

# THE KADRIORG PALACE AND PARK

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The Kadriorg palace and park were founded by the Russian tsar **Peter I**. According to the designs of the architect **Niccolo Michetti**, invited from Rome, the palace was built after the Italian villas, consisting of a main building and of two annexes.



The well-preserved **main hall** is one of the best examples of Baroque architecture not only in Estonia but also in the whole Northern Europe. Besides Russian and Italian artists, masters from Stockholm, Riga and Tallinn took part in its building work. The two-storied hall is decorated with rich stucco work and ceiling paintings.



The **vestibule** and some other rooms in the main building, as well as some of the **stoves** have retained their 18<sup>th</sup>-century appearance.

The park was named **Kadriorg** (Catherine's Valley) after the empress **Catherine I**. Most of the Russian rulers, from Peter's daughter Elizabeth, to the last Romanov emperor Nicholas II, have visited this imperial summer residence.

From 1921 the **Estonian Museum in Tallinn** was situated in the palace. In 1928 it was reorganized into the **Art Museum of Estonia**.

From 1929 the palace served as the residence of the Estonian **head of state** (from 1938 **president**). The building was renovated in 1933-34. The banqueting hall

after the design of the architect **Aleksander Vladovsky** was constructed at the back of the palace. Some rooms were refurbished in Estonian national romantic style after the designs of the architect **Olev Siinmaa**.

From 1946 until 1991 the palace housed **the main building of the Art Museum of Estonia**. Due to the deterioration of the building, large restoration works were started. The government of Sweden supported the works that lasted over 9 years, with 21 million Swedish kronor.

On July 22, 2000 **the Foreign Art Museum**, branch of the Art Museum of Estonia, was opened in the renovated palace. Besides exhibitions, concerts, theatre performances and receptions, as well as lectures, tours and introductions of art works take place in the museum.

Several smaller buildings belong to **the palace ensemble**. Most of them have been renovated by now. The 18<sup>th</sup>-century **pavilion** (*Lusthaus*) and the **guesthouse** from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century house the restoration workshops of the Art Museum of Estonia. In 1997 a new museum introducing the private collection of **Johannes Mikk** was opened in the former **kitchen building** of the palace. The wooden **guards' house** opposite the gates of the palace that was originally built at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century has been completely restored.



The territory of the **park** that was planned together with the palace was originally over 100 hectares. Its central part will be restored as an Italian-French regular park. The **Flower Garden** behind the palace has been renovated after 18<sup>th</sup>-century examples. The **Lower Garden** in front of the palace is waiting for its turn.