

Nomination of
The GREAT
SPAS of Europe



for inclusion on the
World Heritage
List

Volume I: *Montecatini Terme, Italy*



Tettuccio thermal bath,
internal colonnade

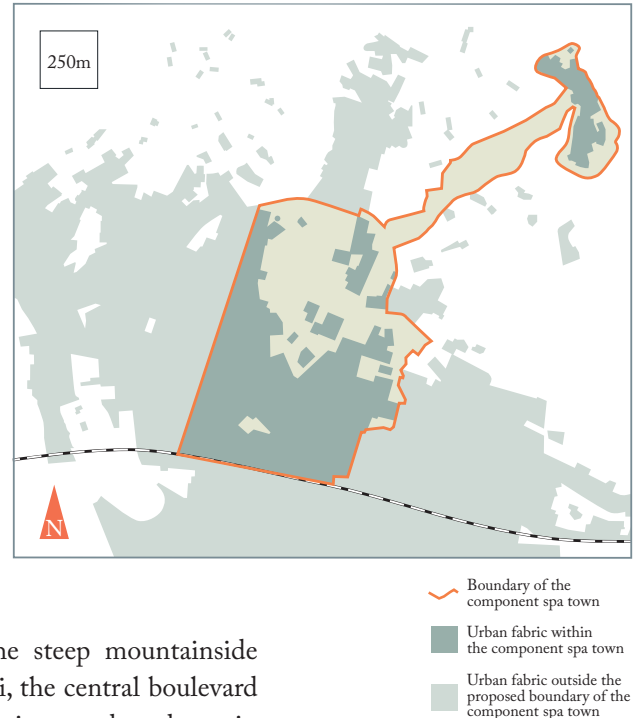
10 Montecatini Terme (ITALY)

Introduction

Montecatini Terme (Italian *Terme* = spa), the great Italian (and Tuscan) spa at the foot of Montecatini Alto (mountain), illustrates a Golden Era that is defined by an ambitious spa regeneration project that represents the last major materialisation of any of *The Great Spas of Europe*.

Montecatini Terme's thermal springs were known to the Romans, and around them grew an eighteenth century spa. But it is the early twentieth century when the planned concept of the transformation from 'garden city' into 'landscape city' was implemented. Its monumental and glittering modern spa architecture – inspired by other *Great Spas of Europe* – is dotted jewel-like within a generous and respectful oasis of gardens, formal parkland and promenades. The image of greenery blends seamlessly with urban fabric and continues in the form of a swathe of pine trees and terraced olive groves that ascend the steep mountainside crowned by Montecatini Alto - the focal point of the Viale Verdi, the central boulevard and main axis of the modern spa. The climate is generally mild in winter and moderate in summer, with rainfall generally concentrated in autumn and spring.

The town has a population of around 20,000, of which just over 9,000 live within the nominated property.



The principal spa quarter at the heart of a 'landscape city's

Location and setting

Montecatini Terme is located in the Tuscany region, in the province of Pistoia, around 50 km east of the Tirreno Sea coast, 30km east of Lucca and some 50km WNW of Florence. It is situated on the southern edge of the Northern Apennine Mountains, and occupies a central part of the valley of the River Nievole within the wide fertile plain that was once the Marsh of Fucecchio. The modern spa town represents the largest area of the component part, and lies at the foot of the hill below the old town of Montecatini Alto; the funicular railway defines a central linear section of the component part that connects the two towns. Spa guests reached the old town, some 260m higher in elevation, either by hiking the steep trail or taking the funicular railway - it was popular to experience the 'mountain air', to dine in the restaurants that surround Giusti Square, and to visit the medieval tower and the palace of the Podestà from where there are fine panoramic views. Here, too, are located former villas for medical use and fine residences for spa doctors.



View south, from above the Tettuccio Thermal Baths, across the spa park and baths ensemble to the spa town of *Montecatini Terme*

Montecatini Terme, born as a spa town, continues its original function and ranks first place amongst health resorts of the "bel paese" on the Viareggio-Lucca-Florence line. With 150,000 guests during the April to November season, it also ranks amongst the top spas in Europe.

Aside from the mountains, the broader setting is essentially the urbanised plain, with an area beyond the spa quarter being occupied by sporting facilities, including the racecourse.

Principal features described

The description of the component part has been sub-divided into the following:

- Historic urban landscape of the 'Great Spa'
- Springs
- Urban ensemble of the spa town
- Therapeutic and recreational spa landscape
- Spa infrastructure
- Internationalism, scientific, artistic and literary values, events and cultural tradition

Historic urban landscape of the 'Great Spa'

The spatial plan of the nominated property can be divided into:

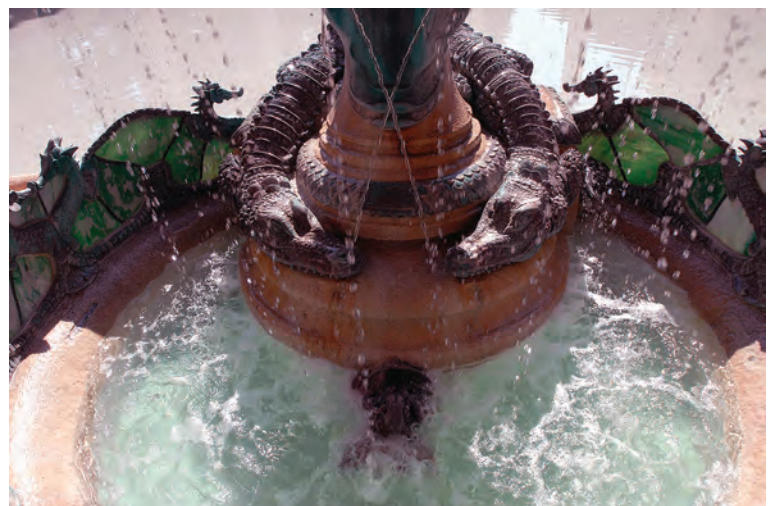
1. The principal triangular spa-district and its Thermal Park, located in the central flat area of the springs, comprising its great ensemble of thermal baths and axial tree-lined avenue.
2. The surrounding 'new' spa town in the south, west and east, including its spa facilities and balneological institutes, squares, structures for leisure and pleasure (including the Kursaal/theatre and cinemas), grand hotels, palazzinas and houses, together with the railway station.
3. The therapeutic and recreational spa landscape of parks and gardens.
4. The linear corridor of the funicular railway (and therapeutic trail) that links *Montecatini Terme* with the old town of Montecatini Alto.
5. Montecatini Alto with its medieval ruins, old town and 'new' villas where doctors lived and treated their spa inpatients.

10.1 Springs

Around eleven thermal (typically 24-33,4°C) springs rise in *Montecatini Terme*, although only around six are important for the drinking cure (with four used at present). Waters are acidulous saline (rich in chloride-sulphate, magnesium and sodium bicarbonate, Br, Li and Si). Most are clear, colourless, odourless and have a slightly salty taste, whilst a few smell characteristically of chlorides. The four currently used springs are: Tettuccio (close to the Salsero); Regina (on the left bank of the Salsero halfway between the Tettuccio and the Bagno Regio); Leopoldina (Terme Leopoldine, anciently *Bagno de merli* or *della Rogna*, on the right bank of the Salsero torrent, 33,4°C, too saline for internal use, ferrous and with high sulphate of lime); and Rinfresco (*Bagno Medicio*, anciently *Bagno tondo*, close to the foot of Monte delle Panteraie). Others include: Bagno Regio (formerly *Bagno dei Cavalli*, 150m from Leopold, on the opposite bank of the Salsero, marked by large masses of travertine); Cipollo (not drinking); Olivo (with the highest content of carbonate and phosphate of iron in Montecatini); Tamerici (high sulphate of lime); Torretta (between Tettuccio and Rinfresco); Speranza; Villino (near the Torretta); Angiolo (not drinking); and Salute. They all have a common geological origin and issue from the same strata. The *Montecatini Terme* area is geologically composed from Triassic strata of calcareous stone, travertine, jasper and limestone, resting on impermeable quartzite and clay. In the northern hills of *Montecatini Terme* the erosion of outcrops from siliceous sandstone expose lower strata of red marls and permeable jasper which allow infiltration of meteoric water up to at least 600-700m below ground level.

The Montecatini springs arise from an aquifer fed by the meteoric waters some 60-80m below ground level. At that depth, the water progressively takes up minerals. The high temperature of the thermal waters has been explained by the reaction from the contact of meteoric waters with upper Triassic anhydride

Tettuccio spring



strata, which turns them into gypsum, the reaction generating heat that create thermal waters. As it rises towards the surface, the water also passes through strata which act as a natural filter purifying the waters: deposits of Jurassic limestone with bands of flint, red marls, jasper, calcareous sandstone and clay.

Even though hydropinic treatment is the most common, the spas are also renowned for massages, physical therapies, mud baths, saunas, ozonizing baths, aesthetic treatments, inhalation therapy and so on. The types of healing procedures in Tettuccio, Excelsior and Redi spa resorts include: drinking cure (Montecatini specialises in the drinking cure for digestive diseases), bathing, inhalation, aerosol, nebulisation, pelotherapy and physiotherapy.

Curative effects include those targeted towards chronic constipation, irritable colon, gastritis, dyspepsia, metabolic disorders, hepato-biliary system disorders, osteoarthritis, chronic extra-articular rheumatism, chronic pharyngitis and laryngitis, chronic bronchitis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, bronchial and lung disease, rhinogenic deafness, chronic catharal otitis, rehabilitation of degenerative joint disease and cerebrovascular accidents, and post-operative rehabilitation of prosthesis recipients.

The Montecatini healing sources are protected according to national law from 1913 and regional decrees from 2010 and 2014.

10.2 Urban ensemble of the Spa Town

The first nucleus of urban settlement in the spa quarter dates to the end of the seventeenth century, its greatest remodelling takes place in the first decades of the twentieth century, whilst the last major interventions date to the 1960s and '70s. The great avenue of trees, and its proximity to the country road and two adjacent squares, one next to the Terme Leopoldine, the other to the Tettuccio, were the three principal points along the main eighteenth century axis. Some spa complexes date to between 1773 and 1783, among them, the Tettuccio, the Leopoldine, the Rinfresco, and the Bagno Regio baths, as well as the Palazzina Regia. As a result, the original axis, which later became the Viale Verdi, and which gives a sense of harmony between the buildings and the surrounding landscape, is still a clear reminder of the original planning.

The avenue with trees ends in the north by the Tettuccio, which functions as an architectural background framing the hillside with Montecatini Castello on top. 1918 was a watershed moment, which sees Ugo Giovannozzi's new project for the new Terme Tettuccio, the Terme Regina, the Terme La Salute, the Torretta tennis courts, The Terme Bibite Gratuite, and the transformation of Terme Torretta, Terme Leopoldine, Terme and Rinfresco.

10.2.1 Building ensembles connected to ‘curative’ waters

10.2.1.1 Tettuccio Thermal Baths (1781/1928)

The magnificent Tettuccio overlooks the square at the far north side of Viale Verdi, its façade providing the scenic backdrop to the Viale itself. According to a design



of Nicolò Gaspero Maria Paoletti, who had been appointed by Pietro Leopoldo, it was built between 1779 and 1781. In the 1920s, Ugo Giovannozzi, who was inspired by late Renaissance models and ancient thermal baths carried out a renovation project that also extended the park and implemented technological works. Four sculptures (added in 1936) by Corrado Vigni portray Spring, Medicine, Hygiene, and Health. Behind the long rectangular entrance there are two courtyards: the left one borders the Writing Hall, decorated by Giuseppe Moroni; the right one encloses the splendid exedra of the Tettucio spring, with a bas-relief portraying a Water allegory realised by Antonio Maraini in 1927. Both courtyards are limited to the north by a diagonal portico that runs through the whole building and joining the east and west sides. The final courtyard is the largest of the three, with a square plan and surrounded by a portico.

Under the portico there are the marble basins for pouring spring water, backed by seven majolica panels by Basilio Cascella, whilst opposite stands the rotunda and music auditorium with its frescoed ceiling by Ezio Giovannozzi.



10.2.1.2 Regina Thermal Baths (1927)

Ugo Giovannozzi planned and constructed the neo-Renaissance Regina baths between 1923 and 1927, on top of a small hill inside the Tettuccio Park using travertine from Monsummano Terme. The health spa has a rectangular base with a main hall used as a sitting room for visitors; whereas the two lateral halls are used for thermal water drinking (collecting the Regina spring water from a decorative pool) and food. A portico runs along the building with an accessible rooftop terrace.



10.2.1.3 Leopoldine Thermal Baths (1780/1926)

The name of Nicolò Gaspero Maria Paoletti's eighteenth century edifice changed to Leopoldine after the name of the Tuscan Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo I. From 1919 to 1926 engineer Ugo Giovannozzi supervised the renovation works of the building wings and kept the central portico. The building began to be renovated from 2008 according to a design by Massimiliano Fuksas, inspired by old Roman baths.



10.2.1.4 Tamerici Thermal Baths (1911)



The name “Tamerici” comes from the trees that used to grow by the ancient water spring, which was discovered in 1843 by the Schmitz family who owned of the land. In 1906, Giulio Bernardini was entrusted with the modernisation of the baths and supervised design and construction, together with Ugo Giusti. It took several years to finish the works, and the new thermal baths were inaugurated in 1911. The hall of the beverage with the works of the Galileo Chini has already been restored.

10.2.1.5 Torretta Thermal Baths (1902/1928)

Occupying higher ground as compared to other baths, this building takes its name from the tower with its crenellations and pointed arches, surmounting the “castle”. Its setting comprises a broad park, crossed by the Torretta stream that widens into a pond. In 1902, Giulio Bernardini demolished some buildings of the nineteenth century and built a loggia inspired by fifteenth century Florentine style, a direct reference to Brunelleschi, also evident in the Corinthian capitols with an abacus on top (the loggia was dedicated to Giuseppe Verdi, in honour of the famous and assiduous visitor of *Montecatini Terme*). Ugo Giovannozzi modified some of the edifices from 1925-28, during which time he also built the entrance lodge and created a circular space for an orchestra.



10.2.1.6 Rinfresco Thermal Baths (1795/1927)

In 1795 Giuseppe Manetti designed a building with a loggia terrace surmounted by a front that could be accessed by a double flight of stairs. In 1927, in place of the old building, Ugo Giovannozzi designed a pavilion with a central plan. He chose to keep the colonnade façade and to repeat it on the other sides of the building. The inside walls are decorated with engraved paintings of bathing scenes by Ezio Giovannozzi.



10.2.1.7 La Salute Thermal Baths (1929)

La Salute (Health) spring was named in 1860 after the curative drinking water that gushed out of it when discovered inside a travertine pit owned by Benedetto Gabrielli. Surrounded by a park, the baths occupy a vast area that lies to the east of Viale Bicchierai and Viale Armando Diaz, and were rebuilt from 1922 to 1929 during the huge renovations undertaken by architect Ugo Giovannozzi. The spring is still used today for Hydroponic therapy.



10.2.1.8 Excelsior Thermal Baths (1907/1968)

Inaugurated 27 June 1907 and originally meant to host the Casinò Municipale Excelsior, this building designed by Giulio Bernardini was used as a café concerto. However, it became almost immediately a health resort thanks to Pietro Grocco, who was inspired by some European thermal baths he had visited. In 1926 Ugo Giovannozzi added another one-storey building to Bernardini's edifice. The structure was demolished in 1968 to make way for a new building to the design of Sergio Brusa Pasquè and his collaborators. At present, the spa provides several medical treatments, including inhalation therapy, nebulisation sessions, aerosol therapy, tubotympanic insufflations, and nasal showers.



10.2.1.9 Ex-“Bagni Gratuiti” Thermal Baths (early 1900s/1920s)



Built by Giulio Bernardini at the beginning of the twentieth century, the edifice had twenty changing rooms, a music hall, a room for the sale of Tamerici salts, and another for medical management. Ugo Giovannozzi made some alterations in the 1920s, whilst Data Medica bought the complex in 2011 and started a renovation project.

10.2.1.10 Redi Thermal Baths (1920s/1964/2009)

The spa dates back to the 1920s and was designed by Ugo Giovannozzi. It was conceived as a place for balneotherapy with showers. In 1964, according to the new needs of social thermalism, it was demolished and rebuilt by the architects Gian Luigi Giordani and Ippolito Malaguzzi Valeri. It was made up of three parts: the first one for bath therapy, the second for mud treatment, and the third for special treatments. The building was renovated in 2009 by Oreste Ruggiero.



10.2.2 Buildings for leisure and pleasure

These buildings were intended to both complement the spas and provide an alternative attraction to them and their regular customers, something that could appeal to a public for its efficient facilities, beautiful landscape and amusement.

10.2.2.1 Kursaal (1907)

Initially the theatre, café, restaurant and the Kursaal garage were opened in May 1907. Realised according to a design by the architects Carbinati and Garbagnani from Milan, the theatre was open from 1 June to 30 September in order to host front rank national acting companies. Between 1914 and 1921 the company Società Anonima Kursaal of Montecatini had the building extended on a project by Giulio Bernardini. Gardens, new rooms for the shooting gallery, and a casino were added. Eight years later, on 29 July 1929, an open-air cinema was built: a summer arena that in 1933 had the first equipment to show spoken movies in the open in Italy.



Today, only the façade, portico and the garden opposite remain of the original building. A new commercial complex has been built in an area formerly occupied by the historic building, on a project by the internationally renowned architect Aldo Rossi. Commissioned by the company Monaco from Verona, the complex was completed after the death of its designer.

10.2.2.2 Tennis Torretta (1925)

This sports complex is inside the park between the Tettuccio and the Torretta. There are four tennis clay courts. In front of them there is an elegant elevated building: this pavilion with a loggia was realised by Ugo Giovannozzi. The rooms vary according to size and purpose. Lit by three-mullioned windows, there are refined pavings, ceilings, and decorations, the walls painted with lime, and the fixtures in wood and metal. The sports complex (with its four tennis courts) was, before World War II, considered one of the finest in Italy for location and functionality.



10.2.2.3 Gambrinus Lodge (1914)

This majestic travertine “loggia”, with a rooftop terrace, is located in a quadrangular space delimited by the Hotel Locanda Maggiore. It was realised by Giulio Bernardini and Ugo Giusti in an attempt to recall the loggias of the most important thermal cities of Europe, most notably the Mühlbrunnen Kolonnade in Karlsbad, designed in 1877 by Josef Zitek, a building that Bernardini considered majestic and pleasant.



10.2.2.4 Cinema Excelsior (1922)



With its eclectic and curving side façade on the corner with viale Verdi and viale Manzoni, and its Ionic colonnade, the cinema Excelsior was rebuilt in 1922 by Ugo Giovannozzi. In order to improve the hall, the theatre underwent a series of internal interventions beginning in the 1950s.

10.2.2.5 Cinema Imperiale (1925)

Erected in an open space in 1864, it was named Giuseppe Verdi Theatre, and later renamed Vittorio Emanuele Theatre. It was rebuilt in 1924-25, when the brothers Lavarini entrusted engineer Arturo Chiti from Pistoia with the new construction works. The name was then changed to Theatre Politeama. Its reinforced concrete dome was designed by a young Pier Luigi Nervi. In 1965, under the supervision of Carmelo Pucci, the hall was modernised.



10.2.3 Accommodation

A number of closely interrelated factors contributed to the reputation of the spa town. Urban planning had been changed at different stages, in a very short time, and this was accompanied by the creation of top-level accommodation facilities built in the early twentieth century. Visitors enjoying a pleasant stay in *Montecatini Terme* were also able to attend artistic and entertainment events which were running throughout the season, and which would take place in dedicated venues in the area.

10.2.3.1 Grand Hotel & La Pace (1926)

Giulio Bernardini was appointed with the design of the most important hotel in Montecatini, which was built inside a large dedicated park for the Società Anonima Alberghi Montecatini Spatz and Suardi (Milan). During a tour of the main thermal cities of Europe in 1901, Bernardini had been really impressed by Pupp hotel in Karlsbad, and on his journey back, he observed that Montecatini, too, needed a top-class hotel like the one he had just visited. Already operating by the end of the nineteenth century in three different buildings, the hotel would be renovated, and the three buildings united by Bernardini over a time-span of twenty-five years. The project, started in 1900 and finished in 1926, and resulted in the building of a luxurious hotel with 300 rooms. The property remains a luxury hotel and its fine interiors are well preserved.



10.2.3.2 Grand Hotel Plaza & Locanda Maggiore Paoletti -1787; Giulio Bernardini, Ugo Giusti - 1914

The building by Niccolò Maria Gaspero Paoletti in 1787, was extended by Giuseppe Michelacci in 1841, and was redesigned in 1914 by Giulio Bernardini and Ugo Giusti; the latter in order to realise a luxurious hotel, extended and raised with 220 rooms, and characterised by a majestic lodge and a brand new façade over-looking Piazza del Popolo.



10.2.3.3 Hotel Grande Bretagne (1909)



This hotel is one of the first projects of the architect Raffaello Brizzi from Montecatini, who made use of an architectural style typical of nineteenth century central Europe, well exemplified by the work of Otto Wagner. In this early work (1906-09), Brizzi adopted a solution that allowed him to display his aesthetic view on the façade.

10.2.3.4 Modern Hotel (1910)

Alfredo Scannavini, son of Alfonso the owner of Eden Hotel, commissioned Giulio Bernardini to design the Modern Hotel, built in 1908 in Corso Roma. It is a square plan building and on the façade stands out the sign, written in characters that remind of the modern spirit of the building. Inspired by modernist architecture, the hotel is a three storey building, with a painted undereave. In the course of time, however, two floors were added to the building, whose name changed to Hotel Moderno. In the 1960s, the building became a private residence, and at present it also hosts a bank on the ground floor.



10.2.3.5 Fedeli house (1910)



On the corner with Viale della Libertà (the former viale delle Rose), at number 2, there is the former house of Carlo Fedeli, a doctor and lecturer at the University of Pisa. Designed by Giulio Bernardini it is linked with walkways across the stream.

10.2.3.6 Scalabrino house and garden



The physician Alberto Scalabrino, who worked on the ground floor, commissioned this building designed by Giulio Bernardini. In the 1950s, Alberto's son, Dino Scalabrino, Health Director of the thermal baths and President of the Health and Sojourn Company, entrusted Pietro Porcinai with the extension of the house and the redesign of the garden.

10.2.3.7 Parenti house (1911)

Parenti's house on the corner of Viale Amendola and Fedeli's on Viale della Libertà has its façade to the south and a corner balcony with a loggia above. The aim of the designer Giulio Bernardini was to create a sense of continuity between the garden and the loggia.



10.2.3.8 Grocco house (1902)

The villa, located in the South area of Montecatini Alto and surrounded by a garden, looks like a Florentine castle in miniature, with towers, loggias and protruding roofs. The house owned by Pietro Grocco (Giuseppe Verdi's personal doctor) was inaugurated on July 6, 1902 and built by an engineer from Pistoia, Vittorio Bardini.



10.2.3.9 Palazzina Regia (1782/1920)



Built in 1782 as a summer residence of the family Hapsburg-Lorena, who spent their holidays in *Montecatini Terme* for its water therapy. The palazzina was composed of two apartments of five rooms each located on two floors with servant rooms and a coach garage. The building, that had remained almost unchanged for more than one and a half centuries was adapted to its new administrative use in 1919-20, on the project of Ugo

Giovannozzi. The ground floor, with its hall decorated with elements referring to water, and its wooden ceiling adorned with geometrical elements, is currently used as the access room to the offices.

10.3 Therapeutic and recreational spa landscape

The city of *Montecatini Terme* includes more than 460,000 m² of urban ornamental greenery. The public green of the large Thermal Park, whose importance is already evident in the seventeenth century plan of Montecatini, includes the public park of the Pineta (pine trees area) and the gardens around the thermal resorts (Torretta, Tamerici, Salute, Tettuccio-Regina parks). From the Thermal Park, with its thermal gardens, parterre and its Avenues, prospects open onto the surrounding landscape.

A widespread park, initiated by the Thermal Park, became an organiser and arranger of urban development, which tended to expand without creating a periphery, in a series of contiguous areas: from colourful polychrome mosaics to reflecting waters; and from walking promenades to sports, pleasure and health areas. In this context, the Thermal Park has not only the function of landscaping the city, but it plays a key role in contributing to the therapies that are practiced in the thermal establishments. Nestled in a hillside landscape of high quality, there is also the park of the funicular line, linking the thermal district and the historic core of Montecatini Alto, with the old road still accessible by pedestrians. The particular integration between historic road and vegetation as well as the characteristic presence of the funicular railway have made this element famous and memorised in the collective imagination.

10.3.1 Public Park (Parco pubblico, early 1900s)

Giulio Bernardini created this garden-park next to the baths Torretta and Tamerici, and the Fortuna spring. Planned in the early 1900s, it was supposed to have a vast stretch of flat land with light undulations, as well as numerous walkways and paths. The stream Rio della Torretta ran across the park, its course sometimes underground, in some points the water collecting into a small pond, or flowing between artificial rocky banks. Wood and concrete bridges linked the walkways across the stream. Traditional architectural spa structures have been developed considering eclectic and liberty culture reinterpreted in Tuscan style.



10.3.2 Viale Verdi (1778/1963) Francesco Bombicci – 1778; Pietro Porcinai - 1963

The urban plan of the spa quarter of *Montecatini Terme* was drawn in the second half of the eighteenth century according to the will of Pietro Leopoldo. The building of an axis – the current Viale Verdi – brought harmony between buildings and landscape and is strong and enduring today with clear reference to the original project. On the north side, the boulevard ends with the Tettuccio; although being sober, the edifice constitutes an architectural background that frames the slope of Montecatini Castello, emphasized by the perspective of the Leopoldine baths.



10.3.3. Montecatini Alto nineteenth century path

An inviting path begins a trail from the downhill funicular station, next to the Funicular line (10.4.1). This climbs among olive trees, woods and slopes, until it reaches the funicular station of Montecatini Alto.



10.4 Spa Infrastructure

The development of the thermal business led to new axes such as the railway (1853), the funicular railway (1898), and the Lucca-Pistoia-Monsummano tramway (1907). These all contributed to both the economy and the primary status of the city. The further work of Ugo Giovannozzi is reflected in the 1920s industrial buildings of Terme di Montecatini, including the Istituto di Cura in the eastern part of the city.

10.4.1 Funicular railway (1898)

The funicular railway, with its average gradient of 12%, was inaugurated in 1898 in the presence of illustrious guests such as Giuseppe Verdi. It has a designed perimeter park, part of an agrarian landscape largely cultivated with olive trees and where the old road is accessible by pedestrians. Its upper terminus is the village of Montecatini Alto.



10.4.2 Former factory for the extraction of Tamerici salts (1920s)



This building complex was realised by Ugo Giovannozzi, its function to extract Tamerici salts from the water of the namesake spring. It hosted machinery rooms dedicated to the extraction of sodium chloride in order to produce a purgative and digestive preparation (the salts were widely distributed in Europe, and also reached North America, Africa and the Middle East), a laboratory, warehouses, management offices, staff dressing rooms, dining room, and a keeper's flat.

10.4.3 Thermal Institute Grocco (1904/1950s)

Realised by Giulio Bernardini in 1904, the building for the production of Tamerici salts was used for different purposes from the 1920s onwards. For a few years, during the renovation of the historical seat on Viale Verdi, it hosted the offices of the Director-General of the Thermal Baths. Then, from 1925 to 1940, it was the seat of the Palace of Expositions. Finally, in the 1950s, it was completely transformed into the Thermal Institute Grocco, a medical centre for clinical and diagnostic analysis essential for thermal care.



10.4.4 Pavilion of the Tamerici salts and the workshops (1903/1950s)



The Pavilion abuts on the Verdi Theatre to the north, Viale Verdi to the south, the new workshops to the east, and the park of the Palazzina Regia to the west. It was built in 1903, according to a design by Giulio Bernardini who was inspired by the workshops in *Bad Kissingen*. In the 1950s, new workshops were realised along Viale Verdi up to the junction with Viale della Torretta. Recently, the building has been carefully restored with supervision of the BAPSAE department of Florence, Pistoia and Prato.

10.4.5 Former laundry room and coatroom (1920s)

Both these industrial buildings were built in the 1920s to the designs of Ugo Giovannozzi. An aesthetic value was assigned to the façades in rough brick and stonewalls, as well as to the roof and the fence materials. Inside the laundry, several rooms and a corridor guaranteed the efficiency of the structure. At present, the property belongs to the local health council (ASL).



10.4.6 Old greenhouses Alla Torretta (early 1900s)

The two greenhouses represent another example by architect Giulio Bernardini, who designed a number of industrial and commercial buildings. The complex was made up of two greenhouses built part in stone, part in iron and glass. The one on viale IV Novembre had only an emergency heating in terracotta and cast-iron stoves; the other, on via della Torretta, had a more modern heating with cast iron radiators and pipes. A rustic flight of stairs in concrete took to the first greenhouse, which was divided in several rooms with benches for the terracotta vases. The greenhouse opposite was built with a one-metre-high wall surmounted by an iron and glass structure with colourful decorations.



10.4.7 Palazzo dei Congressi (1919/1987)

Giulio Bernardini – 1919; Giancarlo Galassi – 1987. In this work of 1919, Bernardini seems to pay much attention to the modern language. After several years in a state of neglect, the complex was transformed and expanded in the 1980s (the building became a conference centre), based on a new project by architect Giancarlo Galassi from Montecatini.



10.4.8 Dino Scalabrino Academy of Art (1920s/1970)



Born as a hotel “villa delle Ortensie” in the twenties of the twentieth century. The Academy was moved to its current location in Villa Ortensie in 1970. The Academy of Art was established thanks to the will of Dino Scalabrino, who created a place where paintings, memories, tokens, pictures, and documents about the thermal town were gathered. On 18 December 1969 Scalabrino sent the plan of the hotel’s garden to the landscape architect Pietro Porcinai, who would design the open-air museum. Currently it is undergoing restoration.

10.4.9 New greenhouses (1920s)

The complex, on Viale Trieste near the Sali Tamerici complex, looks out onto a forecourt with a round fake travertine pool surrounded by ten seed plots built part in stone, part in iron and glass, as the so-called “hot germination beds”, typical of Valdinievole. On the north side of the forecourt there is a building divided into three rooms that are lit by wide glass windows, like those of the old *limonaie*.



10.4.10 Montecatini Railway Station (1853)

The Montecatini railway station was inaugurated in 1853. However, already from the early twentieth century, the station had not been considered sufficient for the high flow of visitors during the spa season, so that in 1937 a further railway station was built not far away from the first one.



10.4.11 Former care Institute and scientific research centre (1915)

The spa was commissioned by Pietro Grocco in 1915 and realized by Ugo Giovannozzi. In 1931 Pietro Rondoni (professor of Bacteriology at the University of Florence, and professor of General Pathology in Sassari and Naples), in collaboration with Cesare Frugoni (professor of Clinical Medicine at the University of Padua) and Mariano Messini (professor of Medical Hydrology at the University of Rome) founded the scientific research centre. It was the most important institution of that kind in Italy, where more than a hundred researchers expanded the knowledge in the field of thermal activity.



10.4.12 Town Hall (1920)

It took quite a long time to build the edifice, which was finally inaugurated on 26 September 1920. Raffaello Brizzi was entrusted with the project in 1912, with the support of Luigi Rigetti, a municipal engineer, as supervisor. A key role in the aesthetic realization of the project was played by Alessandro Del Soldato, who did many of the external and internal decorations. The elements in artificial stone (festoons, little angels, and crests) were realized by Carlo Rivalta. Galileo Chini, who worked in the factory Manifattura Chini in Borgo San Lorenzo, was entrusted with the cycle of paintings about the “buon governo”. At present, the ground floor hosts the Moca Gallery, a new exhibition space dedicated to contemporary art which opened on 4 December 2012. The public gallery hosts remarkable works, such as the majestic canvas by Pietro Annigoni and Joan Miró.



10.5 Internationalism, scientific, artistic and literary values, events and cultural tradition

Between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, *Montecatini Terme* attracted important intellectuals and artists, such as Verdi, Puccini and Leoncavallo. A number of closely interrelated factors contributed to the reputation of the spa town. Besides the fact that the urban plan had been changed at different stages in a very short time, and that this was accompanied by the top-level accommodation facilities built in the early twentieth century, visitors enjoying a pleasant stay in *Montecatini Terme* were also able to attend artistic and entertainment events which were running throughout the season, and which would take place in dedicated venues in the area. A case in point is the Regio Casino, which formerly hosted the Caserma, that is, the Hospital for the poor at the time of the Grand Duke, and which hosted concerts, balls, as well as musical performances by the Pescia marching band. An ordinance of the “Regio Casino dei Bagni di Montecatini” (1865) allowed playing billiards, cards, chess, backgammon, draughts and dominoes. Inaugurated on 27 June 1907, and meant to host the Casinò Municipale Excelsior, this building was used as a café concerto, with some game rooms and reading rooms. At the end of the nineteenth century, the Teatro del Varietà, the Teatro del Casino, the Teatro Olimpia and the Teatro Alhambra Varietà undoubtedly contributed to spread the life of the belle époque. After all, many musicians used to go on vacation in the summer or autumn to Montecatini, such as Gioacchino Rossini, Giuseppe Verdi, Giacomo Puccini, Ruggero Leoncavallo, Umberto Giordana, Pietro Mascagni, Arturo Toscanini, and so on.

Giuseppe Verdi regularly frequented *Montecatini Terme* from 1875 until his death in 1901. The chief medical officer of the Terme di Montecatini, Pietro Grocco was his personal doctor. After composing *The Aida*, Giuseppe Verdi spent ten years without writing works. Only when he came to *Montecatini Terme* in 1882, he began to compose again, creating a part of the *Otello*. According to Verdi, *Montecatini Terme* was such a pleasant and anti-depressant place that he continued visiting for the next 18 summers. In *Montecatini Terme* he also composed a part of the *Falstaff*.

Ruggero Leoncavallo had a house in *Montecatini Terme* where he died on 9 August 1919. The director Gioacchino Forzano and Giacomo Puccini were at the Appennino Hotel in Montecatini Alto to discuss the works *Gianni Schicchi* and *Suor Angelica*.

Giacomo Puccini, Arturo Toscanini and Giovacchino Forzano met in September 1924 at the La Pace Hotel in *Montecatini Terme* to prepare the staging of the *Turandot*. In November 1924 Puccini died. Galileo Chini dealt with the scenography of the *Turandot*, which was later brought on stage by Toscanini.

The first figurative arts exhibition took place at the Tamerici in the early twentieth century. It was directed by the spa administration and was then repeated several times in the years that followed. In the early 1930s another exhibition with paintings and sculptures was hosted at the Palazzo delle Esposizioni (now Grocco Thermal Institute), curated by the Società delle Belle Arti in Florence. Many small art galleries enriched the artistic life in Montecatini, together with others that were more renowned (e.g. Barcaccia, Flori, and Ghelfi) and which would host singular or collective exhibitions on renowned national and international artists, such as De Chirico, Casorati, Carrà, and De Pisis. Many films have been shot on location in *Montecatini Terme*, some examples including scenes from Franco Zeffirelli's *Camping* (1957), Anthony Asquith's *The Yellow Rolls Royce* (1964), Mario Monicelli's follow-up to *My Friend* (1982), and Nikita Michalkov's *Oci Ciornie* (1987). Celebrities who attended Montecatini are numerous: actors Clark Gable, Audrey Hepburn, Orson Welles, William Holden; writers Truman Capote, Alberto Moravia, Pier Paolo Pasolini; artists René Magritte and Paul Cezanne; and royal families King Ibn Saud, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, Dukes of Windsor, and the King of Sweden.

Alessandro Bicchierai (1734-97) was an eminent doctor of *Montecatini Terme*. He published *Dei bagni di Montecatini* in 1778, a book commissioned by the Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo in which, by thoroughly analysing the waters, he identified a series of pathologies that would benefit from Montecatini's springs. In his work, the traditional concepts of water treatments were thus overcome in favour of new therapies originated from his modern analytical research. He was the personal doctor of the Grand Duke of Tuscany Pietro Leopoldo, of his successor Ferdinando III and of Lord Gorge Cowper, an English nobleman, politician and patron who established himself in Florence from 1760 until his death in 1789.

In *Montecatini Terme* mud therapy was utilized in the treatment of articular pain since the 1300s, as described by Ugolino da Montecatini in his book *Tractatus de balneis*. At the beginning of the 1900s, thanks to doctor Pietro Grocco, a system for mud treatments was installed inside the Excelsior spa building. This therapeutical treatment came back into use and was consolidated by the end of the 1920s in the Grocco pit, close to the Leopoldine building. Still at the beginning of the 1900s, in order to treat obesity, diabetes, gout and liver diseases Tamerici iodized salts were used, melted in water, to be swallowed in the morning without food, then followed by a hot drink after fifteen minutes.

10.6 Continuing spa tradition

Montecatini Terme is the most important spa town in Italy, due to the wide range of treatments that have been practiced during the spa season over the years. Currently, four springs are still utilised: Tettuccio, Regina, Leopoldine and Rinfresco.

Many of the historic buildings, such as Tettuccio, Regina, Rinfresco, Excelsior, the Terme Redi and the Ex "Bagni Gratuiti" Thermal Bath (currently called Data Medica), are still used for spa treatments. Moreover, Data Medica has been converted into highly advanced laboratories dedicated to research and medical diagnostics.

The mission of the Terme di Montecatini is oriented towards the enhancement of the elements that have made the thermal waters historically famous, offering a vacation based on relaxation and personal research of psychophysical wellbeing and suitable for the modern tourist who more and more often prefers short but totally regenerating holidays. The Terme di Montecatini, which offers several opportunities for those who seek a complete spa offer, combines the recognised benefits of traditional thermal waters and mud, with the most innovative methods of wellness and beauty, such as massages, body and face treatments, and weight-loss, relaxation or wellness programs. Today, as in the past, guests may also stroll around the parks, the avenues and through the historical colonnades.

The Terme di Montecatini offers a complete range of spa treatments (from hydroponic treatments to mud therapy and mud-bath therapy, from inhalation therapies to thermal rehabilitation and instrumental physiotherapy) as a natural response to prevention, rehabilitation and treatment of major diseases. At the Terme Tettuccio there is the hydroponic treatment, the therapy that involves the drinking of thermal water. At Terme Redi it is possible to perform the following treatments: inhalations, balneotherapy, mud therapy, massage therapy, motor rehabilitation and physiotherapy, thermal pool. At Terme Excelsior the following treatments are carried out: all treatments and the Wellness paths, Beauty and Aesthetic treatments and Hydroponic Care (from November to April).

Today, the modern tourist may still combine medical treatments with vibrant cultural and entertainment activities:

- Montecatini Opera Festival organised by the cultural association Il Parnaso in collaboration with the Municipality of *Montecatini Terme* and Terme Spa, is an international event sponsored by the Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities that bear witness to the ancient bond of the city with the art, culture and well-being. The Montecatini Opera Festival takes place from April to October and it is addressed to the fans of opera and "excellent music". The main objective of the Festival is the enhancement of the historical and artistic heritage of the territory, in particular of the great lyrical tradition.
- M.O.A. Montecatini Opera Academy by il Parnaso Cultural Association, in collaboration with the Municipality of *Montecatini Terme*, hosts the "MOA" International Opera Contest, showcase for young singers from all over the world who aspire to establish themselves on the international scene. The spa town, that offered hospitality to the great protagonists of the Italian melodrama, such as Verdi, Leoncavallo and Puccini, renews its passion for opera, shaping the voices of the future.
- Estate Regina – The artistic directors of the Festival are Yezkel Yerushalmi and Vittoria Ottaviani. In addition to the Regina Orchestra, founded and composed entirely by the musicians of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, the festival has been characterised by the participation of internationally renowned musicians and actors, among those we mention, Zubin Mehta, Uto Ughi, Luciano Berio, Ivor Bolton, Yuri Ahronovic, Daniel Oren, Michele Placido, Salvatore Sciarrino, Shlomo Mintz, Luca Barbareschi and Christian Lindberg.
- Nuovo Teatro Verdi hosted mainly opera performances until 1940; later it was the favourite location of operettas and variety shows. More recently

it has been used, on several occasions, as a theatre studio by RAI. There were also many high-level conference events over the years. Currently it offers a playbill characterised by nationally renowned artists.

- Every year, from July to October, the summer cultural festival "Biblioterme La Biblioteca va alle terme" takes place in the Tettuccio thermal establishment. Biblioterme, organised by the Municipal Library in collaboration with the local section of the Istituto Storico Lucchese, is a cycle of about 40 meetings per year during which several authors present their works to tourists and citizens. The presentations, open to the public, take place near the Caffè Storico, in which the Library has set up a loan point for selected documentary material.



Tettuccio
Spring