



Judaism in Ferrara

The places of Jewish culture in Ferrara are constituted from the old ghetto area, where since 1927 Jewish people has been secluded, the Jewish cemeteries and the MEIS, National Museum of Judaism and Shoah where the story of Ferrara and the Italian Jewish culture are gathered.

The historical streets of the ghetto were Via Mazzini, location of the Jewish Community in the building of the three synagogues, Via Vignatagliata and Via Vittoria. Everywhere these places recall the life and stories of the writer Giorgio Bassani.

There are also two Jewish cemeteries in Ferrara: the smallest, closed to the public, was destined to bury the first 21 spanish families arrived in 1492. The second is in via delle Vigne and is one of the oldest Italian Jewish cemeteries still used today, where G. Bassani rests.

FROM THE CASTLE TO THE MEIS

2 Muretto del Castello

Corso Martiri della Libertà
The plaques report the names of the 11 people killed on November 15th, 1943 in front of the wall of the Castello Estense, as a fight for the murder of Federal Igino Ghisellini.

40 Colonna di Borso d'Este

The column with the statue of Borso d'Este placed in the Vólto del Cavallo (Horse Archway), in front of the Cathedral, is mainly made up of broken tombstones coming from old Jewish cemeteries robbed in the 18th Century.

41 Palazzo San Crispino

During the age of the ghetto, San Crispino oratory was the place of compulsory preaching, since Jewish people could access it without getting out of the ghetto.

32 Porte del Ghetto – Beginning of Via Mazzini

The marble doors of via Mazzini were the biggest of five built in 1627; they marked the main road of the ghetto, they were closed at night and marked the separation between the Jewish community and the rest of the city in the Papal era.

30 Sinagoghe e Museo della Comunità ebraica di Ferrara *(Temporarily closed)*

The building of the Synagogues (German Temple, Italian Temple and the Fanese Oratory), built thanks to a rich banker from Rome, stands out because of the commemorative plaques by the entrance. In the historical building, the Museum of the Jewish community still holds liturgical objects, furniture from the Eighteenth Century and printed documents about the history and the tradition of the Ferrarese Jewish Community.

42 Ex-scuola ebraica

The school in Via Vignatagliata has been a kindergarden and ele-



mentary school in the Jewish community of Ferrara from the half of the Nineteenth Century. Giorgio Bassani taught here.

8 MEIS Museum of Italian Judaism and the Shoah

MEIS has been created in order to offer the first organic showcase of the heritage of Italian Judaism, and also an opportunity for knowledge, history, cultural identity and tourism. It contains 2,200 years of lively and uninterrupted presence of Jewish people in Italy, and was created in order to enhance their traditions and contribution to the history and the culture of this country. MEIS will be completed in the near future, with the construction of the remaining modern buildings.

FROM THE CASTLE TO THE JEWISH CEMETERY

43 Caserma Bevilacqua

Caserma Bevilacqua hosted male Jewish prisoners, who were then taken to the camp of Fossoli close to Carpi (MO) and from there, most of them was taken to Auschwitz.

44 Piccolo cimitero levantino *(Closed to the public)*

A private cemetery, represents one of the few traces left by Sephardic Jews in Ferrara.

35 Cimitero ebraico

The Jewish cemetery, immersed in the greenery of the Addizione Erculea close to the walls, contains tombs of high artistic value from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, the mortuary dedicated to the victims of deportations, and the funeral monument of the writer Giorgio Bassani, created by A. Pomodoro and P. Sartogo.



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.

2 From Castello Estense

24 Palazzo Municipale

3 Cattedrale

36 Piazza Trento Trieste

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.

45 Casa Minerbi-Dal Sale *(Closed to the public)*

The building is mainly famous for a series of frescoes from the fourteenth century. It is the location of the Centro di Studi Bassaniani (Center of Bassaniani Studies).

39 Mura – Porta San Pietro

10 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.



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.

46 Baluardo dell'Amore – Archaeological park

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.

6 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.

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.



Visit Ferrara in brief





The Mediaeval Centre

0h 35'

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.

2 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. It hosts temporary exhibitions.

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.

3 Cattedrale (Closed to the public)

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

36 Piazza Trento e Trieste

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

11 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.

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.

28 Mura – Porta Paula



33



The Renaissance Addition

1h 10'

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.

2 From Castello Estense

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 S. 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.



3



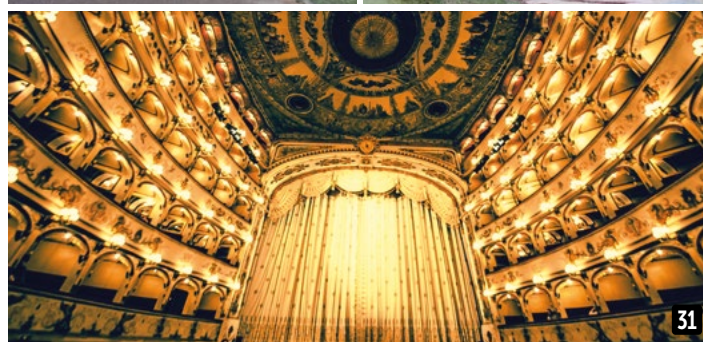
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26



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27 Mura – Porta degli Angeli

34 Piazza Ariostea

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

23 Palazzo Massari (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.

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.

4 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

0h 40'

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.

2 From Castello Estense

24 Palazzo Municipale

3 Cattedrale

5 Chiesa di San Francesco

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

13 Museo di 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.

9 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.

7 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, painted between 1469 and 1470 by Francesco del Cossa, Ercole de' Roberti and other artists, where the frescoes remind us of a period of luxury and culture, and the Room of the Stuccoes, with its ceiling shining with gold.

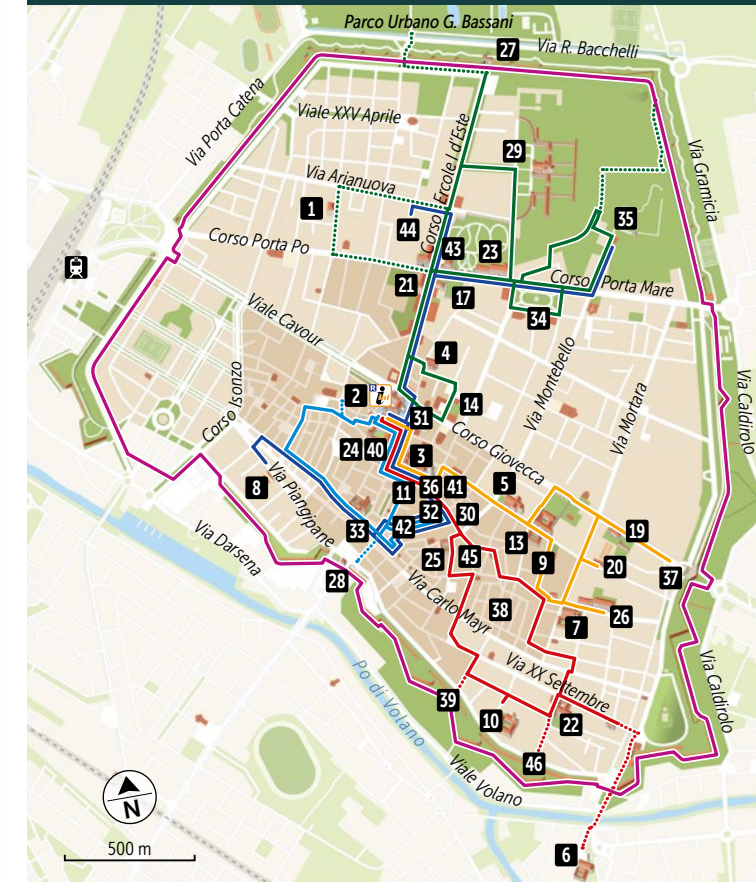
20 Palazzo Bonacossi

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



500 m

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

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