

FLORENCE

Florence (Firenze) is the capital of the Tuscany region and provincial capital. Residents are called Florentines. It is located at the foot of the Northern Apennines and is crossed by the river Arno.

During a stay or a weekend in Florence, you will discover a wealth of art which each year attracts millions of visitors from around the world and has allowed its inclusion in the UNESCO world heritage site.

From the **Ponte Vecchio**, one of the symbols of Florence, the **Uffizi Gallery**, one of the most beautiful painting museums in Italy, through churches, gardens, fountains and squares, you will pass Florence unforgettable moments.

History of Florence

Florence was founded in Roman times, in 59 BC., near the river Arno. It was a mere hamlet until the twelfth century. With the Medicis taking control, as well as the Tuscany at the time of the Italian Renaissance, Florence become a major artistic center of Europe.



The Ponte Vecchio is a symbol of the city of Florence. It crosses the Arno in its narrowest point. The first wooden building dating back to Roman times. Destroyed in 1333 by the river, it was rebuilt in stone in 1345. Its uniqueness lies in the fact that it has shops (mainly jewelers) throughout its length. The Vasari Corridor overlooks one of the 2 rows of shops and Medici allowed to join the Pitti Palace from the Palazzo Vecchio and the Uffizi without the dangers of the street.

The church of Santa Maria del Fiore is the cathedral of Florence (the Duomo). This is the fourth church in Europe through its size, after St. Peter's, St. Paul in London and the cathedral of Milan. It is 153 meters long and the base of the dome is 90 meters wide. The plan is a basilica (three aisles, the aisles are less large than the central aisle), beside giving three radiating chapels, and supporting the huge dome by Filippo Brunelleschi. It is the largest brick dome ever built. You can see inside, one of the largest frescoes narratives: 3 600 m² of paintings executed between 1572 and 1579 by Giorgio Vasari and Federigo Zuccaro.

Construction began on the old foundations of the church of Santa Reparata, in 1296 by Arnolfo di Cambio, was continued by Giotto 1334 (which entailed that the construction of the bell) until his death in 1337. Francesco Talenti and Giovanni di Lapo Ghini continued construction in 1357. In 1412, its name was changed to Santa Maria del Fiore. The church was consecrated on 25 March in the year 1436, at the end of the dome by Brunelleschi, by Pope Eugenio IV.

At present, it is the cathedral of the Archdiocese of Florence.



The Uffizi Gallery (Galleria degli Uffizi) is undoubtedly the most beautiful museum of Italian painting, one of the major in the world. The palace was built between 1560 and 1581 on the orders of Cosimo 1st to centralize the administration. In its collections were found paintings by great masters of the Renaissance as The Birth of Venus and Spring by Botticelli, The Annunciation by Leonardo da Vinci, or the Venus of Urbino by Titian, paintings by Cimabue and Piero della Francesca. Piazzale degli Uffizi, its gallery of great men from Tuscany.

The Accademia Gallery (Galleria dell'Accademia) is one of the museums of Florence. It is housed by the Drawing Academy of Florence created in 1562, moved there in 1784 and has, since 1873, several works by Michelangelo, including the famous David, the four prisoners and the Pietà da Palestrina.

The Basilica of Santa Croce (Basilica di Santa Croce), whose construction began on 3 May 1294 on the foundations of a small church, is located on the Piazza Santa Croce. It is the largest Franciscan church in the world and it is a kind of pantheon, in terms of illustrious people that are here: Michelangelo, Machiavelli, Galileo ...

The Baptistery St. John (Battistero di San Giovanni) is considered the oldest building in town. Located in front of the Duomo, it is famous for its magnificent bronze doors.

The church of San Lorenzo begun by Brunelleschi, continued by Antonio Manetti, front inner by Michelangelo. The Laurenziana Library is accessible by the cloister.



Gardens: Boboli Garden, The Garden of simple, Parcodelle Cascine, Giardino delle Rose, Orti Oricellari, Giardino Bardini in Oltrarno.

Loggias: Open buildings, loggias host many activities, or covered markets, opened day and night: Loggia del Bigallo, Loggia del Grano, Loggia del Mercato Nuovo, Rucellai Loggia, Loggia dei Lanzi, Loggia dei Servi di Maria , Loggia dei Tessitori, Loggia del Pesce

Fountains: Fontana del Bacchino, Fontana del Carciofo, Fontana del Nettuno, Fontana dell'Oceano, Fontana dello Sprone.

The Pitti Palace (Palazzo Pitti) is now the largest palace in the city. Its construction began in 1458, on behalf of a banker named Lucca Pitti, and was designed by Filippo Brunelleschi. The Medici acquired the palace in 1560. Currently, the palace hosts the Palatine Gallery, the Gallery of Modern Art and the royal apartments.

Other Palace: Palais Pitti, Le Bargello, Palazzo Vecchio, Palazzo Bartolini, Palazzo Davanzati, Palazzo Strozzi, Palazzo Strozzi

The Places: Piazza della Signoria, Piazza del Carmine, Piazza San Giovanni, Piazza Santa Croce, Piazza del Duomo, Piazza di Castello, Piazzale Michelangelo, Piazza Ognissanti, Piazza della Passera, Piazza della Repubblica, Piazza San Felice in Piazza, Piazza San Firenze, Piazza San Marco, Piazza San Lorenzo, Piazza Santa Maria Novella, Piazza della Santissima Annunziata, Piazza Santo Spirito, Piazza Santa Trinita.

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