

Visit Ferrara and its province

EN



Provincia di Ferrara



Comune di Ferrara



Camera di Commercio Ferrara



Ferrara
terra e acqua

A SHORT HISTORY

The origins of Ferrara are wrapped in mystery. Its name is mentioned for the first time in a document dating to 753 A.D., issued by the Longobard king Desiderius. In the earliest centuries of its life the city had several different rulers, later it gained enough freedom to become an independent Commune. After some years of fierce internal struggles between the Guelph and the Ghibelline factions, the Este family took control of the city.






The great cultural season began in 1391, when the University was founded, and afterwards culture and magnificence grew unceasingly. Artists like Leon Battista Alberti, Pisanello, Piero della Francesca, Rogier van der Weyden and Tiziano came to Ferrara and the local pictorial school, called "Officina Ferrarese" produced the masterpieces of Cosmè Tura, Ercole de' Roberti and Francesco del Cossa. The best musicians of the time worked for the Dukes of Ferrara, who also inspired the immortal poetry of Boiardo, Ariosto and Tasso.

Niccolò III, the diplomat, Leonello, the intellectual, Borso, the magnificent, Ercole I, the constructor, and Alfonso I, the soldier: these are the names of some famous lords of Ferrara, still recalled together with those of the family's princesses: the unlucky Parisina Malatesta, the wise Eleonora d'Aragona, the beautiful and slandered Lucrezia Borgia, Renée of France, the intellectual follower of Calvinism.

Ferrara had an active role in the Risorgimento and in the history of the Kingdom of Italy, eventually becoming the modern city rich in memories of the past that we can admire today.

INDEX

2 ITINERARIES IN TOWN

-  2 The Renaissance addition
-  14 The Mediaeval centre
-  28 Renaissance residences and churches
-  36 Where the river once flowed
-  42 The Walls

46 LIVE THE CITY

- 46 Events all year round
- 47 Bicycles
- 48 Shopping and markets
- 49 Cuisine

50 VISIT THE PROVINCE

69 USEFUL INFORMATION



Download the podguides and discover Ferrara and its province:
www.ferrarainfo.com/html/audioguide/indexEN.htm

READER'S GUIDE

Along with the Pedestrian Roadsigns sited in the Historic Centre, this booklet will guide the visitor through the most important areas of the city.

The five themed routes are identified with different colour schemes.



The starting point for all these routes is the Tourist Information Office at the Estense Castle.



Route indications



MUSEO
DI QUALITÀ

THE "MUSEO DI QUALITÀ"
IS RECOGNISED BY THE
REGIONAL EMILIA-ROMAGNA
"ISTITUTO PER I BENI ARTISTICI
CULTURALI E NATURALI"

THE RENAISSANCE ADDITION

Throughout the Middle Ages and almost to the end of the 15th century, the northern boundary of the city ran along the current road system of *viale Cavour-corso Giovecca*. To the north of this boundary there were a number of buildings, even prestigious ones, some of which were owned by the Duke. In 1492 Ercole I commissioned Biagio Rossetti to include this vast area in the centre (thus doubling the surface area of the city) and the great architect and town-planner designed a plan which, due to its original and rational nature, made Ferrara “the first modern city in Europe”. In honour of the Duke who ordered its building this great district is known as *Addizione Erculea*.

THE ITINERARY IN BRIEF



CASTELLO ESTENSE

Starting point of the route
Corso Ercole I d'Este

- 1 Palazzo di Giulio d'Este
- 2 Museo del Risorgimento e della Resistenza
- 3 Palazzo dei Diamanti
- 4 Palazzo Prosperi Sacrati

Diversion from the itinerary

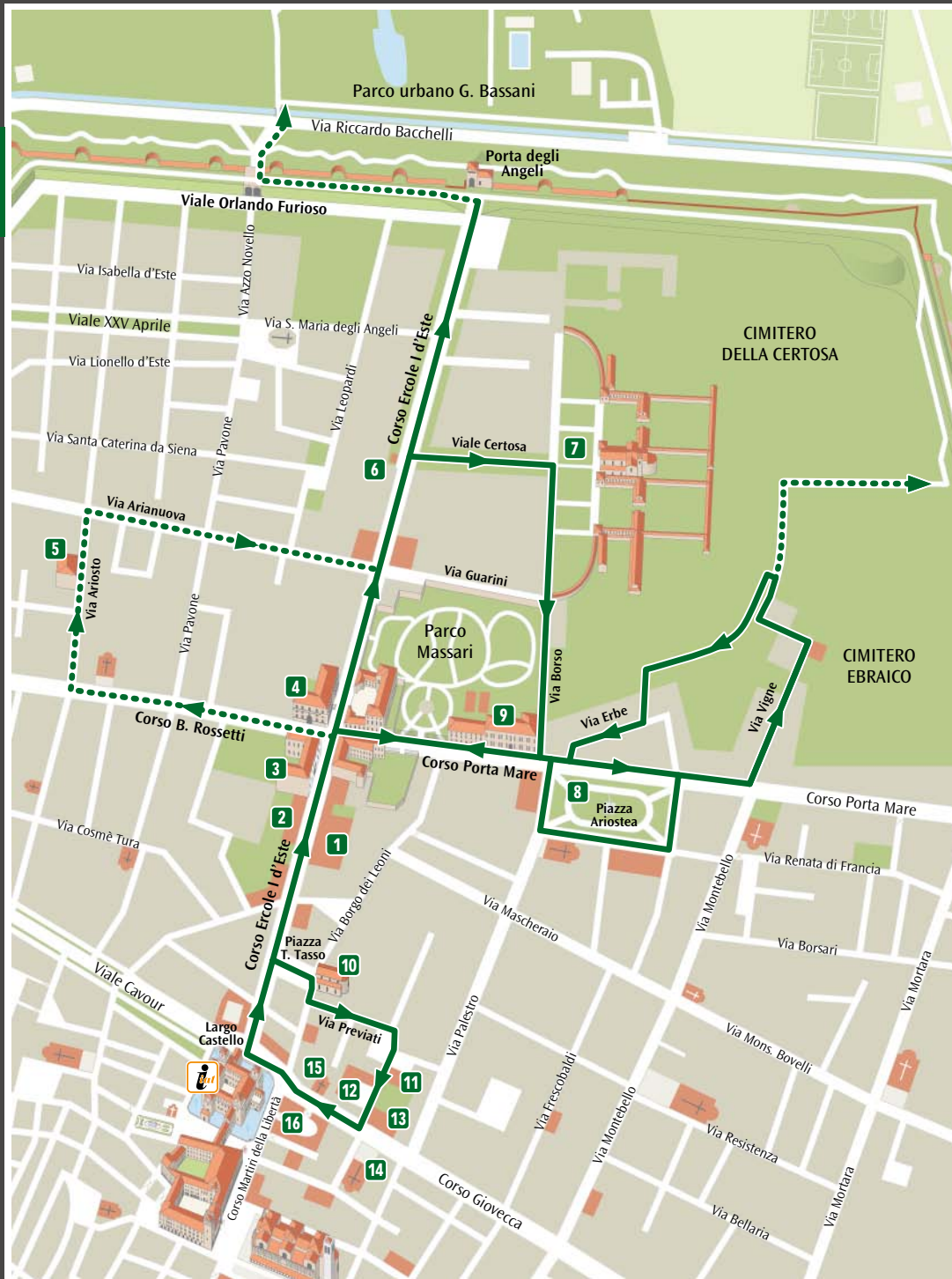
- 5 Casa di Ludovico Ariosto
- 6 Palazzina degli Angeli

Direction Parco Urbano G. Bassani

- 7 Tempio di San Cristoforo alla Certosa
- 8 Piazza Ariostea
- 9 Palazzo Massari
- 10 Chiesa del Gesù
- 11 Museo Civico di Storia Naturale
- 12 Piazzetta S. Anna

Corso Giovecca

- 13 Palazzo Roverella
- 14 Chiesa dei Teatini
- 15 Chiesa di San Carlo
- 16 Teatro Comunale





THIS ITINERARY BEGINS AT THE NORTH RAVELIN (OR ENTRANCE) TO THE CASTLE. THE VIEW FROM HERE CLEARLY DEMONSTRATES THE GRANDEUR OF THE PROJECT KNOWN AS THE **HERCULEAN ADDITION**.

This Street was formerly known as *Via degli Angeli* after the church dedicated to *S. Maria degli Angeli* which stood along it. It forms one of the two main thoroughfares of the *Addizione Ercolea*. With no shops and flanked by fine palazzos, it still retains the features of a residential road as the Duke intended. Its focal point is the **Quadrivio degli Angeli** ("Angels' Cross-roads"), at the junction with the other road of the *Addizione* (*corso Porto Mare - Biagio Rossetti - Porta Po*), underlined by the presence of three elaborately decorated buildings.



Along Corso Ercole I d'Este stand the following buildings

1 Palazzo di Giulio d'Este

Corso Ercole I d'Este, 16

Built in the early years of the great building works of the *Addizione Ercolea*, the Palazzo belonged for some years to Giulio, illegitimate son of Duke Ercole I, famous for his participation, together with his brother Ferrante, in the plot of 1506 against Alfonso I and Cardinal Ippolito, his great enemy. Subsequently the building was the property for centuries of the ancient lords of Carpi, the princes Pio di Savoia. The attribution to **Biagio Rossetti** is based on different elements, such as the marble portal, the use of brickwork in the arch vaults of the windows and in the highly jutting cornice, the extremely free use of architectural style, and a small balcony which appears to be set halfway between the ground and first floors. [SEAT OF THE PREFECTURE]

2 Museo del Risorgimento e della Resistenza

Corso Ercole I d'Este, 19 • tel. 0532 244949

In the section dedicated to the **Risorgimento** a large collection of period illustrations are to be found, including some particular curious satirical caricatures and cartoons in the first room. The showcases display a good number of uniforms, firearms and weapons. One showcase contains a curious series of objects among which is a set of handcuffs, some cell keys and even a spyhole, a reminder of the imprisonment of the Ferrarese patriots Succi, Malaguti and Parmeggiani.

The second room is dedicated in particular to the Bersaglieri del Po, a Ferrarese volunteer corps under the command of the marquis Tancredi Trotti Mosti (whose bust is in the entrance hall), which fought heroically in the battles of Cornuda and of Monte Berico in 1848. The collection is completed with decorations and banners.

The section dedicated to the **Resistenza** is organised in a very similar way to the first, except that there are less objects. The documents date from between 1919 and 1945 and deal with the period of the great social struggles, the Fascist dictatorship, the Second World War and liberation.

3 Palazzo dei Diamanti

Corso Ercole I d'Este, 21 • tel. 0532 244949

Its building was ordered by Sigismondo d'Este around 1493 and is definitely the masterpiece of the court architect and town-planner **Biagio Rossetti**. It takes its name from the 8,500 "diamonds" which form the marble rustication of the original facing.

Situated at the junction of two main roads of the *Addizione*, the building symbolises the prestige and glory of the House of Este, but is also intended to emphasise the importance of the cross-roads itself. The *Palazzo* was designed for a diagonal vision and its focal point is therefore the corner, embellished by the splendid candelabras sculpted by Gabriele Frisoni and the attractive small balcony. On the **ground floor** are living quarters and spaces where the major temporary exhibitions organized by Ferrara Arte and the Gallerie d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Ferrara are held.



The National Art Gallery is situated on the **first floor** and its rooms retain large traces of the ancient, sumptuous decorations.

The collections of paintings housed here cover the period from the 13th to the 18th centuries.

The visit moves off from the hall hosting the Vendeghini Baldi Collection which boasts a number of not-to-be-missed works, such as *The Adoration of the Wise Men* by Jacopo and Giovanni Bellini; a *Holy Virgin* and a *St. Petronius* by Ercole de' Roberti; a small *Christ* by Mantegna. In the following rooms the older masters are represented by Cristoforo da Bologna, Simone dei Crocifissi, and the Master of Figline. The fifteenth century is represented by works of artists of the **Officina Ferrarese**:

two saints by Michele Pannonio; *St. Jerome* by Vicino da Ferrara; a pair of magnificent tondo depicting *The Judgement and The Beheading of St. Maurelius* by **Cosmè Tura**.

Works by Garofalo, Scarsellino, Bononi and Sebastiano Filippi, known as Bastianino, represent the following century. An interesting item is an altar-step by the Bolognese artist, Amico Aspertini.

A room is fully given over to the display of two magnificent panoramic views attributed to Sebastiano Serlio and a *The Muses Erato and Urania* by an unknown fifteenth century master, which were part of the decoration of the Private Study of the Marquis Leonello d'Este in the demolished Delizia di Belfiore.

The Palace's extensive *Feast Hall* hosts a number of large works, such as the frescoes depicting *The Triumph of St. Augustine* and *Ancient and New Testament Stories*, the works respectively of Serafino da Modena and Benvenuto Tisi, also known as **Garofalo**.

The following halls with their richly decorated ceilings made up the apartments of Cesare d'Este and Virginia de' Medici. There are several veritable masterpieces on display here by **Niccolò Pisano** and **Vittore Carpaccio**. There are also many works by Garofalo, including the outstanding Slaying of the Innocents, greatly admired by Vasari. Worthy of attention are several paintings by **Battista** and **Dosso Dossi**.

The last hall is dominated by the overwhelming Polyptych Costabili, painted by Garofalo and Dosso Dossi, complete with its original engraved and gilded wooden altar piece, with the *Enthroned Madonna with Saints*.

An especially precious item is a portable altar by the great painter El Greco.



Judgement of St. Maurelius, Cosmè Tura

4 Palazzo Prosperi Sacrati

Corso Ercole I d'Este, 25

Building began in 1493. The building has a corner decoration, like the other palazzos of the *Quadrivio*, but stands out above all due to

its grandiose marble portal, which is the most significant example of monumental sculpture in Ferrara.

[NOT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC]



A little detour from the itinerary takes you to Corso Biagio Rossetti. Turn right into via Ariosto where, at N° 67, you will find the

5 Casa di Ludovico Ariosto

Via Ariosto, 67 • tel. 0532 244949

"Parva, sed apta mihi, sed nulli obnoxia, sed non sordida, parva meo, sed tamen aere domus". "The house is small but suitable for me, clean, free of expenses and purchased solely with my own money", reads the inscription on the façade of the house where Ludovico Ariosto (1474 - 1533) spent his twilight years, devoting himself to the third and final edition of *Orlando Enraged*, published in 1532.

The house, probably built to the design of **Girolamo da Carpi**, has a simple but elegant brick façade. **Interior**: on the first floor a small museum dedicated to the poet has been laid out. The room on the right conserves the bronze cast of his inkstand, editions of his works and many medals representing him, including the one found in his tomb in 1801.

In the small central corridor stands a display case which conserves the beautiful 1881 edition of *Orlando Enraged* illustrated by Gustave Doré.

In the room on the left, with its elegant chimneypiece, are a nineteenth century bust and portrait of the poet and some furniture, including a chair that belonged to him.


In the second part of the street, the one which leads to the city walls and to the **Porta degli Angeli** ("Angels' Gate"), the buildings gradually decrease in number and importance, until the Street becomes almost identical to a country road, lined with tall poplars.



Along the street stands

6 Palazzina degli Angeli

This house is sited where once was the vegetable patch of the Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli. Many members of the Ducal family were buried here. The Palazzina was designed by Adamo Boari and built in 1913-1916. [PRIVATE DWELLING]

 Carrying on to the end of the street, you will come to the **Porta degli Angeli** designed by B. Rossetti. From here you go up on to enjoy a walk along the walls that still protect the city.

The stroll along the walls will take you to the immense **Parco urbano G. Bassani**.

On the way back, going along Corso Ercole I d'Este, turning left will take you to the splendid Certosa, where you will find the


7 Tempio di San Cristoforo alla Certosa

Piazza Borso d'Este • tel. 0532 244949



Visitors are greeted by a huge lawn spread out in front of Saint Christopher's Church that is flanked by two long arcades.

The history of **Carthusian Monastery** in Ferrara goes back to 1452, when Borso d'Este endowed it. It was transformed into a monumental cemetery at the beginning of the 1800s. The Church dedicated to Saint Christopher was built towards the end of the 15th century, and completely restored few years ago. The restoration includes many works of art in their original location, among them 15 altar pieces, wooden choir screens, the altar with its ciborium, three massive crucifixes, and many other liturgical furnishings.

 The tree-lined Via Borso will next take you to Corso Porta Mare. Ahead of you lies

8 Piazza Ariostea

This square was intended to become the fulcrum of the *Addizione Ercolea* and was at the time named **Piazza Nuova** (New Square), to distinguish it from the former market square, on the southern side of the Cathedral. However it never became important for commerce, but remained a large area free of buildings, with the function of a public park.

In the centre stands a column on which a **statue of Ludovico Ariosto** was placed in 1883.



The buildings which open onto the piazza are very simple: to the south stands *Palazzo Rondinelli*, built at the end of the 15th century by **Biagio Rossetti**, which stands out above all due to its large portico with 22 arches, with a wooden ceiling, which performs the function of a "covered Street".

On the west side of the piazza stands *Palazzo Strozzi Bevilacqua*, built in 1499 characterized by a large portico with 15 arches.

In this *piazza*, on the last Sunday in May of each year, the **Palio di San Giorgio** is held - an extremely ancient event which includes, in addition to a great historical procession, four races: the race of the *Putti* (young boys) and that of the *Putte* (young girls), donkey and horse races.

Staying on the left of Corso Porta Mare, you will come to Via delle Vigne for a detour that touches the **Cimitero Ebraico** after which you will follow the cycle/footpath that runs as far as the end of the city walls.

 Taking Corso Porta Mare to the right, it leads to

9 Palazzo Massari

Corso Porta Mare, 9 • tel. 0532 244949



This building was built at the end of the 16th century, commissioned by Count Onofrio Bevilacqua, and later underwent a large number of extensions and redesign, the most important of which was the building of an annexe to the main Palazzo, in an elegant neo-classical style, known as the *Palazzina dei Cavalieri di Malta*, as it belonged to the knights of Malta in the period (1826 - 1834) when they were based in Ferrara.

The ground floor is the seat of the **Museum of Modern and Contem-**





Gladiolus Struck by Lightning, F. De Pisis

porary Art Filippo De Pisis. The first part of the museum exposes works by Mario Sironi, Aroldo Bonzagni, Achille Funi and Roberto Melli; the second half of the museum is dedicated to the work of Filippo De Pisis (1896-1956). A very original artist who was a poet as well as a painter, throughout his work he managed to transmit a kind of dark melancholy that alternated with the search for a cosmic dimension. His colours in particular are unmistakable, passing from pastel to dark tones, which at times are broken up, almost wounded, by vivid dashes. There is a high number of still lifes, one of his cherished genres and one that clearly shows the influence of Giorgio Morandi.

The **large ceremonial staircase** leads to the **first floor**, whose rooms are still decorated with frescoed ceilings furnished with antique furniture and rugs from various buildings in the city.

The rooms house now several arts collections. The **Giovanni Boldini Museum**, dedicated to the Ferrarese painter who lived between 1842 and 1931 and became the most popular portrait painter of high society in Paris. The visit begins in the palace's elegant Baroque chapel, situated beyond the Grand Hall. This is followed by three small rooms with works realised by the artist in his younger days, among which are a *Self-portrait* and the oil painting *Two White Horses*. In the fourth room, magnificently frescoed and of vast proportions, five large paintings are on display, which alone bear witness to Boldini's mastery of the portrait: *Countess Gabrielle de Rasty*, *The Infanta Eulalia of Spain*, *The Little Subercaseuse*, *Countess de Leusse* and *Fireworks*, all painted between 1878 and 1891. The Boldini Collection continues with drawings and watercolours, the splendid *A Walk in the Bois* (1909) and ends with the *Woman in Rose*.



Woman in Rose, G. Boldini

Other rooms house the **Museum of the Nineteenth Century** with masterpieces by famous painters like Previati and Mentessi. In the garden of Palazzo Massari stands the **Pavilion of Contemporary Art**, used for temporary exhibitions.

Walking along Corso Porta Mare, you will pass between two green areas. Opposite Palazzo Massari are the **University Botanical Gardens** and across the road is **Parco Massari**. This is the biggest of the parks inside the walled area of the city.



The route now takes you back along Corso Ercole I d'Este but, before reaching the Castle, you can turn left into Piazza Torquato Tasso to admire the

10 Chiesa del Gesù

Via Borgoleoni, 56 • tel. 0532 205908

Overlooking *Piazzetta T. Tasso*, it was built in 1570 to a design by Alberto Schiatti, and later extended by adding chapels. The austere façade is in fired brick and tiles throughout. The interior, with a single nave, contains paintings of considerable interest. To the left of the entrance we can see an important 15th- century sculpture group in polychrome terracotta: *The Mourning of Christ* by **Guido Mazzoni**. According to tradition the crying figures around the body of Jesus represent members of the court and, more particularly, the two statues on the far right allegedly depict Ercole I and his wife Eleonora of Aragon. Behind the main altar stands the sepulchral monument to Duchess Barbara of Austria, wife of Duke Alfonso II d'Este.

A short distance walking along via Previati there is a group of buildings built in the rationalist style by the architect **Carlo Savonuzzi** in the 1930s as part of redevelopment of the area previously occupied by the hospital. It is one of the few good redesign projects performed in that period. The piazzetta is dominated by a primary school with a fluted tower which acts as a perspective fulcrum. Opposite, two identical buildings house the "C. Frescobaldi" conservatory and the Civic Museum of Natural History.

11 Museo Civico di Storia Naturale

Via De Pisis, 24 • tel. 0532 244949



The Museo Naturalistico is the first museum in Emilia Romagna to be developed along the lines of an eco-museum that combines displays exhibition areas along with a Learning Centre and reading materials. The museum offers the visitor a broad review of mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, birds, invertebrates and insects covering branches of the natural sciences such as zoology and entomology. There are large collections of fossils, minerals and rocks in the sections devoted to the earth sciences: palaeontology, geology and mineralogy. Of particular interest is "Earth's Environment", a section dealing with understanding the environment and its development and organised using innovative museum techniques, which brings to light the environmental diversity and changes in the world we inhabit. The Specialist Library, the Reading Room and the Educational Section are also the public's service. The museum also carries out important work in scientific research and the spread of knowledge.

 Continuing along Via Boldini will take you to the

12 Piazzetta Sant'Anna

This was the courtyard of the old **Sant'Anna main hospital**, dating back to the 15th century and operative up until the early 20th century. The hospital incorporated pre-existing buildings, including the Armenian monastery of San Basilio, whose picturesque portico can still be seen.

For many years the poet **Torquato Tasso** was kept prisoner in one of the rooms there.



 Continue along **Corso Giovecca**

This Street, built by Biagio Rossetti by demolishing the old walls, forms the link between the Medieval city to the south, and the Addizione Erculea to the north, thus forming the main thoroughfare of the city. Embellished by a number of noteworthy buildings, the road is closed off to the east by a theatrical 18th-century arch.

13 Palazzo Roverella

Corso Giovecca, 47

Built in 1508 circa, to a design by **Biagio Rossetti** for Gaetano Magnanini, secretary to Duke Alfonso I. It was acquired by the Roverella family in the 18th century. The façade has an elaborate decoration in brickwork arranged so as to achieve an actual geometrical division of the surface.

[NOT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC]



14 Chiesa dei Teatini

Corso Giovecca, 52 • tel. 0532 247822

This church was built in the first half of the 17th century to a design by Luca Danesi. The unfinished façade has the preparation for the marble facing.

The interior has elegant decorations and a panel depicting the *Purification of the Virgin* painted by **Guercino** in 1634 of great interest.

15 Chiesa di San Carlo

Corso Giovecca, 19 • tel. 0532 247173

This church was built between 1612 and 1623 on the area of a demolished oratory, to a design by **Giovan Battista Aleotti**. It is a unique example in Ferrara of pure Baroque architecture. The façade is divided by two double columns bearing an architrave with tympanum, niches with statues and a portal with divided tympanum and angels holding a coat of arms. The chiaroscuro effect creates an impressive overall appearance despite the small size. The interior has an elliptical plan with two large rectangular chapels and a semicircular apse. The ceiling has an elegant fresco from 1674 by the painter **Giuseppe Avanzi**. [TEMPORARILY CLOSED]

16 Teatro Comunale

Rotonda Foschini • tel. 0532 218326



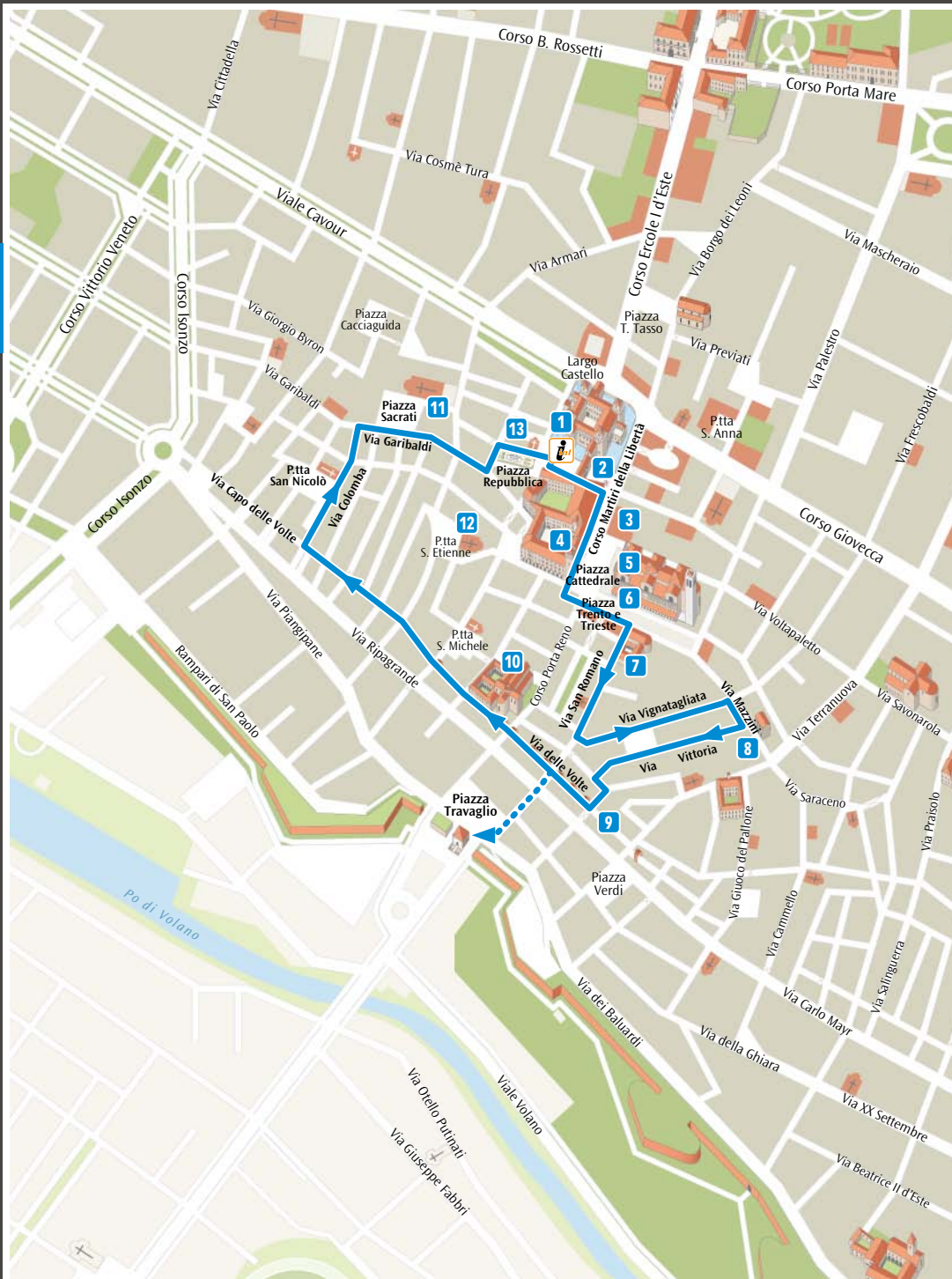
The theatre was built between 1790 and 1797, under the direction of **Antonio Foschini** and **Cosimo Morelli**. The two façades of the building, not heavily decorated, blend with the urban setting and the two exits of the elliptical widening, which originally served for the arrival and departure of carriages, frame two important buildings: the Castello Estense to the west and the church of San Carlo to the north. Inside the **Foyer** can be admired with its rich, mainly Empire style, decorations and above all the large auditorium, a typical example of Italian-style theatre, elegantly stuccoed and frescoed by Francesco Migliari in 1850.

The Civic Theatre currently performs a central role in the cultural life of the city and whole country, the venue for several seasons of theatre, opera, ballet and concerts, as well as top-rate concerts organised by the Ferrara Music Committee.

THE MEDIAEVAL CENTRE

From the Middle Ages to today, the area around the Cathedral has always been the focus of the city life. The seat of the various rulers over the years and a commercial and historical area of great importance, the centre is still the favourite meeting place of residents and visitors alike.

The original layout of the ancient city, which has been developing along the banks of the river PO, is still clearly recognizable in the famous area of *Via delle Volte*.



THE ITINERARY IN BRIEF

- 1** **CASTELLO ESTENSE** 
Starting point of the route
- 2** Piazza Savonarola
- 3** Palazzo Arcivescovile
- 4** Palazzo Municipale
- 5** Cattedrale
- 6** Piazza Trento e Trieste
- 7** Museo della Cattedrale
- Via San Romano**
- 8** Ghetto – Museo Ebraico
- 9** Via delle Volte
- 10** Chiesa di San Paolo
- 11** Chiesa di San Domenico
- 12** Chiesa di Santo Stefano
- Via Garibaldi**
- 13** Chiesa di San Giuliano

1 Castello Estense

tel. 0532 299233



MUSEO
DI QUALITÀ



In 1385 a dangerous revolt convinced Niccolò II d'Este of the need to erect mighty defences for himself and his family; thus the Castello di San Michele was built, a fortress erected against the people. Its imposing proportions, its moat, its drawbridges and its towers date back to that remote period. An elevated covered passageway, which still exists, joined the military building to the marquises' Palace (today Palazzo Municipale). Centuries went by and the risk of riots died down. So the castle became the magnificent residence of the court and was embellished with roof terraces at the top of the towers, marble balconies, the Renaissance-style courtyard (at the time fully frescoed) and sumptuous apartments.

INTERIOR

Once passed through the entrance halls on the **ground floor**, the visit starts in the so-called **Gothic Halls**. The first, with its highly ornate ceiling decorated with ramified vegetation motifs, hosts a scale model of the Castle as it appeared in the fourteenth century. The following three Halls of the series are given over to exhibits showing different aspects of life at Court under the rule of the Este dynasty.

The **Castle Kitchens** were located in the following two rooms. Replica ovens are on display in the second. Next comes the so-called Corridor Hall, which was probably a guards room.

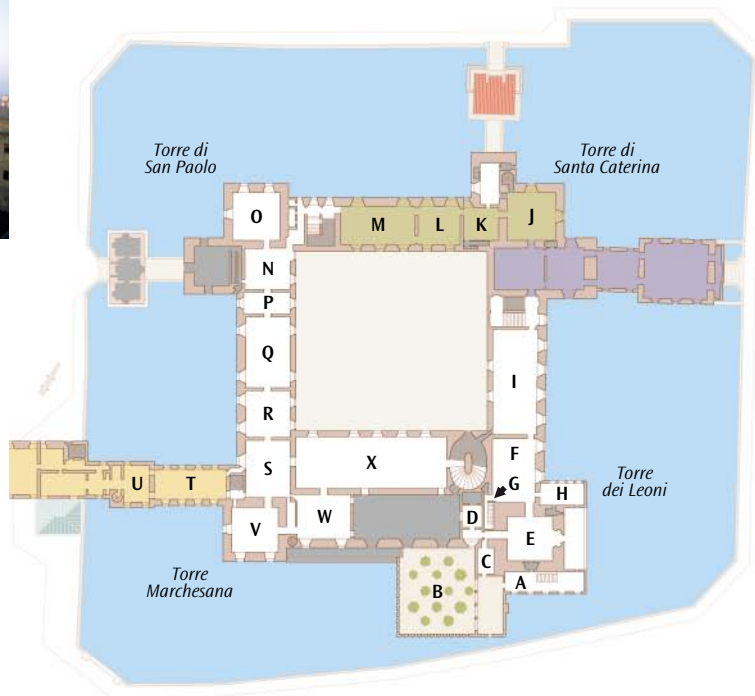
A narrow corridor and a low doorway lead on to **Don Giulio's Prison**, so called because the brother of Alfonso I, Prince Julius, was imprisoned here for having led a famous conspiracy. The graffiti on the walls were made by prisoners and date back to the sixteenth century.

After backtracking to the corridor and climbing down some steep steps, the visitor reaches **Ugo's and Parisina's Prisons**. These two luckless lovers were the protagonists of one of the saddest stories under the rule of the Estes.

Parisina Malatesta was the second wife of the marquis Niccolò III, who was a womanizer and much older than her. After seven years of uneventful marriage she fell in love with her stepson Ugo, whose mother, Stella dei Tolomei, was Niccolò's favourite. The two lovers were discovered, summarily judged and beheaded after a short but distressing period spent in the castle dungeons. It was the year 1425; Parisina was twenty, Ugo still nineteen.

A long ramp, originally used for artillery, leads to the ducal apartments.

On the **first floor**, some rooms can be visited; unfortunately, they lack the original furniture, but have magnificent ceilings whose colours have lost none of their former splendour.



■ Bookshop and Cafeteria
■ Areas closed to the public

■ The Patience Suite
■ The Duke's Private Chambers

FIRST FLOOR - Itinerary

A The duchesses' Loggia

Going up a short modern staircase, you reach a bright ante-room with a few traces of decoration, where is situated an extensive description of the leading Estensi characters and what they did to the structure of the castle.

B Garden and Loggia of the Oranges

A small hanging garden for the duchesses and their most intimate friends. The terrace was adorned, as it is today, with large vases containing citrus plants around which were set out smaller vases with other plants in the form of flowerbeds.

C Camerino of the Bacchanalia

A small connecting room that was once entirely painted. Three scenes

inspired by the myth of Bacchus are still present on the right-hand wall.

D Ducal Chapel

This small room, with elegant geometric lines, was used for private prayer. The decoration, free of sacred images, is traditionally believed to have been ordered by Renata of France, the duchess with Calvinist sympathies, although this is contradicted by the ceiling with its paintings of the Four Evangelists and the white eagle of the Estense family.

E Chamber of Dawn

On the magnificent ceiling are depicted the four phases of the day. To the right of those entering from the chapel is *Dawn*: a young winged goddess who advances pulling the horses of the sun chariot by the reins. Proceeding in a clockwise direction we find *Day*, where

the sun chariot proceeds in all its radiance, preceded by the Dawn holding two torches; *Dusk*, with the sun chariot moving towards the horizon; *Night*, where Diana, with the disc of the moon on her forehead, reaches her lover Endymion. At the centre an old man surrounded by the three Fates, goddesses of life and death, represents time. Lower down, a long train of putti advance on chariots pulled by all types of animals. The great mirrors that are a feature of this room and the two following were set there to recall the name of these rooms, recorded in documents as 'The Apartment of the Mirror'.

F Small Chamber of Games

The centre of the ceiling is decorated with the round dance of the *Four Seasons*, all around are frescoes with "games" scenes from Ancient Rome.

G access to the "Torre dei Leoni" staircase.

H Small Chamber of Poison

It seems that this room was originally used by the court pharmacist for making medicines and, according to some, the poisons used against political enemies. The ceiling is nineteenth-century.

I Hall of Games

This large room was for evening entertainment, such as concerts or games. The ceiling is divided into eleven sections, each one showing a sport after the taste of Duke Alfonso II. The most



valuable, on the courtyard side, are the work of **Bastianino** and from the left, show *free-style wrestling*, *shot-put* and *Greco-Roman wrestling*. The athletes are nude in homage to the ancient Greek traditions.

J Room of the Tower of St. Catherine

The attractive ceiling is in the Renaissance Revival style. The highlight is a raised panoramic view of eighteenth century Ferrara.

K Gallery Ante-room

This room originally led into a long gallery which was subsequently partitioned to form smaller rooms. A panoramic view of Ferrara as it appeared between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is depicted in a large panel.

L "Hector and Andromache" Room

This Hall takes its name from the nineteenth century fresco painting on the ceiling. Aeneas says farewell to his son and wife Andromaca. A replica of a fresco painting showing the Dukedom of Ferrara is depicted in the panel.

M Gallery Room

The original decorations have been lost. Today, the Gallery hosts an exhibition of the "Delizie", the name by which the various leisure lodges the Estes had built throughout the Dukedom are known.

N Land Reclamation Projects

The exhibit here shows the various reclamation works carried out throughout the territory of the Province of Ferrara.

O Room of St. Paolo Tower

The Hall is decorated with grotesques and medallions in the Neo-classical style.

P "Governo" ante-room

This small room was where those who



Hall of Games

had asked for an audience with the duke waited. The ceiling is reminiscent of the one in the following room.

Q "Governo" Room

Commissioned by Ercole II d'Este (1534-1559) to dispatch government business, it still conserves its gold-painted panelled ceiling, one of the most beautiful of its type in all Italy.

R Devolution Room

Ferrara's devolution, that is its transition from Este to Papal domination in 1598, is shown in the ceiling scenes. Clockwise we have: Lucretia d'Este, Duke Cesare d'Este, Cardinal Aldobrandin, one of the many feasts given in honour of Pope Clement VIII upon his arrival.

S Landscapes Room

This room takes its name from the section of the wall decorated with remarkable landscape frescoes, executed in the 18th century by an unknown artist.

T Gallery Hall

This highly ornate room is decorated with grotesques in the Renaissance Revival style.

U The Duke's Private Chambers

Starting in the early sixteenth centu-

ry, Duke Alfonso I had these famous Chambers finely appointed by several of the most renowned artists of the time.

(Open for temporary exhibitions only)

V Geography Room

Splendid geographical maps of the Ferrarese territory, drawn in 1709-1710. Note the vast area covered by water and marshes, most of which has now disappeared following major land reclamation.

W Blue Room


Elegant nineteenth-century ceiling with rosettes and garlands.

X Coats of Arms Room

This room presents a double decoration from the papal period. The oldest decoration consists of a long series of shields with the Pope's tiara and St. Peter's keys. The lower part of the wall is taken up with a decoration executed in 1857 on the occasion of the visit of the Pope Pius IX. More coats of arms and some views of Ferrarese territory as it was at the time; the city of Ferrara (the castle), Comacchio (Trepponti bridge), Cento (the main square), Lugo di Romagna (the porticoes), and Pomposa Abbey




The sixteenth century spiral staircase brings back in the courtyard.

 Leaving the Castle behind, you find yourself in

2 Piazza Savonarola

In the centre stands the **monument to Girolamo Savonarola**, built in 1875 in honour of the famous reformer born in Ferrara in 1452. The small piazza is closed off to the south by a 16th-century loggia which forms part of the Town Hall, to the north by the Castle and to the west by the so-called **via Coperta** (Covered Route), a five-arched building intended to link the two ducal residences.

 Piazza Savonarola overlooks Corso Martiri della Libertà. Turn right towards the Cathedral where you can admire

3 Palazzo Arcivescovile

Corso Martiri della Libertà, 77

Built from 1718 to 1720 by order of the cardinal Tommaso Ruffo. It has a long façade divided into three bays, of which the two side ones are decorated with a pseudo fiat rustication. The windows are framed in marble and the majestic central portal, with a balcony above, is in the same material.

The interior, not open to visitors, has a luxurious staircase, with a double flight of stairs, and sumptuous apartments.

Opposite the Archbishop's Palace stands the

4 Palazzo Municipale

The building of the Town Hall started in 1243. This was the residence of the Este family up to the 16th century, when the court moved to the Castle. Right opposite the Cathedral stands the ancient entrance to the court palace: a **big arch** flanked by the statues of the Marquis Niccolò III on horseback and **Duke Borso of Este enthroned**. Passing through the arch we reach the former ducal courtyard, now known as the piazzetta Municipale.



A fine **grand staircase** can be admired, built in 1481 by the architect Pietro Benvenuto degli Ordini, next to which stands the **court chapel**, commissioned by Ercole I of Este and now used as a theatre. Inside, the following can be visited: the **Duchesses' room** - a small room possibly designed for Eleonora and Lucrezia d'Este and splendidly decorated in the second half of the 16th century, and the **Sala**

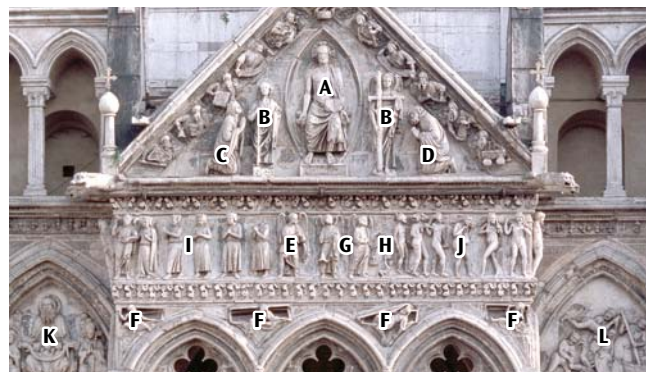
dell'Arengo, with frescoes painted between 1934 and 1938 by Achille Funi.

 Walking through the Vòlto del Cavallo (the Horse Archway) one reaches the

5 Cattedrale

tel. 0532 207449

The Cathedral dates from the 12th century and bears witness to all the historical periods of the city. The outstanding façade, divided into three sections, was begun in Romanesque style, still visible in the lower part. Note the St. George and the scenes from the New Testament above the central door, the work of the sculptor **Nicholaus** (1135). The upper part was built some decades later in a Gothic style and besides the numerous small arches and the splayed mullioned windows presents an extraordinary *Last Judgment* by an unknown sculptor over the central loggia.



- | | |
|---|---|
| A Christ in Glory | H A small devil lowers the dish containing sins in an attempt to damn the souls being judged |
| B Angels with the symbols of the Passion | I The blessed souls, dressed and crowned, set off for Heaven |
| C The Virgin Mary | J The damned souls set off for Hell |
| D St John the Evangelist | K Heaven, Abraham seated with the blessed souls in his lap |
| E Two angels play trumpets | L Hell: sneering devils |
| F The dead leave their tombs | |
| G An angel weighs sins and good deeds on a scale | |

Under these sculptures there is an elegant Gothic loggia with a statue, once gilded, of the *Virgin Mary and the Child*, which dates from the early part of the 15th century and is attributed to Michele da Firenze. In the lower part of the facade, on the left, a memorial tablet recalls the passage of power in Ferrara from the Este family to Pope Clement VIII, whose head in bronze is placed above the marble plaque. To the right, in a niche, stands a statue of the marquis **Alberto d'Este**, founder of the University (1391). The side facing Piazza Trento

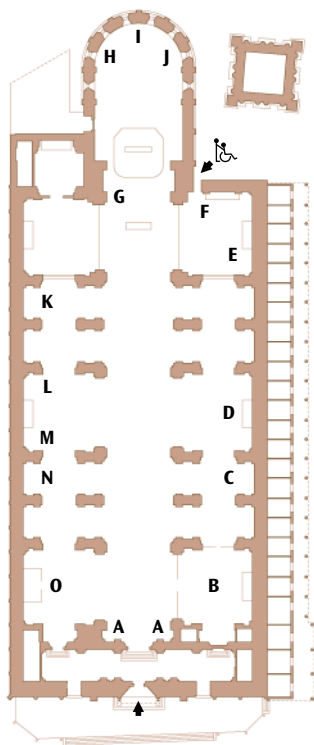
e Trieste is decorated with two galleries and small columns of various shapes. At ground level is the Loggia of the Merchants, occupied by shops since Medieval times. Half way along the south side what remains of the *Porta dei Mesi*, demolished in the 18th century can still be seen; some of its sculptures are conserved in the Cathedral Museum. The imposing Renaissance belltower, in pink and white marble, is an unfinished work attributed to **Leon Battista Alberti**. The brickwork apse, whose sober design is lightly embellished by terracotta arches and marble capitals, is the work of Ferrara's top architect and town planner, **Biagio Rossetti**.

INTERIOR

Over the centuries the interior has been completely redesigned; the apse in the 16th century, the transept in the 17th century and the aisles in the 18th century. Today it has a classic style, whose pictorial decoration is complex and sumptuous. Valuable works representative of various eras can be admired there.

A In the entrance to the cathedral there are some noteworthy works: *St Peter and St Paul*, frescoes removed from a deconsecrated church, the work of **Benvenuto Tisi da Garofalo** (1481-1559), maestro of the Ferrarese school. Above, in two niches, the monumental statues of the co-patrons of Ferrara, St George and Bishop St. Maurilius, realised in 1746.

B The Chapel of *Madonna delle Grazie*: here an image of the Virgin Mary particularly dear to the Ferrarese people is worshipped. It is conserved inside a magnificent polychromatic marble altar by **Agapito Poggi** and



Andrea Ferreri (18th century).

C *Madonna in Glory with St. Barbara and St. Catherine*; canvas by Sebastiano Filippi, known as **Bastianino** (1532-c.1602).

D *St. Lawrence and St. Francis, with a portrait of the donator*; by Ippolito Scarsella, known as **Scarsellino** (1550-1620).

E *The Martyrdom of St Lawrence*, by Giovan Francesco Barbieri, known as **Guercino** (1591-1666).

F Above the supine funeral monument of Archbishop Ruggero Bovelli there is a beautiful group of 15th cen-

tury bronze statues; The *Crucifixion with the Virgin Mary and St John*, the work of **Niccolò Baroncelli**; to the sides are *St. George and St. Maurilius*, realised by his brother-in-law, **Domenico di Paris**.

G Tomb of Pope Urban III. The pontiff died unexpectedly in Ferrara 1187, while staying in the city during a journey.

H Choir (early 16th century): the work of the **Canozzi** family from Lendinara, cabinet makers who worked all over northern Italy.

I The walls of the apse are covered in magnificent gilded stucco executed in 1583-84 by **Agostino Rossi** and **Vincenzo Bagnoli**.

J The bowl-shaped vault of the apse: *Last Judgment* by **Bastianino**. The fresco (completed in 1580) is

clearly inspired by the work of Michelangelo.

K *Crowning of the Virgin Mary and Saints*, canvas by **F. Francia** (1450-c.1517).

L *Betrothal of the Virgin Mary*, by **Niccolò Roselli** (16th century).

M *Mary as Intercessor*, executed by **Garofalo** in 1532 as a votive offering for the liberation from the plague which began in 1528.

N *Madonna Enthroned with Child and Saints Sylvester, Maurilius, Jerome and John*, signed and dated (1524) by **Garofalo**.

O Baptistery Chapel: the baptismal font, based on Byzantine models, was made from a single block of marble in the 13th century. It is surrounded by an elaborate neo-Gothic construction from the late 19th-century.

On the right side of the Cathedral opens the wide

6 Piazza Trento e Trieste

It was for centuries the location of the main town market. Nowadays it features a widening to the south of the Cathedral, whose southern wall, together with the bell tower, occupies one of its largest sides. On the opposite side a building built to a design by Marcello Piacentini from 1954 to 1956 in place of the 14th century **Palazzo della Ragione**, destroyed by a fire in 1945. Further on, past the side of the former **Church of San Romano**, there is the façade with large windows of the **Teatro Nuovo**, built from 1923 to 1925 by Sesto and Adamo Boari. The piazza is closed off to the east by the neo-classical façade of the



former oratory of **San Crispino**. This later building has a curious feature: on the capitols of the side arches of the portico shields with a shoe sole in their centre can be clearly seen: this is the mark of the guild of cobblers, for centuries housed in this oratory, dedicated to its patron.

Along the South side of the piazza, the former Church of San Romano with its brick façade, houses the

7 Museo della Cattedrale

Via San Romano • tel. 0532 244949




The Cathedral Museum mostly holds objects from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance belonging to the Cathedral.

Among these are the 13th-century panels from the Porta dei Mesi, the side entrance to the cathedral demolished in the 18th century; the *Madonna of the Pomegranate* by **Jacopo della Quercia**; the previous decorative panels of the organ, depicting the *Annunciation* and *St. George and the Dragon* by **Cosmè Tura**, the master of the 15th-century Ferrarese school. A rich collection of illuminated antiphonal hymn-books, reliquaries, paintings and other works of art complete this interesting museum.

 **Via San Romano** starts in front of the church and was a main artery in the mediaeval city.

This ancient road was the main link between the market square (currently piazza Trento e Trieste) and the port, which was situated at the present via Ripagrande.

Nowadays, as before, it is one of the busiest commercial streets and with several houses with porticoes.

 Turn left off San Romano into Via Vignatagliata that is one of the streets encompassed in the Jewish Quarter.

8 Ghetto - Museo Ebraico

Via Mazzini, 95 • tel. 0532 210228




The origins of the Jewish community in Ferrara are very ancient and the city boasts a tradition of religious diversity. Many groups of Jews, driven out of their native countries

- Spain (1492), Portugal (1498) and Germany (1530) - were welcomed by the Este family. They settled in Ferrara and created a strong and well-organised community. The ghetto was set up in 1627 by the papal government which, after the devolution of 1598, ended the previously liberal policy. The area set aside included the present via Mazzini, via Vignatagliata and via Vittoria. The **Synagogue** is found in via Mazzini, at n. 95. The front of the building is distinguished from its neighbours by the memorial stones at the entrance.

Among the most important parts inside are the former German Synagogue, used for the most solemn ceremonies, the erstwhile Italian Synagogue, and the Fanese Oratory, used for Sabbath worship. In this historic building there is also the **Jewish Museum**: liturgical objects, 18th century furnishings, and printed documents with works of the celebrated Isacco Lampronti, a doctor and theologian who lived between the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century.

As a matter of interest - The column supporting the statue of Borso d'Este facing the Cathedral was built using miscellaneous grave stones from the Jewish cemetery.

 Walking along via Ragno, one reaches the charming

9 Via delle Volte

In this long and narrow road, whose unmistakable appearance has become one of the symbols of Ferrara, much of the commercial activity of the Medieval city took place.



There are still many elevated passages (known as “volte”) which joined the merchants’ houses (on the south side) to their warehouses (on the north side). According to another interpretation, the volte were used to regain living space in a highly populated area.

 Diversion for the southern city walls at Porta Paula.

Following Via delle Volte will take you to the junction with Corso Porta Reno where we suggest you make a little detour by turning right to visit the


10 Chiesa di San Paolo

Piazzetta Schiatti • tel. 0532 765284





The current church was built after the earthquake in 1570 by the architect **Alberto Schiatti**. Officiated for centuries by Carmelite monks, the church was the object of a number of legacies and donations which made it today’s sumptuous building. On one side there still stands the former convent, with two elegant cloisters.

Interior: the frescoes and excellent paintings from the 16th and 17th centuries make this church a museum of late Renaissance Ferrarese art. Particularly fine are some works by **Bastianino**. In the bowl-shaped vault of the apse there is the fine fresco *Elijah’s Abduction* by **Scarsellino** (16th century). [TEMPORARILY CLOSED]

 You can return to the planned route by taking Via Capo delle Volte. Keep on going until you can turn right into Via Muzzina.

The streets in this mediaeval area are laid out in “riviera” style and were initially designed to provide housing for soldiers. Continuing along Via Muzzina you will come to the wonderful Chiesa di San Nicolò with its famous apse designed by Biagio Rossetti.

 The street ends at the junction with Via Garibaldi, one of the oldest and most important arteries of the city. It was once known as Via della Rotta (breach) in an obvious reference to flooding caused by breaches in the banks of the River Po.

 Little diversion along via Spadari to reach the

11 Chiesa di San Domenico

Via Spadari • tel. 0532 203383

The church was built in its present form in 1726, in place of an older one, of which a chapel and the bell tower remain, to be seen to the right of the façade.


In the interior: pictures by Ferrarese painters of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. The floor is covered in ancient tombstones, an example of what was once a common feature of churches. The apse contains a wooden choir built in 1384.

 Little diversion along via Bocccanale di Santo Stefano to reach the

12 Chiesa di Santo Stefano

Piazzetta Saint-Etienne • tel. 0532 203969

A very ancient church (11th century), it has been rebuilt a number of times. The present façade, the work of extensive restoration performed in 1825, has an elegant decoration in brickwork and a marble portal taken from another church, no longer standing. The three-nave interior contains interesting works by Giacomo Parolini and Scarsellino (17th century). Opposite the church stand Medieval houses which are worthy of note.


 The tour continues into Via Garibaldi until it meets Via della Luna where, a left turn will take you to the Piazza Repubblica where you will be greeted by the façade of the

13 Chiesa di San Giuliano

Piazza Repubblica


This small church was built in 1405 in place of an older one, demolished during the building of the Castello Estense. The lines of the building are Gothic, with decorations in the typical brickwork of Ferrara, in particular those of the tricuspid portal, above which a marble relief represents St. Julian killing his parents. The interior was rebuilt in the 18th century. [NOT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC]



 From Piazza Girolamo Savonarola, turning right towards the **Cathedral** (page 21), you will reach the 18th century **Palazzo Municipale** (page 20) with the Palazzo Arcivescovile on your left. When you reach the Cathedral, turn left into

1 Via degli Adelardi

It flanks the northern side of the Cathedral, in fired brick and tiles throughout. Here stands the ancient Bishop's House, which can be recognised by the long row of paired windows framed in fired brick. The same building houses the most ancient *osteria* or hostelry in the world, also mentioned by Ludovico Ariosto.

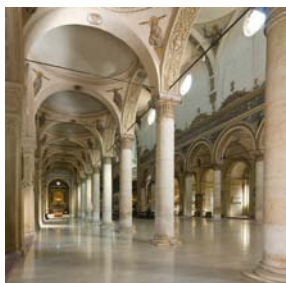
 Continuing along this street will lead you to

2 Via Voltapaletto - Via Savonarola

This is a thoroughfare "added" by Niccolò III, formerly known as *via di San Francesco*, from the church of the same name which stands at the corner with *via Terranuova*.


3 Chiesa di San Francesco

Piazzale S. Francesco • tel. 0532 209646



The present church is the third one built on this site where the Franciscans had settled as early as the 13th century and was built by **Biagio Rossetti** from 1494 onwards. The brickwork façade is divided up by pilaster strips in marble in the first order and in fired brick and tiles in the second, which is linked to the lower one by very large scrolls. The brickwork frieze in the line separating

the two orders is remarkable, with its portrait of St. Francis, borne by angels, which is repeated tens of times. The interior has a Latin cross plan, with three naves and eight chapels on each side. Only a few traces of all the decorative patterns formed over the centuries remain today. Particularly interesting is the first chapel on the left, with an unusual altar-piece sculpted in tufaceous stone *Jesus Praying in the Garden of Gethsemane* from 1521. The right-hand wall has the splendid fresco *The Capture of Christ* (1524) by Garofalo. In the right wing of the transept we can see the grandiose **mausoleum** of the Marquis Ghiron Francesco Villa, famous general under the Savoia family: an almost unique example of a Baroque tomb in Ferrara.

 Passed the Church of San Francesco stands

4 Casa Romei

Via Savonarola, 30 • tel. 0532 234130

This house, an almost unique example of an aristocratic residence of the 15th century, was built for the banker Giovanni Romei and, on his death, became part of the adjacent Corpus Domini monastery. The courtyard is extremely fine, with its double loggia and large monogram of Christ in terracotta on the back wall. It should be noted how the architect, probably Pietrobono Brasavola, used Medieval elements and Renaissance features, effortlessly juxtaposing them.



In the ground floor rooms there are **frescoes** from the original decoration, in an international Gothic style, in addition to a large painted Medieval fireplace. In other rooms on the same floor there is a small museum, with sculptures of various origins.

On the first floor an apartment, built in the 16th century for Cardinal Ippolito II of Este and used for centuries by the illustrious guests of the Monastery, can be visited. The "grotesque" decorations of the ceilings recall those of the ducal residences but are more understated and, given the setting of the rooms in a religious environment, the main pictures represent Biblical scenes, in place of the mythological scenes in fashion in aristocratic houses. In the decorative bands the heraldic symbol of Cardinal Ippolito II, the white eagle, is often to be found.

 On the opposite side stands

5 Palazzo di Renata di Francia


Via Savonarola, 9

The palazzo was built around 1475. A few years later Biagio Rossetti took over, as seen by the decentralised position of the main portal, once more grandiose and still today crowned by the Este device of the unicorn.

The building takes its name from the wife of Duke Ercole II who often lived there, possibly to stay away from the court where she was kept under close



control due to her approval of the ideas of the Reformation. The courtyard still has a Renaissance appearance, while the façade and the interior were totally rebuilt in the 18th century. Since 1963 the building has housed the University. Behind the building opens the park, now a public garden, surrounded by high walls. The entrance is on *corso Giovecca*.


 After Casa Romei, turn right into *Via Pergolato*: on the corner with *Via Campofranco* stands the

6 Monastero del Corpus Domini

Via Pergolato, 4 • tel. 0532 207825



Founded in 1406, this convent of cloistered Clarisse nuns conserves the heirlooms of St. Catherine de Vigri, a mystic and a writer who lived here until 1456. The convent owes its fame to the fact that several members of the Este family are buried in the nuns' choir: Eleonora d'Aragona, Alfonso I, Ercole II, Alfonso II and the famous Lucrezia Borgia. The interior of the public church was richly decorated in the Baroque era.

 Turn left at the end of *Via Pergolato* into *Via Borgo di Sotto* to arrive at


7 Oratorio dell'Annunziata

Via Borgo di Sotto, 49 • tel. 0532 741009

The Oratory, built in 1376 as the seat of the "Confraternity of Death", currently has a simple 16th-century façade, attributed by some to Aleotti. The interior is divided into two halls, lower and upper: the latter was decorated with frescoes which narrate the *Legend of the Wood of the Holy Cross*. The frescoes, the work of Camillo Filippi, Bastianino, Roselli and Dielaì, are not all of the highest standard, but they do represent a rare and interesting example of 16th-century decoration which is still intact. Behind the altar there is an older Resurrection with a Pisanello influence.



The Resurrection of Christ's detail

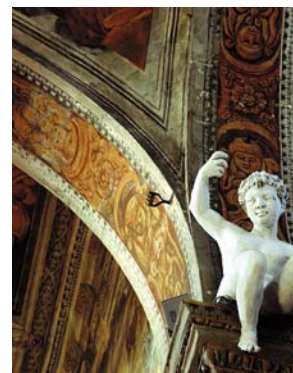
 Continuing along *Via Borgo di Sotto* will lead you to the

8 Chiesa di Santa Maria in Vado

Via Borgovado • tel. 0532 65127

Built near a ford (*vado*) of the Po, there is mention of this church from the 10th century onwards. In 1171 a miraculous event took place there: at the moment of the consecration, drops of blood sprayed from the Host, and washed over the vault of the church (at that time small).

Rebuilt in 1495 with the technical assistance of Ercole de' Roberti and Bigagio Rossetti, the church has a façade in fired brick and tiles, decorated by a fine marble portal and crowned by statues. Richly decorated, the interior has a basilica plan, with an apse, and divided into three naves by two rows of columns. The wings of the transept, with two chapels per side, house a 16th-century organ and the **Sanctuary of the Precious Blood**, in which the ancient vault is preserved with the traces of blood of the Eucharistic miracle.



 Along *via Scandiana* stands

9 Palazzo Schifanoia

Via Scandiana, 23 • tel. 0532 244949

The building was built in a green area by order of Alberto of Este in 1385 and was later converted and extended, above all during the era of Borso. The façade has a **large portal**, exquisitely sculpted, while the current open brick face replaces the original one, which consisted of plaster frescoed with brightly coloured hexagons. The interior decorations have also been greatly ruined, although what remains is unanimously considered to be one of the greatest masterpieces of the Italian Renaissance.

The most famous and interesting room is definitely the **Sala dei Mesi** (Room of the Months), frescoed by Ferrara painters of the 15th century: **Francesco del Cossa**, **Ercole de' Roberti** and others. Painted pilaster strips divide the walls into squares, each corresponding to a month.

Each square is in turn divided horizontally into three parts. The up-



per band depicts triumphs of pagan divinities: this part symbolises the world of God, who has provided Man with laws of behaviour. The lower part however symbolises the world of Man, through scenes from everyday life, both of the people and of the court. There is a third band between these two, with western horoscope signs, accompanied by the decans of the Egyptian zodiac. The meaning of this band is that astrology, a “science” much prized by the Ferrara court, is none other than a symbolic means whereby man can understand the will of God, otherwise unknown to him. Among the many other symbols which can be interpreted in the frescoes we must not forget the glorification of the patron, Duke Borso, repeatedly represented in every month while he wisely governs his states. After the serious damage to the frescoes over the centuries, today only the months from March to September (to be read anti-clockwise) can be seen.

In the adjacent **Sala degli Stucchi** (Stuccoes Room) a splendid gilded and painted panelled ceiling can be admired, created by **Domenico di Paris** (15th century) and depicting the cardinal and theological virtues and the Este family devices.

The Palazzo houses the **Civic Museum of Ancient Art**, with its many collections: archaeology, coins, bronzes and plaques etc., Particularly fine are the illuminated antiphonaries, the collection of medals, with many portraits of the Este family, paintings and ivories.



Opposite the palace, one can visit the

10 Museo Civico Lapidario

Via Camosabbionario • tel. 0532 244949

This museum is housed in the former **church of S. Libera** built in the 15th century. The Civic Lapidary has the main collection of Roman marbles from the Ferrara area. The finds are exhibited in topographical order. Particularly interesting are the great sarcophagus of the Aurelii (3rd century AD), a true masterpiece of craft from Ravenna, and the small sarcophagus of the child Neon (3rd century AD), from Voghenza, the most important Roman town in the area.



Return along Via Madama and turn right for

11 Palazzo Bonacossi

Via Cisterna del Follo, 5 • tel. 0532 244949

This was built in 1468 for Diotisalvi Neroni, a Florentine exile protected by Borso d’Este. His simple and austere palace has a tower with battlements at the centre. Its present appearance dates back to 1572, when it was bought by Francesco I d’Este to join it up with

the little Marfisa d’Este Palace. In 1643 the property was acquired by Conti Bonacossi who was responsible for the opening of the present windows, and the installation of balconies, besides the interior decoration from the baroque and classical periods.

This building is home to the **Musei Civici d’Arte Antica** that houses the prized **Riminaldi collection** made up of marble busts, miscellaneous paintings, statues, bronzes and fossils.



Take Via Ugo Bassi and turn right into Corso Giovecca to reach

12 Palazzina Marfisa d’Este

Corso Giovecca, 170 • tel. 0532 244949

This is a magnificent example of an aristocratic residence of the 16th century, once surrounded by splendid gardens in which other buildings stood.

Built by Francesco d’Este, the small *palazzo* formed part of a larger group of buildings, linked by the garden which is no longer in existence. Passed down as an inheritance to the daughter Marfisa, it then took the name of this princess, who lived there until her death, refusing to leave Ferrara even when her family moved to Modena. Inside we can admire the frescoes on the ceilings, partially repainted in the 20th century, the work of the **Filippi studio**. The “grotesque” decoration here achieves great sophistication and sumptuousness. The *palazzina* is furnished with **furniture from the 16th and 17th centuries**, partly from Ferrara and partly purchased on the antiques market. Worthy of note are the marble bust of Duke Ercole I, the work of Sperandio da Mantova (15th century) and the sculpture of the *Madonna Worshipped by Duke Alfonso I*, of the **Lombardi school** (16th century).

The loggia, once open on the outside, has two fresco portraits of little girls on the walls: these are the two daughters of Francesco d’Este, Marfisa and Bradamante.

Through what remains of the garden a frescoed loggia, once used for concerts and small shows, can be reached.



13 Corso Giovecca

This Street forms the link between the Medieval city to the south, and the Addizione Ercolea to the north, thus forming the main thoroughfare of the city. The road is closed off to the east by the **Prospettiva archway**: a theatrical 18th-century arch built to a design by Francesco Mazzarelli, to serve as a permanent scenic structure at the end of corso Giovecca. From here, you can go up on to the city walls.

WHERE THE RIVER ONCE FLOWED

Until the 12th century, Via Ripagrande was the main branch of the Po that today runs a few kilometres away to the north of the city. It originally flowed past the southern walls, where in the past a river port handled the shipping of goods. The south of the city was the oldest part and extended along the banks of the river, where various streets along which goods were taken to the marketplace met with it. This area is still largely intact and offers glimpses of buildings of significant cultural and religious importance. When the course of the main river was re-routed to the north of the city, the riverbed gradually narrowed and new buildings were erected; later, Duke Borso had the area encircled by the city walls to create a new quarter.

THE ITINERARY IN BRIEF




CASTELLO ESTENSE

Starting point of the route

- 1** Palazzo Paradiso
- 2** Chiesa di San Gregorio
- 3** Casa di Stella dell'Assassino
- 4** Monastero di Sant'Antonio in Polesine
- 5** Palazzo Costabili
Museo Archeologico Nazionale
- Byzantine Castrum**
- 6** Via XX Settembre
- 7** Casa di Biagio Rossetti
- 8** Chiesa di San Giorgio



 The tour starts from the **Castle Estense** (page 16), crosses Piazza Savonarola and heads towards the **Cathedral** (page 21). It then takes along the front of the 18th century **Palazzo Municipale** on your right with the Palazzo Arcivescovile on your left.

After the Cathedral, cross **Piazza Trento e Trieste** (page 23) and take Via Mazzini, one of the main arteries of the old Jewish quarter. In Via Scienze, you will find

1 Palazzo Paradiso

Via delle Scienze, 17 • tel. 0532 418200


Built in 1391 by order of Alberto of Este, the building later had various owners until 1567 when Cardinal Ippolito II d'Este rented it to the city authorities in order to transfer all the university faculties there. In 1753 the **Civic Library** was founded here, later dedicated to Ariosto. Of special interest are the **tomb of Ludovico Ariosto**, designed by **Aleotti** in 1612, the grandiose main staircase and the **Anatomy Theatre**, both from the 18th century.

 After Via Giuoco del Pallone, Vicolo Granchio, will take you to **Via Cammello**, in front of the

2 Chiesa di San Gregorio

Via Cammello, 19 • tel. 0532 209794

The existence of the church is documented from 1035 onwards. The Gothic façade in fired brick, restored in 1932, and the ancient bell tower (1092, made higher in the 14th century) make it a particularly evocative building.

 At a short distance stands

3 Casa di Stella dell'Assassino

Via Cammello, 15

This is a tall building, with massive walls and ogival windows and doors. Traditionally it is known as the house of Stella dei Tolomei, favourite mistress of Niccolò III, to whom she gave three famous sons: Leonello, Ugo and Borso. The nickname dell'Assassino was possibly attributed to her given that her father was from Assisi (with the adjective Assisino - from Assisi, later turned into Assassino- murderer).

[NOT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC]

 This route will take you along the streets where the bed of the River Po once lay and where in the fifteenth century, a new quarter sprang up with churches, streets and mansion houses that Borso d'Este had included to the city.

At the end of Via Quartieri you come to the city walls and passing through Porta San Pietro will take you into the park area outside the walls.

Secluded in Via del Gambone from the rest of the city that surrounds it, lies the

4 Monastero di Sant'Antonio in Polesine

Via del Gambone • tel. 0532 64068

Founded by Saint Beatrice II d'Este on an island in the centre of the old Po, this group of buildings is of great importance and still has a special atmosphere of peace and isolation.

The small public church, in the Baroque style, has a remarkable

frescoed ceiling from the 17th century. Inside the church **three chapels with precious frescoes** can be visited: the left-hand chapel contains the *Stories of the Childhood of Jesus* and the *Life of the Virgin*, of the Giotto school (1315-20). In the right-hand chapel *Stories of the Passion* can be seen, also of the Giotto school, painted between the end of the 13th and the middle of the 14th century.

The central chapel has frescoes of different schools and periods, including the delicate *Annunciation* by D. Panetti (1460-1530) and the 16th-century "grotesque" ceiling. The nuns' choir and a 16th-century *Flagellation*, with a precious gilded and sculpted wood altar-piece, are also interesting. The monastery has other interesting features, above all the elegant cloisters and the tomb of the foundress saint, to whom a number of traditions of religious devotion are linked.



 Leaving the Monastero di Sant'Antonio in Polesine behind you, turn right and take Via Beatrice d'Este until you come to the

5 Palazzo Costabili Museo Archeologico Nazionale

Via XX Settembre, 124 • tel. 0532 66299

Begun in 1500 by order of A. Costabili, Este ambassador at the court of Ludovico il Moro, Duke of Milan, the *Palazzo* is an important work of **Biagio Rossetti**, who however left it unfinished. The marble decoration of the pilaster strips and of the steps of the main staircase, by Gabriele Frisoni, is worthy of note.

The original pictorial decoration can still be seen in some rooms of the 16th century



frescoed by **Garofalo**, particularly noteworthy is the frescoed ceiling of the **Sala del Tesoro** where the influence of Mantegna can be seen. The building, bought by the government in 1920, became the seat of the **National Archaeological Museum**. It exhibits the findings of the Etruscan city of **Spina**, which flourished from the 6th to the 3rd century B.C. and which was discovered at the beginning of the 20th century during the reclamation works. The museum conserves various types of objects of excellent artistic quality, most of which come from the necropolis. In the port of Spina, an important trading centre, goods from all over the known world used to arrive and a considerable wealth spread among its inhabitants.

The abundance of sets for symposium of Athenian origin bears witness to the city's close cultural links with Greece. Particularly fascinating are the large **Attic symposium vases** upon which are depicted mythological episodes and scenes of daily life.

Other objects, such as candelabras, tripods, stands, mostly in bronze, were made by the Etruscans. Some candelabra cymatia are true works of sculpture. Note the High Adriatic ceramics, produced locally when commerce with Greece came to a halt. The museum has been greatly enriched by the exhibition on display in the **Sala degli Ori** that houses almost a hundred items of gold, silver, amber and paste stone jewellery e pasta recovered from tomb decorations dating back to the sixth and seventh centuries A. D.



Panathenaic vase

6 Via XX Settembre


This Street was once known as via della Ghiara (Gravel Street) in that it ran along the old course of the Po which, as it dried up, left large quantities of round stones, known as *ghiaioni*, uncovered. Marquis Niccolò III d'Este had it levelled off in 1401 and donated land to those who wanted to build houses. It later became the main thoroughfare of the Addizione di Borso. The road is closed off by an 18th-century archway.

 Heading east along Via XX Settembre will take you to the

7 Casa di Biagio Rossetti

Via XX Settembre, 152

The house was built in 1490 by the great architect and town-planner **Biagio Rossetti** for himself and his family. It is a small building with a simple design, whose door and windows are crowned by arch vaults in brickwork and a highly projecting cornice, decorated with panels in the same material. [TEMPORARILY CLOSED]

 Detour here for the city walls of Alfonso I. Crossing the San Giorgio bridge will lead you to the first cathedral in Ferrara, the **Church of St. George**, dedicated to the city's Patron Saint.

8 Chiesa di San Giorgio

Piazzale San Giorgio • tel. 0532 62231



The church of St. George is mentioned from the 10th century onwards and was the **city cathedral** up to the 12th century. From the middle of the 15th century the monastery buildings and church were administered by the monks of the "Olivetian Congregation". The **bell tower** was built in 1485 by **Biagio Rossetti**.

The current layout of the church is the result of alterations made by Alberto Schiatti (1581) and later work in the 17th century. The façade in fired brick is decorated by a large stone bas-relief: *St. George slaying the Dragon*. The interior has a basilica plan with three naves and an apse. In the area of the presbytery stands the sepulchral monument of Lorenzo Roverella, bishop of Ferrara, rich in elegant decorations. At the entrance to the bell tower there is the tomb of the painter **Cosmè Tura**, leader of the Ferrara painting school. The sacristy and cloisters, the only remains of the large ancient convent, have a very elegant design.

On the way back, **Via Coperta** and **Via Ghisiglieri** are some of the ancient streets that, according to historians, lay at the very heart of development of the city. The horseshoe layout of these streets bears witness to the past existence of a "**castrum**" or military defensive building founded by Ravenna Byzantines in about the 8th century on the left bank where of River Po once flowed.



THE WALLS

The walls, stretching for nine kilometres, surround Ferrara almost entirely, forming one of the most comprehensive and varied routes in Italy. All the most significant periods of Italian military architecture are represented there, surrounded by the greenery of the embankments and ramparts. Also studied by Michelangelo as an example of the highest military art, the red tile curtain walls bear witness to the important past of the city.

Nowadays, the city walls have become a large park, in addition to the smaller ones within the city.



The Fortifications of the Addizione Erculea

1 2 From Torrione del Barco to Torrione di San Giovanni

The north walls were mostly built between 1493 and 1505 by the court architect **Biagio Rossetti**, commissioned by Duke Ercole I d'Este, in order to defend the city from any attacks by the Venetians. The embanked town-walls are supplemented, according to a well-defined plan, by low semicircular keeps. Great importance was given to the embankment against the base of the keeps, which served to dampen the overwhelming projectile force. On the rear part of the embankment tall trees were planted which strengthened it. The moat in front was filled with water.

At the northwest end of the town-walls stands the **Torrione del Barco** ("torrione" = keep), built as from 1493, which represents the most advanced example of military architecture between the two centuries. Continuing eastwards we come to six smaller keeps, with a semicircular base, which allowed crossfire by crossbows and small artillery through the slits and openings between the merlons. In this section the walls are sharply interrupted by two barrel vaults formed in 1959 at the exit of via **Azzo Novello**. The **Porta degli Angeli** was built in 1526, but was already included in the 15th-century design, at the bottom of *via degli Angeli*. According to tradition the last Duke of Ferrara, Cesare, exited through this gate in 1598, year of devolution of the city to the Papal State. In front of it an embanked arrow-shaped rampart was built in 1991 to replace the original one erected in the 16th century to defend the northern part of the city and then destroyed in 1859. An elevated passage allows the rampart to be reached.

In the subsequent section 12 embrasures for heavy firearms inserted in the wall system were recently discovered and restored. A short distance away there is a nineteenth-century ice-house. The moat was known in the sixteenth century as the "Duke's Fishery" as there was a mooring point for the ducal boats, and also because tournaments took place on the water there, attended by the court.

We then come to the **Punta della Montagnola**. The eighteenth-century works totally altered the appearance of the walls in this point, by the total demolition of a tower and the alterations to the curtain wall, with the building of point *della Montagnola*. The name was taken from an artificial hill created in the 16th century in order to serve as a high and privileged vantage point. The decorative element of the kerb or earth layer at the top of the slope and also serving as an obstacle to the climb of assailants, is of interest.

The sixteenth-century ramparts

2 3 From Torrione di San Giovanni to Torrione di San Lorenzo

These walls were designed for Alfonso I, who between 1512 and 1518 had the first arrow ramparts built in the eastern part of the city.

The first salient military point is the **Punta di San Rocco** - not a true rampart but instead a "diversion", used to defend the **Baluardo di San Rocco** ("baluardo" = rampart), built in 1518 and demolished around 1870. Further on, the **Punta della Giovecca** hill can be seen, at the sides of which two barrel vaults were

formed in 1937.

Next there are the **Doccile di San Tommaso**, built in the 17th century to convey the city's waste water outside of the city centre and the **Baluardo di San Tommaso**, a rampart whose simple triangular plan without orillions at the side dominates the section of wall prior

to the **Baluardo del Montagnone**. The latter is a second artificial hillock, built as from 1512 and with a platform immediately on top as a high vantage point. It was originally much higher, and at present it serves the simple function of a park area and memory of an ancient and vast garden, of which the elegant nearby building of the Bagni Ducali ("ducal baths") formed a part. At the entrance to *Via Marco Polo* the **Baluardo di San Giorgio** and a 17th-18th century sentry-box, the last remaining of those built during the period, can be seen. To remind us of the ancient **Porta San Giorgio** the remains of the **Prospettiva** archway, partially demolished during bombing in 1944, can still be seen.

In the section from San Giorgio to **Porta Paola** there are four impressive **ramparts** built between 1575 and 1585 by order of Alfonso II. The first three known as *dell'Amore*, *di S. Antonio* and *di S. Pietro* are the type with round orillions ("ace-of-spades") with open embrasures at the top and casemates at the lower levels. Among the ramparts opens the **Porta San Pietro** where a sloping section allows to change from rampart to ground level or vice versa.

The Pontifical Defence ramparts

4 5 From Porta Paola to Baluardo di Santa Maria alla Fortezza

Porta Paola was built in 1612 to a design by C. B. Aleotti and was dedicated to Pope Paul V, who reigned at that time. It was positioned in the centre of the bastions, consisting of the ramparts of **San Paolo** and **San Lorenzo**, renovated in the 16th century. In 1901, at the sides of the Gate, two openings were made and it was reduced to a customs barrier. The two Ramparts of **San Paolo** and **Santa Maria della Fortezza** are what remains of the pentagonal fortress of Ferrara: built between 1608 and 1618, after the departure of the Este family, it was mostly demolished between 1859 and 1865.

5 1 From Baluardo di Santa Maria alla Fortezza to Torrione del Barco

The itinerary along the walls, after a break, can begin again at the entrance to *viale Belvedere*, where the rampart of **San Benedetto** had been built by the Este family in 1582 and then demolished as from 1846. From here, covering another section of wall distinguished by the Salient of **Porta Catena** (16th century), the **Barco** Keep is reached once again.



Live the city

Events all year round



Every season has a wealth of quality events that will enrich your visit to the city and its surroundings. Every year the **Teatro Comunale**, a magnificent example of 17th century Italian Theatre construction, blessed with an exceptional acoustic, presents a season outstanding for the quality and the variety of its range of **plays, opera, dance and concerts**.

The most important Art exhibitions are held in the prestigious Palazzo dei Diamanti.

In the month of April takes place the Kites Festival, a gathering of kite-makers from many countries and a festival much enjoyed by nature-lovers.

May is the month of the **Palio**, the historical show that takes place in several stages: the Competitions in the ancient art of throwing, catching and waving the Este flags; the Historical Procession with over one thousand participants wearing Renaissance costumes; and finally the spectacular races of the Palio in Piazza Ariostea.

The last week of August is dedicated to **Ferrara Buskers Festival**, the greatest review of street musicians and artists in Italy, with shows in the streets and in the squares of the historical centre.

The **Ferrara Balloons Festival** in September is one of the biggest festivals of hot air ballooning in Europe where the public can experience the thrill of flight in either tethered or free balloon flights, parachute jumps, or plane flights over the city and the Po Delta.

New Year in the city, celebrated as the Feast of **New Year's Eve**, is a joyful occasion: a non-stop concert heightened still further by the fireworks at midnight, when the Estense Castle becomes the backdrop for fireworks and cascades of light accompanied by an impressive soundtrack.

Bicycles

The true queen of the city streets is the bicycle: the most popular means of transport in Ferrara. Almost everybody uses it, and not

only for sport or leisure-time activities, but also to go to work, to school or shopping, whatever the weather, often amazing visitors, who are not accustomed to seeing so many cyclists riding fast in all directions. Bicycle represents an enjoyable and a peculiar way of visiting Ferrara, since it allows you to ride through the narrowest and most typical streets, stop at any corner, ride across the centre and the pedestrian precinct, cover, in a twinkle of an eye, the distance between the monuments and the places of interest scattered all around the wide historical centre.

Besides the sightseeing tour of the city you should not miss the cycling or walking tour of the **Walls**, 9 km in length, where several tracks have been arranged for that purpose, both on top of the embankment and along the moat. Through the **Parco Urbano** it is possible to reach the **river Po**, a short distance to the north, where the longest cycling route in the province runs.



Info

tel. +39 0532 299303
www.ferrarainfo.com
www.comune.fe.it



Shopping and markets

Shopping in town you can take back home a piece of Ferrara and profit from the different opportunities offered by shops and local department stores.

A tradition forgotten for centuries, the Renaissance art of **graffito ceramics** was revived a few decades ago: the outcome is a series of fine objects which preserve the charm of bygone days. The items on sell range from small and simple cups to sumptuous ceremonial dishes, all coloured with vegetable paint. Anything can be purchased in the city centre, around the Cathedral and in the streets nearby: Via San Romano, flanked by arcades, Via Cortevicchia, Corso Porta Reno and Via Garibaldi. It is the traditional commercial area, where shops have lined the streets since ancient times. Nowadays, however, many shops offering a wide range of items are scattered all over the city, or are located in the big and elegant shopping centres in the outskirts of Ferrara. For those who love to buy from Street stalls, Ferrara offers two weekly markets, extending over large areas and allowing a great choice, both in quality and price. Every month, the antique and the handicrafts markets have become a rendez-vous for enthusiasts.



Markets

ARTICLES FROM THE PAST ANTIQUES AND CRAFT MARKET

Each first Saturday and Sunday
of the month (except August)

Piazza Trento Trieste

Piazza Savonarola

STREET MARKET OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS

Each second Sunday of the month
(except July, August, December,
January)

Piazza Trento Trieste

ARTISTIC CRAFTS STREET MARKET

Each third Saturday and Sunday of
the month (except July and August)

Piazza Trento Trieste

CRAFT MARKET

WORKS OF ORIGINAL DESIGN

Each fourth Saturday and Sunday of
the month (except July and August)

Piazza Trento Trieste

WEEKLY MARKET

Each Monday and Friday
of the week

Piazza Travaglio, Piazza Trento Trieste

Cuisine

The popular country traditions and their simple and natural tastes, blended with the customs of the elaborate dishes of the ducal court, give birth to the Ferrarese cuisine and its special flavours.

Something that is always present on the Ferrarese table is **bread**, called "coppia" (pair), unique for its twisted and elaborate shape, which was probably invented by Cristoforo da Messisbugo, cook at the service of Alfonso I and Ercole II d'Este.

Together with **lasagne** and **cappelletti** (a local variant of the more famous tortellini), **capellacci**, filled with squash and parmesan cheese, are also very popular. Not to be forgotten is the **pasticcio di maccheroni** (macaroni pie), a true triumph of the ancient courtesan traditions: a sweet short pastry filled with macaroni in bechamel sauce and white bolognese sauce, flavoured with mushrooms and truffles. Among the main courses, the **salama da sugo** is the queen of Sunday tables: it is an unusual mixture of pork meat savoured with wine and spices, left drying for many months in its roundish wrapping. It is usually served with a potato purée, which complements perfectly its very strong taste.

Pampepato is the name of the most popular Ferrarese cake, created centuries ago by the nuns of the venerated convent of Corpus Domini and once made at home for Christmas time: it is a spiced chocolate bread enriched with lots of almonds and candied fruit, topped with a thick layer of melted chocolate.

The rich gastronomic tradition perfectly matches with its valued wine production - the DOC wines of Bosco Eliceo - and it is based on the region's equally substantial agriculture. Green asparagus, pears from Emilia-Romagna and nectarine from Romagna have all been accorded an IGP, a geographically limited certification of quality; also worthy of note are garlic from Voghiera, rice from the Po Delta, eels from the Comacchio lagoons, carrots from the Ferrarese Delta, local watermelon, melon from Emilia, violin squash, Ferrarese salami, and clams from Goro.



VISIT THE PROVINCE

ARGENTA

This once Roman town is first mentioned in medieval documents. Argenta passed from the Bishopric of Ravenna to the Este family and became an important trading town because of its strategic, central position on the Emilia-Romagna waterway network. Borso d'Este in particular paid much attention to the town and had it ringed by protective walls. Argenta, along with Ferrara, came under the control of the Papal State and decline slowly set in with the gradual drying-up of the River Po di Primaro and the earthquake of 1642. During WWII, the town was more or less totally destroyed and nowadays Argenta is a modern town with some important links to the past: it boasts the oldest church in the Province of Ferrara, the **Pieve di San Giorgio**. It also features cycle tours that go along river banks, cross through woods and floodplains and let you meet local people as well as sample traditional dishes. There is also a thriving variety of cultural events and theatrical performances all year round.

MUSEO DELLE VALLI DI ARGENTA

Via Cardinala, 1/c • Campotto • tel. 0532 808058



Situated at the entrance to the **Campotto Nature Reserve**, the themes of the museum are the morphology of the environment in and around Argenta, its animal and vegetable life, and the succession of man's interventions over the centuries:

in sum, the area's history and current situation. The seat of the museum is in the **Campotto Country House**, which houses the historic-naturalistic section.

MUSEO DELLA BONIFICA

Via Saiarino, 1 • tel. 0532 808058



Dedicated to man's centuries-old efforts to defend the land from and gain control over the waters, the **Land Reclamation Museum** is integrated with the structures of the Saiarino pumping station, the heart of the land reclamation system between the Reno and Sillaro rivers. The museum presents the general system, the man-made structures, the plant and their operation.

MUSEO CIVICO

Via G.B. Aleotti, 46 • tel. 0532 808058

Located in the 15th-century former church of *San Domenico*, the **Civic Museum** includes a remarkable collection of old paintings. Among those worthy of note are the works by **Antonio Aleotti**, **Garofalo**, **Scarsellino**

and **Camillo Ricci**. The Museum also includes a large **archaeological section** dedicated to the recent discoveries in and around Argenta that pieces together the stages in the development of settlements and town layouts of an area that was, for a long period, dominated by water.

PIEVE DI SAN GIORGIO

Via Cardinala



The small Church of St. George, of Byzantine origin and style, dates back to 509 A.D. Originally, the structure consisted of three aisles communicating by means of 6 arches on each side and a pentagonal apse and mosaic floor. Today it has a brickwork face and a single hall with a pitched roof. The marble portal is Romanesque and dates back to 1122, on the sides are allegorical representations of the main and typical activities carried out during the months of the year; the central lunette bears a description of St. George's martyrdom.

Tourist Information Office

tel. 0532 330276

BONDENO

Several finds regarding prehistoric times have made Bondeno the oldest inhabited area in the province. Bondeno remained loyal to the Este family and went down in history with them. This border town was originally heavily fortified and was home to many castles. The most significant local event in its history was when nearby River Po burst its banks.

PINACOTECA CIVICA "G. CATTABRIGA"

Piazza Garibaldi, 9 • tel. 0532 899245

Galileo Cattabriga (1901-1969), celebrated and valued painter, gave his name to the Civic Art Gallery which, as well as his works, exhibits around sixty paintings, all belonging to the council, that cover the period between the 17th and 20th centuries. On the ground floor a room has been set up for permanent exhibitions.

CENTRO VISITE CAVA SEI

Settepolesini • tel. 0532 768444

A nature reserve and a deposit site of Mammoth bones, the centre assembles the fossilised remains of animals who lived on the Po Plain at the time of the last Ice Age and the Holocene era. Thanks to a careful reconstruction, the mammoth, the woolly rhinoceros, the plains bison, the mega-deer, and the elk can all be seen today, full size, near the visitor centre.

MUSEO CIVICO ARCHEOLOGICO "G. FERRARESI"

Via Gramsci, 10 • Stellata • tel. 0532 899507

Bondeno and its hinterland can boast a long and eventful history, as the finds on display in this Museum clearly testify. The Museum consists of five distinct sections, with exhibits ranging from prehistory to the post-classical period: the **Neolithic**, with exhibits dating back to the first centuries of the IV Millennium BCE, from a village discovered at Fornace Grandi; the **Bronze Age**, with exhibits from six digs in the area, all traceable to the Terramare civilisation; the **Iron Age**, with exhibits from a Villanova burial ground dating back to between the VIII and VII centuries B.C. and from digs concentrated around the ancient branches of the Po River; the **Roman Age**, with exhibits covering the long period of Roman domination, from the II-I centuries BCE to the IV century of the common era; the **Post-Classical Age**, when the Benedictine Monastery of Nonantola held sway over the area up to the High Middle Ages, governing the waters and detaining fishing rights, and when a cluster of fishermen's huts probably gave rise to the first nucleus of *Castrum Bondeni*.

ROCCA POSSENTE

Via Argine Po • Stellata • tel. 0532 885470



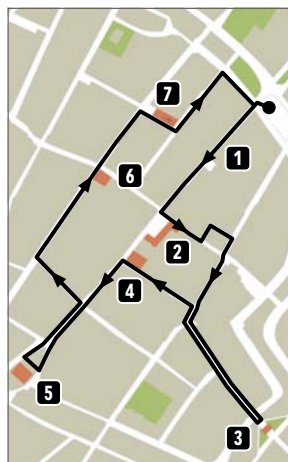
A small fortress stood in the flood bed area where the Panaro flows into the Po right from the year 1000, then, in the middle of the 1300s, Niccolò II d'Este had the building extended and it assumed its present-day form at the end of the 1600s. The Rocca was positioned to guard Ferrara's interior at the

extreme north of the Estense territory. The building's original star-shaped layout gave the village in which it stands its name. Today it is used for cultural activities and exhibitions.

CENTO

The tour starts from **Piazzale Bonzagni**. From here, take **Corso Guercino** **1**, Cento's main thoroughfare along the right hand side of which is a long row of arcades. Some of the older houses feature wooden arcades and among these, the house at number 74, **Casa Pannini**, (15th century) has a splendid façade with double ogive windows.

Almost facing number 49 is the offices of the **Partecipanza Agraria**, a very old, local, savings institution.



More than once during mediaeval times, the Bishop of Bologna and the Abbot of Nonantola gave land to the city to administer collectively. Rich and powerful landowners frequently tried to take possession of these properties but in the end, the poor won and the communal system prevailed. Still today, these properties belong to the Partecipanza that every twenty years redistributes them amongst its members by means of an ancient criterion system.

A little further along is the superb **Piazza del Guercino**, dominated by the imposing **Palazzo del Governatore** **2** (16th century), that was the residence of the ruling Este family and then Papal delegates that governed the city. The beautiful façade has been refurbished numerous times over the ages whereas the central tower has retained its original 16th century lines.



Ownership of Cento (along with neighbouring Pieve) was hotly disputed with adjacent provinces and was formally placed under the care of the Bishops of Bologna. Their control however was so ineffective as to allow the local community a great deal of freedom of action. This rather nice little arrangement came to an abrupt end in 1502 when Lucrezia Borgia, the daughter of Pope Alessandro VI, married Alfonso d'Este, the Duke of Ferrara. Part of her amazingly rich dowry (chroniclers of the time labelled it a "gold mine") was Cento and Pieve. And so the **Palazzo del Governatore** was built - a symbol of no longer "formal" control on behalf of the new ruling family. In 1598, Cento, along with all the Este properties passed to direct Papal rule whom replaced the Duke's governors with Papal delegates but without restoring the freedoms once enjoyed.

GALLERIA D'ARTE MODERNA "A. BONZAGNI"

Piazza Guercino, 39 • tel. 051 6843390



The **Modern Art Gallery Aroldo Bonzagni**, dedicated to one of the most important Italian artists of the 1900's (Cento 1887 – Milan 1918), is now housed in the palazzo. The gallery exhibits other works by artists such as Giacomo Balla, Mario Sironi, Achille Funi, Aligi Sassu, Salvatore Fiume, Lucio Fontana, Arnaldo Pomodoro and many others.

The 17th century **Town Hall** building is also situated along the piazza. There is an Eclectic/Liberty-style building at the corner of Via Matteotti. Take **Via Provenzali** and on the left, between numbers 3b and 3c you

will find an alleyway that leads to the small **Ghetto** area that has been recently restored. The short right-angled street of the Jewish Quarter opens out into **Via Malagodi** where you turn right.

You will soon see the **Church of San Pietro**, that was built in the 14th century but greatly restored in the 1900's. The interior houses 19th century frescoes and some canvases by Benedetto Zallone and Matteo Loves. A little further along stands a small, abandoned 18th century church (at number 19) and the unpretentious arcaded house (number 13) where **Guercino** and his brother Paolo Antonio lived for many years.

Giovan Francesco Barbieri was born in Cento in 1591. The nickname "Guercino", with which he became famous, was given him because of the way he squinted after a fright in his childhood. Son of simple countryfolk, he showed his talent at a very early age. During his apprenticeship he was influenced by Scarsellino from Ferrara and through him by Veneto colourism. Later in life Guercino saw this style at first hand whilst visiting Venice (1618). His meeting in Bologna with the Carraccis was of great significance, especially that with Ludovico who widened the Cento artist's horizons on the most up to date painting techniques in use at that time. Even as a youth he achieved considerable note and was given a number of commissions particularly in Bologna, Ferrara and Cento. Some of his most famous frescoes must be those at the Casa Pannini. He had a number of patrons during those times and one of them was the Papal Legate to Bologna, Cardinal Ludovisi who bought a number of his works and the Papal Legate to Ferrara, Cardinal Serra who not only bought his works but also made him a Knight of the Order of the Golden Spur (Cavaliere dell'Aurata Milizia). In 1621, Ludovisi became Pope Gregory XV and immediately had the young man that had become his favourite painter brought to Rome. During the three-year period with the Pope as his patron, Guercino met many new people and carried out numerous commissions for the church and Roman aristocratic families. After Pope Gregory's death, Barbieri returned to Cento where he lived for many years in an unassuming house, receiving commissions and distinguished guests alike. After the death of Guido Reni in 1642, he moved to Bologna where he was very soon considered the new leader of local art. He died in Bologna in 1666.



If you take **Via Malagodi** and then **Via Donati** you will arrive at the turreted **Porta Pieve 3** that marks the exit from the city going towards Pieve di Cento. This village, already in the Bologna territory is very near-by (easily reached on foot) and its history is closely tied to that of Cento.

This itinerary however, continues by turning into **Via Campagnoli**, a short street that leads to the second part of Corso Guercino to where the **Teatro Borgatti 4** stands. The building stands out with its striped, two-tone, terracotta façade. It was designed by Antonio Giordani and opened in 1861.



The theatre houses two small museums dedicated to local musicians who became famous on the international scene.

Continuing down the street you will see the former **Church of San Filippo Neri** on the left that features a main altar by Ferdinando Bibiena (18th century) and the **Sanctuary of Beata Vergine della Rocca 5**, built in 1884 over an older church. The Sanctuary is situated at the entrance to an enormous square that houses the exquisite **Rocca 5**, built in 1378 and modified towards the end of the 15th century by the bishops of Bologna.

Heading back towards the centre, turn left into **Via Accarisio** that will lead you to **Via Ugo Bassi**. Turn right and this will take you to the **Collegiate Church of San Biagio** that has an incomplete façade. The interior is characterised by 18th century Bolognese architecture and was designed by Alfonso Torreggiani. Among the altar canvases are 17th century works by Domenico Mona, Ercole and Benedetto Gennari, but above all stands out the *San Carlo Borromeo in prayer* by Guercino (1614).

PINACOTECA CIVICA "IL GUERCINO" Via Matteotti, 16 • tel. 051 6843390



A little after the church at the corner with Via Matteotti (number 16) is the former Pawnshop, that now houses the **Civic Picture Gallery 6**. A rich and varied collection of paintings from the period between the 1500 and 1800's is on display in the gallery. Many of the works are by Guercino including *St. Peter's Chair* (1618), *The Risen Christ appears to the Virgin* (1628-29), *Madonna with Child* (1629), *The Baptist in the desert* (1650) and many sketches. Another painting of great significance is the *Madonna with Child* and the *Saints Giuseppe and Francesco* (1591) by Ludovico Carracci. There are also works by Gennari, di Benedetto Zallone, Ubaldo Gandolfi, Denis Calvaert and Domenico Panetti.

In front of the gallery stands the War Memorial, an imposing classical-style archway. Beside the museum is the bell tower of the *Collegiate Church of San Biagio*. A little further along on the right you will see a small churchyard that lies in front of the colourful **Chiesa del Rosario 7**. The church was designed by Guercino for the Brotherhood of the Rosary of which he was Prior. Many of his works of art are kept here including the *Crucifixion* and the *Our Lady of the Assumption*. The main altar by Bibiena (1727) stands out amidst the ornate furnishings.

A short walk along **Via San Salvatore** up the side of the church will take you to **Via Baruffaldi**. If you turn right here, you will find the **birthplace of Ugo Bassi** at number 7.

Ugo Bassi was born in Cento in 1801 and took up a vocation for the church by entering the Barnabite Order. He was a noted orator but his fiery sermons on the rights of the poor and concepts of an Italy that was equal for all gained him the animosity and, on occasion, outright censorship by his superiors. The year 1848 was crucial to his life: at the outbreak of popular uprisings he was sent along with the Pope's army as chaplain but he very soon crossed over to the side of the insurrectionists. In Rome he actively participated in the birth of the Republic and her defence against enemies from abroad. When the Republic fell, he followed Garibaldi's retreat towards the north to defend Venice that was the last of the Italian cities still offering resistance to the Austrian army. He never arrived- he was captured at Comacchio then brought to Bologna where he was executed.

Turning now to the right, you will arrive at the gardens alongside *Piazzale Bonzagni*, where the tour began.

Tourist Information Office

tel. 051 6843334

CODIGORO, loc. Pomposa

ABBAZIA DI POMPOSA

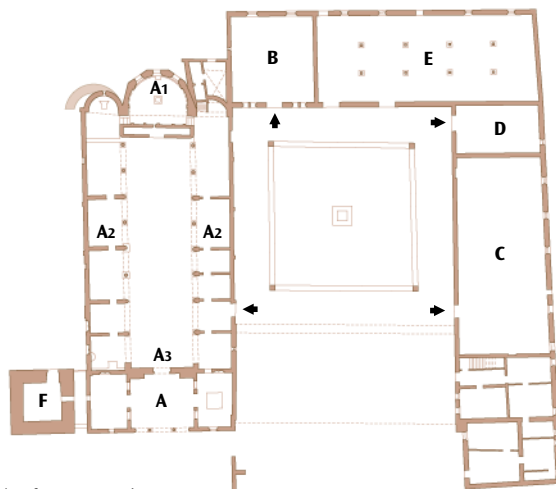
S.S. 309 Romea
tel. 0533 719110

A masterpiece of Romanesque art, **Pomposa Abbey** can be seen from a distance with its towering campanile. The **church** was founded in the 6th century A.D. and from the middle of the 9th century the first community of Benedictine monks began to form, reaching its peak after the year 1000, when the Abbot's spiritual and political jurisdiction extended over all the surrounding villages. Civil administration of the abbey's feuds was centred in Codigoro, nearby. A true lighthouse of culture, Pomposa had one of the most extensive libraries of the time. Among the personalities that made it so famous were the saint and abbot Guido degli Strambiati who imposed a very austere lifestyle within the monastery. Here the monk **Guido da Pomposa** invented the **modern musical notation**. In the 15th century most of the monks moved to Ferrara, where Duke Ercole I had built a new monastery for them.

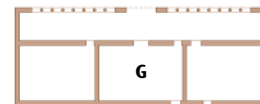


EXTERIOR

The first building the visitor sees is the **Church of Santa Maria**, with a portico in front of it, richly decorated in terracotta, marble and colourful majolica tiles. The two circular windows, closed by beautiful stone transennas sculpted with animals and vegetative forms are particularly graceful. To the left, near the arches of the narthex, there's a large white plaque with an image above it, in memory of the extensive renovation work carried out under the abbot Giovanni Vidor (1148-1161). To the side of the church stands the 48-metre high **campanile F**, built in 1063 by the architect **Deusdedit** who chose to be remembered on the western wall. It is divided into nine levels, each one having windows that are wider and with more lights than the level below it, giving the building a particularly light and soaring appearance that is emphasized by the spire of considerable height. The red and yellow brick face conserves very rare inserts of ceramic bowls (18 of ancient origin, the others of the modern era) with designs of trees, fish, birds and flowers: these can be dated to the 11th century and come from various parts of the Mediterranean such as Egypt, Tunisia and Sicily. On the opposite side with respect to the campanile is a courtyard of which only three sides have survived. Opposite the cloister is the **Palazzo della Ragione G**, from which the abbot administered justice in his feuds. As the building did not have religious functions, it was detached from the others.



- A Church of Santa Maria
- B Chapterhouse
- C Refectory
- D Pomposa Museum
- E Sala delle Stilate
- F Campanile
- G Belfry
- Entrances



INTERIOR

Despite the loss of many of the structures of the ancient abbey over the centuries, today it is still possible to visit many richly decorated parts of it.

A Church of Santa Maria: the interior is divided into three aisles with two rows of Byzantine-Ravenna style columns, with elaborate capitals and pulvins above them. The floor is of great value, with sections laid in different periods (from the 6th to the 12th century).

A1 The apse area was decorated in the 13th century by **Vitale da Bologna**. At the centre is a monumental *Christ Enthroned* in the mandorla of heavenly light, surrounded by groups of angels (on his left, lower down is the Archangel Michael with the scales for weighing sins and good deeds). To the sides of the representation are two groups of saints. Below the vault is a band with portraits of saints and lower down still a second band with stories from the *Life of St. Eustace*.

A2 Along the side walls of the central nave runs a rich 13th-century frescoed decoration, arranged in

three bands. The upper band shows scenes from the *Old Testament*, the middle one scenes from the *New Testament* and the lower one, at the level of the arches, scenes from Saint John's *Apocalypse*.

A3 The wall on the inside of the façade is decorated with a large *Last Judgement*.

B Chapterhouse: 14th-century frescoes. In the centre *The Crucifixion*, flanked by the portraits of Saint Benedict and Saint Guy, the abbot of Pomposa.

C Refectory: on the rear wall are three well-conserved frescoes.

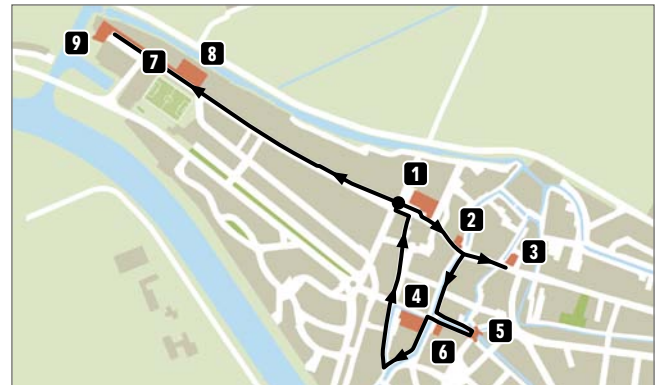
D Pomposa Museum: located in a room on the first floor, it contains decorative exhibits from many of the parts of the abbey that have now disappeared. Finely sculpted capitals in various styles, marble plutei and panels with mythical animals, fragments of frescoes and majolica tiles.



COMACCHIO

The tour begins at **Piazza XX Settembre** that faces the **Cathedral of San Cassiano 1**, an ancient church founded in the 8th century that owes its façade to reconstruction work in 1659. The interior is particularly noted for the 17th century *Crucified* by Germano Cignani and the organ by Gian Domenico Traeri (19th century). To the right in front of the main altar is a beautiful portrait of the patron saint and beneath this is a picture of Comacchio in days gone by when it was surrounded by water.

The cathedral **bell tower** was built in 1751, collapsed after only seven years and was rebuilt in 1868 but never completed (inside the cathedral near the entrance you will see a sketch of the original bell tower design).



Take the somewhat narrow Piazzetta Ugo Bassi and continue until you reach the **Loggia del Grano 2**, built in 1621 at the behest of Cardinal Giacomo Serra. The first floor held a room that was used to keep grain for the poor while the first floor housed a spacious gallery where traders could do business in comfort while in Comacchio. This gallery is still visible today.

The clock tower or **Torre dell'Orologio** was built in 1842 to replace 14th century construction and stands alongside the gallery. Free tours around the town's canals depart from near the tower.

Going through Piazza Folegatti, take Via Sambertolo (to the left is a shortcut by the **Canale Maggiore** to the *Church of Carmine*), at the beginning of which you will find the splendid 17th century **Church of Rosario 3**. There are some very precious canvases housed there including the *Decollation of the Baptist* by Carlo Bononi (17th century) and works by Mezzogori and Van Schayek.

Turning left into **Via Gramsci** will take you to where most of the splendid brickwork bridges over the canals are located.

This part of town has best kept its original design and the little waterways and canals are very reminiscent of Chioggia and Venice. Indeed, Comacchio was founded long, long ago on a group of islands in the middle of an immense lakeland. Like other Laguna towns, Comacchio, in the high middle ages was a flourishing trade centre and its fleet was used by Charlemagne in the war against the Byzantines. A war against the rival Venice, in 946 left it half-destroyed and killed its business aspirations. For hundreds of years, the town could only be reached by water and the canals acted as streets. This isolation ended in 1821 when the first road along the riverbanks connected it with Ostellato. Nowadays, following the great land reclamation works of the 1900's, Comacchio is framed by the valleys only in the southeast.

You will soon see the **Chiesa del Carmine** (17th century) that you can reach by taking **Via Carducci**. After crossing the *Ponte del Teatro*, continue along the left of **Via Cavour** that will lead you back to the *Torre dell'Orologio*. After the clock tower turn into **Via Fogli**. The tall building at number 34 is the ancient Comacchio **Bishop's Palace**. When you reach a junction of the canals, you will see the **Ponte degli Sbirri** that was built by Luca Danese in the 17th century. The view from here is without any doubt the best in Comacchio. To one side you can see the former **Ospedale di San Camillo** **4**, an elegant, and at the same time, imposing classical style building that features a central portico supported by terracotta and marble pillars with a small bell tower to either side of it. The hospital was built between 1778-1784 by Cosimo Morelli. The 19th century **Palazzo Bellini** sits facing the hospital and close by The Roman Ship Museum.

Turning into **Via Peschiera** you will find the small brick **Fish market** (17th century) that is rarely used, then take the steps up to the **Trepponti** **5**. The symbol of Comacchio is to be found at the end of a section of the canals.



This 17th century bridge complex was the work of Luca Danese and has some rather peculiar elements. There are five sets of steps that all lead to a central landing featuring two small towers. When you cross the bridge you will find the **Museum of the Roman**

Ship **6**, at number 2 that houses the hull (still being restored) and cargo of an ancient merchant ship recovered near the town.

In ancient times, the **Comacchio wetlands** were part of an immense system of lagoons that were dotted all along the Northern Adriatic coastline. These lagoons with their sheltered waters allowed navigation from Romagna right up to Grado. Despite the relative safety of navigation in these inland lagoons, there was no shortage of shipwrecks and many of the ships that foundered in these waters are now buried under the land surrounding Comacchio that appeared as a result of the reclamation schemes.

Turn left into Via Agatopisto and follow the paths that perhaps best represent the town with the bright colours of the houses mirrored in the canals. When you have crossed **Ponte di San Pietro**, take Via Buonafede and this will lead you back to *Piazza XX Settembre*. From the piazza, turn left into Corso Mazzini and after a short walk you will find the **Porticato dei Cappuccini** **7**. This arcade is supported by 143 arches and was built as an ex-voto in 1647. Through a passage way situated under the arcade, you reach the **Marinade manufacture** **8**, the old eel marinating factory, now a museum and a laboratory of this traditional production.

At the end of the arcade you come to the **Sanctuary of Santa Maria in Aula Regia** **9** that was founded in the early 10th century then rebuilt to its current form in the 17th century. The main altar is particularly note-worthy and is overlooked by the Madonna. The annex houses a small museum dedicated to contemporary religious art.

CASA MUSEO REMO BRINDISI

Via N. Pisano, 45 • Lido di Spina



About 7 km from Comacchio, at **Lido di Spina** stands the Museum of Contemporary Art "**Remo Brindisi**". This building with its modern design was the summer home of the artist Remo Brindisi for many years, right up to his demise. It was built between 1971

and 1973 to a design by the architect Nanda Vigo, and is clearly inspired by the Bauhaus style. The exhibits inside afford a truly outstanding and exhaustive historical account of contemporary art and painting. Modigliani, Picasso, Fontana, Dalí, De Chirico, De Pisis, Morandi, Chagall, Boccioni, Guttuso and others are all admirably represented.

Tourist Information Office

tel. 0533 314154

COPPARO

MUSEO “LA TRATTA”

Via Goito, 4 • tel. 0532 864633

A vast collection of material regarding rural society supported by practical, modern exposition methods that place the emphasis on an explanation of the main productive cycles of grain, wine and hemp in the area around Copparo. Domestic rural settings are also reconstructed.

MUSEO VILLA BIGHI

Via Marino Carletti, 110 • tel. 0532 861339

Villa Bighi was built in 1963 by the eclectic artist Dante Bighi who used it as his home and gallery. The Villa still has its original furnishings, a large library and the artist's private collection that includes some wonderful contemporary works of art. There are about one hundred works from the main movements of the late 1900s by artists painters such as Fontana, Warhol and Giò Pomodoro.

PIEVE DI SAN VENANZIO

Via per S. Venanzio • località Saletta • tel. 0532 864633

The Romanesque church of St. Mary Savonuzzo, otherwise known as the church of San Venanzio, was built in 1344 above an old riverbed,



by the orders of Giovanni da Saletta, the local overlord. The Church of San Venanzio, having been deconsecrated in 1918, was then used as a storage depot for agricultural implements and as a silo for hemp. Some remains of the attractive XIVth century frescoes have

been restored inside the church, based on stories from the life of the Virgin, to whom the church was dedicated.

VILLA DELLA MENSA

Strada per Formignana • località Sabbioncello San Vittore
tel. 0532 864633

The villa was built on the orders of Bartholomew della Rovere, bishop of Ferrara between 1474 and 1495. The Villa has a polygonal groundplan and a cloistered court. The front of the building, facing west, continues in two walls with battlements that extend to the service courtyards at the sides of the villa.

MASSA FISCAGLIA

MUSEO PARROCCHIALE

Piazza Ferrari • tel. 333 2163401

Exhibits in this Museum include sacred art objects from the Church of Sts. Peter and James. The **first section** is given over to such objects as reliquaries, chalices, pyxes and thuribles. The crowns and the sceptre of Our Lady of the Corba is also on display here. A collection of paintings ranging from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, including an Annunciation believed to be by Jacopo Bassano, are on display in the **second section**.

MESOLA

CASTELLO ESTENSE

MUSEO DEL BOSCO E DEL CERVO DELLA MESOLA

Piazza Umberto I, 1 • tel. 339 1935943



Right from the start, development of the area tended to be centred around the Castello degli Estensi. The huge building stood at the edge of what were then vast hunting lands that are now known as the “**Gran Bosco di Mesola**”. The **Castle** was built in the sixteenth century under the last Duke of Ferrara, Alfonso II, as a tribute to his third wife, Margaret Gonzaga. It was the last of the leisure or pleasure lodges, known as “delizie”, of the Este family to be built. It is rather unique as, though refined, it is also quite austere-looking. It was in the middle of extensive hunting grounds and surrounded by a twelve-kilometre long wall, of which only a lookout tower (the Abbot's Tower) is still extant. The outhouses and utilities embracing the Castle in a semicircle have survived and are currently used for shops and restaurants.

The Castle houses the **Museo del Bosco e del Cervo della Mesola** that serves to increase public awareness about the natural habitat of the Parco del Delta del Po and especially provides us with fascinating details about the Dune Deer, the only native deer in the whole of Italy.

Few kilometres from Mesola you can visit the **Gran Bosco della Mesola** and the **Fossil Dunes of Massenzatica Natural Reserve**.

Tourist Information Office

tel. 0533 993358

MIGLIARINO

MUSEO DEL TROTTO

Via Garibaldi, 2/g • tel. 0533 640210

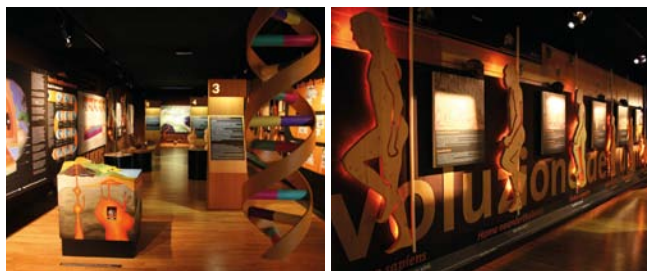
The Harness Racing Museum conserves an impressive collection, the only one in Italy, of documents, prints, mementos and similar objects relating to the discipline of harness racing.

OSTELLATO

The first mention of Ostellato was in a Papal bull by Pope Gregory V in 997. The Este family had a residence there. The area suffered from economic problems that began in 1598 and were only resolved in the period between 1800 and 1900 with agrarian reform and land reclamation works. Nowadays, nature tourism is a very important factor in the local economy.

MUSEO DEL TERRITORIO - MdT

Strada Mezzano, 14 • tel. 0533 681368



The museum represents a starting point in the quest of knowledge about the history of the earth. In fact it illustrates the evolution of mankind and the geology of the area from the origins of the universe to the present day. The installation develops on the ground floor the theme of the evolution of the ground and transformation of the delta area. On the first floor, a long historical excursion acquaints the visitor with all the populations who have settled on the plains territory around Ferrara. A special section showcases the Etruscan period and the city called Spina.

PARCO DI SCULTURA CONTEMPORANEA

Via Argine Mezzano, 1

Launched in 1998, the Nature Reserve of Ostellato **Contemporary Sculpture Park** is host to works by various Italian artists on the theme of the sky, the stars and the land which, placed along the nature trails, highlight the beauty of the place.

Nearby stand the **Anse vallive di Ostellato** and the romanesque **Pieve di San Vito**.

PORTOMAGGIORE

The name of this town reflects the fact that navigable courses of water once flowed through these areas. It had a strategic position in the heart of a dense network of waterways, among which the ancient branch of the Po di Volano, known as "Sandalo". About 3 km from Portomaggiore, at Gambulaga stands the

DELIZIA DEL VERGINESE

Via Provinciale • Gambulaga • tel. 0532 323011 - 323258



Originally a rustic hamlet, the Verginese was turned into a Ducal residence in the early sixteenth century by Alfonso I d'Este, and was later granted to Laura Eustochia Dianti, his companion after the death of Lucretia Borgia. The lady turned it into the seat of her small private court and ordered its reconstruction. The main architect in charge of this major renovation was Girolamo da Carpi. According to his plan, the Castle is rectangular and on two levels, with four square towers at each corner. An eighteenth century chapel stands at the side of the main building, to which it is joined by an arcade, also of the same period. Interior decorations cover several centuries, starting from eighteenth century stuccoes through to tempera-painted art nouveau-style flowers, shells, rosettes, scrolls, and thick cornices bordering the ceilings. The Villa del Verginese is now a noted artistic and cultural centre thanks to archaeological discoveries made in the grounds adjacent to the **Sepolcreto dei Fadieni** and to the later establishment of the archaeological museum housing an important collection of Roman remains on its first floor gallery. The nearby pigeon tower dating back to the sixteenth century is a surviving relic of the outhouses with which the lodge was originally endowed. The Renaissance **garden** between the lodge and the tower is a faithful replica of the original, based on contemporary plans and documents. It is known as the "brolo".



SANT'AGOSTINO

This town was erected along the bank of the Reno river and was once known as "Sant'Agostino of the Swamps", given the area's vulnerability to frequent flooding. Finally, in 1767, the course of the river was diverted through the lagoons of the Poggio and the situation changed. The land was progressively turned over to farming and life improved quickly. The town's new-found wealth and importance was reflected by its establishment as an autonomous Commune in 1816.

CENTRO POLIFUNZIONALE "FERRUCCIO LAMBORGHINI"

Via Statale, 342 • Dosso
tel. 347 5329320

The "Ferruccio Lamborghini" Multipurpose Centre brings together the car manufacturer's entire activity and production, from the first tractors to the cars such as the famous Miura, Countach, Urraco, Espada, Jarama and Islero up to the new creations such as the Golf-cars and the Town-life. Nearby you can have a walk in the **Panfilia Wood**.



TRESIGALLO

Tresigallo is the small capital of Rationalism and a unique case of urban design. It is an excellent example of an absolutely innovative architectural reality, built according to the fundamental principles of Rationalism. The architectural layout is a hybrid of European and American lines using an abstract language. There are no symbolic references; lines are minimalist and strongly geometric. Some of the world's greatest architects came from the early 1900's, names like F.L. Wright, Le Corbusier, Garnier, Loos and W. Gropius. Tresigallo, a small mediaeval town that was totally transformed between 1927 and 1934, now remains a little museum to architecture set in a rural landscape in its own dimension.



Comune di Tresigallo

tel. 0533 601354

VIGARANO MAINARDA

DELIZIA DELLA DIAMANTINA

Vigarano Pieve, Diamantina • tel. 0532 716902



A tower was built here in the 12th century on the site of previous Roman settlement and later, during the land reclamation project carried out by Borso d'Este at Polesine di Casaglia, the main building of the Diamantina was built around it. This development took place between the late

1400's and early 1500's. The overall construction was carried out in various stages and many changes and restructuring works took place over the years in line with requirements at any given time. The three-storey villa features paired windows. The turreted tower was modified in the 19th century and now features a Moorish-style three-lighted window leading on to white balcony supported by two columns.

VOGHIERA

The town grew up along the river Sandalo, no longer in existence, in the vicinity of the Este palace of Belriguardo, which in its days was one of the grandest and most luxurious palaces of Renaissance Italy.

DELIZIA DI BELRIGUARDO

Strada Provinciale, 274
tel. 0532 328511 - 328063

This Lodge was built by order of Niccolò d'Este in 1435. It was the first of the famous "Delizie" that the Dukes of the dynasty had built for their leisure and pleasure beyond the city walls. Its deterioration began after the departure of the last Duke, Alfonso II, from Ferrara. The original building comprised fifty fully decorated rooms and two open galleries, with many outlying buildings and large horse stables. The entrance beneath the porch and en-



trance tower, which still bears the Este family coat of arms, leads into a spacious courtyard. The main building features large Gothic-style windows and an archway leading to a colonnade. At one time there was an extensive and luxuriant garden with many fountains and fish ponds here. The scenes painted by **Girolamo Carpi** in the **Hall of the Vines** afford a pale glimpse of the magnificence that once adorned the rooms of this Lodge. The works on display in the **Sala Virgili** are by the famous modern-day sculptor of the same name. One of the wings hosts the **Archaeological Museum**.

MUSEO ARCHEOLOGICO

Strada Provinciale, 274 • tel. 0532 328511 - 328063

In rooms by the entrance tower to the Delizia of Belriguardo are collected the finds emerging from the Roman Necropolis of Voghenza and from settlements across the area.

This small museum also houses funeral items from 67 tombs. These include pieces of gold and amber jewellery, amphorae and other types of containers, lanterns, coins, incense vessels in glass paste and a magnificent onyx balsamarium.

The epigraphic section is particularly rich. The upper room is dedicated to the finds from the immediate area and from Fondo Tesoro, where 64 tombs from a Byzantine necropolis were discovered. There is also a rich collection of lamps and other material from places outside the Voghenza area.



Nearby stands a large private garden surrounding a stately 18th century villa that was once the summer residence of the Papal Legates of Ferrara. This separates the area from the older town of **Voghenza**, where you can visit the Church, the mediaeval sarcophagus of Saint Leo, the small **Necropoli Romana** that can be seen from the exterior and the Museo del Modellismo Storico.

MUSEO DEL MODELLISMO STORICO

Via San Leo 9/a • Voghenza • tel. 0532 815252 - 333 1901154

The Associazione Modellisti Ferraresi (Ferrarese Modelling Enthusiasts Association) has set up this interesting **Museum of Historical Scale Models** where it is possible to admire a quite extraordinary working model of a railway, collections of scale model cars, Estense costumes and weapons and model soldiers.

USEFUL INFORMATION

TRANSPORTS

Trains

Trenitalia
tel. 892021
Ferrovie Emilia-Romagna
tel. 800-91.50.30

Motorway A13 BO-PD

Ferrara Nord and Ferrara Sud exits (Intersection with the motorway branch from Ferrara to Porto Garibaldi)

Bus services

urban and suburban bus lines: ATC
tel. 0532 599490, www.atc.bo.it

Radiotaxi

tel. 0532 900900

Airports

Bologna, tel. 051 6479615
Forlì, tel. 0543 474990
Venezia, tel. 041 2609260

TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICES

FERRARA

Castello Estense

tel. 0532 299303
fax 0532 212266
infotur@provincia.fe.it

ARGENTA

Piazza Marconi, 1
tel. 0532 330276
fax 0532 330291
iatargenta@comune.argenta.fe.it

CENTO

Piazzale della Rocca, 9
tel. 051 6843330 - 4
fax 051 6843398
informaturismo@comune.cento.fe.it

CODIGORO

Abbazia di Pomposa

Via Pomposa Centro, 1 Pomposa
tel. e fax 0533 719110
iatpomposa@libero.it

COMACCHIO

Via G. Mazzini, 4
tel. 0533 314154
fax 0533 319278
comacchio.iat@comune.comacchio.fe.it

MESOLA

Ptta S. Spirito, 3
tel. 0533 993358
prolocomesola@libero.it

GORO (Seasonal opening)

Via Cavicchini, 13
tel. 0533 995030
turismo@comune.goro.fe.it



www.ferrarainfo.com

Edited by
Comune di Ferrara
Provincia di Ferrara

By
Centro Unificato di
Informazioni Turistiche
Castello Estense,
Ferrara

Photos by
Archivio fotografico della
Provincia di Ferrara,
FerraraFoto.it - M. Baraldi,
L. Capuano, L. Gavagna-le
Immagini, T. Gavioli, G.
Magini, M. Marchetti, F.
Meneghetti, M. Rebeschini,
A. Samaritani, P. Zappaterra

Design concept
Noemastudio,
Ferrara

Printed by
Italia Tipolitografia, Ferrara

Editing closed on
25.02.2011



Ferrara, a Unesco World Heritage Site

In 1995 U.N.E.S.C.O. classified Ferrara's historic centre as a world heritage site, defining it as "... a fine example of a city designed during the Renaissance that has managed to retain the integrity of its historic centre".

This acknowledgement has been extended to the Po Delta Park and to the itinerary of the ancient dwellings, called Delizie Estensi. The Delta Po is the cultural and planned landscape, which preserves its original layout.



PROVINCIA DI FERRARA EMOZIONI TIPICHE GARANTITE

Guaranteed Typical Emotions

ETG identifies a tourism system that supports the diffusion of a specific image of the area, focussed on the quality of the "emotions" offered to the visitor: restaurants, typical and hand-made products, bathing establishments, bicycle hire, motorboats, accommodation and tourist centres; a network of structures united to offer its guests a wide range of quality services and products, capable of calling forth "Guaranteed Typical Emotions"!

Look for this symbol and you will find lots of discounts and special offers.

Download "Layar" for your smartphone and see ETG with the Augmented Reality

www.ferrarainfo.com/etg

