



Castello di Razzano

HISTORY

The Castello di Razzano, located in the municipality of Alfiano Natta between the provinces of Asti and Alessandria, in the heart of Monferrato, stands on the southern slope of the Montebaldo hill, located as a watershed between two tributaries of the Versa stream.

The building was built in 1697 by Giovan Battista Gaetano Natta. Today few traces remain of the ancient construction, which appears in its version renovated in the following century with the beautiful square tower with neo-Gothic battlements and the severe main facade.

The building is an ancient fortified stately residence with a rectangular plan created purely for defense. Over time it lost its defensive connotation passing between the fortified "Castrum" and "Domus" for residential and productive functions.

Several families have taken turns in possession of Castello di Razzano, which has been changed in some of its aspects based on the new needs arising from the conversions of use.

In the 18th century the property passed to the Delù family, an important family who, in addition to Razzano, owned the surrounding estates; there is no news of them other than a mention of them in the church of Santa Maria di Razzano, annexed to the Castle.

The Delù family was succeeded by the Caligaris family (political and military figures) who maintained the property for around 200 years, for residential use, hosting numerous illustrious figures, such as Napoleon Bonaparte in 1805. Among the prominent figures of the family there is undoubtedly the lawyer Valentino Caligaris who in the early 1900s inherited the Castle from his uncle General Eugenio Caligaris. He was state advocate general of the nascent Italian Republic after the Second World War and also contributed to the drafting of the Italian Constitution. The Caligaris family stood out for its patriotism and until September 1943 hosted officers of the American Air Force, concealing not only their presence, but also weapons, parachutes and aviation materials including the Radio Transmitting station with which they kept in



Avv. Valentino Caligaris

connection with their base in Southern Italy. In 1943 Benito Mussolini offered the lawyer Caligaris the state attorneyship of the nascent Republic of Salò, which he decisively refused and fled from Rome to take refuge in Razzano for fear of Nazi-fascist reprisals. His rigorous personality is well expressed in his reserved nature which he addressed to the Prime Minister Alcide De Gaspari on 1 February 1946, when he was near the end of his career, he submitted to the President (..) *the following considerations on the current concrete needs of the Bar in relation to the appointment of the new Attorney General of the State (..)*. He suggests orienting the choice towards a relatively young person, in whose profile there are professional skills, essential elements for managing the democratic evolution of the entire body of legislation reflecting public law.

Upon his death in 1958, his son General Luigi Caligaris, an expert in military strategy defined by Antonio Padellaro as a "man with a straight back", succeeded him in the properties. His life first alternated between important military positions as head of the military policy office of the Defense General Staff and advisor for NATO's military strategies. He later held political positions, becoming an MEP until 1999. He ended his career as a columnist.



Gen. Luigi Caligaris



Eugenio Olearo

In 1968 Eugenio Olearo purchased the Castle with all the surrounding lands, annexing them to his properties, converting the estate into a wine production cellar until 2006, the year in which the Relais di Charme and the Museo Razzano ArteVino were opened.