sold it to Giustinians.



*Censo stabile Austriano Cadastre 19th century*





*Michele Marieschi Grand Canal with the church of San Stae 18th century private collection*

This ancient and eminent lineage has made the enlargements and embellishments to the palace that originally overlooked the Grand Canal, occupying the area where the garden is located today, and featured the typical Venetian fifteenth-century structure in three sections, with the entrance to the lobby facing the waterside with an L shape.

The façade, in white Marmorino Veneziano, featured arch windows enriched by elegant balustrades in Istrian stone.

The entrance to the palace was through Corte and Calle Dandolo. From the ground floor, a monumental staircase led to the main floors and the “casino”. These were the parlors where, in the Golden 18th century, violinists played Vivaldi’s scores and the brightest nobility of the city gathered to dance, play cards and converse about the most interesting news and gossip.

In 1722, the palace was the site of the celebration of the lavish marriage of the last heir of the Giustinian family, Maria, daughter of Antonio, and the public prosecutor and state attorney of San Marco, Simon Contarini, who was heir of one of the “evangelical families” of the city and whose line of descent included doges, diplomats and bishops.

At that time, the lobby became a functional space with benches placed against the walls and two “*ferali*” oil-filled lights, that have been preserved to this day, lighting up the entrance door and the main staircase.

The building has remained through the centuries one of the most beautiful in town, so much so that it appears in the guide, dated 1819, of the  
**“Foreigner educated in the most valuable and curious ancient and modern things of the city of Venice”**

In its rooms, on April 21st 1809 Francesco Pini Bey was born, son of Napoleon’s best man in the famous Egyptian Campaign. He was a scholar, passionate about mathematics and a trader. Following in the footsteps of his father, he was nominated as the representative of Venice and administrator of the wealth of the Pasha of Egypt.

On returning in Venice in 1868, he bought the palace which, in the meantime, had its façade on the Grand Canal destroyed by a fire in 1845, that left the lounge and the section of the palace reserved to the “casino” intact.

The restoration works lasted over ten years. In the first stage, 1851-2, the unstable areas were secured and structural works were done, while in 1864 the new spaces were outlined and decoration features were undertaken.

Further restoration took place in 1880 by Amelia Richetti, after this property was inherited from her husband along with other buildings in Venice, such as the palace of San Stae and the estate in Altino, an ancient pre-roman town that has now disappeared.

Her daughter Adele then married the lieutenant colonel Edmondo Bacchini delle Palme, who designed the coat of arms located in the lounge: “truncated by a golden band, in blue and red, with ciborium shaped vase with a lid, crossing on the blue background and the band, and topped with a Maltese cross”.

All these symbols were chosen to reflect the close ties the family has with the Roman Church.

*Pictures before, during and after the restoration. The coat of arms, painted with tempera colors on a fir wood board, shows an alteration of the painted film due to the high humidity. The restoration consisted of an initial cleaning and removal of loose deposits and the stabilization of the painted film that was detaching from the wooden framework. The restoration has been completed with filling the gaps in the painting.*



The tempera painting, that can be seen today on the walls and ceilings of the lounge area, dates back to the time of the entire restyling of the building and it is inspired from the fresco painting by Michelangelo Mortalier at Palazzo Grassi, and represents social gathering scenes of the Venetian society that depict the actual life in the palace at the time. The characters are portrayed while looking out a fake wooden balcony and a false gallery is visible on the background. The scenes are designed to be observed from below and far away. It is thought that they had been created after the demolition of the “passatizio”, a passage connecting the two wings of the mezzanine floor above the marble staircase.

The analysis of the images conducted during the restoration highlighted that many pigments used in the making of the paintings such as zinc white, artificial ultramarine blue and chrome yellow, as well as the inorganic binders with soda lime mixed with chalk, were employed only since the second half of the 19th century.



*Pictures showing the state of the painting before the restoration.*

*The heavily deteriorated paintings due to damp and infiltration have been recovered during the last restoration.*

*The decorated part shows a significant damage to the plaster and presence of whitish and dark brown spots, along with a widespread presence of loose paint inhibited proper study of the painting details.*

*Pictures during and after restoration. Paintings have been cleaned, stabilized and compensated in areas where cracks and material losses occurred.*

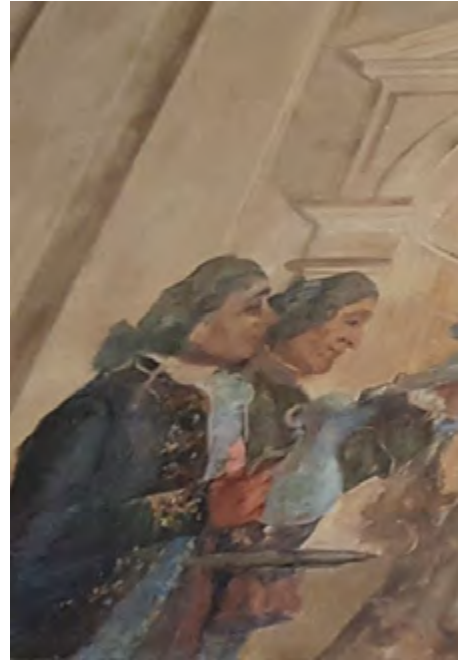
*In order to restore the decorative features, a conservative restoration of the surfaces has been performed aiming to reduce visual interferences.*





←  
*before*

*after*



*before*

*after*  
→



Completed in 2016, the restoration was intended to preserve any transformations which had taken place over the centuries, while also bringing to life the decorative features of the lounge ceilings and walls, as well as the architectural stone elements characterizing the palace, such as the precious marble staircase leading to the mezzanine and the Istrian stone portal on the main floor.

*The ceiling, painted in tempera, was affected by cracks and gaps, while the painted film appeared deteriorated.*

*A conservative restoration has been performed, including stabilizing, cleaning and recovering of the polychrome surface, as well as on the walls that showed an advanced state of deterioration, particularly in the narrowing section of the hallway, where the decoration of the false balcony is located, is simplified compared to the social gathering scenes.*





The construction works that demolished the area towards the Grand Canal also date back to the 20th century. A leisure garden was created and embellished with statues and artifacts, partly deriving from the past building and partly from the roman archaeological site of Altino. In the following years, the Bacchini delle Palme family donated part of the collection to the Museum of Altino, where they are still preserved today, while others were left in the garden, giving the property its distinctive historical charm.

In August 2016, the renovation work, carried out by Taiwan's LDC Hotels & Resorts group was completed and the building was renamed Palazzo Venart, Luxury Hotel, with the aim of becoming one of the city's most popular 5-star hotels.

