

Getty Villa

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Guide to the collections and architecture of the Getty Villa in Malibu, California

Last update: Mar 25th, 2010

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General Information

The Getty Villa is located at

17985 Pacific Coast Highway
Pacific Palisades, California 90272
(310) 440-7300

[Hours, Directions, and Parking](#)

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Introduction

The Getty Villa, the original site of the J. Paul Getty Museum, is a museum dedicated to the study of the arts and cultures of ancient Greece, Rome, and Etruria. The design is based on the Villa dei Papiri, a 1st century Roman estate in Herculaneum, Italy, which was partially excavated in the 18th century. It is the only museum in the U.S. dedicated exclusively to ancient art. It underwent a major renovation project and reopened in 2006.

Visit the **TimeScope Room**, containing interactive exhibits that focus on time, place, and artistic style in the ancient Mediterranean, and the **Family Forum** for some hands-on activities.

Performances and films are available (student rate tickets), as well as free **lectures** (tickets required).

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Bird's Eye View



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Director, Collection Development

[Profile Image](#)

Amy Navratil Ciccone

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Subjects:

Archaeology and Classics
(primary); Architecture and Art
History (secondary)

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Collections and Exhibitions

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General Information

Watch a 12 minute video introduction on the history of the Villa.

<http://www.getty.edu/art/gettyguide/videoDetails?cat=4&segid=3729>

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Collections

The **Permanent Collection** of the Getty Villa is comprised of approximately 44,000 Greek, Roman, and Etruscan antiquities; more than 1,200 items are on exhibit in 23 galleries. There is also a small collection of Cycladic objects, dating from 3000-2200 BCE.

Many of the **galleries** are arranged by themes, including Women and Children in Antiquity, Stories of the Trojan War, Monsters and Minor Deities, and Wine in Antiquity.

Please see Further Reading at the **Find Books** tab for a brief list of books about the Getty.

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Exhibitions

Current Exhibitions



The Aztec Pantheon and the Art of Empire explores the parallels between two great empires—the Aztec and the Roman. Celebrating the 2010 bicentennial of Mexican independence, the exhibition illuminates a dialogue between the New and Old Worlds that has shaped the modern contours of Mexico.

March 24–July 5, 2010



Roman Ephebe from Naples

May 7, 2009–Ongoing

Youth as a Lamp Bearer is on long-term loan from the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Naples



Molten Color: Glassmaking in Antiquity

October 8, 2009–Ongoing

Over 180 ancient glass objects made in Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Greek world, and the Roman Empire. The exhibit spans the entire period of ancient glass production, from its origins in Mesopotamia in about 2500 B.C. to Byzantine and Islamic glass

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of the eleventh century A.D.

Forthcoming Exhibition

The Art of Ancient Greek Theater
August 26, 2010–January 3, 2011

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AFA Library

Helen Topping Architecture and Fine Arts Library

Watt Hall
850 Bloom Walk, B-4
University Park Campus
Los Angeles CA 90089-0294

Phone: (213) 740 1956
Email: afa@usc.edu
Campus map code: [WAH](#)

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Amphitheatre


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Further Reading

All of the following are available in the Helen Topping Architecture and Fine Arts Library (AFA).

Hackman, William R. *Inside the Getty*. 2008
AFA: N582.M25I57 2008

Getty, J. Paul. *As I See It: The Autobiography of J. Paul Getty*. Rev. ed., 2003
AFA and Grand: HD9570.G4A26 2003

J. Paul Getty Museum. *Guide to the Getty Villa*. 2005
AFA Reference and Leavey Reserves: N582.M25A87 2005

J. Paul Getty Museum handbook of the antiquities collection. 2002
Leavey Reserves: N5603.M36J25 2002

J. Paul Getty Museum. *Handbook of the Collections*. 7th ed., 2007
AFA Reference: N582.M25A627 2007
Previous editions in AFA and Grand; check Homer

Ross, Richard. *Seeing the Getty Villa*. 2005
AFA and Leavey: N582.M25R68 2005

Spier, Jeffrey. *Ancient Gems and Finger Rings: Catalogue of the Collection*. 1992
AFA: NK5565.S68 1992

True, Marion. *The Getty Villa*. 2005
AFA and Leavey Reserves: N582.M25T78 2005

For additional books, search Homer.

Currently on Exhibit

Molten Color: Glassmaking in Antiquity
Related book:
Glass Throughout Time. 2003.
AFA: NK5106.G5413 2003x

The Aztec Pantheon and the Art of Empire. 2010.

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Architecture and Gardens

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East Garden



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Architecture

A Roman Villa Recreated

The Getty Villa is modeled after a first-century Roman country house, the Villa dei Papiri in Herculaneum, Italy.

The J. Paul Getty Museum building was constructed in the early 1970s by the architectural firm of Langdon and Wilson. Architectural consultant Norman Neuerburg worked closely with J. Paul Getty to develop the interior and exterior details.

The Villa dei Papiri was buried by the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in A.D. 79, and much of it remains unexcavated. Therefore, Neuerburg based many of the Museum's architectural and landscaping details on elements from other ancient Roman houses in the towns of Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Stabiae—from bronze lanterns like those carried along the streets of Pompeii to herbs and shrubs grown by the Romans for food and ceremony.

The Getty Villa Reimagined

Boston-based architects Rodolfo Machado and Jorge Silvetti began renovating the Getty Villa site in 1997.

Visitors now start their visit in a spectacular open-air Entry Pavilion, then progress along a scenic pathway to the heart of the site, a 450-seat outdoor classical theater, based on ancient prototypes.

http://www.getty.edu/visit/see_do/architecture.html

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Gardens

Gardens are integral to the setting of the Getty Villa, as they were in the ancient Roman home. Open spaces around the site feature bronze sculptures, fountains, and lush plantings of trees, herbs, and flowers used by the Romans.

Inner Peristyle

The Inner Peristyle provides an intimate resting spot at the center of the J. Paul Getty Museum.

Around a narrow reflecting pool sit replicas of finds from the Villa dei Papiri in Herculaneum, including square marble basins and bronze statues depicting women who have come to draw water from a stream.

Herb Garden

Outside the Museum entrance lies the Herb Garden, a mosaic of fruit trees and fragrant and colorful annuals and perennials used by the ancient Romans in cooking, ceremony, and medicine.

A small pool of water lilies forms the centerpiece of this quiet spot for strolling and birdwatching.

Outer Peristyle

The Museum's south doors open onto the Outer Peristyle, the largest garden at the Getty Villa. It is adorned with hedge-lined pathways and circular stone benches. Plants favored by the ancient Romans, such as bay laurel, boxwood, myrtle, ivy, and oleander, are planted around a spectacular 220-foot-long reflecting pool. Bronze sculptures, replicas of statues found at the Villa dei Papiri, are placed in their ancient findspots. A peristyle, or covered walkway, surrounds the formal garden and leads visitors past illusionistic wall paintings to spectacular views of the Pacific Ocean.

East Garden

Beyond the East stair in the Museum lies the East Garden, one of the most tranquil spaces at the Villa. This walled sanctuary is shaded by sycamore and laurel trees and animated by splashing water from two sculptural fountains. Theatrical masks adorn the mosaic-and-shell fountain on the east wall, while sculpted bronze civet heads spout playful streams from the

fountain at the center of the space.

Plants

About 300 varieties of plant material are used in the landscaping of the Getty Villa.

For more details, see http://www.getty.edu/visit/see_do/gardens.html



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