





## WHAT IS THE VENETIAN GOTHIC STYLE OF ARCHITECTURE?

The Venetian Gothic style of architecture was used in Venice, Italy from the 1200s to the early 1500s. Most Gothic buildings in Europe were big stone fortresses meant to protect their owners from warring neighbors. The people of Venice didn't need protection, living in a peaceful city that was naturally protected by water, so they built buildings that were bright, colorful, and airy. These buildings were covered in decoration, including many arches, colored or gilded designs, stone cutouts, and colored windows. The most famous example of Venetian Gothic architecture is the Doge's Palace in Venice. The Ringlings often visited Venice during their trips to Europe and designed the Ca' d'Zan after the Doge's Palace.

What elements of the Venetian Gothic style of architecture can be seen in the Ca' d'Zan?



Ca' d'Zan means "House of John" in Venetian dialect, but Mable was the one who designed and decorated the house.

**Quatrefoils**-cutout forms that look like flowers with 4 petals-decorate above the windows on the second floor

Most of the windows and doors are surrounded by **ogee arches**-arches with a double curve that have the shape of an elongated s. Some of the windows are **trefoil arches**-arches that have a 3 part curved piece on top

The glass doors that lead to the Court are separated by **columns**-cylindrical building supports

The terrace is covered in a **mosaic**-a decoration created by setting pieces of marble in a pattern

An 81-foot tower that ends in a **loggia**-an outside area open on one or more sides with an **arcade**-a row of arches supported by columns-tops the Ca' d'Zan

A **spiral staircase**-a staircase with steps that wind around a central axis-leads to the tower

A large amount of **bas relief**-sculpture in which the design is only slightly raised from the background-and other terra cotta decorations in shades of soft red, yellow, green, blue, and ivory cover the walls

The balconies are supported by decorated **corbels**-projections from the wall that support structural elements

The windows are filled with colored **European Lac glass** in jewel tones

## CA' D'ZAN CHALLENGE

Explore the outside of Ca' d'Zan then try to answer these questions (the answers are on the back).

1. If your footstep is about 1 foot long, how long is the terrace (the open porch behind the house)? Try walking the length to find out. (Adults, your footstep is about 18 inches long)
2. Look from the ground all the way to the top of the tower. How many stories is Ca' d'Zan?
3. Can you count higher than 100? If so, try counting the number of windows and glass doors on Ca' d'Zan. How many can you find?
4. Colors abound on the Ca' d'Zan. Which ones do you see?
5. Animals and plants decorate the railings surrounding Ca' d'Zan. Which four do you see?