

Guide to the tactile exploration of the book Palazzo Pitti. Architecture and history

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Preface

The following text provides a guide to the tactile exploration of the book **Pitti Palace. Architecture and history** that contains braille texts, tactile tables, qr-codes that refer to further information on the Uffizi Galleries website. The publication is both in Italian and in English.

The left side of the book contains braille texts and each page in Italian is followed by its English translation.

The right side of the book, printed in enlarged fonts, contains the braille titles, the tactile tables and the qr-codes of the audio descriptions.

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Cover

The tactile image on the cover represents the architectural pattern in the Palace's courtyard, which is composed of three orders corresponding to the three floors (ground floor, first floor and second floor). This same pattern is repeated on three sides of the

courtyard, the fourth one consisting of only one order, to allow the view on the back garden.

From the bottom of the page you can move your fingers upwards until you feel three arch lines: these represent the arched porticoed passage on the ground floor, where all the museum entrances, the cafeteria, the bookshop, the cloakroom and the toilets are located. The arches are supported by half-columns that lean on mighty pillars and are composed of curved stone blocks, placed one on top of the other.

Moving your fingers slightly upwards, you will feel three arched windows, which represent the first and most important floor of the building, the so-called "Piano Nobile", where the Palatine Gallery is. These arches are supported by half-columns composed of squared stone blocks, leaning on four pillars.

Moving your fingers further upwards, you will feel the last three arches which represent the Modern Art Gallery rooms on the second floor. Here, the semi-columns leaning on the pillars are made of curved stone blocks which are positioned a bit further apart. This change in the decoration is typical of the 16th century architecture.

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Table of Contents

When you open the book you will find two flaps, one on the left and the other on the right side, with braille overwriting. The left wing contains the Italian version of the book's index and a square-shaped outline in relief with the qr-code that leads you to this guide; the right wing contains the braille index and the qr-code that leads you to the English version of this guide.

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Incipit

The first page of the braille text provides a brief presentation of Pitti Palace. The corresponding page on the right side of the book provides two qr-codes that refer to the detailed audio descriptions

of the book's contents, the first one in Italian and the second one in English. We recommend listening to them before starting to explore the book.

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Page 1: the Palace and the City

Turn the pages in braille on the left side until you reach the page marked with number 1, dedicated to the location of the Palace in the city centre. Turn the page on the right side as well and you will open the two corresponding tactile tables. The one on the left shows the passage of the Vasari Corridor which connect the Palace to the two key points of the city centre: Gallerie degli Uffizi (represented by a circular outline in relief) and Palazzo Vecchio (a square one); the three wavy lines in the middle of the page represent the Arno river. The tactile table on the right shows Pitti Palace's floor plan on top of the page and the Uffizi's floor plan on the bottom. They give you an idea of what the buildings' shapes are and a comparison between the different proportions.

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Page 2: Construction phases

Turn the pages in braille on the left until you reach the page marked with number 2, dedicated to the construction of Pitti Palace, which began in the 15th and ended in the 19th century. Turn the corresponding page on the right to find the tactile tables that provide four plans of the Palace showing its architectural evolution until today. You must read them from the right page to the left one, from the top to the bottom.

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Page 3: the Medici

Turn the pages in braille on the left until you reach the page marked with number 3, dedicated to the life of the Medici Family in

Pitti Palace. Turn the corresponding page on the right, right in the middle you will feel the tactile story telling the transfer of the building stones used to make the Ammannati Courtyard, coming from a quarry in the Boboli Garden.

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Page 4: the Habsburg-Lorraine

Turn the pages in braille on the left until you reach the page marked with number 4, dedicated to the life of the Habsburg-Lorraine family in Pitti Palace. Turn the corresponding page on the right to discover the tactile table: on the bottom of the page you will feel the meander pattern which is typical of this historical period and decorates the ceilings of the White Hall, as said in the braille caption.

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Page 5: The Savoy

Turn the pages in braille on the left until you reach the page marked with number 5, dedicated to the life of the Savoy family in Palazzo Pitti. Turn the corresponding page on the right to discover the tactile table that shows a reproduction in relief of a door's knob in which you can recognize the Savoy Coat of arms: a cross on a shield.

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Explicit

The last two braille pages on the left, not numbered, put an end to the book by mentioning the final transition of the Palace to the State of Italy and its transformation into a museum.

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Colophon

Project curated by: The Uffizi Galleries. Director: Simone Verde.
Scientific collaboration: Italian Union of the Blind and Visually Impaired (UICI). Texts: Anna Soffici. Translation: Martina Liorni.
Made by: Atipiche Edizioni. Book design and tactile graphics: Andrea Delluomo. Graphic design and layout: Patrizio Anastasi and Andrea Delluomo. Credits: Photographic Department of the Uffizi Galleries, Roberto Palermo, Andrea Biotti. Printed in September 2025 by Tiburtini Srl. Copyright: Gallerie degli Uffizi, Firenze.

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