



Garden Pavilions and the 18th Century Court

Eleanor P. Delorme

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A detailed account of the ornamental garden structures which were created for the French monarchy and royal circles, and some that embellished the gardens of the First Empire. Pavilions and gardens are inseparable as the latter provided the mise en scene for these little architectural gems. As well as complementing and enriching the garden, they were most often intended to be lived in. Built by the leading architects and craftsmen of the day, they were of extraordinary stylistic diversity, commensurate with the purpose for which they were designed. The grandeur of the Sun King's Grand Trianon, for example, proclaimed the nature of the absolute monarchy, serving a political as well as an aesthetic purpose. On the other hand, the Pavilion Français of his great-grandson Louis XV provided a centre piece for his botanical garden. Outdoor meals were served in Madame de Pompadour's salon frais while Marie Antoinette's Belvedere was given over to concerts and conversation. Whatever shape they assumed and for whatever purpose they were put, these ephemeral structures decorated a landscape intended as a refuge from the everyday world. For the ultimately doomed society of the 18th century these kiosks, tents, temples, tombs and grottoes assume a particular significance.



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