

# Stabiae's



archaeological excavations



POMPEII

SOPRINTENDENZA  
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CASTELLAMMARE DI STABIA



Visit Us Here  
Via Passeggiata Archeologica  
Località Varano  
Castellammare di Stabia (NA)  
Tel. 081.8714541

## OPENING HOURS

Everyday from 8,30 am to one hour  
before the sunset.

Closing Days:  
January 1 - May 1 - December 25

## Getting here:

**Car**  
from Napoli and Salerno  
Autostrada A3 Napoli-Salerno  
Castellammare di Stabia exit

**Train**  
Circumvesuviana railway line Napoli-Sorrento  
(via Nocera stop)

## FREE ENTRANCE

*side: Villa S. Marco,  
Cratere in marmo*

*coverpage:  
Villa S. Marco, Peristilio*

Archive Soprintendenza Pompei (Ph U. Cesino)

Print: Editrice Cerbone - 081.8354357

## Site history

Stabiae is the ancient name of a settlement located on the south side of the Gulf of Naples. The earliest period is understood mainly through the documentation provided by the necropolis located in the area of Madonna delle Grazie that was discovered in 1957. This necropolis with nearly 300 tombs dates to between the seventh and third centuries B.C., and attests the significant strategic and commercial role played by this city in the Archaic period. The following period in between the third century B.C. and 89 B.C., year of the destruction of Stabiae by Sulla, is poorly documented due to the end of use of the necropolis. Two settlements in the territory testify to a destruction during the first century B.C., and a sanctuary at Privati was abandoned at the end of the second century B.C.. After the annihilation at the hands of Sulla in 89 BC (Pliny N.H. III, 70) Stabiae was transformed into an elite residential site on the Varano plateau and large villas of "otium" ("leisured culture") with beautiful views were built next to a small urban establishment of approximately 45.000 square meters which has not yet been unearthed. Stabiae was buried by the eruption of A.D. 79 by nearly 3 m. of ash and lapilli (cinder) that also caused an advancement of the coastline. About 42 years after the eruption Stabiae appeared to have revived as is suggested by a letter of *Publius Papinius Statius* urging his wife to join him in what he called "*Stabias renatas*" ("Stabiae reborn"). During excavations of the cathedral a milestone was found dating to A.D. 121 attesting that the road to Nuceria was again viable. In the second century A.D. new necropoleis were established in the area at Grotta S. Biagio (beneath the Villa Arianna), Santa Maria la Carità and Pimonte.



*Necropolis Madonna delle Grazie Str. - Tomb 68*



*Aerial view of Villa S. Marco*



*Aerial view of Villa Arianna*





*Villa S. Marco, room 30 - Citarista*

## History of the excavations

The Stabiae excavations began in June the 7th, 1749 at the instance of Charles III Bourbon. They revealed a small urban establishment with shops and streets, and six very large seaside villas on the edge of the Varano plateau. The excavation took place, according to the custom of that time, through tunnels which were re-buried and abandoned when the findings were not deemed worthy of being exhibited at the Bourbon Museum of Portici, and work would move on to other areas. The work done by Bourbon excavators was published in 1881 by M. Ruggiero the architect-collaborator of Fiorelli, the director of excavations at Pompeii, by gathering all the relevant documentation of the Bourbon excavations: excavation diaries; drawings; and graphics. An overall plan of the discoveries made in the Stabia territory was also drawn up. During the 1950's, the interest in the Stabiae area rose again, with the initiation of re-excavation of the villas by L. D'Orsi. For the sake of conservation, many frescoes were detached from the villas and were collected in the Antiquarium in Castellammare, which, opened in 1957.

## Villa San Marco

With an area of about 11.000 square meters the villa lies in a splendid panoramic position on the edge of the Varano plateau. So named from an existing chapel in the area in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the villa includes two large peristyles, located at different levels, around which are arranged entertainment and residential halls. In one there is a deep pool surrounded by a garden. The villa



*Villa S. Marco, room 30 - Servente with pisside*

is equipped with a complete thermal zone (hot bath) whose orientation follows the adjacent street below with which it communicates via a subterranean stair. It is possible to hypothesize that it may have been available for public use because it was isolated from the rest of the villa by two double doors. The oldest part, dating back to the Augustan period, consists of a tetrastyle atrium with surrounding rooms, and an adjacent large kitchen. To the east of the atrium a second entrance has recently been exposed connecting to the public street which leads down to the shore. This entrance leads into a rustic courtyard with a small peristyle with a central green area with a fruit tree which in turn opens to the atrium. Surrounding chambers contained latrines, small industrial facilities, and perhaps food storage rooms.

## Villa Arianna

The villa, so named from the fresco depicting Ariadne abandoned by Theseus on Naxos on the back wall of the *triclinium* 3, had been excavated and then re-buried in the Bourbon era, and was re-excavated again starting in the 1950's. It has a complex plan

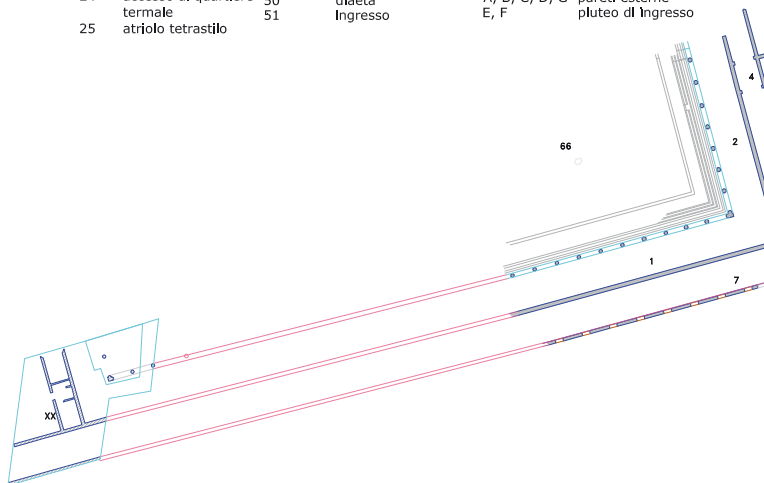


*Villa Arianna, room 89 - winged female figure  
and architectural structures*

# VILLA S. MARCO

## ambienti

1-2	peristilio superiore	26	cucina	52	cubicolo
3	peristilio	27	amb. di servizio	53	diaeta
4	rampa	28	viridario	54	amb. di servizio
5	peristilio	29	callidarium	55	scala
6	amb. soggiorno	30	diaeta	56	vestibolo
7	crypta	31	corridoio	56b	protiro
8	diaeta	32	portichetto finestrato	57	cubicolo
9	viridario	33	scala	58	ambiente
10	amb. soggiorno	34	nichia	59	tablino
11	corridoio	35	amb. di passaggio	60, 61	cubicolo
12	diaeta	36	corridoio	62, 63	galleria anulare
13	scala	37	tablino	64, 65	ninfeo
13b	area esterna	38, 38a,		64b,65b	ante del ninfeo
14	diaeta	39, 40	amb. di servizio	66	viridario
15	natatio	41	andito	67	corte
16	oecus	42	frigidarium	68	porticato
16	oecus	42a	natatio	69	corridoio
17	corridoio	43	spazio di risulta	70	clsteria (?)
18	amb. soggiorno	44	atrio	71	piano superiore
19	viridario	45	larario	72, 73	latrine
20	peristilio	46	tepidarium	74 - 80	piano superiore
21	amb. soggiorno	47	cubicolo accesso	81	amb. di servizio
22	corridoio		caldaia		
23	apodyterium	48	palestra	a	vasca
24	accesso al quartiere	49	corridoio	b	banco cucina
	termale	50	diaeta	A, B, C, D, G	pareti esterne
	atrio tetrastilo	51	Ingresso	E, F	pluteo di Ingresso

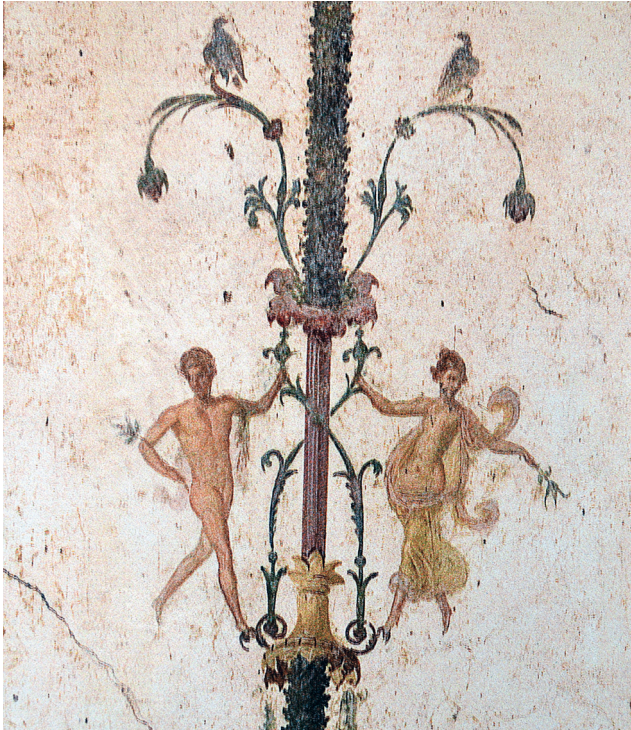








which makes many adjustments to the topography of the site and many additions. Connected with the shore below through a ramp and tunnel, the villa is divided into four parts: entrance courtyard and atrium and adjacent rooms, dating back to the late republican period; service rooms and thermal zone; rooms to the sides of the summer *triclinium* dating to the Neronian age; and a large courtyard the size of a public "palestra" (gym) connected



*Villa Arianna, room 12 - flying figures  
side, room 9 - wall decoration*

to villa in the Flavian age.

The Tuscan style atrium (with no columns) originally opened to the two *cubicula* (44-45) with frescoes in the II style of the Late Republican period.

The thermal installation, next to the service areas (e.g. kitchen), consists of a *calidarium*, a *tepidarium* and a *laconicum* with private chambers for rest and relaxation.

Next to these there is a series of rooms overlooking the Bay added during expansion of the Neronian period. They are fronted by a portico (54) and supported by two terraces with blind arches which have partially collapsed down the hill. Beyond these is the large peristyle the size of a public gymnasium whose central area was planted with greenery.

## Second Complex

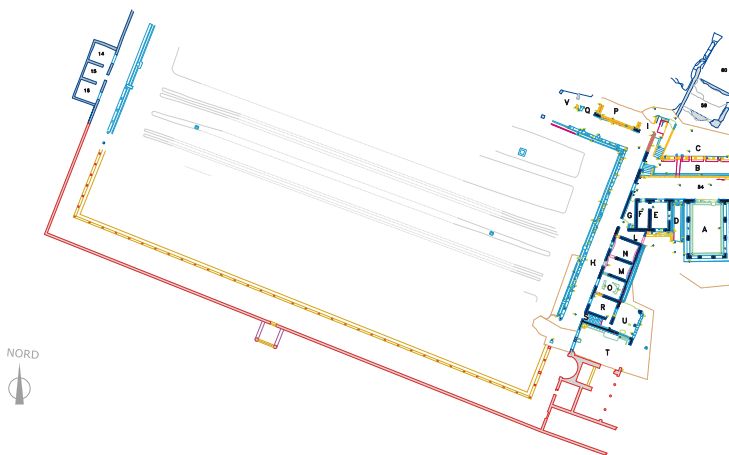
This Villa, separated from the Villa Arianna villa by a narrow lane on which open small splayed windows of the outer wall of the Villa Arianna, was explored, measured and despoiled of much of its mosaic floors in 1762 by Weber and in 1775 by La Vega. It was partially re-excavated between 1967 and 1971 to an extent of about 1000 square meters. It presents a peristyle with a series of dining rooms on the north side overlooking the sea. From the Bourbon plan is evident that the south side of the peristyle was closed and had a false portico made with half columns engaged to the wall, beyond which was the thermal zone with *calidarium*, *frigidarium* *laconicum*. To west is the *oecus* 13 with a late third-style black decoration and a series of rooms (14-22) at different orientation which can be considered as an extension of the Imperial age or as a merger with another existing building. The decoration of the oldest part of the building is almost completely disappeared. The floors, removed mostly during the Bourbon excavations, were inserted into the pavement of several rooms of the Royal Bourbon Museum in Naples, now serving as the MANN today (Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli). On the site today there are only traces of the original black-white mosaic tessellations.





*Second Complex - room 19 - particular of ceiling*

# VILLA ARIANNA



1, 2	diaetae panoramiche	26	corridoio	63 - 68	sostruzioni / ambienti	A	tridinio estivo
3	triclinio	27	triclinio	69, 70	amb. parz. scavati	B, C	terrazzi
4	cucina	28	accesso al prae-furnum	71	magazzino (?)	D	vidiartium
5	cubicolo	29	prae-furnum	72	amb. parz. scavati	E, F	diaetae
6	caldarium	30	laconicum	73	area scoperta	G	ambiente di passaggio
7	diaeta	31	tepidarium	74	ambiente	H	porticato
8	corridoio	32	area scoperta	75	area di risulta	I, L	ambienti di passaggio
9	diaeta	33	corridoio	76	galleria	M, N, O	ambienti
10	cubicolo	34	cortile	77	ambiente	P, Q	diaetae
11, 12	diaetae	35	corridoio	79 - 83	ambienti	R	ambiente
13	vidiartium	36 - 40	ambienti	84	corridoio	S	scala
14 - 16	ambienti	41, 42	diaetae panoramiche	85	anticamera	T	ambiente
17	diaeta	43	ambiente	86	ambiente colonnato	U	porticato
18	tablino	44, 45	cubicoli	87	corridoio	V	ambiente
19	diaeta	46	vestibolo	88	disimpegno		
20	magazzino	47 - 53	ambienti di servizio	89	cubicolo		
21	cortile	54	loggiate	90	nicchia		
22	magazzino	54 bis - 58	sostruzioni / ambienti	91	porticato		
23	cubicolo	59, 60	ninfei	92	area di risulta		
24	atrio	61	galleria	93 - 96	cubicoli		
25	magazzino	62	strada	97	stalle		





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STABIA



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*Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo*

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