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# City Book

Verona

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**Hanno collaborato:**  
Renato Groppo, Simone Madinelli, Paolo Groppo,  
Marcella Bellavite

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## A trip that leaves a mark in your memory

A trip to Verona is a plunge into the emotions of bygone times, of a city that conserves values and forms related to an ancient past of medieval and renaissance splendour, albeit it is in constant expansion in our own day. According to the poet, Shakespeare, "There is no world outside these walls..." but this also expresses the impression that strikes tourists when they enter the ancient walls that surround the city. The tragic story of the love of Romeo and Juliet, which Shakespeare situates in the Verona of the Scala seigniory, makes the city a preferred destination for lovers and tourists seeking emotions.

During the summer months a stroll through the ancient city can reach a climax of emotions in an evening at the Arena, Italy's largest opera theatre. The Roman amphitheatre can seat 15,000 spectators and put on a show with scenery designed by the greatest artists in the world: an evening at the Arena is unforgettable and reason enough alone to make a trip to Verona. There are visual memories and suggestions for travellers stopping over in Verona, not only due to the ancient architecture and its testimonial value, which pervades the entire city; not only thanks to the suggestive atmosphere of the narrow streets and squares, but also because of the tastes and flavours of an inimitable traditional territorial cuisine that has been perpetuated unaltered through time, which creates insoluble ties with veronese wines, which are famous and highly appraised throughout the world.

### General Aspects

Verona is one of the most ancient and beautiful Italian cities. It has 250,000 inhabitants and is the largest venetian city after Venice. Near Garda Lake, the city spreads out from the shores of the Adige River, at the feet of the venetian pre-alpine hills, enjoying a fortunate climatic position.

Verona is at the centre of the most important national and international routes of communication, so it has always been an important centre of commerce, fuelled - among other things - by the important industrial and agricultural production of the province.

### Historical Notes

The origins of the city are uncertain, as is the meaning of the name of Verona itself. In the III century B.C., it was populated by the Venetians, but as early as 89 B.C, Verona became a Roman colony and was an important crossroads: the Claudia-Augusta road, the Postumia and the Gallic road all passed through the city. In the period of the barbaric invasions, Teodorico made Verona the headquarters of his reign and built a sumptuous castle on the hill of San Pietro. Berengario, who had been elected king of Italy, chose Verona as his residence. In medieval times Verona became a free municipality and reached its maximum splendour with the dynasty of the Scala family. After a brief dominion under the Visconti and Carraresi, in 1405 the city spontaneously accepted the rule of the Serenissima Republic. Venice's dominion thus lasted about four hundred years, until the French invasion of 1797. With the Treaty of Campoformio (October 1797), Napoleon consigned Verona and much of its territory to Austria. Under Austrian dominion, Verona became one of the strongholds of the Quadrilateral. Finally, Verona was united to the Reign of Italy in 1866 by popular vote.

### Principal Monuments

The most important monuments of Verona can be found along five itineraries, which are flexible and conventional. The monuments indicated in bold type are described in detail on the following pages; they concern the religious and civil architecture. Of course, to consent rapid and easy consultation of this guide, a drastic selection was made: in addition to those indicated, Verona also has many other religious and civil monuments.

#### *Itinerary 1 - the Historical Centre*

The **Duomo**, in romanesque style, was built in the XII century in the vicinity of the Adige River, in the area that the Romans had earmarked for the hot springs. Although it was remodelled in successive periods, it represents a monument that is rich in history and works of art. The complex includes the churches of S. Elena and San Giovanni in Fonte, as well as the Piazza del Vescovado. The seat of an important Capitulary Library is located in Piazza Duomo. The church of **Santa Anastasia** is

located not far from the Duomo (XIII-XV century). It was built in the gothic style and is adorned with many works of art. Continuing along Corso Santa Anastasia, you reach the lively **Piazza delle Erbe**, situated at the centre of the ancient Roman Court and dominated by the high tower **Torre dei Lamberti**. The square is surrounded by stupendous palaces built in various periods, some of which are adorned with frescoes that are still visible. Adjacent to this is **Piazza dei Signori**, which bears important signs of the Scala Seignior and the venetian domination. At the centre of the square, the statue of Dante Alighieri recalls the divine poet's long sojourn at the Court of Cangrande. The ancient **Palazzo del Comune** (also known as Palazzo della Ragione), the Palazzo del Capitano, the stupendous **Loggia del Consiglio**, built in 1400 and the **Palazzo del Governo**. In the immediate vicinity there are the Romanesque church of **Santa Maria Antica**, whose portal bears the tomb of Cangrande I della Scala, and the monumental complex of the **Arche Scaligere**, with the tombs of Mastino II and Cansignorio.

#### *Itinerary 2 – Modern Centre*

From Piazza delle Erbe, along the central, elegant Via Mazzini, you can reach the wide and suggestive **Piazza Brà**, dominated by the enormous **Arena** (1st century A.D.). Numerous places face the square, dating mostly from the venetian era, the Palazzo della Gran Guardia and Palazzo Barbieri, which is now the City Hall. Continuing along Via Roma, you come to **Castelvecchio**. The imposing structure was built along the shore of the Adige River during the reign of Cangrande II; it is now the seat of the **Civico Museo d'Arte**. At the end of Corso Cavour, there is the church of **San Lorenzo** and the roman **Porta Borsari** (1st century A.D.). Beyond the gate, you can walk down the avenue, which has the same name, which winds its way back towards Piazza delle Erbe. Halfway down the avenue is the beautiful romanescque chapel of **San Giovanni in Foro**.

*Itinerary 3 - Juliet and the Right Bank of the Adige River.* This itinerary touches the localities where the story of Romeo and Juliet took place, the characters in the shakespeareian tragedy of the same name. Entering Via Cappello from Piazza Erbe, you encounter the so-called **House of**

**Juliet**, with its famous balcony, overlooking the courtyard, and the bronze statue of the girl. Not far away is the **House of Romeo**. Continuing along Via Leoni, in the vicinity of Ponte Navi bridge, is the church of **San Fermo Maggiore**, which admirably unites the romanescque and gothic styles. Just a short walk away is the **Tomb of Juliet**, situated in the vicinity of an ancient convent: it is the sentimental cemetery of the city and is visited by romantic tourists from every part of the world.

*Itinerary 4 – Veronetta and the Left Bank of the Adige River.* Coming from the Duomo in the direction of the hill, cross **Ponte Pietra** bridge, which was built by the Romans in 89 B.C., which reaches the left bank of the Adige and the area known as Veronetta. The grandiose complex of **San Giorgio in Braida** can be seen even from the bridge. It was started in around 1477: the dome is by Sammicheli and the church contains some very precious paintings. The church of **Santo Stefano** rises near the bridge. It was built in three phases, the last of which was in veronese romanescque style. An Austrian military construction built in 1853 occupies the hillside of Castel S. Pietro, and the complex of the **Teatro Romano**, built at the end of the 1st century B.C. and recovered in the first half of the 1800's, lies on the shore of the Adige River; the **Museo Archeologico** is annexed to it. On the hill on the right the ancient parish of **San Giovanni in Valle** is located. It was built in the romanescque style following an earthquake in 1117. The 15th century **Giardino Giusti** gardens lie at the foot of the hill, and are an annex of the palace that bears the same name. Not far from this location there is the church of San Nazaro e Celso, which dates from the XII century.

#### *Itinerary 5 – Monasteries and Fortifications*

The area to the southwest of Verona is dominated by the Abbey of **San Zeno Maggiore** and its tall bell tower. The church, which has extremely ancient origins, was rebuilt in the romanescque style in the XII-XIII centuries. It is dedicated to the eighth Bishop of Verona, patron saint of the city. Near the Abbey there is the suggestive church of San Procolo. There are also a series of Scala family, venetian and austrian fortifications in the vicinity.

## DUOMO

1

Piazza Duomo, 21		Tel. +39-045595627
Hours:	November/February:	Closed:
10.00-17.30	10.00-13.00 13.30-16.00	Monday
Holidays:	Holidays:	Entrance:
13.30-17.30	13.30-17.00	€ 2,50

**Historical Notes.** The successive early Christian, high medieval, romanesque and gothic contributions through the course of time have made the Duomo an extremely rich architectural complex, more than just a single building: it is formed by the Cathedral, the square, the Capitulary Library, the cloister of the Canonicals, Sant'Elena, San Giovanni in Fonte and the Bishopric. The history of the Verona Cathedral is the history of four Basilicas. Among the architectural innovations of the latest grandiose intervention, between the second half of the XV century and the second half of the XVI century, are the façade, the internal door, over which there is a splendid clock, the great columns, erected to raise the naves; the choir banister by Sammicheli.

**Architecture and Art.** *Façade.* The façade of the Cathedral – whose work of reconstruction began in 1120 – is a splendid composition of various materials: tuff with white and rose coloured marble, together with ceramic tiles. It is essentially romanesque in style, therefore it is quite simple artistically speaking, and is characterised by three vertical partitions, obtained thanks to the two columns placed alongside the entrance, and by two large lateral gothic style double lancet windows. In a central position there is a two-storey portico that protects the great entrance doorway. The lower floor in white and rose marbles is distinguished from the upper floor in tuff especially because of the presence of base relief human figures of St. John the Evangelist and St. John the Baptist. The final version of the façade was not completed until 1587, in the era of Cardinal Valier, whose stem can be seen at the summit of the centre. *Inside.* The inside, with three naves and five bays, is the result of the gothic transformation that took place between 1444 and 1513. The height and depth of the central nave and the overall design can be seen as a unit. A tour of the inside of the Cathedral will enable visitors to admire the frescoes and a series of chapels, decorated with splendid paintings.



Above, the façade of the Duomo, below, the cloister.



## SANT'ANASTASIA ②

Piazza Santa Anastasia		Tel. +39-0458004325
Hours: 09.00-18.00	November/February: 10.00-13.00 13.30-16.00	Closed: Monday
Holidays: 13.00-18.00	Holidays: 13.00-17.00	Entrance: € 2,50

**Historical Notes.** The Basilica of Santa Anastasia is definitely the most important gothic style religious monument in Verona. Construction on the church started around 1290 and lasted a century. It was supported by the Scala family, however the name of the architect is not known. The site chosen for the construction is very near to Piazza dei Signori square, where the Scala family had their palaces; therefore Santa Anastasia presumably became the official church of their court. The church is in the Italian Gothic style, with three crossed naves and five polygonal apses. It was admirably restored in 1878-1881.

**Architecture and Art.** The unfinished façade has a magnificent twin portal with polychrome marble, base relief and frescoes; on the left, there is the suspended arch of Guglielmo di Castelbarco.

The wall, up to the portal, dates from the years of Castelbarco (1315-1320). He also built the perimeter walls. The Renaissance style marble panels date from the XV century and narrate the life of St. Peter the Martyr: following the Napoleonic pillage, only two of these remain. The inside of the majestic church, with its twelve great white marble columns with Gothic capitals, is divided into three naves joined by a crossed vaulted ceiling. The plan of the church is a Latin cross, with a great apse flanked by four chapels. So as you enter the nave and turn right after reaching the baptistery and the plaque with the bust of the poet Bartolomeo Lorenzi, you gradually encounter sixteen splendid altars and marvellous chapels, with works by Pietro da Porlezza, Danese, Cattaneo, Michele da Firenze, Liberale da Verona and Giolfino. The pensile tomb of Cortesia di Serego, walled in the presbyterial area in front of the *Judgement* by Turone, is of great interest. Above the Pellegrini Chapel there is a famous fresco by Pisanello, *St. George and the princess*. There is little information about the bell tower: it rises light and quickly over the last chapel on the left as you look at the main altar. The style dates from the early 1400s.

## SANTA MARIA ANTICA ③

Via Santa Maria Antica		Tel. +39-045595508
Hours: 07.30-12.30 15.30-19.00		Free entrance

**Historical Notes.** S. Maria Antica is in the Romanesque style and rises in the area of a small VII century church. It was rebuilt and consecrated in 1185 by the patriarch of Aquileia, Gotifredo. The present-day church became the private chapel of the Scala family, who built the family cemetery area in the church courtyard. Around 1630, the inside of the church was modified in the Baroque style, but at the end of the 19th century the church was restored and regained its original style and splendour.

**Architecture and Art.** The small square bell tower in tuff, in pure Romanesque style, is noteworthy, with double lancet windows in the bell cell and a cone covering in lateritic brick. The Arca di Cangrande I della Scala is located above the door. It is the most sober of the Scala family Arca, but perhaps the most monumental as well. There are three naves inside the church, divided by a series of columns with raised curve arches. There are also three apses. The two lateral apses are decorated on the top in tuff and fired brick, while in the central apses the decorations are substituted by two frescoes dating from the beginning of the thirteenth century. The interior is severe and disadorned: the remains of frescoes can be seen here and there on the walls and archways, which perhaps date from the XIV century. The remains of an ancient fragment of white and black chequered floor tiles can also be seen, protected by a trap door. This probably dates from the X century.

## SAN LORENZO ④

Corso Cavour, 28		Tel. +39-0458001879
Hours: 10.00-18.00	November/February: 10.00-13.00 13.30-16.00	Closed: Monday
Holidays: 13.00-18.00	Holidays: 13.00-17.00	Entrance: € 2,50

**Historical Notes.** The current church was built at the beginning of the XII century over the remains of a previous early Christian building, built around the V or VI century and restored after 793. The new church, in the

romanesque style, was built around 1110, re-utilising part of the previous construction material. After the earthquake of 1117, the perimeter walls of the apses were raised. At the end of the century the church was completed with the addition of the transept, the women's gallery and cylindrical towers. The two different phases of construction are recognisable because of the difference between the lower wall, built with river rock arranged like a fish spine, alternated with rows of tuff and fired brick, and the upper wall, where only tuff and fired brick were utilised. But the beauty and suggestiveness of the building, created by the equilibrium of the individual architectural parts, the warm chromatics of the materials and the calibrated play of light through the narrow splay windows, were later destroyed by additions and remodelling.

**Architecture and Art.** The façade is pressed between two graduated towers, from which access was gained to the women's galleries. The red marble door, is surmounted by a prostyle with elegant renaissance arches. The external face is built with bands of tuff and brick. The plan is a latin pentapses benedictine cross. Intimate and suggestive, the interior is divided into three naves concluding with three apses and a transept with two spans, terminating with a small apse. The presence of the women's galleries, which are still intact, is rare and precious. They open on three sides along the upper floor of the smaller naves and the counter face: the women's galleries are as large as the two lateral naves and face the altar above them, like a loggia.

## SAN GIOVANNI IN FORO

5

Vic. San Giovanni in Foro, 1		Tel. +39-0458009496
Hours:		
10.00-12.30		
16.00-19.30		

**Historical Notes.** San Giovanni in Foro is an interesting religious building located in Corso Porta Borsari, which dates at least back to the XII century. The church, built on the Maximum Decuman, bordered directly with the Court, thereby giving the building its name. Because of its proximity to the Court, the building also had the title of basilica. The church was damaged by the fire that destroyed most of

Verona in 1172, and this is the justification for affixing an inscription, engraved on a marble triptych on the external wall, which commemorates the event of that year "combusta est civitas Verone".

**Architecture and Art.** The romanesque walls were rediscovered in 1905, when several pieces of the external plaster of the church fell off along Corso Porta Borsari and the City had to intervene for maintenance. On the advice of the rector of the time, the plaster was removed from the entire wall: thus the underlying wall in equally thick alternating layers of tuff and fishbone stones, with a basilica window, came to light. On the outside there is a marble burial site, with a cross and overlying triptych. The bell tower is built of brick: the basement was built in the 1300s. On the inside there is a noteworthy base relief of the *Madonna with Child*, signed by Maestro Pulia. The gem of the church is considered the renaissance door, sculpted by Gerolamo Giolfino, which bears on the sides of the arch and at its summit the statue of Saint John the Evangelist, Peter and John the Baptist, and in the niche there is the fresco by Nicola Giolfino with *Saint John on the Island of Patmos*.

*A view of the church of Santa Maria Antica.*





## SAN FERMO MAGGIORE

6

Via Dogana, 2		Tel. +39-0458007287
Hours: 10.00-18.00	November/February: 10.00-13.00 13.30-16.00	Closed: Monday
Holidays: 13.00-18.00	Holidays: 13.30-17.00	Entrance: € 2,50

**Historical Notes.** The first traces of this church go back to the VIII century. The benedictine restructuring that took place in the XI century was particularly important. It apparently started in 1070: the Benedictines built the upper and lower church and began construction of the bell tower, which was finished much later, towards the beginning of the XIII century.

**Architecture and Art.** The façade is adorned with two loggias with several theories of arches, a beautiful three-mullioned window, an imposing XIV century romanesque portal and a burial court dating from 1300, which contains the remains of Aventino Fracastoro, the Della Scala family doctor. The apses are interesting, being decorated with cusps and pinnacles, with the movement of the high, slim windows and the beautiful 15th century loggia, erected on the south side. The bell tower is quite picturesque, with its lines of tuff and brick and the elegant three-mullioned windows with rounded arches. The bronze portal, realised by the sculptor Minguzzi, is worthy of note. The interior of the Church has a single nave with a five apse crossed vault. The Chapels are disposed as follows: on the right, the first chapel is the NICHESOLA Chapel, adorned with marble statues. Behind the pulpit is the admirable Brenzoni Chapel. It is adorned with a beautiful altar, several tombs, statues, plaques and ionic columns. The Della Torre altar lies beyond the door that leads to the sacristy. It's in baroque style and is decorated with an altarpiece by Bellotti that portrays *Saint Francis*. In the right wing of the cross there is the Alighieri Chapel (1541). In the successive chapel, which goes by the name of the Chapel of the *Agonizzanti*, there is a *Crucifixion* by Brusasorzi. The presbytery is adorned with a splendid altar by Schiavi, upon which the relics of Saints Fermo and Rustico are conserved. Immediately to the right is the gracious Chapel of Saint Anthony. Following the Chapel of the Madonna, there is the beautiful Della Torre Mausoleum, a renaissance work.

## SAN GIORGIO IN BRAIDA

7

Lungadige San Giorgio, 6		Tel. +39-0458340232
Hours: 07.30-11.00 17.00-19.00		Closed: Monday
Holidays: 13.30-18.00		Entrance: Free

**Historical Notes.** Towards 1046, a benedictine monastery was built on the banks of the Adige River. It was almost totally demolished during the initial decades of the 19th century. Alongside the monastery a romanesque church was immediately built, of which nothing remains today. As testimony of its presence there remains the bell tower, which dates from the XII century. In 1442, the monastery was given to the Canonicals of St. Giorgio in Alga of Venice, who rebuilt the church. The façade of the Church and the Canonical house, built in 1791, both bear traces of French rifle fire, from a battle that took place in October of 1805, when the french came from Castelvechio to assault austrian Verona.

**Architecture and Art.** The façade was realised in the 17th century and is in white marble, with two orders of shortened pillars. Underneath they are ionic and on top they are corinthian; the two lateral niches accommodate the statues of San Giorgio and San Lorenzo Giustiniani.

The rest of the church is in brick. The bell tower was designed by Brugnoli; some think it was designed by Sammicheli or even by Palladio. The dome demands attention because of its gracefulness, but also because of the masterful way in which it was built. Sammicheli had to work on a pre-existent building on this site. The interior has a single nave and is simple and grandiose at the same time: finished between 1536 and 1543, it unites majesty and beauty, also because of the art treasures it contains. Above the large door, an initial painting masterpiece, an exquisite work by Tintoretto, shows the *Baptism of Christ*. There are four lateral chapels on each side. Underneath the dome, there is the choir with its underlying marble altar, which depicts the *Miracle of St. Barnaby*, by Veronese.

Two large paintings can be seen in the presbytery: one is by Farinati, the *Multiplication of bread*, and the other is by F. Brusasorzi, masterpiece by Veronese, the *Martyrdom of St. George*.

## SANTO STEFANO

8

Piazza Santo Stefano	Tel. +39-0458348529
Hours: 09.00-12.00 16.00-18.00	Closed: Tuesday afternoon Entrance: Free

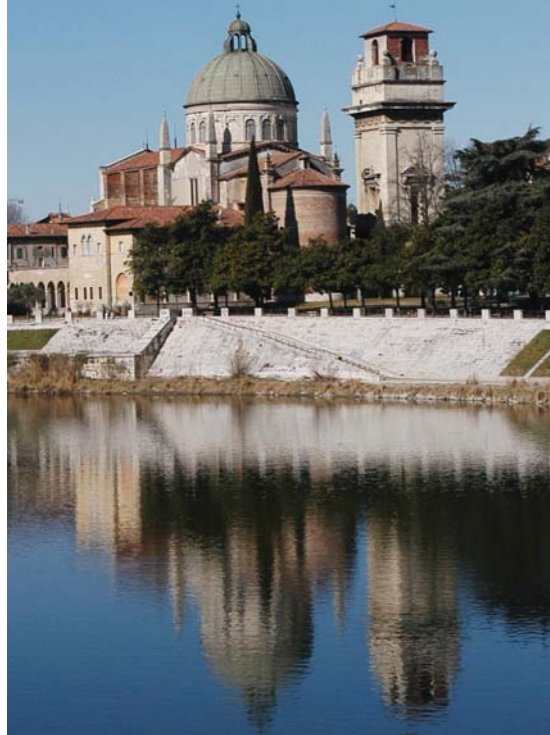
**Historical Notes.** The primitive nucleus of the church – the floor and lateral wall plan – probably dates from the V century, when the worship of the first martyr Stephen was introduced in the veronese christian community. Santo Stefano's remains were found in 415. The romanesque church of Santo Stefano was probably the Cathedral of Verona until the VIII century. In the VII century, in fact, the deterioration of the building imposed an almost complete rebuilding project.

Nothing remains of this restructuring, with the exception of the capitals, because they did not sustain heavy damage during the earthquake of 1117 – the entire church, except for the apse, was rebuilt by romanesque artisans during the first half of the XII century.

**Architecture and Art.** The façade is built of brick and tuff, with the usual frame of climbing arches, a luminous central cross, a simple rose window and a small pensile prostyle over the main entrance. The rose window and lateral windows were opened in the nineteenth century. The octagonal bell tower, with double lancet windows divided by plates, is completely built of brick and is rather short and heavy. The interior of the church has three naves, but with a single ceiling, which has a cross, crypt and raised presbytery. The gallery that runs around the apse, with its columns and capitals, suggests that in ancient times there were lateral women's galleries here. In the lower church, on the right, at the entrance, there is a noteworthy baroque chapel dedicated to Saints Innocenti. The dome was frescoed by Pasquale Ottino. Ottino also realised the altarpiece, which depicts the *Massacre of the Innocents*. This Chapel, built between 1618 and 1621, consists of a parallelepiped, upon which a cylinder is fixed. The frescoes are conserved better in the upper church.

To the left of the presbytery, there is a splendid *Enunciation and Coronation of the Virgin*, by Martino da Verona.

*The church of San Giorgio and the Adige River.*





## SANTA MARIA IN ORGANO

9

P.ta S.Maria in Organo, 1		Tel. +39-045591440	
Hours: 09.00-12.00 15.00-18.00		Entrance: Free	

**Historical Notes.** A benedictine monastery, built during the lombard era, Santa Maria in Organo is the oldest monastery known in the city of Verona. The monastery and its church were both rebuilt following the 1117 earthquake, and were again rebuilt during the period from halfway through the fifteenth century to mid sixteenth century, by the Olivetani, who had been called upon to support the abbacy following the Scala and Visconti dilapidation. The church and monastery were visited by illustrious foreign travellers, who all left enthusiastic written accounts of what they had seen, prior to the destructive blows inflicted by Napoleon's army and the successive dominations. The artistic patrimony suffered inevitable losses. The altarpiece, by Mantegna, is now at the Brera Gallery in Milan.

**Architecture and Art.** The façade is unfinished and is divided into two distinct parts, the upper part is the oldest, and is built of tuff and fired brick, while the lower part is the work of Sammicheli and is in white marble. The bell tower was built in the XV century. The interior is in romanesque style with gothic elements; it is two storeys high and is divided into three naves. The central nave has many frescoes; the ones on the right are by Caroto and the ones on the left are by Giolfino. Descending from the presbytery, it is possible to visit the subterranean church (or crypt), which is a rare and interesting example of pre-romanesque architecture, with capital belonging to the first church and a famous marble altarpiece dated 1300, which is attributed to Giovanni of Riginò.

**Choir and Sacristy.** The most famous works inside the church are the wood inlays of the choir and sacristy, which depict urban scenes, allegories, still life pictures, etc. It was realised at the end of the fifteenth century by the olivetan Frà Giovanni da Verona. The complex gained the immediate admiration of Vasari, who defined the sacristy as the most beautiful one in Italy.

## SAN GIOVANNI IN VALLE

10

Via San Giovanni in Valle, 36		Tel. +39-0458030119	
Hours: 09.00-12.00		Entrance: Free	

**Historical Notes.** The history of San Giovanni in Valle is the history of three churches: the crypt goes back to the V-VI century and was built over an ancient early christian cemetery; the second church was built by the lombards in the VI-VII centuries and was destroyed by the earthquake of 1117; the current present day church dates from 1120 and was rebuilt over the ruins of the previous church. It was a baptismal parish with an archpriest and a "college" of friars.

**Architecture and Art.** In romanesque style, with the façade and sides in tuff, three naves and three apses, the crypt and raised presbytery, the church was consecrated by the Bishop Ognibene in 1164. The façade dates from the beginning of the XV century. Above the door there is a noteworthy prostyle. On the right side of the church there is a surviving wall of a beautiful romanesque cloister and square bell tower, which is romanesque on the lower part and eighteenth century on the upper part. Adjacent to the wall of the church and college, there are stems, plaques and sepulchre seals. Inside, the baroque altars of the lower church and the central altar of the upper church are worthy of attention, along with the renaissance baptistery and a *St. John*, by D. Brusasorzi.

**The crypt.** Extremely beautiful and recently restored, the crypt occupies the lower space of the church. The front part is the oldest, dating from the IX century, and has a square floor plan with eight columns, while the rear part is in romanesque style (XII century) with crossed vaulted ceilings and the traditional three naves. The crypt contains two beautiful sarcophagus of greek marble from early christian times. The largest one, according to tradition, contains the relics of San Simone and Giuda Taddeo, whose effigies can be seen on cover.

The second sarcophagus is decorated with undulated grooves; on the side, Saints Peter and Paul can be seen, while in the middle, on a shell, the half bust depicting two spouses can be seen.

## SAN ZENO MAGGIORE

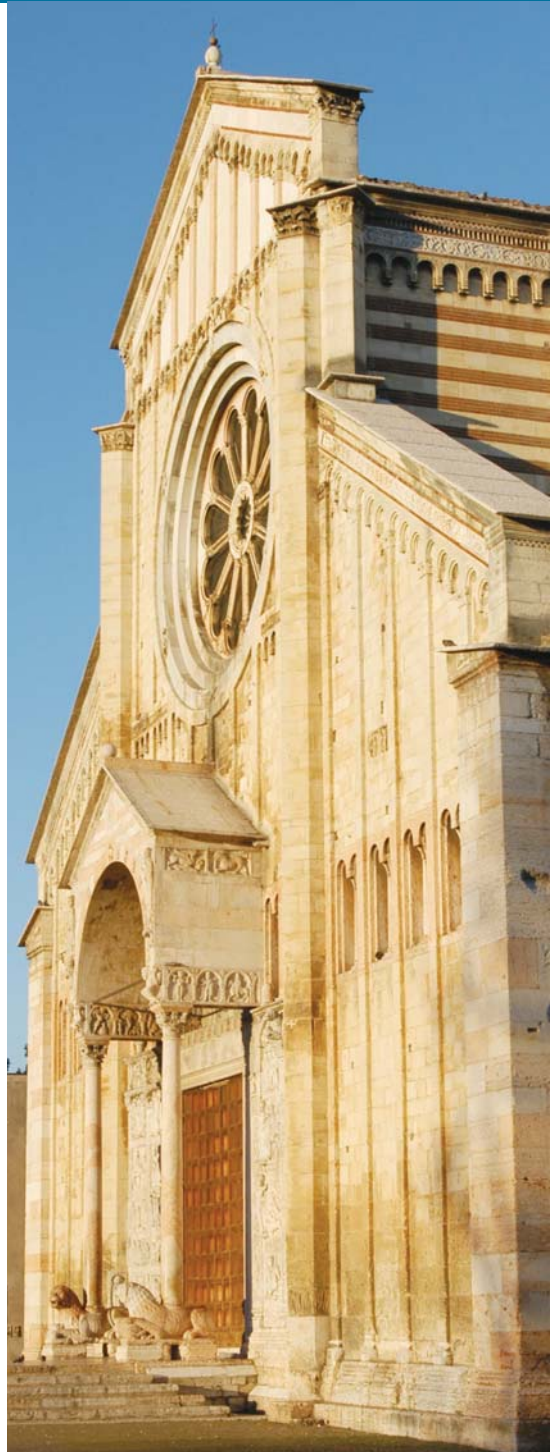
11

Piazza San Zeno, 2		Tel. +39-0458006120
Hours:	November/February:	Closed:
08.30-18.00	10.00-13.00 13.30-16.00	Monday
Holidays:	Holidays:	Entrance:
13.00-18.00	13.00-17.00	€ 2,50

**Historical Notes.** San Zeno was the eighth bishop of Verona. The basilica dedicated to him is one of the masterpieces of romanesque art in Italy. Between the IX and XIII centuries, the abbacy was the richest and most powerful monastery in Verona. Various emperors sojourned there. The plague of 1630 decimated the monastic community, which became extinct. The monastery was suppressed by the Serenissima Republic in 1770. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the devastation of the buildings of the former abbacy began, which were sold to private parties. In 1831 the last remnant of the abbacy building crumbled.

**Architecture and Art.** Built in the IX century, it was restored between 1120 and 1138 and was enlarged during the XIII-XIV centuries. The bell tower as the embattled tower date from 1045. The marvellous rose window by Master Briolato stands out on the façade of the building. It is also known as the *wheel of fortune*. The wooden portal is lined with 48 precious bronze forms, with scenes from the Old and New Testaments and the miracles of San Zeno. On the wall of the basilica, there is a massive and rough roman tomb which contains the remains of King Pipin. The interior has three naves with XIII and XIV century frescoes. The fourteenth century ceiling is shaped like the keel of a ship. On the left, as you enter, there is an enormous monolithic porphyry cup, from the roman hot springs. On the right side, a large baptismal fountain can be seen. It is monolithic and octagonal in shape. This fountain is attributed to Briolato. As you proceed to the upper church you will note the statue of San Procolo and a polychrome marble statue of San Zeno, which has been named *San Zeno laughing*. The actual presbytery supports the icon that frames the triptych by Mantegna, which depicts the *Madonna on the throne among the Saints*. The crypt, restored in 1938, is empty: only the monolithic altar that rises in the middle contains the remains of the Saint.

*The façade of the basilica of San Zeno Maggiore.*





## ROMEO AND JULIET

The tragedy of Juliet Capuleti and Romeo Montecchi, first written by the vicentine poet Luigi da Porto in 1524 and immortalised sixty years later by the pen of William Shakespeare, found its precise environmental setting in Verona. Popular imagination, greatly influenced by the sad story of the two lovers, quickly mixed legend and reality, ending up recognising in ancient city constructions the places that were the theatre of these events. The key moments of the tragedy of Romeo and Juliet and their unhappy love are set in two precise locations: Capuleti House and the Tomb of Juliet. Capuleti House is the theatre of the feast where the two offspring of enemy noble families meet, their lightening like love, the romantic dialogue on the balcony and the passionate night of love, interrupted only by the song of the lark. But the place where all of Verona accompanies the coffin of Juliet who allowed herself to be thought dead to avoid the arranged wedding organised by her father, who was unaware of the fact that she had already married Romeo. In Verona both of the places of legend took body and life, and have for almost two centuries been the destination of a ceaseless pilgrimage of tourists from every part of the world. If Capuleti House has found its place in a thirteenth century building located halfway down the central Via Cappello, the Tomb of Juliet relives among the walls of the ancient former convent of San Francesco al Corso, beyond which, for the exiled Romeo, “there is nothing except purgatory, torture and Hades itself”.

### JULIET'S HOUSE

Via Cappello, 23 – Tel. +39-0458034303

Hours: 8.30-19.30

Monday: 13.30-19.30

Entrance: € 4,00

Reduced prize: € 3,00

School groups: € 1,00

12

**Historical Notes.** Capuleti House was long the property of the Dal Cappello family. The combination of Cappello and Capuleti led people to believe that this had been Juliet's House, the unhappy lover of the noted shakespearean tragedy. In reality the building dates from the XII century. In 1905 the house was purchased by the City of Verona. The building took on its current aspect only seventy years ago: Antonio Avena, director of the cities museums transformed it from an anonymous ex-stall to the home of the dreaming Juliet. The aspect and internal structure of the building, prior to the restoration, remain a mystery. We must be satisfied to observe the end result, under the sign of a “medieval scenography”.

**Architecture and Art.** Overall, the “restoration” respected the structure of the interior more than anything else. In fact, recent studies on medieval living give us an image of a living environment that was quite similar to Capuleti House. Elements such as the banister that puts the various bodies of the house into communication, and the principle hall on the first floor, which is well adapted to the image of the “multi-purpose” room, can still be read: traditionally, in fact, the most important room was appointed as a master bedroom, but it could, if necessary, be transformed into a hall for parties; it depended upon the ability of the servants to move furnishings, carpets and tapestries, giving life in a few minutes to a scenario suitable for a party. The pictorial decorations, in this connection, are meaningful. Although they re-propose more or less current themes for the era the home was built in. Only one single strip of original painting can be glimpsed in the main hall: at one point the evanescent trace of an “imitation vair” border can still be seen, which reproduces the festoons of ermine furs, with which the rich decorated the halls of their dwellings. In the courtyard there is a bronze statue of Juliet, a work by the sculptor Nereo Costantini.

## ROMEO'S HOUSE

13

**Historical Notes.** Montecchi House, located in Via Arche, is not far from Juliet's House; at one time, in order to go from one to the other, all you had to do was cross the Botanical Gardens, which were much more spacious than now. Legend has it that this was the home of Romeo Montecchi: as he left his house, Romeo almost immediately reached the fateful balcony where Juliet awaited him anxiously. It is certain that the Montecchis were a powerful and rich Verona family and that they almost certainly lived in the area between Le Arche and La Chiavica, where the house is now located.

**Architecture and Art.** Of all the more typically medieval houses, this is the most grandiose and relatively well conserved. The imposing construction is arranged on three sides around an ample closed courtyard, towards the road, by a high embattled wall, where the entry way opens; originally the interior of the construction was supported by a spacious portico that is conserved almost intact in the front wall, while on the right it has been incorporated into the building and on the left it is covered by structures that were built on later.

To the left of the entrance there is a stairway that provides access to the upper floors, among the red twelfth century bricks, romanesque windows alternate with gothic and renaissance ones, surmounted by several tracts of a beautiful original embattlement. Throughout the curve of the windows and portico the arches are decorated with alternating tuff and brick decorations.

## THE TOMB OF JULIET

Via del Pontiere, 35 – Tel. +39-0458000361

Hours: 8.30-19.30

Monday: 13.45-19.30

Entrance: € 3,00

Reduced price: € 2,00

School groups: € 1,00

Free entrance first sunday of each month

14

**Historical Notes.** Regardless of the ancient site that hosts it (the convent, which previously belonged to the Cappuccini Monks, dates from the XIII century), Juliet's Tomb as we now see it dates only back to 1937. That year, the Director of Veronese Museums Antonio Avena decided to give a new face to the site most

identified as the place of burial of the shakespearean heroine. An ancient red marble sarcophagus had lain in the garden of the former convent for decades, perhaps even centuries. With no cover, the completely empty sarcophagus was indicated as the place of burial of the beautiful Juliet, as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Another important event created the final push to transform the site that hosted Juliet's Tomb: a stay in Verona by the troupe of Metro-Goldwin-Mayer, which was then seeking ideal settings for its new colossal film, *Romeo and Juliet*. The film (starring Norma Shearer and Leslie Howard), was not shot in Verona, but the extraordinary success that it enjoyed allowed Avena to imagine an imminent, conspicuous flow of tourists to Verona, in search of the places described in the film. Here, however, the final scene of the double suicide was not set in the cloister of the convent, but in a crypt: it was probably on inspiration of the cinema choice that the museum director decided to give the sarcophagus a more suggestive background.

Today, Juliet's tomb is the sight where civil weddings are celebrated: many couples come especially from abroad, to crown their dream of love in the place where Romeo and Juliet saw their hopes shattered. And here, in the den illuminated by the high gothic windows, where the empty tomb awaits the romantic tribute of visitors, a singular tradition was born: the habit of addressing messages of love to "Juliet, Verona". An entire squad of secretaries gathers these messages and answers them, because the story of Juliet is legend, but the throes of love that afflict men and women from every continent are a reality.





## MUSEUMS

### FONDAZIONE MUSEO MINISCALCHI-ERIZZO 15

Via San Mamaso, 2/a – Tel. +39-0458032484  
 Hours: 16.00-19.00  
 Sunday: 11.00-13.00 / 16.00-19.00  
 Closed: saturday  
 Entrance: € 5,00  
 School groups: € 3,00

The museum is located in the old Palazzo Miniscalchi; there are fifteen halls where archaeological collections, XVI century drawings, Renaissance bronzes, marbles and ivories are on exhibit. In the ground floor hall temporary shows are organised.

### GALLERIA D'ARTE MODERNA PALAZZO FORTI 16

Corso S. Anastasia - Tel. +39-0458001903  
 Hours: depending on shows  
 Closed: moday  
 Entry: depending on shows

The gallery includes numerous masterpieces of venetian artists of the XIX and XX centuries. Two halls are reserved for new donations of the Society of Fine Arts. For several months of the year, the gallery hosts a show of artists from the Civic Collection.

### CIVICO MUSEO D'ARTE DI CASTELVECCHIO 17

Corso Castelvecchio, 2 – Tel.+39-0458062611  
 Hours: 08.30-19.30  
 Monday: 13.30-19.30  
 Entrance: € 4,00  
 Reduced: € 3,00  
 School groups: € 1,00  
 Free entry the first sunday of the month

The Scala family castle, built in 1353 and transformed into barracks initially by Napoleon (1805) and later by the Austrians, was furnished as a museum in 1925. Restored by Carlo Scarpa between 1958 and 1964, it hosts sculptural works from the XIV and XV century, panels and canvases from the middle ages and the eighteenth century. Additionally, objects from the lombard era are exhibited, including fabrics and arms. On the walkway and in the Hall of Mastio findings are exhibited of lombard white arms dating from 1300 to 1700. The most significant work is the statue on horseback of Cangrande I della Scala, dating from the XIV century.

The collection that is not on display due to lack of adequate space may be consulted by scholars. The collection includes prints, miniatures, bronze statues from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, gems, coins and medallions from the Roman era to the nineteenth century.

### MUSEO LAPIDARIO MAFFEIANO 18

Piazza Brà, 28 – Tel. +39-045590087  
 Hours: 08.30-14.00  
 Closed: monday  
 Entrance: € 3,00  
 Reduced: € 2,00  
 School groups: € 1,00  
 Free entry the first sunday of the month

Among Europe's most ancient public museums, the Museo Lapidario was instituted in 1745, thanks to the greek, etruscan, early venetian and roman epigraphic collection of the veronese illuminist Scipione Maffei. The collection includes 650 findings of considerable interest, including the greek reliefs admired by Goethe; there are inscriptions to exalt the value of writing as a form of memory and communication. The epigraphic material and reliefs are distributed by chronological sections in the courtyard, through which access is gained to the Teatro Filarmonico, to the underground or to two upper halls. The museum is frequented mostly by specialists, archaeological lapidary and art scholars.

### MUSEO DEGLI AFFRESCHI 19

Via del Pontiere, 35 – Tel. +39-0458000361  
 Hours: 08.30-19.30  
 Monday: 13.45-19.30  
 Entrance: € 3,00  
 Reduced: € 2,00  
 School groups: € 1,00  
 Free entry the first sunday of the month

The museum is located inside the San Francesco al Corso Convent complex, which dates from the XIII century and was refounded in 1625. In 1935 Antonio Avena, who was then Director of Civic Museums, opened to the public the so-called Tomb of Juliet or the place where the arc had been set, which according to legend held the bodies of Romeo and Juliet, making it a tourist attraction. In the annexed "G. B. Cavalcaselle" Museum of Frescoes, inaugurated in 1975, cycles of frescoes from veronese medieval buildings in the sixteenth century and nineteenth century sculptures, while the church

of San Francesco hosts works on canvas of great dimensions ranging from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. The underground holds a deposit of roman amphoras dating from the 1 century A.D., which were found in local diggings. In the courtyard there is medieval and modern lapidary material (architectural and sculptural) that awaits preparation of a medieval lapidary.

### MUSEO ARCHEOLOGICO

20

Regaste Redentore, 2 – Tel. +39-0458000360

Hours: 08.30-19.30

Monday: 13.30-19.30

Entrance: € 3,00

Reduced: € 2,00

School groups: € 1,00

Free entry the first sunday of the month

The Archaeological Museum was founded in 1923 on the premises of the former fifteenth century convent of San Gerolamo, which is found in the area of the Teatro Romano. The exhibit includes greek vases, mosaics, sculptures, glass objects and utensils for daily use, from necropolises, sacred and sepulchral inscriptions found in Verona and her province. The museum building was built over the area of the Teatro Romano (which was started in the 1 century A.D.), where the remains of the stage, orchestra and cavea of the theatre building are among the best conserved in northern Italy. The adjacent church of San Girolamo conserves frescoes from the XV and XVI century.

### MUSEO CIVICO DI STORIA NATURALE

21

L.ge Porta Vittoria, 9 – Tel. +39-0458079400

From October 2 to June 5: 09.00-19.00

From June 6 to October 1: 10.00-17.30

Closed: friday

Entrance: € 3,00

Reduced: € 2,00

School groups: € 1,00

The museum headquarters is located in the sixteenth century Lavezzola-Pompei Palace. The museum, which conserves findings from various italian regions, is especially well-known for its extraordinary collection of plant and animal fossils from the diggings that are still in the deposits of Bolca, the fossil locality at on the slopes of the Lessinian mountains.

*The entrance to the Museo d'Arte di Castelvecchio.*



## PIAZZA DELLE ERBE

22

**Historical Notes.** Piazza delle Erbe occupies a good part of the area of Verona's Roman Court, where the Maximum Decuman and Maximum Cardo intersected. Through the centuries, the square has been the centre of the city's political and economic life.

**Monuments.** The square is surrounded by buildings and monuments that have marked the history of Verona. We have included in this guide the special cards for some of these buildings (Palazzo del Comune, Torre dei Lamberti Tower) in the following pages.

1. The complex that is detached after Volto Barbaro and which extends to the end of the corner of Corso Sant'Anastasia is known as **Case dei Mazzanti**. These structures go back to the XIV century.

2. The smaller side of the palace winds up with the solemn baroque side-scene of **Palazzo Maffei**. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Maffei family owned the area and had decided to build a monumental palace. It was equipped with a terrace, upon which a pensile vegetable and citrus fruit garden was planted. The banister that concludes the prospectus of the palace is adorned by statues: from the left, they are Herculese, Jupiter, Venus, Mercury, Apollo and Minerva.

3. **Torre del Gardello** tower was pre-existent with respect to the Scala era, but in 1363 Cansignorio restored it and raised it to its current level. In 1370 the seigniory had a bell placed in the tower to mark the time (and it was thus called the *clock bell*).

4. The side of the square that faces the corner of Corso Porta Borsari at Piazzetta XIV November is cited in medieval documents with the name of Borgolecco or Borgoletto. The houses rise on the foundations of the **Roman Capitol**, which faced the Court with one of its most important façades.

5. **Casa dei Mercanti** stands on the corner with Via Pellicciai. The foundations of this building go back to 1301. Through the centuries, the building has undergone various

transformations. In 1797 the house changed its name and became the Chamber of Commerce.

6. The most ancient monument in the square is the Fountain, with its statue, which is called **Madonna Verona**. It is a roman statue, with an epigraphy dated in the IV century, which asserts that the statue was transferred to the Court around the year 380 with a solemn ceremony. In 1368 the square's beautiful fountain was built, perhaps by Bonino da Campione.

7. Another historical monument that has been renovated several times is the capital, also called the **Tribuna** or **Berlina**. It already existed in the XIII century, and the Praetorians sat under it for the swearing in ceremony, when they took office.

8. At the end of the square, towards Via Cappello, there is an ancient column surmounted by an aedicule, which was erected towards the end of the fourth century, during the brief years of domination by the Visconti.

9. Following the events tied to the temporary occupation of Verona by Maximillian Hapsburg, the Veronese erected a superb white marble column in the square, in order to be forgiven for their previous pro-empire sentiments, upon the summit of which a **Leone Marciano** had been placed in 1524, the symbol of the Republic of Venice.



## TORRE DEI LAMBERTI

23

Cortile Mercato Vecchio		Tel. +39-0458032726
Hours:		Entrance: € 3,00
09.30-19.30		Stairs: € 2,00
Monday:		Reduced: € 1,50
13.30-19.30		School groups: € 1,00

**Historical Notes.** In the middle of Piazza delle Erbe, on the corner towards la Costa, stands the slim Tower of the City, or Torre dei Lambert. Apparently construction of the tower began in 1172. In May 1403 lightning struck the tower and knocked off its top. Some time later, it was decided to restore and raise the tower higher.

The restoration lasted from 1448 to 1463-1464.

**Architecture and Art.** In the romanesque period, the tower was modest in height, as can be seen by the construction in tuff and brick. Two bells were placed on the tower, the smallest of which was to signal fires and the largest of which was to call a meeting of the city council and to call the citizens to arms to defend the city. The two bells have been fused several times, and still conserve their ancient names of Marangona and Rengo.

The tower is 84 meters high; the clock was added only in 1779. It has been said that the tower “is a stem of light, that elevates its solemnity to assert the most shrill of songs to the beauty and life of a Verona gathered beneath its maternal protection.

*Below, a view of Piazza delle Erbe; right, Torre dei Lambert.*



## PIAZZA DEI SIGNORI

24

**Historical Notes.** Piazza dei Signori shows no signs of roman times, even though it is very near to the ancient Court, which later became the market square, Piazza delle Erbe. For the history of this place, you have to start from the Scala family seigniory, bearing in mind, however, that in the square there were already the Municipal Palace and the Domus Nova. At the end of the XIII century, the square (which was then called Platea Domini Vicarii), did not have today's rectangular form; neither the palace that is now called the Palazzo dei Tribunali, nor the Palazzo del Governo.

**Monuments.** Piazza dei Signori is surrounded by buildings and monuments of great historical and architectural importance. For the most important monuments (Palazzo del Comune, Loggia del Consiglio, Palazzo del Governo) please read the special cards on the following pages.

**Casa della Pietà** - On the same side of the Loggia del Consiglio, beyond the arch of via delle Fogge, there is a house without pretence. In 1407 it was the property of a notary public. The entire building would have been sold to the nobleman Galasso Pio da Carpi in 1408, but in 1490 it turned out to be the property of the Casa della Pietà. Perhaps it was during these years that the building was remodelled and the façade was transformed into the simple renaissance style. On the face of the building there is a curious base relief with a seated woman who holds a flag in her hand, upon which it is written *Fide et Charitate in aeternum non deficiam*. The woman represents Verona resting safe in the shadow of the Serenissima Republic, who is protecting her. Verona's oldest Caffè is important, which hung out the sign "Dante" in 1863, following erection of the monument to the poet in the square. The place was frequented by professionals, men of letters, artists and politicians, especially the elderly, who formed various "small parliaments", discussing politics, art and above all criticizing everything.

**The arches** - Palazzo del Consiglio was not entirely completed when it was decided to place a few statues on the arch at the top of via delle

Fogge. The administration decided upon San Zenone, protector of the city, and the task was given to this "magistro Angelo lapicida". But things got complicated. Instead of San Zenone, a statue of Girolamo Fracastoro was placed on the arch in 1559. The great doctor, poet and astronomer is dressed in the roman style and holds a sphere of the world in his hand. The sphere immediately struck the shrewd popular fantasy: Fracastoro would have dropped the sphere on the head of the first honourable man that walked under the arch. But the sphere is still there... In 1756, the statue of Scipione Maffei was placed on the arch facing via Barbaro. The two statues were substituted only in 1925, respectively, by the historian and theologian Enrico Noris (1613-1704) and the historian and archaeologist Onofrio Panvinio (1529-1568). The arch on via Dante dates back to 1575 and was built in order to create a direct passage between Palazzo del Comune and Palazzo del Capitano. The last arch, which faces via S. Maria Antica, joined the Palazzo del Capitano with Palazzo del Governo. On this arch the Venetians raised a one-storey building, creating an internal passage between the two palaces, while outside of that structure there was a balcony that joined the Palazzo del Governo with the extremely long archway that crossed the entire length of the square, from the Palazzo del Capitano to the Costa.

**The monument to Dante** - 1865 was the sixth centennial of the birth of Dante and Italy was about to solemnly commemorate the recurrence. As an initiative of the Academy of Agriculture and the Society of Fine Arts, to which the City Council adhered, it was decided to erect a statue of Dante in Piazza dei Signori, where the Scala Palace that had hosted the *Ghibellin fuggiasco* was. On 6th October 1863 a call for tender was emanated for the design of the statue. The only conditions were that the second quality Carrara marble be suitable for a height of three meters, supported by a pedestal and that the figure, which would turn its back to Via delle Fogge, have its head turned slightly towards the left, or namely towards Palazzo dei Tribunali. The winner of the tender was a young, entirely unknown artist, Ugo Zannoni. When the statue was uncovered in 1865, it was not desired that the Austrian authorities intervene in the inaugural ceremony.

**PALAZZO DEL COMUNE**  
(della Ragione  
or del Mercato Vecchio)

25

**Historical Notes.** The majestic palace that was once the City Hall, alongside Piazza delle Erbe, and which long housed the Offices of the Magistrate's Court and court of Assize, is an imposing complex, with an almost square plan and a central court. The complex is located between Piazza delle Erbe, Piazza dei Signori, Via Dante and Via Cairoli, thus occupying the southeast corner of what must have been the ancient Roman Court – namely Piazza delle Erbe. Two recent plaques are walled to the outside of the palace, indicating two discordant dates for construction of the palace (1138 and 1193). In 1218 a terrible fire involved much of the Palace, but it was rebuilt the following year. During venetian domination, the Palace became the seat – in addition to the City Administration, of the civil and penal courts, the prison, the College of Notary Publics – with its own Chapel, which still exists in the northeastern corner of the Palace – of the silk customs offices, the Fiscal Chamber, the public granaries, the salt deposits, the Office of Health and others. In 1447 the so-called Scala della Ragione was built inside the courtyard, under Torre dei Lamberti tower. The Stairway is one of the first structures added to the architecture of the palace courtyard.

**Architecture and Art.** It is difficult today to say how the complex, which is developed on three storeys, originally looked. To understand that above the portico and lower premises, perhaps on all four sides of the building, great halls had been created for public meetings. A partition of columns still supports the arches along the entire curve, with a sculpted keystone. An analogous partition can be seen on this floor in the vicinity of the angular tower as well. This is one of the few precious pieces of architecture conserved inside the palace, just as was the Cappella dei Notai chapel. The numerous 19th century restorations had the pretext of restoring the building to its original splendour. In particular, it was desired to make the wall covering uniform, utilising rows of tuff and brick.

*The monument to Dante in Piazza dei Signori.*



## LOGGIA DEL CONSIGLIO (or di Fra' Giocondo)

**26**

**Historical Notes.** This is a loggia that the notables of the City of Verona desired to build for meetings of the Patrician Council. Only in 1476, however, it was decided to build a beautiful loggia with marble columns. The phases of design and construction of this gem were extremely long, due to an unknown architect, or a group of citizens who waited for many years.

Based on an erroneous attribution advanced in the nineteenth century, the veronese call it Loggia of Frà Giocondo.

**Architecture and Art.** The splendid Loggia, which is extremely rich in base relief sculptures and pictorial decorations, is a masterpiece, an exuberant and superb expression of the artists, especially the lombards who worked on it, and it shows the strong influence of this nearby region of Italy. The two high bronze reliefs cast by Gerolamo Campagna, which depict the *Enunciating Angel* and the *Enunciated Virgin*, were placed, due to the will of the City Council, in the centre of the façade: they were removed from this spot a century ago.

In order to ennoble the internal halls of the Loggia, the Council initially commissioned a painting, in 1566, from artists Bernardino India and Orlando Flacco. The painting is still in the Loggia and depicts the *Blessed Virgin with Child, between Saints Zeno and Pietro the Martyr*. The painting received the homage of Verona and the presence of several local glories: Gerolamo Verità, Onofrio Panvinio, Gian Battista Montano and Gerolamo Fracastoro. In the nineteenth century, the Loggia was temporarily utilised as a civic picture gallery; the building filled up with medallions and busts of veronese celebrities: the so-called protomotec, which could be placed in the Loggia within 1871.

## PALAZZO DEL GOVERNO (or della Provincia, del Podestà, della Prefettura, di Cangrande)

**27**

**Historical Notes.** As early as 1311 Cangrande I della Scala resided in the new Palace of Santa Maria Antica, the current palace of the

Provincial Administration. The palace has a façade that faces Piazza dei Signori square and another one that phases the Arche Scaligere. It appears that Cangrande hosted the poet Dante Alighieri precisely in this building. It was also in this palace that Giotto found hospitality at the Scala court when he came from Padua. During venetian domination and beyond, the palace was the seat of important magistrate's courts. During the venetian era, the offices of the podestà were located in this building. One of the podestà, Giovanni Dolfin, commissioned the magnificent portal that adorns the entrance to Piazza dei Signori square from Michele Sammicheli, in 1533.

**Architecture and Art.** A fourteenth century loggia was built here by Cansignorio. Paintings were housed under the archways of the upper floors: this was the most ancient example of imperial medallions that had been attested to until that time in the Medieval period, an example that anticipates the medallions of the Carraresi, which are even today deemed the most ancient in the formula of pre-humanistic courtly taste, this kind would therefore find in Verona one of its first expressions.

## ARCHE SCALIGERE

**28**

Via Santa Maria Antica		Tel. +39-0458003392
Hours: 09.30-19.30	The price includes the visit to the Torre dei Lamberti.	Entrance: € 4,00
Monday: 13.30-19.30		Reduced: € 3,00
	Open from June to September	School groups: € 1,00

**Historical Notes.** Arche Scaligere are among the most distinguished monuments of gothic art in Verona. As early as the end of the XVI century the Arche presented serious problems of conservation. This is a theme that will be re-proposed to the attention of those responsible for public administration. While a complete restoration of the Arca di Mastino was performed in 1786, it must be remembered that there was a general project of restoration in 1839. John Ruskin, who wrote of the how grace of the activity of building, the grace that once seemed to be reserved to churches, had been employed by the Scala family in sepulchres, not like the tombs saints, but like the place where people who have fallen asleep live.

**Architecture and Art.** Arche, which date from the XIV century, are the work of various

sculptors. Entering, along the wall of the church, there is the tomb of Mastino I. The shape of the sarcophagus is extremely simple: the cover with two overhanging elements and four previously fixed ones recalls roman use. Further on, isolated, lies the tomb of Alberto I. The Sarcophagus is richly storied, and repeats, in an architectural form, the tomb of Mastino I. The primary phases are adorned with the symbols of evangelists and the figure of the Patriarchs. The cover bears, among slight decorations, the imperial coat of arms, flanked by two Scala family coats of arms. The three simple tombs near the external perimeter wall probably belong to Bartolomeo I, Cangrande II and Bartolomeo II or Bailardo Nogarola, respectively. Above the lateral door of S. Maria Antica, there is the magnificent mausoleum of Cangrande I, who died on 22nd June 1329. The sarcophagus is supported by four symbolic dogs, which uphold the Scala family coat of arms. On the front face, three small statues have been placed. Above the cover of the Sarcophagus, it is the supine statue of Cangrande. Four columns support the canopy, which is thrown like the trunk of a pyramid upwards, and culminates in the marvellous statue on horseback. The second door of the gate leads to the sepulchre of Mastino II. The sarcophagus rests on the four pillars. The sarcophagus still bears traces of the ancient colours. Four sharp pinnacles make up the crown, with the between the three gables, the central spire, upon which the monumental horseback figure of the signiory rests, completely closed in a solid armour and with his face concealed. The last Arca, of Cansignorio, is richer and has more movement than the previous ones, but is not of such high artistic value. The sarcophagus rests on pillars substituted by four couples of nude putties of almost renaissance inspiration. Along the faces of the urn evangelistic stories are sculpted. Around the listel at the base, on the east side, the signature of the author of this mausoleum is engraved: Bonino da Campione. Translated in the Scala tomb in 1831, it is the sepulchre of Giovanni della Scala, placed at the back of the cemetery, on the external wall of the house adjacent to the church.

*The tomb of Cangrande I, Arche Scaligere.*



**PIAZZA BRÀ'**
**29**

**Historical Notes.** The Brà began to be defined as a square only around mid sixteenth century, when Michele Sammicheli built the Palazzo degli Honorii and gave a correct perspective to the Arena. Another contribution was made by construction of the Palazzo della Gran Guardia, which defines the southern limit of the area. After paving of the area, which was finished in 1782, the Brà became the preferred place for a vespers stroll, instead of Piazza dei Signori square. Around mid XII century, it was used for the wood, hay, straw and livestock market, to the extent that ancient documents often refer to the Brà as the livestock market. The traditional Fair of Saint Lucy survives as a remnant of the ancient custom of holding a fair in Piazza Brà. This recurrence takes place each year between the 11th and 13th of December.

**Monuments.** See the respective analytical cards for the Arena and Museo Lapidario.

**Palazzo Barbieri** – Alongside the Arena, on the eastern side of the square, the neoclassical City Hall rises, which was built in the nineteenth century by architect Giuseppe Barbieri. It has been the seat of the municipal government since 12 October 1869. In 1945, the interior of the City Hall was destroyed by a fire; when it was rebuilt, the rear portion and semi-circular wing were added.

**Gran Guardia** – Began in the XVII century on a design by Domenico Curtoni, Gran Guardia is an imposing building, whose stone stair access leads to the deep and grandiose portico, which is supported by twelve pillars with full centre arches.

The noble floor aligns five great central arched windows.

**Palaces on the Listòn** – According to the design by architect M. Castellazzi, *Ottolini Palace* was built in the sammichelian style. It is on the corner of Via Roma, near the *Guglienzi-Brognofigo Palace*, which is in the renaissance style of the fifteenth century. The beginning of the sixteenth century is represented by nearby *Fracasso-Gianfilippi Palace*, which has a fresco attributed to Caroto on its façade. Number 16 is *Guastaverza Palace* built in the mid sixteenth century according to a design by Sammicheli.

**ARENA**
**30**

Piazza Brà		Tel. +39-0458003204
Hours: 08.30-19.30		Entrance: € 4,00 Reduced: € 3,00
Monday: 13.45-19.30		School groups: € 1,00

**Historical Notes.** The Roman amphitheatre Arena is the most renowned veronese monument. Today the Arena is set in the historical centre and acts as a backdrop for Piazza Brà. But once upon a time, when the Romans built it, the monument was located at the margins of the urban area, outside the circle of the walls. The Arena summarises in itself almost twenty centuries of local history. Through time, it has become the very symbol of the city. Its cult has far away roots, that go back to carolingian humanism. The fame that the amphitheatre has enjoyed in the civic consciousness of the veronese has gradually led the monument to increasingly assume the character of the very symbol of ancient nobility. The Arena has always served the special purpose of spectacular events. During roman times, for example, it was used for spectacles of gladiator fighting. In Medieval times and until the mid eighteenth century, games and tournaments were common events at the Arena. In 1913, the Arena was finally discovered for what it has become known for today, as the first true and most important open-air opera theatre in the world.

**Architecture.** The most solemn monument in roman Verona, with various orders of tiers of seats and, in the centre, an area or arena for gladiator shows or struggles with wild beasts. It was built with well-squared blocks of marble in the 1st century A.D., namely between the end of the empire of Augustus and the empire of Claudio. It is one of the best-conserved monuments of its kind. The perimeter of the current seating stalls is 391 metres, and including the wing it is 435 meters. The amphitheatre is built from three concentric circles. Only one side of the external ring remains. It is commonly referred to as the “Wing”. The tiers of the amphitheatre are all made of veronese marble. Underneath the tiers there are galleries, cells and passageways (which cannot be visited today) which once served and still serve, in part, for the complex operation of the amphitheatre.

## CASTELVECCHIO

31

**Historical Notes.** Following the revolt headed by his half-brother Fregnano, Cangrande II no longer felt safe inside the city: on top of the surrounding city walls, he had a castle and a bridge over the Adige River built. The new dwelling was to be a palace, fortress and a guarantee of escape. The construction of the castle, entrusted to Guglielmo Bevilacqua, began around 1354. Cangrande lived there for only a little while, because on 14 December 1359, he was betrayed and killed by several assassins, paid by his brother Cansignorio, who took over dominion of Verona. With the fall of the Scala family, the castle was transformed from a royal palace into an urban fortress, and such was its destiny, both during the Visconti occupation and during the four centuries of domination by the Serenissima Republic. It began to be used as a museum between 1920-1930.

**Architecture and Art.** The castle appears as a single unit, but it is a complex made up of three distinct walled perimeters. In the great courtyard, from which access is gained to the museum today, there was a garrison; the wide space served as a training ground for the soldiers, and it was closed on three sides by the turreted wall. The first tower was called the Clock Tower; at this tower, the church of San Martino in Aquaro had been conserved. The second tower pertained to the drawbridge and postern, the third protected the corner and the fourth protected the wall towards the river. The so-called royal palace, namely the residence of the della Scala family, was developed on two floors of the building.

**The bridge.** The bridge rises along a tract of the Adige River where the riverbed is about 120m. wide. The bridge is a masterpiece of engineering, absolutely one of the best examples that can be cited for the thirteenth century. It has three arched spans; the overall length of the bridge is 119,90 m. The base of the piles and arched lintels are made of local stone; the rest of the bridge is in brick. The bridge was minded by the retreating Germans and blown up on the evening of 24 April 1945, as was the Ponte Pietra bridge. In 1951, the bridge was inaugurated, at the end of a delicate and exemplary reconstruction.



## ARCO DEI GAVI

32

**Historical Notes.** Around mid 1st century A.D., the Arch was built to honour several members of the *Gens Gavia*, an illustrious family that may have been of veronese origin. The site was chosen with care, on a road of great transit, the Postumia, at the margins of the plateau where the city could develop: the precise point where it rose is marked by a grey marble rectangle that is visible from the roadway. During medieval times the Arch became a city gate and included the Scala walls and Clock Tower of Castelvecchio. The entire base of the Arch is under the level of the roadway, except for a corner that is visible from the castle moat. The Arch was one of the roman monuments of Verona that was most widely studied and admired during the renaissance. In 1805, the french military engineers decreed its demolition, to improve the transitivity of the course of military mule trains. The Arch stones lay for decades piled first in Piazza Cittadella square and later under the Arena arches.

Finally the Arch was rebuilt, with its authentic pieces, in 1932, alongside Castel vecchio and facing the Adige, not far from its original location.

**Architecture and Art.** The construction is entirely of white veronese stone, probably from the Valpolicella.

Despite its vicissitudes, the Arch is one of the rare surviving examples, in our territory, of a meaningful type of construction in the history of roman architecture. Although the arch was often cited in archaeological literature and has been the subject of specific study, its architectural form and dating have continued to fuel lively discussion among scholars.

## PORTA BORSARI

33

**Historical Notes.** Built towards mid 1st century A.D., Porta Borsari was initially called Porta Iovia, because of the nearby temple of Lustral Jupiter. In medieval times it was called Porta San Zenò and then Porta Borsari, probably because the *Bursarii*, that is to say the tax collectors with bags, levied entry and exit tariffs on goods at this gate. Only the external façade towards the countryside remains of the original construction, with its covering in late imperial style.

The front is located about halfway between the line of the republican wall in lateritious brick and the walls of Gallieno, built in 265 A.D. in various recovered material. The restoration is recorded in the long inscription on the architrave.

**Architecture and Art.** The complex of the gate was built from a rectangular building with two fronts with openings and with surrounding land. The hinge plates are visible in the remains of the line of the open front, made up of the bases of pillars in reinforced lateritious stone with points of tuff. No trace remains of the walls that united the two fronts, just as nothing has remained of the republican gate. It must be assumed that there were two guard towers alongside Porta Borsari and that there were guard rounds to join the two fronts, permitting precise and careful control of those who entered and exited from the city: a veritable fortified filter.

The plan of this complex is typically "italic", with two fornixes, and is one of the most ancient. Porta Borsari is therefore important as a prototype of an element of military engineering that Rome also developed in the gallic territories and hispanic provinces.



## PONTE PIETRA

34

**Historical Notes.** Ponte Pietra is located in one of the most panoramic and suggestive sites in Verona. It is legitimate to date the bridge prior to 89 B.C. – the year when Verona became a latin colony – an initial bridge across the Adige, perhaps in wood, may have been built in this site following the construction of Via Postumia, which ran from Genoa to Aquileia, in 148 B.C. When the Adige was in spate, or through the intervention of man, the bridge collapsed in 1007, 1153 and 1232 and 1239. In 1503 the bridge was rebuilt in stone, but collapsed and was rebuilt in wood. In 1508 the City Council asked the architect Fra' Giocondo to superintend the construction of the roman bridge.

On 25 April 1945 the bridge was mined by the retreating Germans and was blown up. Only the first arch on the right bank remained standing. In 1957 the first stone was laid for the reconstruction of the arches destroyed and finally, on 7 March 1959, the bridge was inaugurated, to crown an extremely faithful reconstruction.

**Architecture and Art.** The bridge blown up by the Germans had five arches of different sizes: the two towards the left bank of the Adige were Roman and built of stone; of the other three, the one closest to the right bank was still the one built in 1298, while the other two had been rebuilt in 1520. In the Roman part there were apertures similar to elongated windows. A round hole was located above the third piling, in the middle of the bridge. Ponte Pietra can be considered a programme of constructions from different époques.

*Below, a nocturnal view of Ponte Pietra.*



*Above, Porta Borsari; below, Arco dei Gavi.*





## TEATRO ROMANO

35

Via Rigaste Redentore, 2		Tel. +39-0458000360
Hours: 08.30-19.30	The price includes the visit to Museo Archeologico. Free entrance first sunday of the month.	Entrance: € 3,00
Monday: 13.30-19.30		Reduced: € 2,00
		School groups: € 1,00

**Historical Notes.** Teatro Romano was built in the last quarter of the 1st century B.C., at the foot of the hill of San Pietro. The building site of the Theatre remained open for several decades, which was natural, given the grandiose nature of the building. During the course of time, the building suffered damage from the weather, the cataclysms that intervened, and lay entirely buried beneath miserable huts for centuries. It was only around 1830 that the veronese Andrea Monga purchased the houses at his own expense and demolished them, starting work to bring to light what remained of the ancient building. Today there remains a cavea and tier of seats of the ancient theatre, several arches of loggias and some important remains of the stage. A profound restoration was began at the beginning of the XX century. The renaissance convent of San Gerolamo is located alongside the Theatre. The convent hosts the Museo Archeologico and offers a fascinating view of the river and the city.

**Architecture and Art.** On the right of the wall there are the remains of the monumental eastern entrance, with its wide staircase that leads to the upper orders. The roman Postumia Bridge was in correspondence with this entrance. The bridge apparently collapsed in the XI century. The western entrance, which also has a wide stairway, corresponded more or less with Ponte Pietra. Between the two entrances and bridges there was the Theatre, decorated with loggias and porticoes and with large semicircular tiers of seats climbing up the side of the hill. It reflected the architectural canons pertinent to such buildings: the semicircular cavea or tier of seats reserved for spectators, the orchestra at the foot of the tier, the stage or scenic building, reserved for the actors. The scenic building was developed with a backstage, scenery front and stage. In the theatre area parts of the architectural decoration of the building are located, in addition to the inscriptions and monuments in roman marble, mostly coming from the city and territory.

## GIARDINO GIUSTI

36

Via Giardino Giusti, 2		Tel. +39-0458034029
Hours: 09.00-20.00	October/March: from 09.00-17.00	Entrance: € 5,00 Reduced: € 4,50 School groups: € 2,50

**Historical Notes.** Giardino Giusti is one of the most beautiful late renaissance Italian gardens, which belongs to and is the splendid annex to Palazzo Giusti. Begun at the end of the sixteenth century, the garden was gradually improved and completed. Valotto wrote of the magnificence of the garden, which he said vied with nature, and its construction, because of the solutions, combinations and other similar gardens in Florence, Fiesole and Rome, had to be defined as “italian style”. The Second World War hit this garden hard. Currently, given the continuous care that has been provided, the Garden has been restored to its former beauty. The statues aligned among the tall cypress trees, the marble memories of past ages, the fountains with their trickle of water, the tubs covered with moss, where water lilies float, stress and give importance to this Garden, which has rightly been declared a National Monument.

**Structure.** Contrary to similar gardens in other cities, where the villa rises on the summit of a hill, this garden was conceived inversely: the dwelling is on the lower level, with a courtyard, while the majestic central pathway leads up towards the “belvedere”, and from there to the summit of the hill, which offers the visitor a magnificent panoramic view of the city. The great cypress-lined path, which Goethe praised profusely, divides the garden into two distinct parts, forming on the right a woody area that leads to the belvedere, while on the opposite side there is the italian garden. A high romantic cloister or loggia towers above, which bears historical inscriptions on the inside, some of which are important. The central cypress line path divides the garden area from the wooded area and leads to a terrace with a grotto. From here, there are stairways for paths, and you climb up to the belvedere. The Garden – as all renaissance gardens of the time – is animated with statues (among which there is the one Della Peschiera, by Alessandro Vittoria which Maffei describes beautiful) and with roman memorial tablets.

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