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Titolo	Dairy queens [[electronic resource]] : the politics of pastoral architecture from Catherine de' Medici to Marie-Antoinette / / Meredith Martin
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Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Introduction -- Catherine de' Medici, the French Cybele -- Absolutism and the sexual politics of pastoral retreat -- Health, hygiene, and the hermitages of Madame de Pompadour -- Marie-Antoinette and the Hameau effect -- Regenerating the monarchy : the Queen's dairy at Rambouillet -- Epilogue.
Sommario/riassunto	Though Meredith Martin is primarily an art historian, this book goes way beyond art history. It examines "pleasure dairies," built by the French aristocracy to be sites of leisure, healing, and simple luxury, from the vantage point of cultural studies as well as social and political history. The traditional historical narrative, still deeply resonant, is that these dairies were little more than frivolous excess or attempts to imagine "common life" by people so wealthy they could not even imagine poverty. But Martin complicates this picture. She examines the social, cultural, and political uses of these dairies, showing that they were in fact instrumental as sites that both reinforced and challenged definitions of femininity. The dairies provided strategic venues for noble women to assert their status and identity while at the same time appearing to retreat from power. They served the functions of a spa, where fresh milk and beautiful scenery helped women recover their

health. They also are tangible evidence of the new valorization of country living, which was expressed also in political debates about improving the countryside and reforming the aristocracy, especially elite women.
