



Where the Po 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.

3 From Castello Estense

24 Palazzo Municipale

4 Cattedrale

36 Piazza Trento Trieste

30 Sinagoghe – Museo Ebraico

25 Palazzo Paradiso

Former seat of the University, the palace now contains the "Ariostea" Library, the tomb of Ludovico Ariosto, and many important historical relics and works of art.

38 Area Castrum Bizantino

The earliest settlement on the site of present-day Ferrara was a *castrum* or military camp established by the Byzantines of Ravenna on the left bank of the river Po.



39 Mura – Porta San Pietro

11 Monastero di Sant'Antonio in Polesine

Founded in 14th Century by Beata Beatrice d'Este, it has chapels with frescoes of the Giotto's and byzantine schools.

22 Palazzo Costabili
National Archaeological Museum

Also known as "Palace of Ludovico il Moro", the building dates back to the 16th Century and it hosts the finds of the Etruscan city of Spina, which flourished from the 6th to the 3rd Century BC. Particularly fascinating are the large Attic symposium vases, and the precious gold, silver, amber and paste stone jewels. Not to be missed the rooms with frescoes by Garofalo, and the Renaissance garden.

7 Basilica – Monastero di San Giorgio

The first city Cathedral, from the 7th Century AD, it was re-built in the 15th Century by Biagio Rossetti.



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 architec-

ture 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 detailed map of the town and the schedule for museums, churches and monuments are available at:

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Visit
Ferrara
in brief



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Ferrara, City of
the Renaissance
and its Po Delta

Ferrara
terra e acqua



The Mediaeval Centre and the Jewish town

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.

3 From Castello Estense

The Castle built in 1385 to protect the Este family, still has the typical aspect of a medieval fortress, even though the marble balconies and the tower loggias remind us of the transformations of the XVI Century, when the building became the new ducal palace. The Filippi School (16th Century) painted the inside frescoes. Temporary seat of the collections of G. Boldini and F. de Pisis.

24 Palazzo Municipale

Begun in 1245, it was the Este residence till the 16th Century. Restored at the beginning of last century in 13th-Century style, it is now the seat of the Town Hall.

4 Cattedrale

The cathedral, dedicated to the patron saints of the city, George and Maurelius, is a harmonic unity of Romanesque solidity and exquisite Gothic elegance.

12 Museo della Cattedrale

The Cathedral Museum is located in the little church of San Romano and houses objects which once belonged to the cathedral like the ancient organ shutters by Cosmé Tura, the panels of the destroyed Door of the Months, sculptures, statues and 16th Century large tapestries.

32 Area "ghetto"

Via Mazzini formerly known as Via Sabbioni was the main thoroughfare of the Jewish ghetto which took in the adjoining Via Vittoria and Via Vignatagliata.

30 Sinagoghe – Museo Ebraico

The building of the Synagogues also houses the Jewish Museum (*Temporarily closed*), rich in documents and objects that illustrate the history and traditions of the local Jewish community.

33 Via delle Volte

A long stretch of the street is covered overhead by vaults that connect the two sides of the street and give it its unmistakable and fascinating character and appearance.

9 MEIS – Museo Nazionale dell'Ebraismo Italiano e della Shoah

The history, the theory, the originality of Hebraism in Italy is presented through an innovative museum approach. A millenarian culture explored through installations, performances and exhibitions.

28 Mura – Porta Paula



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 Ercolea*.

3 From Castello Estense

13 Museo del Risorgimento e della Resistenza

It keeps important historical documents.

21 Palazzo dei Diamanti

With its original façade covered with diamond-shaped stones, the palace is attributed to Biagio Rossetti. In the large rooms on the first floor you can see the collections of the National Picture Gallery, while the Galleries of Modern and Contemporary Art, on the ground floor, house international art exhibitions.

1 Casa di Ludovico Ariosto (*Out of the route*)

The house was Ludovico Ariosto's residence during the last years of his life and it was built around 1528, probably on a project by architect Girolamo da Carpi. It houses documents and some Ariosto's personal belongings.

29 Tempio di San Cristoforo alla Certosa

Built in the 15th Century by order of Duke Borso d'Este, the great Monastery was later enriched with the construction of the church



of San Cristoforo, by Biagio Rossetti. Since the beginning of the 19th Century, it has become the city's monumental cemetery.

27 Mura – Porta degli Angeli

34 Piazza Ariostea

Large green area with the statue of L. Ariosto in the middle.

35 Cimitero ebraico

Surrounded by the greenery of the *Addizione Ercolea*, the Jewish Cemetery includes tombs of great artistic value, such as the one of the writer G. Bassani.

17 Orto botanico

The Botanical Garden is a scientific institution born within the University; a lot of plants, both in the open air and in greenhouses, are kept here.

23 Palazzo Massari (*Temporarily closed for restorations*)

Seat of the "Giovanni Boldini" Museum, the Museum of the 19th Century, and the "Filippo de Pisis" Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art.

5 Chiesa del Gesù

Built in 1570 for the Jesuits to a design by Alberto Schiatti, it houses the "Mourning of Christ", a 15th-Century sculpture group in polychrome terracotta by Guido Mazzoni.

14 Museo di Storia Naturale

Particularly interesting for the collections covering all the realms of nature.

31 Teatro Comunale Claudio Abbado

Designed by Antonio Foschini at the end of the 18th Century, it is famous for the Prose, Ballet, Opera and Concerts Seasons. It is possible to visit it with a guide, on previous arrangement.



Renaissance residences and churches

Along the ancient *Via di San Francesco*, the main thoroughfare of the new districts commissioned by Niccolò III and an elegant street in the Medieval city, stand many palazzos, patrician residences and major churches. The itinerary winds among these wonders to the "Delizie", dwellings built by the court for amusement and relaxation, far from the cares of governing.

3 From Castello Estense

31 Teatro Comunale (*Diversion from the itinerary*)

24 Palazzo Municipale

4 Cattedrale

36 Piazza Trento Trieste

The beating heart of the city, this square dates back to the Middle Ages, when the new Cathedral was built.

6 Chiesa di San Francesco

In pure Renaissance style, the building is a masterpiece of Biagio Rossetti.

2 Casa Romei

The house is an outstanding example of a building between Middle-Ages and Renaissance. On the ground floor some rooms are decorated with gothic frescoes and a small sculpture museum. On the first floor there is a XVI Century apartment with beautiful decorations, and pieces of ancient furniture.

10 Monastero del Corpus Domini

It keeps the memories of Santa Caterina Vegri together with some tombs of the Este family: among them, the tomb of Lucrezia Borgia.

16 Oratorio dell'Annunziata (*Closed to the public*)

It keeps the splendid frescoes with the Legend of the Holy Cross of the 16th Century.

8 Chiesa di Santa Maria in Vado

Majestic temple built around the little vault stained with the Sacred Blood sprayed from the Holy Host in 1171.

26 Palazzo Schifanoia

A palace built for the amusement of the ducal family, Schifanoia contains the Hall of the Months, where the frescoes remind us of a period of luxury and culture, and the Room of the Stuccoes, with its ceiling shining with gold.

20 Palazzo Bonacossi

Built in 1468, the palace hosts rich collections of art, such as the ones of Cardinal Gian Maria Riminaldi.

19 Palazzina Marfisa d'Este

In the rooms of the Palazzina Marfisa d'Este you can see extraordinary 16th Century "grotesque" decorated ceilings ancient furniture and antiques.

37 Mura – Punta della Giovecca