

TUSCANY REGION

FLORENCE & PISA PLUS WINE TASTING FROM ROME PRIVATE DAY TOUR

TOUR DESCRIPTION

Dear friends, Tuscany is one of the most loved regions by foreign tourists, proliferating of exceptional artistic and food and wine inspirations thanks to the dense network of Strade del Gusto scattered throughout the territory and masterpieces of strong international appeal, one above all the David by Michelangelo, one of the most famous sculptures in the world. Cradle of the Italian Renaissance, Florence and its historic center, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, would be enough to retrace the history of the entire country. But unique treasures are scattered in the other art cities of the region, from Lucca to Livorno, from Siena to Arezzo, from Pisa to Massa-Carrara, without forgetting the minor villages with medieval charm and the fortified citadels scattered almost everywhere in the territory.

-FLORENCE-

The Florentine plain and the surrounding hills have been inhabited since prehistoric times, as evidenced by archaeological findings in the area.

The first permanent settlement was a village on stilts, built around the 9th century b.C. by the Etruscans in the Villanovan period, near a ford on the Arno River, in the center of a fertile plain.

Around 150 b.C., the Etruscans of nearby Visul (today's Fiesole), located high on the hill, founded a "satellite city" near the Arno, to take

advantage of the presence of the waterway, and built a first wooden bridge.

Already in Etruscan times, the city was called with the nickname **Florentia**, in Latin, a language that was emerging in the valley crossed by numerous wayfarers.

Florentia is a auspicious name: "that you are florid", "city of prosperity". Likewise Potentia, Piacentia, Valentia, Pollentia in other regions of the Empire.

Following the wars between Silla and Mario, Roman General by two opposing factions, the Etruscan **Visul** became Roman, assuming the Latin name of **Fæsule** and, in 59 b.C., thanks to the Giulia Law, **Florentia** also became a castrum for Roman veterans, surrounded by walls, with the typical rectangular plan, and with a central square, **Forum**, where the main streets, **Cardo and Decumanus**, crossed: **via Roma and via Climala** resume the route of the ancient **Cardo**, (north-south artery), and **via Strozzi and via del Corso that of the Maximum Decuman (east-west artery)**; **Piazza della Repubblica**, created at the end of the 19th century, occupies instead the area of the **ancient Forum**, while near Santa Croce, the **Via de 'Bentaccordi and the Via Torta** evoke the contours of the **Roman amphitheater**.

Since the time of Emperor Hadrian, Florence was connected to Rome by the Via Cassia. Under Diocletian it was raised to Corrector Italiae (capital of Etruria and Umbria) and then passed through periods of Byzantine, Ostrogoth, Lombard and Frankish domination, during which the population sometimes fell to a few thousand people.

-Climate-

From a climatic point of view, Florence has a temperate climate with very hot summers and often sultry episodes and moderately cold and humid winters; according to the classification of the Köppen climates, the florentine one results in a humid temperate climate.

-Background-

In the Middle Ages, Florence was an important artistic, cultural, commercial, political, economic and financial center; in the modern age it covered the role of **capital of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany** from 1569 to 1859 which, with the government of the Medici and Lorraine families, became one of the richest and modern states. The various political vicissitudes, the financial and mercantile power and the influences in every field of culture have made the city a fundamental crossroads of Italian and European history. **In 1865 Florence was proclaimed capital of the Kingdom of Italy (second, after Turin), maintaining this status until 1871, the year that marks the end of the Risorgimento.**

Florence is universally recognized as a city of art, with an invaluable patrimony of architecture, paintings, sculptures, historical and scientific memories, which form the city fabric, as in a pulsating widespread museum. **The first Florentine artist, or however active in Florence, is such a Rusticus, "clericus et pictor", whose name is mentioned in two notary parchments of the year 1066 relating to the ancient church of San Pier Maggiore.**

The heart of Florence is **Piazza della Signoria, with the majestic Palazzo Vecchio**, with the gallery of sculptural masterpieces in the **Loggia dei Lanzi** and the nearby **Uffizi Gallery**, one of the most renowned art museums in the world. Not far away is the religious center of the **Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore, the Duomo**, with the majestic dome (the largest ever built): “at the time of the Grand Duchy, it was said that with its shadow it would cover all of Tuscany”.

The huge cathedral is beautifully equipped with Giotto's bell tower, one of the most beautiful in Italy, and the Baptistery of San Giovanni, with the famous bronze doors among which the golden door of Paradise stands out.

The Arno river, that flows through the city, occupies a place in florentine history as much as the people who live there.

Historically, the local population has a hate-love relationship with the Arno, which has alternatively brought the benefits of trade and flood

disasters. Among the bridges that cross it, **the Ponte Vecchio is unique in the world**, with the characteristic jewelers' shops in the houses built on it. Crossed by the noble **Vasari Corridor**, it is the only bridge in the city to have passed unscathed through the Second World War.

In addition to the Uffizi, Florence has other museums that would be the main artistic attraction of any other major city in the world: the **Accademia Gallery, the Bargello or the Pitti Palace with its eight museums including the Palatine Gallery**. The Florentines boast to have the best example of beauty in both female (Venus by Botticelli) and male (Michelangelo's David) art.

Florence as the "cradle of the Renaissance" has its masterpieces in the works of **Filippo Brunelleschi** (*the Hospital of the Innocents - formerly the hospital of Santa Maria Nova- reception place for abandoned children, Church of San Lorenzo and Church of Santo Spirito*) and by **Leon Battista Alberti** (*the facade of Santa Maria Novella and Palazzo Rucellai*); but also other artistic periods have left their absolute masterpieces: from the romanesque of San Miniato al Monte, to the Gothic of Santa Croce (where the burials of the Italic glories are located, as Ugo Foscolo, also buried there, defined them), to the extravagances of the Mannerism of Giambologna or Bernardo Buontalenti (such as the Fountain of Neptune or the Boboli Gardens), up to the masterpieces of the great Italian architects of the twentieth century such as Santa Maria Novella Train Station and the Artemio Franchi Stadium, respectively by Giovanni Michelucci and Pier Luigi Nervi.

The center of Florence with its hundreds of commercial activities is a paradise for shopping and entertainment, from elegant high fashion boutiques and historic cafes to lively historical outdoor markets, as well as hosting numerous night clubs, discos, american bar, lounge bar and meeting places for an aperitif.

-Old Bridge- Ponte Vecchio-

The Ponte Vecchio is one of the symbols of the city of Florence and one of the most famous bridges in the world. It crosses the Arno river about 150

meters downstream of the area where the river naturally presents one of the points where the riverbed is narrowest within the city of Florence in its stretch upstream of the Cascine.

The area in question is the Canottieri under the Uffizi.

In ancient times there was a ford.

The first crossing on the Arno was to be located slightly further upstream of today's bridge, on the continuation of the *cardo maximo* of the current **via Roma- via Calimala**, or in the current **Piazza del Pesce**. It was to date back to shortly after the foundation of the city, that is to the middle of the first century b.C., and to have an oblique trend compared to the current, to better support the thrust of the floods. Surveys carried out in the riverbed at the end of the 1950s have in fact found two large concrete foundations which can probably be traced back to the first Roman bridge.

This walkway had to be consolidated and enlarged towards 123 a.D., when the roman emperor Hadrian promoted the construction of the *via Cassia Nuova*, which crossed the city and which probably corresponded, on the south bank, to the *Via de' Bardi* and *San Niccolò*. The bridge probably already had masonry piers, while the truss must have been, as usual, in wood. The first Roman bridge had to be destroyed towards the 6th-7th century, due to the neglect and wars of the barbaric era, as well as to probable damage related to floods.

It is difficult to hypothesize how many bridges were overwhelmed by the frequent floods of the Arno and how many were rebuilt. Among the scarce documentary traces there is one from 972 in which the bishop Sichelmo granted Father Domenico d'Orso the church of Santa Felicita "**not far from the head of the Ponte de fluvio Arno**". Giovanni Villani spoke of a bridge built under Charlemagne, and it is perhaps in the 9th or 10th century that the crossing had its current position.

-The first bridge-

Certainly a bridge in its current position was rebuilt after a collapse in 1177. Twentieth-century studies of the remains in the heads and pylons show that it rested on more ancient remains, such as oak beams from the second half of the 10th century.

Damaged in 1222 and 1322, it was swept away by the flood of 1333, one of the most violent they remember. After the construction of the "lungarni", the bridge was rebuilt with three crossings in 1345 and is considered the work of Taddeo Gaddi (according to Italian historian Giorgio Vasari) or Neri di Fioravante.

In 1442 the city authority imposed on the **beccai** (butchers) to gather in the shops on the Ponte Vecchio to make them a bit isolated from the buildings and houses of the center and to safeguard cleanliness and decorum. The provision aimed above all to eliminate the usual, foul-smelling traces left by the barroccini (chariot drawn by hand) of the beccai along the roads until to the Arno during the transport of the most minute waste of the meat processing, waste that could now be dispersed directly, without any damage, in the underlying current of the river. From that moment onward the bridge became the market of the meat and of the beccai (butchers) who later became owners of the shops. To get more space, they added in a disorderly way small rooms jutting out on the river propping them with wooden poles.

-Vasari hallway-

In 1565 the architect Giorgio Vasari built the "Vasari corridor" for Cosimo I, with the aim of communicating the political and administrative center in Palazzo Vecchio with the Medici private residence, Palazzo Pitti. The elevated corridor, about a kilometer long and built in just five months and starts from Palazzo Vecchio, passes the Uffizi Gallery, runs along the Lungarno Archibusieri, then passes over the shops on the east (left) side of the bridge, bypasses at its end the Mannelli tower, supported by corbels and continues on the left bank ("Oltrarno") to Palazzo Pitti. The butchers' shops were then occupied by goldsmiths and jewelers by order of Ferdinando I in 1593 who disliked a less noble trade and with unpleasant smells under the windows of the suspended corridor. In 1860, on the occasion of the celebrations for the arrival of His Majesty, the three central windows were modified in the configuration still visible today.

-Recent history-

Ponte Vecchio was visited by Hitler, Mussolini and the Nazi and fascist hierarchies on the occasion of the Führer's trip to Italy in May 1938. Following the retreat of German troops during the Italian campaign, this was the only bridge in Florence that was not blown up by the Germans in 1944 during the Second World War, thanks also to the providential intervention of the German representative in Florence Gerhard Wolf, who in the post-war period obtained honorary citizenship of Florence for this and other merits and who is remembered with a plaque affixed to the bridge itself.

A recent hypothesis states that the bridge was saved by some goldsmiths who sabotaged the devices by cutting their threads: the night between 3 and 4 August 1944, Burgassi (called by all Burgasso) goldsmith's assistant left free to circulate in as much as the Germans thought he understood nothing, old and physically impaired by polio but with a clear mind, he witnessed the laying of mines. Having seen everything, he knew where the mine connections were and managed to defuse them.

The Vasari Corridor in the frantic days of liberation remained the only way to move between the north and south of the city, as is also evidenced in the episode dedicated to Florence in the film "**Paisà**" by Roberto Rossellini, where the protagonist passes incognito from a bare Galleria degli Uffizi full of packed ancient statues.

-Architecture of Ponte Vecchio-

The Ponte Vecchio is made up of three wide low arched crossings (height / width ratio 1: 6); for the first time in the west, the Roman model was exceeded, which provided for the exclusive use of rounded arches (that is semicircular arches) which in the case of a very long bridge required a large number of arches, thus creating potential dangers in the event of a flood (due to the easy obstruction of the narrow passes) or a very marked slope, an equally undesirable solution (typical cases: the Ponte della Maddalena, near Borgo a Mozzano, the Ponte Fabricio, in Rome). The example was a school, with a similar lowered arch the **Rialto Bridge was built in the 16th century in Venice and many others**. The Alconétar bridge, in Spain, offers a much older example of the use of low arched crossings, but it cannot avoid the problem of clogging the river

bed with the arch support piles, given that it is a bridge with numerous small crossings, in all similar to traditional bridges with round arches. Another typical feature, much more evident to the tourist but less revolutionary, is the passage flanked by two rows of artisan shops, obtained from ancient arcades then closed, which made it famous, as if it were the continuation of the road. The shops of Ponte Vecchio all overlook the central passage, each one with a single showcase closed by thick wooden doors, and often have a back room built overhanging the river and supported by corbels (or "sporti"). At the four corners of the bridge there were as many towers that controlled their access: of these only the Mannelli tower remains, while the Rossi-Cerchi tower was rebuilt after the explosions of 1944.

-Monument to Benvenuto Cellini-

At the center of the bridge the shops stop with two panoramic terraces: the one to the east is surmounted by the Vasari corridor, while the other houses the monument with a bust of Benvenuto Cellini (Florence, November 1, 1500 - Florence, February 13, 1571). He was an Italian sculptor, goldsmith, writer, silversmith and artist, considered one of the most important Mannerist artists; the statue was created by Raffaello Romanelli and inaugurated on May 26, 1901.

The work is also equipped with a fountain, which was placed on the occasion of the celebrations of the fourth centenary of Cellini's birth. The water gushes from four masks placed on the edges of the pedestal and conveys in as many shell-shaped tanks made by Egisto Orlandini. Also on the base there are some typical decorations of the Cellini era, such as festoons, masks, lion legs, goat heads (emblems of Cosimo I) and diamond rings, present in the enterprise of numerous members of the Medici family .

The fence of the Cellini monument was used by lovers to hang padlocks with felt-tip pen writing, symbol of a love bond that you want to be indissoluble; the keys of the padlock are then thrown into the Arno so that no one can symbolically remove it. This custom, perhaps started by the military of the Academy of San Giorgio alla Costa, dates back to no more than twenty years ago and is the first of its kind, even before the more well-known Ponte Milvio in Rome.

The municipal administration, in order to curb the huge amount of padlocks that by now disfigured the decorations of the bridge, established in 2006 a fine of 50 euros for those who are surprised to attach a padlock to the Cellini gate: the attack of the padlocks then moved to the railing of the nearby Lungarno degli Archibusieri.

-Piazza della Signoria-

Piazza della Signoria is the central square of Florence, **the seat of civil power and the heart of the social life of the city**. L-shaped, it is located in the central part of medieval Florence, south of the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore. In the past it has taken on different names, such as **Piazza dei Priori or Piazza del Granduca**.

Thanks to the archaeological findings made since 1974, it was possible to establish that the first activities in the area of the square date back to the Neolithic (10th century. b.C.) and that the current square was an important area of the Roman city, with a **thermal system of Hadrian era and a fullonic (laundry)** of industrial dimensions near the theater, the remains of which were found under Palazzo Vecchio (excavations of Palazzo Vecchio). Subsequently (IV-V century) the thermal baths and the fullonica were abandoned and replaced by poor buildings and craft activities, while a large paleochristian basilica (about 27x50 meters) was built.

From the 10th century a.D. the urban reconstruction process began which led to the definition of the medieval quarter which was then demolished for the construction of the square. Archaeological excavations have brought to light several towers, houses and the remains of two churches (**Santa Cecilia and San Romolo**) with their respective cemetery areas. A plaque almost at the corner with via de 'Calzaiuoli recalls Saint Romolo bishop and martyr, more or less where the church was located and where the Bombicci palace stands today.

The square began to take on its current shape around 1268, when the houses of the Ghibellines that stood in the area were demolished by the victorious Guelphs in Benevento, but without giving the area a coherent and unitary setting, insomuch that it was only paved in 1385. Hand in

hand the **Palazzo della Signoria** was built, so the square became the center of the political life of the city, in contrast with the religious center of **Piazza del Duomo** and the **trade square that was the Old Market, where today Piazza della Repubblica stands** . In the 14th century, the **Loggia della Signoria was added** for public ceremonies, and the Merchandise Court, an institution capable of resolving civil and commercial disputes.

Seat of civil power, the square was also the seat of public executions, of which the most famous is that of May 23, 1498, when **Girolamo Savonarola was hanged and burned for heresy (a plaque on the square, in front of the Fountain of Neptune, remember this event)** in the same place where, with his disciples, he had operated the so-called Bonfire of the Vanities, setting many books, poems, game tables, clothes, etc. on fire.

-Palazzo Vecchio former Palazzo dei Priori-

It is located in Piazza della Signoria and is the **seat of the Municipality**. It represents the best synthesis of the 14th century civil architecture of the town and is one of the best known civic buildings in the world.

Originally called "**Palazzo dei Priori**" (Priori delle Arti, the representatives of the professional corporations that had held the government of the city since 1282 and who used to reside in the Bargello), it became in the fifteenth century "**Palazzo della Signoria**", from the name of the principal organization of the Republic of Florence; in 1540 it became **Palazzo Ducale**, when Duke Cosimo I de 'Medici made it his residence; finally the name **Vecchio** took it after 1565 when the court of Duke Cosimo moved to the "new" Palazzo Pitti.

From 1865 to 1871 it was the seat of the Parliament of the Kingdom of Italy, while today it houses the Mayor of Florence and various municipal offices. There is also a museum, which allows you to visit the magnificent rooms where, among others, Agnolo Bronzino, Ghirlandaio, Giorgio Vasari worked, and where works by Michelangelo Buonarroti, Donatello, Verrocchio are exhibited.

-Loggia della Signoria-

The Loggia della Signoria is a historical monument in Florence, located in Piazza della Signoria to the right of Palazzo Vecchio and next to the Uffizi, which are grafted onto the back with a terrace right on the top of the loggia. It is also called **Loggia dei Lanzi** not so much because here it seems that the Lanzeschinetti camped in 1527 passing through Rome, but because the Guardhouse of Grand Duke Cosimo I, that was staying under the Loggia, was partly composed of Lanzeschinetti. Another interpretation believes that the name derives from the spears (lanze) as weapons used by the Grand Duke's Guard.

Also called **Loggia dei Priori** or **Loggia dell'Orcagna**, due to an incorrect attribution to Andrea di Cione, nicknamed Orcagna, whereas the realization of the work has been documented being made by the architects Benci and Simone Talenti. However, some sources mention Oragna as a collaborator of the project.

At the sides of the entrance steps there are **two marble lions**, one from the Roman era (right), and the other built in 1600 by Flaminio Vacca (left): traditionally the lions symbolize the guard and protection of places from negative presences, according to an iconographic tradition that dates back to the Mesopotamian civilizations. The most important masterpiece is the **Perseus by Benvenuto Cellini**, a large bronze statue 3.20 meters high including the pedestal decorated with mythological themed bas-reliefs. The well-proportioned body and the plastic position of Perseus, rest on one leg while lifting the head of Medusa with his left arm. It was placed in the loggia in 1554 and, apart from the restoration period in 1999, has always remained here.

Even more complex is the **Ratto delle Sabine (rape of sabinas), a marble masterpiece by Giambologna (1583)**. In the Museum of the Academy there is the life-size plaster model, made by Giambologna himself as preparation for the execution of the marble statue.

Also by Giambologna is the Hercules and the centaur Nessus, with the sensational effect of movement expressed by the body in tension of the centaur subjugated by the Greek hero (1599).

Sculptures from the Roman era are **Patroclus and Menelaus**, a copy from the Flavian era of a Greek original from 230-240 BC, a gift from Pius V to Cosimo I, and the **six female figures close to the back wall**. It is believed that they may come from the Trajan's Forum in Rome; they were however found in the mid-sixteenth century and, after having decorated Villa Medici for a long time, they arrived in Florence in 1789. About the female figures, the first two have not been identified as characters, while the third from the left represents Thusnelda, a barbarian captive wife of Arminius. The last three represent Roman matrons of imperial rank, more finely carved and with more precious marble.

The **Ratto di Polissena** by the sculptor Pio Fedi (1865) is instead a nineteenth-century work, which takes up the style of the nearby Menelaus.

-The statues of Piazza della Signoria-

The statues of Piazza della Signoria are not only a decorative set of the highest level, but also represent a real secular allegorical cycle, unique in its kind in the world, which should have inspired the city rulers who moved to Palazzo Vecchio.

Right in front of the Palace, on the so-called "arengario" there are the oldest sculptures, which were once ahead towards the square: they are **the Marzocco and the Giuditta and Holofernes (around 1455-60), both by Donatello**, replaced by copies for their preciousness (the Marzocco is kept in the Bargello, the Giuditta inside Palazzo Vecchio).

The Marzocco, made of pietra serena, is a mighty lion resting a paw on the emblem with the Florentine lily, and has now become a symbol of the city.

The bronze Giuditta is a symbol of the political autonomy of the Florentine Republic. It was in fact sacked from the Medici Palace after the first expulsion of the Medici family (1495) where it adorned a garden fountain, and therefore symbolizes the victory of the people against the tyrants. Upon the return of the Medici, although much of their heritage was repurchased and reunited again in the collections of the lineage,

Giuditta remained in the Piazza so as not to offend the sensitivity of the people.

A second chapter of this dispute between the Medici and the republic is represented by **Michelangelo's David**, today replaced by a copy placed in the original location of the famous sculpture. Michelangelo carved it around 1500 when the Savonarola season was raging and its meaning is still that of the people (symbolized by David) who, with the help of God, defeats the tyrant (Goliath). The greatness of Michelangelo's sculpture is even more remarkable if compared with artworks by Donatello, and this "gigantism" gave rise to all the other statues that were later placed in the square.

Hercules and Cacus by Baccio Bandinelli (1533) is located next to David and represents the victory with strength and cunning against the wicked, in a symbolism taken from the Twelve Labors. The sculpture would have been initially made by Michelangelo, but due to his continuous commitments it was instead entrusted to Baccio Bandinelli, who attempted to emulate the powerful style of David without succeeding, and earning many harsh criticisms and a bad reputation (of envious) which has come down to the present day.

On the sides of the main entrance of Palazzo Vecchio we find the **two marble statues**, the male one by Vincenzo de 'Rossi and the female one by Baccio Bandinelli which reproduce a classical statuary genre. They depict the spouses Philemon and Bauci, who according to legend were transformed by Jupiter into oak he, and she into lime and so considered specimens of mutual love. Originally they supported a chain that was placed to block the entrance.

The Fountain of Neptune by Bartolomeo Ammannati (1563-1565) and some of his pupils, including Giambologna, is the first public fountain in Florence. The great Neptune in white marble is not much loved by the Florentines who call it Biancone (the epitome-summary of a work-expressed by the people at the inauguration of the statue in 1565 "Ammannato Ammannato, what a beautiful marble you ruined!").

Finally, in a central position to the left of Palazzo Vecchio is the grandiose **equestrian statue of Cosimo I**, a bronze work by Giambologna (1594).

-Duomo Santa Maria del Fiore-

The metropolitan cathedral of **Santa Maria del Fiore**, commonly known as the cathedral of Florence, is the main Florentine church, symbol of the city and one of the most famous in Italy; when it was completed, in the fifteenth century, it was the largest church in the world, while today it is believed to be the third in Europe after Saint Peter's in Rome and Saint Paul's in London. It stands on the foundations of the ancient cathedral of Florence, the church of Santa Reparata, in a point of the city that has hosted religious buildings since Roman times.

The construction of the Duomo, ordered by the Florentine Lordship, began in 1296 and ended from a structural point of view only in 1436. The initial works were entrusted to the architect Arnolfo di Cambio and were then interrupted and resumed numerous times over the decades (by Giotto, Francesco Talenti and Giovanni di Lapo Ghini). After the completion of Brunelleschi's dome followed the consecration by Pope Eugene IV on March 24, 1436. The dedication to Santa Maria del Fiore took place during construction, in 1412.

The floor plan of the Duomo is composed of a three-nave basilica body welded to a huge triconic rotunda that supports the immense **Brunelleschi dome, the largest masonry dome ever built with a diameter of 45.50m. Inside it is visible the largest surface ever decorated with fresco: 3600 m², executed between 1572-1579 by Giorgio Vasari and Federico Zuccari. At the base of the marble lantern, there is a panoramic terrace overlooking the city 91 meters from the ground. The facade of the Cathedral in polychrome marble is from the modern era, dates back to 1887 by Emilio de Fabris and is an important example of neo-Gothic style in Italy.**

It is the cathedral of the Archdiocese of Florence and can hold up to thirty thousand people. It has the dignity of a minor basilica.

-Basilica di Santa Croce-

The basilica of Santa Croce in the homonymous square in Florence is one of the largest Franciscan churches and one of the greatest achievements of Gothic architecture in Italy, and has the rank of minor basilica.

Santa Croce is a prestigious symbol of Florence, the meeting place of the greatest artists, theologians, religious, writers, humanists and politicians, who determined, in good and bad luck, the identity of the late medieval and Renaissance city. It also housed famous personalities from the history of the Church such as Saint Bonaventura, Pietro di Giovanni Olivi, Saint'Antonio from Padova, Saint Bernardino from Siena, Saint Ludovico d'Angiò. It was also a welcoming place for popes such as Sixtus IV, Eugene IV, Leo X, Clement XIV.

Michelangelo's tomb- Michelangelo Buonarroti's Tomb is the work of Vasari (1570). The tomb is located at the beginning of the right nave of the church of Santa Croce, as soon as you cross the main door of the Basilica.

Above the tomb there are three sculptures that represent the personifications of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture. These figures appear saddened by the disappearance of the great master. But the whole of the tomb is a mixture of painting, sculpture and architecture. The tomb, surmounted by the bust of Michelangelo (work by Battista Lorenzi) is decorated with statues of Architecture (work by Giovanni dell'Opera), Sculpture (work by Valerio Cioli), Painting (work by Battista Lorenzi) and frescoes work of GB Naldini.

-The body transported hidden in Florence-

Michelangelo Buonarroti (March 6, 1475 – February 18, 1564) had died in Rome on February 18, 1564, at the age of almost 89 years. On February 20, 1564, Michelangelo's body was placed in the church of the Holy Apostles in Rome.

Lionardo, the grandson, organizes the transport of the body to Florence. But fearing that this can be impeded, he hides Michelangelo's body in a roll of cloths and loads it on a cart with other merchandise. The body of the artist will arrive in Florence 3 weeks later, on 10 March 1564.

The body is deposited in the company of the Assumption (Assunta), behind San Pier Maggiore and two days later it is transported to the

Basilica of Santa Croce, at night, by the artists of the Academy, in the midst of an immense crowd, by the light of the torches.

On July 14, 1564, after numerous postponements, Michelangelo's funeral took place in the church of San Lorenzo. After the ceremony, the body of the great artist was finally placed in his tomb inside the famous Basilica of Santa Croce in Florence, a place where he still rests.

-Republic square-

Piazza della Repubblica has been the center of the city since Roman times. Here, exactly where the Column of Abundance is located, the **cardo and the decumanus maximi met** and the **Forum** opened up: the Cardo corresponds to via Roma, via Calimala and via Por Santa Maria, instead the Decuman corresponds to via del Corso, via degli Speziale and via degli Strozzi.

Archaeological traces were found at the time of the nineteenth-century demolitions, such as the remains of buildings, of a **bath complex** facing south and remains of **religious buildings**. Via del Campidoglio and via delle Terme for example were named after their respective archaeological findings. On the south side an entrance arch opened, while the north side was delimited by a fence wall; to the east and south were public buildings; the Capitoline temple was to the west. In a second moment, probably the Hadrian era, the area was further monumentalized, raising and lengthening the square, with a new Lunense marble flooring higher than about a meter and a half. There were some doors with steps and a small portico with statues of magistrates and emperors.

The Capitolium (1st century BC-1st century AD) was more or less where the porticoes stand today, placed on a quadrangular podium of about three meters, accessible by stairs, of which the foundations remain.

Dante reports the oral tradition that in these neighborhoods there was a temple dedicated to Mars that supervised the city: according to the poet this determined the bellicose character of the city. According to other sources, a statue of Mars (or of another deity, since it was equestrian) would have really existed and would have been placed in the Middle Ages near the Ponte Vecchio, from where it was however swept away during the flood of 1333.

(Colonna della Abbondanza) Also called the **Dovizia column**, the Abbondanza column is located in Piazza della Repubblica. In Roman Florentia at this point, in the forum, the cardo and the decumanus met, so here was the navel of the city. Surely in this point there was a Roman column, probably surmounted by a statue of the period, of which traces were lost anyway.

In 1431 the present column was erected, with the statue of Dovizia by Donatello at the top, made of pietra serena. Two irons were fixed on the granite stem: one, at the top to hold a small bell which was rung to indicate the opening and closing time of the market activity; the other at the bottom where a bell with two chains with a collar was dropped, used to expose dishonest traders, fraudsters and insolvent debtors to the "pillory".

-Republic Square in the Middle Ages-

In the early Middle Ages the area was densely built. Before the construction of the fifth circle of walls, the chroniclers tell of how in the city there was no longer a single garden or space for grazing and the tower-houses stood out towards the sky with a vertical development made necessary by the lack of space. **Over time, however, this area maintained the function of a meeting place, starting to host the market, which was institutionalized after the year 1000.** Typically compared to other Italian cities, the public space intended for commerce was thus defined, which was contrasted by a Piazza del Duomo intended for political affairs and a Piazza del Comune (Piazza della Signoria) intended for politics and civil affairs. In the sixteenth century the market took on the denomination "old" due to the construction of the Loggia del Mercato Nuovo near the Ponte Vecchio. The Old Market was a low and long oval-shaped building with a rather overhanging canopy that also served as a shelter for the buyers and stalls that were placed on both sides. Other shops and stalls unfolded in the surrounding square.

Here was also the Jewish Ghetto, where Cosimo I had forced the Jews to reside in the city. In the ghetto there was an Italian synagogue and a Spanish or Levantine one.

-Piazzale Michelangelo-

It represents the most famous observation point of the city panorama, reproduced in countless postcards and an obligatory destination for tourists visiting the city.

It was built in 1869 from a design by the architect **Giuseppe Poggi** on a hill just south of the historic center, to complete the redevelopment works on the left bank of the Arno. In fact, from that year Florence was the capital of Italy and the whole city was engaged in an urban renewal, the so-called Renovation, or the bourgeois rebirth of the city: the lungarni were created; on the right bank, instead of the fourteenth-century walls, the ring roads were opened in the manner of the boulevards; on the left bank, Viale dei Colli, an 8-kilometers-long panoramic tree-lined road, was traced along the hill of San Miniato, at the height of which the square was built, as a privileged panoramic terrace over the city. The chronicle of the rapid construction of this latter enterprise has been described to us in detail by the Italian journalist Pietro Coccoluto Ferrigni (known under the pseudonym of Yorick) who does not fail to report how a part of the Florentines was sorry "for the excessive expenditure" of the construction. Between 1890 and 1935 the area hosted the tracks of the Chianti tramway, which connected Florence with San Casciano in Val di Pesa and Greve in Chianti.

The square, dedicated to the great Renaissance artist Michelangelo, presents copies of some of his famous works preserved in Florence: the David and the four allegories of the Medici Chapels of San Lorenzo. These copies are made of bronze, while the originals are all in white marble. The monument was brought up by nine pairs of oxen on June 25, 1873.

Mr. Poggi also designed the neoclassical loggia which dominates the entire terrace and which today houses a panoramic restaurant. Originally it should have housed a museum of Michelangelo's works, never built. In the wall of the balcony, located under the loggia, there is an epigraph with large characters that recalls his work: **Giuseppe Poggi Florentine architect, turn around here is his monument MCMXI.**

The panorama embraces the heart of Florence, from Forte Belvedere to Santa Croce passing through the lungarni and bridges of Florence in sequence, especially the Ponte Vecchio; the Duomo, the Palazzo Vecchio, the Bargello and the octagonal bell tower of the Badia Fiorentina stand

out, without forgetting the opposite hills north of the city with Fiesole and Settignano in the center. It rises 104 meters above the sea level.

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The wine tasting is not included in the tour fee.

PISA

-Chatedral of Pisa-

The cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, in the center of the Piazza dei Miracoli, is the medieval cathedral of Pisa.

Romanesque masterpiece, particularly Pisan Romanesque, represents the tangible testimony of the prestige and wealth achieved by the Maritime Republic of Pisa at the time of its apogee.

It was started in 1063 (1064 according to the Pisan calendar at the time) by the architect **Buscheto**, with the tenth part of the spoils of the Pisan enterprise in Sicily in the port of Palermo against the Muslims (1063) led by Giovanni Orlandi belonging to the Orlandi family.

Different stylistic elements come together: classic, Lombard-Emilian, Byzantine and in particular Islamic, as evidence of the international presence of the Pisan merchants at that time. In that same year, the reconstruction of the basilica of San Marco in Venice was also started, so it may also be that there was a rivalry between the two maritime republics at the time to create the most beautiful and sumptuous place of worship.

The church was erected in an area outside the early medieval walls, to symbolize the power of Pisa that did not require protection. The chosen area was already used in the Lombard period as a necropolis and, already

in the early 11th century, an unfinished church was erected which was to be named after Santa Maria. In fact, the new large church of Buscheto is initially called Santa Maria Maggiore until it is definitively named after Santa Maria Assunta.

The cathedral was consecrated in 1118 by Pope Gelasius II, belonging to the Pisan branch of the Gaetani (or Caetani), counts of Terriccio and Oriseo.

The end of the works would date to 1180, as documented by the date affixed on the bronze doors of Bonanno Pisano on the main door.

The current appearance of the building complex is the result of repeated restoration campaigns that took place in different eras. The first radical interventions followed the disastrous fire of 1595, as a result of which the roof was redone and the three bronze doors of the facade were made, the work of sculptors from the workshop of Giambologna, including Gasparo Mola and Pietro Tacca.

Starting from the eighteenth century began the progressive coating of the internal walls with large paintings on canvas, **the "squares" with Stories of Blessed and Saints from Pisa executed by the main artists of the time thanks to the initiative of some citizens who self-financed by creating a special business.**

The Napoleonic spolings of the Cathedral of Pisa and the Opera del Duomo are significant, many works flowed into the Louvre where they are exhibited today, including **The Triumph of Saint Thomas from Aquino among the Doctors of the Church** by Benozzo Gozzoli, today at the Musée du Louvre but allocated in the Primitiale of the Cathedral of Pisa, **Death of San Bernardo** by Mr. Orcagna, and **Saint Benedetto**, the work of Andrea del Castagno.

Among the various noteworthy interventions it is worth mentioning the dismantling of the **Pergamo," Organ"** by Giovanni Pisano which was reassembled only in 1926 in a different position and with several missing parts, including the staircase, and the dismantling of the **Monument to Arrigo VII** made by Lupo di Francesco which was located in front of the

Saint Ranieri gate and was later replaced by a simplified and symbolic version.

The building that was originally a greek cross floor plan with a large dome at the crossroads of the arms, today is a latin cross immissa, that is, in the shape of a T, with five naves with apse and transept with three naves; inside it suggests a spatial effect similar to that of the great Islamic mosques, thanks to the use of raised arches, the alternation of white and green marble bands and the unusual elliptical dome, of Moorish inspiration. The presence of the two raised matroneums in the naves, with the solid monolithic granite columns, is a clear sign of Byzantine influence. The architect Buscheto had accepted stimuli from the Islamic Levant.

The Pulpit, also called **Ambo or Pergamo**, of the cathedral of Pisa was carved by Giovanni Pisano between 1301 and 1310 and represents one of the masterpieces.

The pulpit commissioned from Giovanni replaced a previous one, made by Guglielmo (1157-1162), which was sent to the Cathedral of Cagliari, then dependent on the archbishop of Pisa.

Giovanni Pisano's pulpit was completed by 1310 and survived the great fire of the Duomo on 25 October 1596.

With its articulated architectural structure and complex sculptural decoration, the work is one of the largest narratives for fourteenth-century images that reflects the renewal and religious fervor of the time. In the panels, slightly curved, the **episodes of the Life of Christ** are carved with an expressive language. The structure is polygonal, like the previous analogous examples, in the baptistery of Pisa, in the cathedral of Siena and in the church of Sant'Andrea in Pistoia, but for the first time the panels are slightly curved, giving an idea of circularity new in its kind. Equally original are:

- The presence of real caryatids and telamons, that are figures carved in place of simple columns, with various symbolic meanings
- The adoption of volute shelves instead of arches to support the mezzanine floor

- The extraordinary sense of movement, given by the numerous figures that fill every empty space.

This work presents reliefs with a slightly more compassionate language than the disruptive dynamism of the Pistoia pulpit, while the architectural innovations are more relevant.

One of the caryatids symbolizes **Ecclesia**, and has at its base the series of the four personified **cardinal virtues (justice, fortitude, temperance and prudence)**, among which the naked **Temperance** stands out, which takes up the pose of Venus pudica. But these virtues, as the inscription of John himself says, have a wider meaning, such as four parts of the world, four rivers of Paradise and four ages of women. Giovanni then created a summa of the encyclopedic universe of the time.

-Selected works of art-

The church also preserves the relics of **Saint Ranieri, patron of Pisa**, and the fragmentary **tomb of Henry VII of Luxembourg, emperor of the Holy Roman Empire**, who died in Buonconvento while besieging Florence in vain. The tomb, also dismantled and reassembled (was sculpted by Tino da Camaino in 1313-1315) is now located in the right transept, while it was originally placed in the center of the apse, as a sign of the city's Ghibelline faith. Necessarily moved several times for political reasons, it was also separated into several parts (some inside the church, some on the facade, some in the Campo Santo, now in the Museo dell'Opera).

The 27 paintings that cover the grandstand behind the high altar, depicting episodes from the Old Testament and Christological stories, were painted between the 16th and 17th centuries by the greatest Tuscan painters, including **Andrea del Sarto** (three paintings, **Santa Agnese, le Sante Catherine and Margaret and Saints Peter and John the Baptist**) Sodoma and Dominico Beccafumi (**Stories of Moses and Evangelists**).

Numerous and precious are the sacred furnishings, including **the bronze Crucifix, on the high altar**, and the **Angel Candlestick Beares** at the end of the rich **Marble Transenna**, by Giambologna, in addition to the large

silver **Ciborium** designed by Giovan Battista Foggini (1678-86) on the altar of the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament.

Particularly venerated is the image of the thirteenth-century Madonna and Child, called "Madonna di sotto gli organi", attributed to the Volterrano Berlinghiero Berlinghieri.

The building, like the bell tower, is perceptibly sunk into the ground, and some instabilities in the construction are clearly visible, such as the differences in level between the nave of Buscheto and the extension by Rainaldo (the spans to the west and the facade).

-THE PISA'S TOWER-

The tower of Pisa (popularly leaning tower and, in Pisa, the Tower) is the bell tower of the cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, in the famous Piazza del Duomo, later on nicknamed Piazza dei Miracoli, of which it is the most famous monument due to the characteristic slope, symbol of Pisa and among the iconic symbols of Italy. It is a bell tower in its own right, 57 meters high (58.36 meters considering the foundation plan) built over two centuries, between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries. With a mass of 14,453 tons, the curved line predominates, with rounds of blind arches and six floors of loggias. The slope is due to a subsidence of the underlying land that occurred already in the early stages of construction. The inclination of the building measures 3.9 ° with respect to the vertical axis.

The tower is managed by the Opera della Primaziale Pisana, a company that manages all the monuments in the Piazza del Duomo in Pisa. **It has been proposed as one of the seven wonders of the modern world.**

The works began on August 9, 1173. As usual with the lighthouses and with the buildings adjacent to the sea in general, the foundations were left to rest for a whole year. Some studies attribute the authorship of the project to the Pisan architect Diotisalvi, who was building the baptistery in the same period. According to Vasari, the works were started by Bonanno Pisano. Vasari's thesis, believed to be without foundation, was

instead considered valid especially after the discovery in the vicinity of the bell tower of a tombstone with the name of Bonanno, walled in the atrium of the building.

The first phase of the works was interrupted in the middle of the third floor, due to the subsidence of the land on which the base of the bell tower stands. The compliance of the ground, caused by soft clay, is the cause of the slope of the tower and, although to a lesser extent, of all the buildings in the square. The works resumed in 1275 under the guidance of Giovanni di Simone and Giovanni Pisano who added three more floors to the previous building. In an attempt to straighten the tower, the three added floors tend to curve in the opposite direction to the slope. The bell tower was completed in the middle of the following century, adding the bell cell. Since its construction, the overhang has substantially increased, but over the centuries there have also been long periods of stability or even a reduction in the slope. During the nineteenth century the bell tower was affected by major renovations, which led, for example, to the isolation of the base of the tower. The works, carried out under the direction of Alessandro Gherardesca, contributed to definitively debunk the theory, supported by some scholars of the time, according to which the bell tower was thought to have been leaning since its origin.

THANK YOU!

Alessandro Vagnoni