

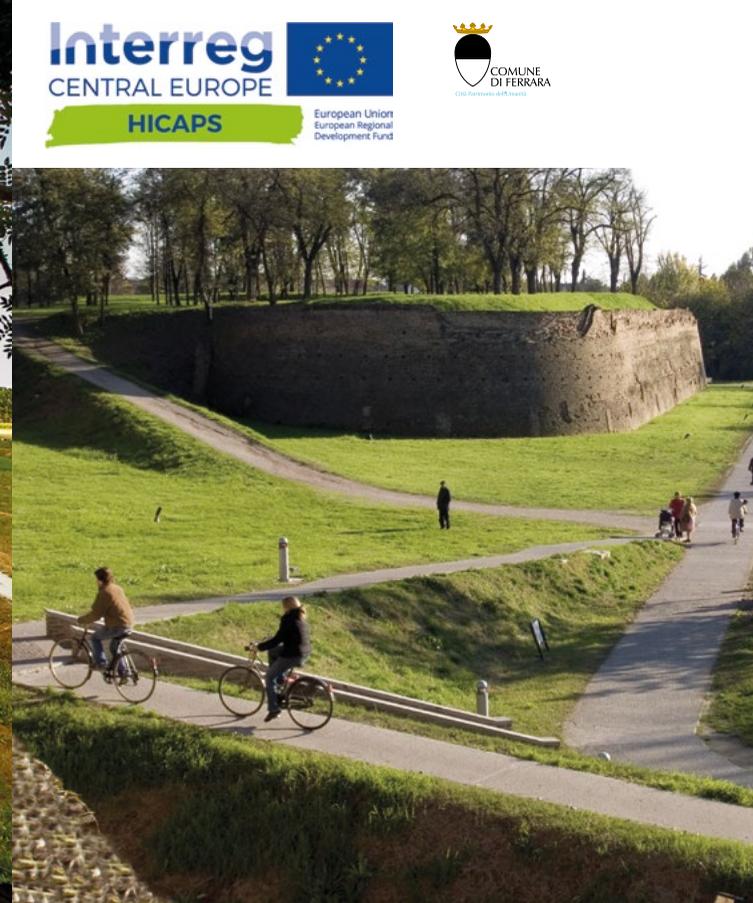
FLORA AND FAUNA

The green space surrounding the walls is a veritable park, prized for its rich biodiversity in terms of both flora and fauna, including numerous rare, protected species.

The park hosts around 240 species of grass, tree and shrub. It is also the urban site that boasts the greatest number of rare species. Such richness and abundance is due to the circular layout of the walls and the wide surrounding ramparts, creating varying conditions of sunshine and humidity. The most commonly encountered trees are the tall hackberry and locust varieties.

Around the area of the walls and the ramparts grow plane trees, farnias, hornbeams, various prunus species, white poplars, black poplars, cypress poplars and white willows.

The walls are populated by numerous animal species. Among the avian species are owls, Italian sparrows, great tits and bluetits, blackbirds, robins, jays, pigeons, swallows, swifts, woodpigeons, grey crows and jackdaws, magpies, kestrels, owls and turtle doves. In the northern area, closer to the Po, there are grey herons, egrets, moorhens, night herons and bitterns. Mammals to be found include house and wild mice, bats, shrews and hedgehogs. Native amphibians and reptiles are present and protected by the regional law on "minor fauna" (Regional Law 15/2006), including the Italian green toad, the wall lizard and the grass snake. Many of the insects present are pollinators.



FERRARA AND ITS WALLS

Nine kilometres of walls surround the heart of the city of Ferrara, girdling its historic centre. Created and developed mainly for defensive purposes in the first half of the 12th century, they now exist as an enormous garden to be enjoyed freely by all; a place for meeting, relaxation, well-being and sport. The walls show their long history and the numerous and varied transformations they have undergone to become what you see today. Bastions, towers and gates rhythmically mark the wall's length and testify to the development of military.



▲ Porta Paola (15)
◀ Porta degli Angeli (3)



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Translations: Medhiartis Srl, Bologna
Photo: Caspar Diederik, Luca Gavagna - le Immagini,
Archivio fotografico Comune e Provincia di Ferrara
Design: Noemastudio, Ferrara
Print: MATTEO25 società cooperativa onlus, Ferrara
Editing closed on 22/02/2022

FERRARA AND ITS WALLS

Ferrara, città del Rinascimento e il suo Delta del Po



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FERRARA
FEELINGS





1 Torrione di Barco

With an external diameter of 21 metres, it is the largest circular defensive tower of those designed by Biagio Rossetti along the fortified perimeter of the historic *Addizione Erculea* (Erculean Addition). Built from 1493 onwards, it stands at its north-western vertex.

2 Mura Rossettiane

Built between 1493 and 1505 by Biagio Rossetti, Alessandro Biondo and Bartolomeo Tristano, the walls of Ferrara mark the transition from vertical defences (from which projectiles could be dropped on the enemy) to horizontal bastion defences from which firearms were fired, and represent one of the most famous examples in Italian military architecture of this transition to a later defensive system. A water moat, which though shallow was very wide (between 35 and 80 metres) made any attempt to approach the crenellated curtain wall exceedingly difficult.

3 Porta degli Angeli

Located at the end of the ancient Via degli Angeli, this Porta was the only gateway in the fortified walls that provided access from the north, and which were built between 1493 to 1505 around the "Terra Nova", the area of urban expansion better known as the *Addizione Erculea*. Restored between 1984 and 1991, it was the subject of many transformations over the centuries with the changing of its functions.

4 Parco Urbano Giorgio Bassani

Situated between the city and the River Po, the park overlays the ancient territory of Barco. It was the Este family's hunting reserve, annexed to the Delizia di Belfiore, within the city walls. It was a place given over to leisure and entertainment, but also served to extend the *Addizione Erculea* walls defensive system as far as the Po.

5 Torrione di San Giovanni Battista

Built between 1493 and 1497, this fortified tower kept watch over the Porta of the same name, at the eastern end of the long decumanus road of the *Addizione Erculea* urban area. In 1518, Duke Alfonso I d'Este decided to cover the tower with a conical roof, while the original battlements were filled in during the first half of the 19th century. After the French occupation of 1796, the gate was named "Porta Mare", and the entire complex was subject to the first in a series of functional modifications. Since 1999, the Torrione di San Giovanni has been the home of the Ferrara Jazz Club.

6 Baluardo e docile di San Tommaso

With a typical arrow shape and with no rounded "orecchioni" ramparts on its sides, the bastion was built at the end of the second decade of the sixteenth century, when the Alfonso I d'Este decided to reinforce the defences of the south-eastern area of the city. A short distance away is the 18th century "docile" of San Tommaso, a sort of canal that was built in 1524, in order to convey the waste from the city's sewers to the Naviglio di Baura canal.

7 Baluardo della Montagna

Between 1518 and 1522, the new wall was built between the Porta di San Giorgio and the Baluardo di San Tommaso. In 1518, Sebastiano Bonmartini designed the large arrow-shaped Baluardo della Montagna, a bastion complete with embrasures. An enormous mountain (called the Montagna di San Giorgio), was created on top of the bastion with the earth from the excavations, which served as a cavalier upon which the powerful artillery of Duke Alfonso d'Este was installed.

8 Bagni Ducali

The Delizia della Montagna, now known as the Bagni Ducali (Ducal Baths), was the recreational residence built by the Duke Ercole II in 1541 according to the plans drawn by Terzo Terzi. The external façades of this small, simple palace, featured frescoes by B. Dossi, G. da Carpi, C. Filippi and Garofalo. The fame of the residence was linked to the unique environmental backdrop in which it was set, with waterways brought to life by complex hydraulic devices which flowed around the vine and flowercovered mountain, at the foot of which stood a fish pond of more than 200 metres in length (now Viale Alfonso I d'Este). The mound of earth also hid two underground decorated caves, unfortunately fell into ruin with the exile of the Este dynasty from Ferrara.

9 Porta Romana

The current ruins are all that remains of the architectural complex that until the end of the 16th century overlooked the main southern entrance of

the city. In order to protect the fifteenth century Porta di San Giorgio gate (known as Porta Romana from 1798 onwards), between 1557 and 1563, the dukes Ercole II and Alfonso II d'Este ordered the construction of a new bastion. The Porta was transformed into the monumental "Prospettiva" arch. The changes and the disasters that befell the structure at the end of the 19th century led to the functional decentralisation of the building, resulting in architectural damage.

10 Baluardo dell'Amore – Parco Archeologico

Built onto the curtain wall constructed by Borso d'Este in the mid-fifteenth century, the Baluardo dell'Amore (literally the Bastion of Love) as we see it today, with its typical ace of spades shape, was actually added more than a century later: it was Alfonso II d'Este who commissioned a major series of works to strengthen the southern fortifications near the Po between 1578 and 1585, according to the plans drawn by engineers and military specialists.

The **Archaeological Park** allows visitors to rediscover the remains of the ancient curtain wall and the Porta d'Amore. The ravelin of 1557 can be found after passing through the gate. A walkway has been installed above this curtain wall to restore the continuity of the wall-top path. The centre of the walkway corresponds to the upper level of the Porta dell'Amore.



11 Baluardo di Sant'Antonio

Located at the Benedictine monastery of Sant'Antonio in Polesine, this bastion is the central element of the southern system of bastion defences behind the banks of the river Po, which was almost completely buried at the end of the 16th century.

12 Mura di Borso

The gradual drying up of the Po distributary which skirts the southern edge of Ferrara led to the establishment of the urban settlement on the island of Sant'Antonio in Polesine that once stood in the middle of the river, between the end of the 14th and the first half of the 15th century. Nicolò III d'Este (1383-1441) was responsible for ordering the first steps towards building a defence for the urban dwelling. The further drying up of the Po river led Leonello d'Este (1407-1450) and above all his successor Borso (1413-1471) to order new walls to be built in order to protect the entire southern area.

13 Baluardo e Porta di San Pietro

The Baluardo di San Pietro is the first of the state-of-the-art fortifications built by Alfonso II d'Este between 1578 and 1585, in order to modernise and strengthen the pre-existing 15th century walls. During the period in which the bastion was being built, the merlons of the 15th century walls were demolished and the tower that stood at the Porta, was completely knocked down. In 1583, a new marble arch was built over the Porta San Pietro, designed by Giovan Battista Aleotti. In 1630 the opening of the Porta di San Pietro was definitively walled up.

14 Baluardo di San Lorenzo

The Baluardo di San Lorenzo stands on the site of the ancient Castelnuovo bastion, dismantled between 1562 and 1572. Built in 1583 and renovated in the papal period, along with the previous Baluardo di San Paolo, this structure constitutes part of the defensive system built to protect the Porta Paola gate, which was built in 1612. At the beginning of the 20th century, the top of the bastion was used for the weekly market, and was commonly known as the "horse market".

15 Porta Paola – Centro di Documentazione delle Mura estensi

The current structure was built in 1612 in accordance with the plans drawn by Ferrarese architect Giovan Battista Aleotti, who designed it in honour of the reigning Pope Paolo V Borghese, from which the name Porta Paola derives. Porta Paola is the most prestigious monumental archways in the city of Ferrara, particularly with regard to its late Mannerist and proto-Baroque architectural language. The **Este Walls Documentation Centre** at Porta Paola was created to raise awareness and appreciation of the walls and how they have changed through history. The story is told through themed panels, films, models and multimedia applications. Since 2021, Porta Paola has been the headquarters of the food and wine organisation *Associazione Strada dei Vini e dei Sapori*, set up to promote the local area.

16 Baluardi di Santa Maria e di San Paolo

These two "baluardi" or bastions are the only testament to the fortress that was built between 1608 and 1618 equipped with five arrow bastions, barracks, depositories, gunpowder magazines, armouries, the residence of the castellan and the church of Santa Maria dell'Annunziata. In 1859, the decision was made to demolish the structure once and for all. Only the bastions of Santa Maria and San Paolo and the Marian church left still standing, even if the church was later destroyed by bombs in the Second World War. On the embankment of the two bastions, the statue depicting Paul V - once placed at the centre of the fortress - is still visible.

17 Porta catena e Saliente

Up to the point at which Corso Porta Po and Viale Cavour meet, the only structure of note is a trapezoidal salient. To the north of this, in 1938, two archways were built: these were known as the Porta Catena, due to the proximity of the access structure of the same name. The original Porta Catena was a river gate located at the mouth of the navigable canal that connected the Po in Pontelagoscuro to the Castello Estense trench.