



# In Ferrara

- 1** Ferrara's City Walls 30,950 km
- 2** Where the river used to run 9,010 km
- 3** The historic centre and the ghetto 4,260 km
- 4** The Renaissance City 4,720 km

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Castello Estense

## 2 WHERE THE RIVER USED TO RUN

**Depart/arrive:** Ferrara, Railway Station

**Length:** 9,010 km

**Difficulty:** level route along city streets, cycle paths and restricted traffic zones

**Recommended period:** all year

Once upon a time the Po ran to the south of Ferrara and lapped against a busy river port, a source of riches for the mediaeval city. A series of floods in the 12<sup>th</sup> century moved the main stream of the river further north, and the Ferrara Po began to lose body, finally disappearing almost completely. In time a new quarter of the city grew up in this area.

The route unfolds through the south of Ferrara and crosses the centre of the mediaeval city with its famous monuments: the imposing **Estense Castle**, seat of the Este court until 1598, surrounded by a moat; the cathedral; Casa Rome; the refined Palazzo Schifanoia with its 15<sup>th</sup> century murals; the monastery of Sant'Antonio in Polesine; the Archaeological Museum and its Greco-Etruscan finds from Spina. After visiting the Church of San Giorgio, first cathedral of Ferrara, the route

runs into the green zone at the foot of the wall. This antique stretch of curtain wall was radically changed in the latter part of the 15<sup>th</sup> century on the orders of Duke Alfonso II with the addition of three imposing bastions shaped like the Ace of Spades.



Palazzo Schifanoia



Cattedrale

## 3 THE HISTORIC CENTRE AND THE GHETTO

**Depart/arrive:** Ferrara, Piazza Savonarola

**Length:** 4,260 km

**Difficulty:** level route along city streets, cycle paths and restricted traffic zones

**Recommended period:** all year

**Don't miss:** the Via delle Erbe cycle path.

former Ghetto, made up of what is now Via Mazzini, Via Vignatagliata and Via Vittoria. The building with the three **synagogues** still stands as a museum dedicated to the history of the Jewish community and the most important aspects of their daily life. The journey then shifts to the renaissance part of the city to visit the **Jewish Cemetery**, which extends across a green area beside the walls.

The **Estense Castle** is the symbol of Ferrara, a fortress of 1385 built as a fortified palace to protect the Este family after a revolt in the city, but quickly transformed into a residence and embellished with richly decorated state rooms. To the south of the castle is the oldest part of the city, including the area around the **Palazzo Municipale** (town hall) and the **Cathedral**, about which the life of the city revolves, and which includes the townscape between the cathedral and the old river port.

Here the urban fabric, to a large extent still intact, is easy to read through the streets around the famous Via delle Volte, with its most atmospheric corners.

Also in the mediaeval city is the zone of the



Via Vignatagliata