

MONTE PORZIO CATONE

The little city is located at the centre of a territory, offering historical interest and comprehending the ruins of the ancient city of *Tuscolo*, part of the villas Tuscolane and the rich country that is full of many ruins of ancient villas. The old town rises on the ruins of a Roman time villa and of a little medieval settlement and it's inserted between two impressive architectural elements: the cathedral of the XVII century and the *Palazzo Borghese*. In the territory of Monte Porzio Catone, rise, other then, suggestive ruins of the City of Tuscolo, also wonderful historic mansions of the great roman families: *Villa Mondragone*, *Villa Taverna (Villa Parisi)*, *Barco Borghese*, the seventeenth century *Villa Lucidi*. There is also the Observatory with the Didactic Museum "*Astrolab*". To remember: the *Museum of Wine*, situated in the typical old town of Monte Porzio Catone and the *Camaldoli hermitage* of the XVII century.

VILLA MONDRAGONE

Villa Mondragone is one of the most beautiful villas tuscolane. Built in the beginning of 1573 by the Cardinal Mario Sittico Altemps, suggested by Pope Gregorius XIII, it rises on the impressive ruins of the roman villa of the *Quintili*, prestigious roman family that carne to the consulate in 151 A.C. Villa Mondragone, in the course of it's stay, was the setting of important cultural events, like the signature by Gregorius XIII of the bull *Inter gravissima*, in February 24 1582, that introduced the Gregorian Calendar. Bought in 1613 by the Cardinal Scipione Borghese, nephew of Pope Paul V, the villa was enlarged and further embellished by the Flemish architect Jan Van Santen (Giovanni Vasanzio) who provided it with a big quadrangular court, based on the pattern of the *court d'honneur* of the French residences. The whole monumental estate and the huge park that surrounds it, were bought in 1981 by the *University of Rome Tor Vergata*, that is proceeding with the restoration. Today, prestigious national and international meetings promoted by the *Centro Congressi* di Villa Mondragone take place in the villa.

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Villa Mondragone
Monte Porzio Catone (Rome)
12-15 October 2005