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# Florence

*For other places with the same name, see [Florence \(disambiguation\)](#).*

**Florence** (Italian: *Firenze*) is the capital of the region of [Tuscany](#) in [Italy](#), with a population of about 367,000 (2022). The city is a cultural, artistic and architectural gem, and is inscribed on the [UNESCO World Heritage list](#). The birthplace of the Italian Renaissance, Florence was the home to powerful families, creative geniuses and scientific masterminds who left their legacies in the city's many museums and art galleries. The city also has a very rich literary history, being the birthplace of the famous poet Dante, and standard Italian today is primarily based on the dialect of Tuscan spoken in Florence.

## Understand

Politically, economically, and culturally, Florence was the most important city in Europe for around 250 years, from some time before 1300 until the early 1500s.

Florentines reinvented money, in the form of the gold florin. This currency was the engine that drove Europe out of the Dark Ages, a term invented by Petrarch, a Florentine whose family had been exiled to Arezzo. They financed the development of industry all over Europe, from Britain to Bruges, Lyon and Hungary. They financed the English kings during the Hundred Years' War. They financed the papacy, including the construction of the papal palace in Avignon, and the reconstruction of St. Peter's and the Vatican when the papacy returned to Rome from the "Babylonian captivity".

Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio pioneered the use of the vernacular — the use of a locally spoken language, rather than Latin — and in their case, it was Tuscan, which, because of them, became the *lingua franca* for the entire Italian peninsula, and eventually the basis for standard Italian following unification in 1871. Because Dante, et al., wrote in Tuscan, Geoffrey Chaucer, who spent a lot of time



The Duomo, officially Cattedrale di Santa Maria del Fiore, is the fourth largest church in Europe, with the biggest brickwork dome in the world

in Northern Italy and who used some of Boccaccio's little stories to inspire his Canterbury Tales, wrote in English. Others started writing in French and Spanish. This was the beginning of the end of Latin as a common language throughout Europe.

The Florentines, perhaps most notably Filippo Brunelleschi (1377-1466) and Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472), invented Renaissance architecture. This architectural style revolutionised the way Rome, London, Paris and every other major city in Europe, from Barcelona to St. Petersburg, was built.

Florentines were the driving force behind the Age of Discovery. Florentine bankers financed Henry the Navigator and the Portuguese explorers, who pioneered the route around Africa to India and the Far East. It was a map drawn by the Florentine Paulo del Pozzo Toscanelli, a student of Brunelleschi, that Columbus used to sell his "enterprise" to the Spanish monarchs, and which he then used on his first voyage. Mercator's famous "Projection" is a refined version of Toscanelli's map, taking into account the Americas, of which the Florentine was obviously ignorant. The western hemisphere itself is named after a Florentine writer who claimed to be an explorer and mapmaker, Amerigo Vespucci.

Galileo and other scientists pioneered the study of optics, ballistics, astronomy, anatomy, and so on. Pico della Mirandola, Leonardo Bruni, Machiavelli, and many others laid the groundwork for our understanding of political science.

Opera was invented in Florence.

And that is just a smidgen of what went on in this city, which never had a population above 60,000 from the first attack of the plague in 1348 until long, long after it became unimportant.

And there were the Medici, perhaps the most important family that ever lived. The Medicis changed the world more than any other family. Forget all the art for which they paid. They taught first the other Italians, and then the rest of the Europeans, how to conduct statecraft. For example, Catherine de' Medici (1519-1589) married Henry II of France (reigned 1547-1559). After he died, Catherine ruled France as regent for her young sons, and was instrumental in turning France into Europe's first nation-state. She brought the Renaissance into France, introducing everything from the châteaux of the Loire to the fork. She also was, to 16th- and 17th-century European royalty, what Queen Victoria was to the 19th and 20th centuries — everybody's grandma. Her children included three kings of France, Francis II (ruled 1559-1560), Charles IX (ruled 1560-1574) and Henry III (ruled 1574-1589). Her children-in-law included a fourth king of France, Henry IV (ruled 1589-1610), plus Elizabeth of Hapsburg, Philip II of Spain (of Armada fame), and Mary Queen of Scots.

And that is without mentioning any artists. From Arnolfo and Cimabue to Giotto, Nanni di Banco, and Uccello; through Lorenzo Ghiberti and Donatello and Masaccio and the various della Robbias; through Fra Angelico and Sandro Botticelli and Piero della Francesca, and on to Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci, the Florentines dominated the visual arts like nobody before or since. And this list does not include many who, in any other place, would be considered among the greatest of artists, but

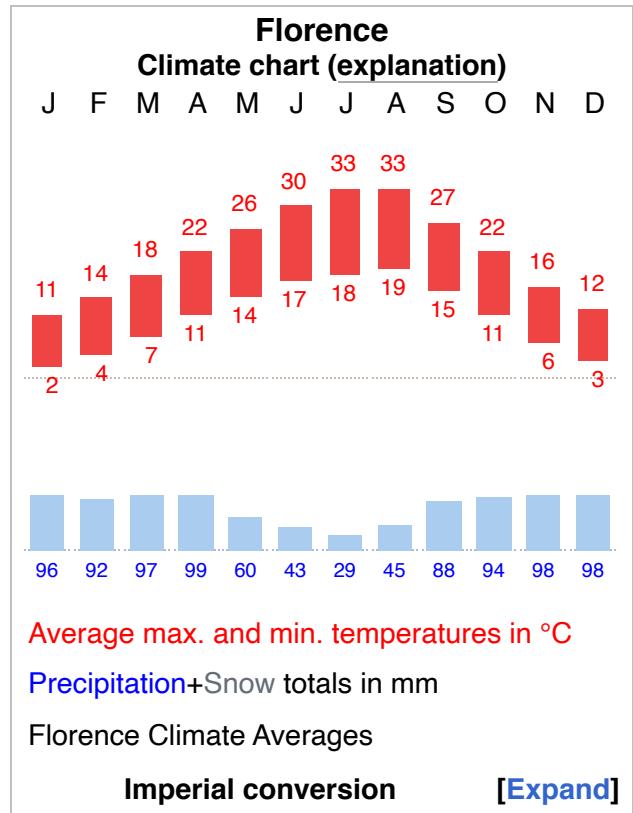


Bridges over the Arno

in Florence must be considered among the near-great: Benvenuto Cellini, Andrea del Sarto, Benozzo Gozzoli, Giorgio Vasari, Domenico Ghirlandaio, Fra Lippo Lippi, Buontalenti, Orcagna, Pollaiuolo, Filippino Lippi, Andrea del Verrocchio, Bronzino, Desiderio da Settignano, Michelozzo, the Rossellis, the Sangallo, Pontormo. And this list does not include the prolific Ignoto. Nor does it include the near-Florentines, such as Raphael, Andrea Pisano, Giambologna, the wonderfully nicknamed Sodoma and so many more, such as Peter-Paul Rubens, all of whom spent time in Florence and were educated by it.

## Climate

Florence boasts a Mediterranean climate with hot, mostly dry summers and mild, wet winters. Day temperatures during summer are very hot, ranging from 30°C in June to 33°C in July and August. Winters experience day temperatures ranging from 11°C in January to 14°C in February. Springs and autumns are mild to warm, with day temperatures ranging from 16°C in November to 27°C in September. Sunshine is abundant throughout the year, with sunshine hours being very elevated in summer and discretely elevated also in winter.



## Tourist information

- **Tourist information offices** (<https://www.feelflorence.it/en>), ☎ +39 055000, [touristinfo@comune.fi.it](mailto:touristinfo@comune.fi.it) (<mailto:touristinfo@comune.fi.it>). M-Sa 07:00-21:00, Su 09:00-14:00. Infopoint Piazza Stazione 4 is the largest tourist information in the city, with a bookshop and booking service. Infopoint via Cavour 1R, specialises in the territory all around Florence as well as Florence. Infopoint Airport Vespucci is found at the Arrivals. Infopoint Borgo Santa Croce 29r has tourist brochures and general tourist information. E-mail enquiries answered within 24 hours. (updated May 2024 | )

## Get in

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### By plane

The airport of Florence itself is Amerigo Vespucci International Airport (FLR IATA) (4 km northwest of the center), locally known as "Peretola", to which there are flights from major destinations in Western Europe. There is only one runway covered by hills, and therefore the flights that land there are relatively infrequent and expensive.

The airport is connected by tram line T2 connecting the airport to the train station SMN; The station is on the south side, and ends at Piazza dell'Unità Italiana. The tram station is controlled, to the left of the main entrance. The trams run every 5-15 minutes (depending on the time of day) until 12:30

(02:00 on weekends). One-way tickets cost €1.70 (as of January 2024) and can be purchased with cash or credit cards at vending machines at each station. The tram ride is about 20 minutes from end to end.

Taxis charge a flat rate of €25 from the airport to anywhere in the historic center of Florence, plus €1 per large item of luggage.

Other airports serving Florence are **Bologna** and **Pisa**.

Bologna (BLQ IATA) is the preferred option which is an hour's drive from Florence by car or train. From the airport of Bologna there are flights all over Europe when the dominant airline is Ryanair. From the airport there are also Emirates and Turkish Airlines flights, so these companies can be used to reach Bologna across Asia, Africa and Oceania.

Another airport that is used is the airport of Pisa. which is an hour and a half away from florence by train. There are fewer flights to Pisa than Bologna. So Bologna is better option.

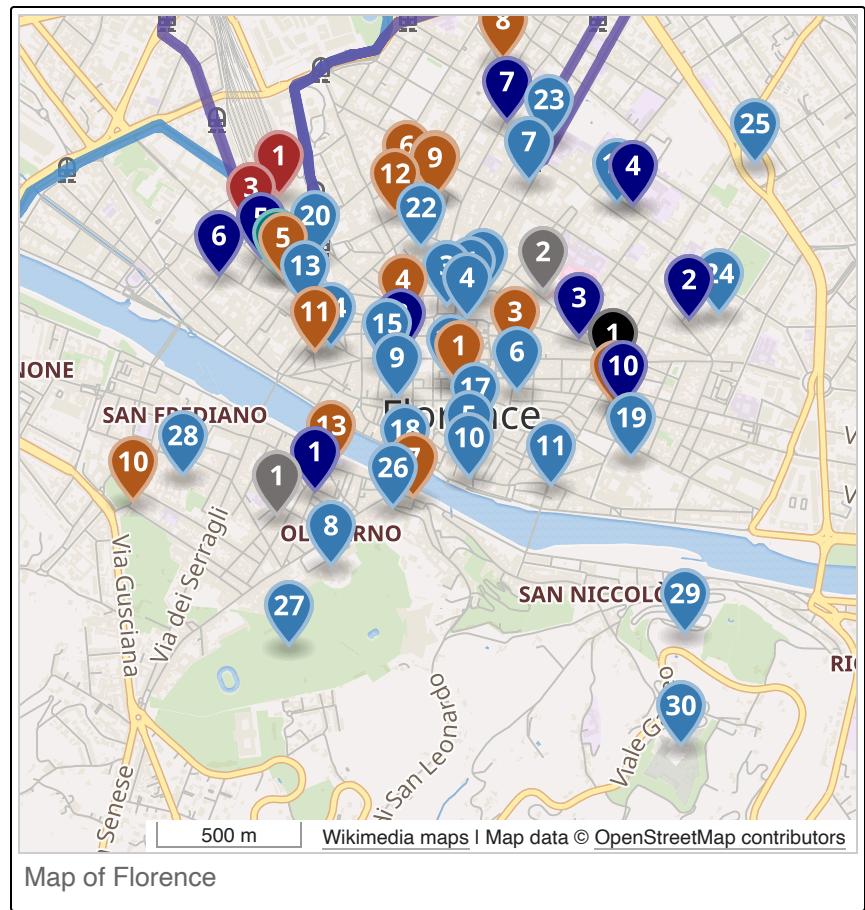
It is better to book a flight that does not land or take off in the evening, because during these hours the reliability of the trains in Italy is quite low, and it is not worth taking the risk of missing a flight, or the last train. Taxi drivers in Bologna and Pisa, if you get stuck there at night, will not agree to take you to Florence.

If you are coming from North America from where there are no flights to either Bologna or Pisa, it is better to use the airport in Rome Fiumicino rather than Milan Malpensa, because from Rome the trip to Florence is much faster.

## By train

Frequent direct trains connect Florence with Rome (90 mins), Milan (1 hr 40 min), Venice (2 hr), Naples (2 hrs 50 min) and Italy's other main cities.

Coming by train from other countries usually involves changing at Milan. However a direct Nightjet runs from Munich leaving around 20:00, reaching Florence around 06:00 and continuing to Rome, with the return leaving Florence towards 22:00 to reach Munich shortly after 08:00. The fare is about €100. This Nightjet divides and also runs to Vienna, with similar times.



Almost all trains go to the main station, **1 Firenze Santa Maria Novella** (<http://www.firenzesantamarianovella.it/en/>)  on the north edge of the historic old town, near most accommodation and sights. There's a bank of Trenitalia ticket machines (cards or cash accepted) on the terminus platform concourse, staffed kiosks in the main hall, and various fast food options there and nearby. An underpass leads south into Piazza SMN.

A few regional trains bypass SMN, calling at **Firenze Campo Marte**, 2 km east near Florence Stadium, **Firenze Statuto** 1 km north of SMN, and **Firenze Rifredi**, 2 km north of SMN. Unless your ticket specifies otherwise, it's valid for any connecting train between those stations and SMN - you'll seldom have to wait longer than ten minutes. Otherwise, take a bus or taxi from the street outside.

## By car

Florence is well connected by good highways to the rest of Italy. Autostrada A-1 runs to Bologna, Milan and the North, and to Rome and the South. Use Firenze-Impruneta exit for these routes and for Siena via the "Fi-Si" highway. A-11 runs to Pisa and the West: for north of the river follow A-11 to the end, for south of the river turn onto A-1 south to Firenze-Scandicci exit.

**However, driving in Florence is very problematic.** Driving in the historic centre - inside the wide "viale" where the old city walls were (and still are, south of the river) - is strictly prohibited, except for residents with permits. This is ferociously enforced by camera - if you drive in the prohibited areas, you will be hunted down and sent a stiff fine - around €100 for every camera you pass before escaping the zone. The city raises over €50 million in traffic fines each year, half of this from traffic zone offences.

If you're just visiting for the day, use the Park & Ride areas at the edge of town, for instance Villa Constanza (described below under "By bus"). You can't leave your car overnight here.

If you're driving to pre-booked accommodation in the centre, check ahead with them: given your car registration (Italian *targa*) they may be able to get you a 30-minute waiver, barely enough to find the hotel in the warren of old streets, drop luggage and check in, then take the car out of the zone. Central car rental offices likewise have a waiver and permitted route to exit and re-enter the city.

Firenze Parking (<https://www.fipark.com>) run a dozen or so edge-of-centre parking lots, with a long walk or a short bus ride to the centre. For example the lot just north of Piazza della Liberta charges €10 per day, €70 per week.

Near the centre, parking is more expensive: e.g. a garage costs €30 per night. On the street, you can only use a blue parking space, if you're lucky enough to find one free. White parking places are for residents only and yellow ones are reserved. The price is €1 per hour and charges apply from 08:00 to 20:00; leave the ticket visible inside the car. You need coins for parking, as the machine won't accept banknotes or cards.

## By bus

Flixbus (<https://www.flixbus.com>) ply direct between Florence and Rome (3 hr 30, two per hour), Milan (4 hours, roughly hourly), Perugia (2 hours, 4 times), Naples (7 hours, every 2-3 hours), Geneva (12 hours, one overnight, else change in Milan), Marseille (9 hours overnight), Paris (17 hours), Munich (4 per day, 9 hours), Zurich (9 hours), Frankfurt (14 hours), Vienna (12 hours) and Budapest (14 hours).

Buses that originate or terminate in Florence stop at the downtown bus station on Piazzale Montelungo next to SMN railway station. Buses that are passing Florence between other cities pick up and drop off at **2 Villa Constanza Park & Ride**, just off Autostrada A-1 on the west edge of the city - take Tram 1. (And see "Get around: By tram" for practicalities.) The parking lot is short of shelter or other facilities.

**3 Busitalia SITA Nord Autostazione**, Via Santa Caterina da Siena, 15/17. Main bus stop for **Tiemme SpA** (<http://www.tiemmespa.it/>) and **CAPautolinee** (<http://www.capautolinee.it>). Which serve many cities in Tuscany and beyond.  (updated May 2019 | )

## Get around

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### On foot

Most of the major tourist sights in Florence are within easy walking distance of each other. It is possible to walk from one end of the historic center of Florence to the other - north-south or east-west - in a half hour. Walking is not only an easy way to get around, it also offers the chance to 'take in' much more of the city life. Be warned though, that electric motor scooters are small enough to fit where cars cannot. They are relatively quiet but quick and in the summer they often travel into the plazas. Some of the streets in central Florence are closed to traffic. Many more are simply too narrow for buses to get through. Therefore, bus and car tours are not recommended. This is a very small, compact city that really needs to be seen on foot.



Interior of the Baptistery, showing the mosaic of Christ in Majesty

### By bicycle

There is a bike rental service organized by the city. Bikes can be hired at several points in the city (and returned to the same place). One of the most convenient for tourists is at the SMN Station. There are other locations at many railway stations, but often with restricted opening hours. In addition, some hotels provide their guests with free bicycles. Bike shops also often rent bikes and some of them organize guided bike tours in the countryside.

While there are hills north and south of the center of town, almost all of the historic center of Florence is easy for bikers, because it is flat. But there is a problem: traffic is terrible, with buses, trucks, cars, motorcycles, motorbikes, bicycles, and pedestrians fighting for almost no space. However, a network

of cycle paths make it often much faster to circumvent the city centre than to cycle directly through historic streets, even if the destination is in an area such as Santa Croce or Santa Maria Novella.

## By taxi

Taxis are available, but it may be best if you have your hotel or the restaurant you are eating at call ahead. When taxis are called by phone, the nearest one available is sent to you through the company's radio system with its meter ticking away. In Florence, it can be difficult to hail a cab from the street curb. You either call for one or get one at the very few taxi stands. One popular taxi stand is at the central Santa Maria Novella Train Station, and there are others in a few major squares. The first taxi in the taxi stand line should be available - ask in case of doubt. Most taxis do not take credit cards for payment, so be sure to have cash on hand. Taxis in Florence are relatively expensive. Tipping is not expected, unless the driver helps you carry luggage, etc.

## By bus

Another way of getting around is by using the public buses from **AutolineeToscane (<https://www.at-bus.it/en>)**.

A single-ride ticket costs €1.70, a carnet of 10 tickets is €14 (as of 2024 these are no longer easily available).

There are different ways of obtaining a ticket:

- **Paper tickets** can be bought at tabacchi (shops selling tobacco, which are marked with official looking "T"s out front"), kiosks/newsagents/bars where the symbol "Biglietti AutolineeToscane" is shown, as well as at the AutolineeToscane ticketing office at the bus station outside Santa Maria Novella train station.
- **Contactless via debit/credit card** at the card readers in your choice of transport, provided your card is branded with a Visa, Mastercard or American Express logo. For urban lines (marked green), simply tap on when getting onto the vehicle; for lines operated on a distance-based fare, also tap off upon leaving the vehicle. Within the ticket's validity period, a new tap in another vehicle will not be charged again.

Within 90 minutes of stamping/tapping you can hop-off & hop-on on any bus of the urban AutolineeToscane network. Paper tickets need to be stamped when entering the bus (from the front and rear doors of buses - the central door is supposed to be exit only; though now it is more accepted to enter from the central door). If you are unable to find a ticket vendor, there also ticket machines at some locations accept ING contactless card payment and coins.

A ticket may also be available from the driver for €2.50, but there is no guarantee that the driver will agree to sell them.

Hold tightly onto the hand rails as Florence traffic is unpredictable and frequent sudden braking is necessary. Unlike bigger cities such as Rome or Naples, buses in Florence are relatively "safe." Keep a close eye on your belongings and avoid showing off cash, jewelry, etc., especially in very crowded buses.

## By tram

There are two tram lines (<https://www.gestramvia.it/?lang=en>) in the city. The first one runs from Villa Constanza Park & Ride on the south-western edge of the city, just off the A-1, so most users are commuters. It runs into town through the western suburbs of Scandicci and L'Isolotto to SMN main railway station (25 min), then turns north to Rifredi and the University/Hospital area. It runs daily 05:00-00:30 every three to ten minutes, and a single ride costs €1.50. The second line connects the airport and the near west side to the city centre and the Santa Maria Novella station. By 2025, the network will have been extended to Piazza della Libertà and Piazza San Marco.

## By car

Don't even think of it - see "Get in". Just thinking of it is probably enough to incur a fine.

## See

Learn from Stendahl and don't try to see too much. Most tourists rush to do the Uffizi, the Duomo and the Bargello. These are indeed splendid, but you may wait hours to get in, and be jostled by tour groups. Pre-book if you know you want to see them; otherwise spread out and see stuff that is equally fine but less touristy. A long weekend here could comfortably take in a sprinkling of old churches, and a couple of museums or galleries. But leave time and energy for just enjoying the ambience.

**Churches:** the standout is definitely the **Duomo** or Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore. But other fine churches north of the river include San Lorenzo, Santa Maria Novella, Santa Trinita, Santa Croce, Santo Spirito, SS Annunziata and Ognissanti. Highlights south of the river are Santa Maria del Carmine and San Miniato al Monte.

**Art galleries:** aim to do at least one of Uffizi, Pitti Palace, Accademia, Bargello and the Museum of the Works of the Duomo. They are filled with the brilliant creations of all the renaissance big names: Donatello, Verrochio, Desiderio da Settignano, and Michelangelo. There are also several modern galleries.

**City views:** the classic panorama is from Piazzale Michelangelo, on the hillside just south of the river, and from San Miniato al Monte a little higher up. But every tour bus pauses here for photos so it can get mobbed. There is also a great view from the dome of the Cathedral or Giotto's Bell Tower, and an even greater line to climb them.

### Stendahl Syndrome

"I'm pooped, and I'll scream if I have to look at any more putti or martyred flesh": the fancy name for this condition is *Stendahl Syndrome*.

Stendahl was the pen-name of the French writer Marie-Henri Beyle (1783-1842) – or at least his best-known name, as he generated pseudonyms on an industrial scale. As French Consul based in Milan, he had ample time (perhaps too much time) to soak up the artistic beauties of Italy, and in Florence he found them overwhelming: "As I emerged from the porch of Santa Croce, I was seized with a fierce palpitation of the heart... the well-spring of life was dried up within me, and I walked in constant fear of falling to the ground."

He was much given to histrionics and attacks of the vapours, and in 1979 local psychiatrist Dr. Magherini named this syndrome,

Consider whether you'll benefit from buying a **Firenzecard**, described earlier.

Florence is featured in *Assassin's Creed II*; see [Assassin's Creed Tour](#).

## Piazza del Duomo

The Cathedral, Santa Maria del Fiore, is an astonishing confection dominating the piazza below and the skyline above. It's the fourth largest Christian church in the world, behind the Basilica of Our Lady of Peace in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire; St Peter's in Rome; and St Paul's in London. It's an early example of "technology-forcing" - like the US lunar missions of the 1960s, the 13th-century Florentines started building it without knowing how they'd complete it, until along came Brunelleschi and his vast crowning dome. The eye-catching facade is 19th-century. In front of the cathedral is the ornate medieval Baptistery, in use until modern times. Also in the piazza is the Bell Tower, designed by Giotto. The artwork from these buildings has been replaced by replicas, with the originals in the adjacent Museum of the Works of the Duomo. Buy a **combined ticket** online for €18 (concessions €3) to enter the following monuments (one entry per monument, valid for 72 hours after first use, book up to 30 days ahead; **all closed** first Tuesday of the month):

- **1 Santa Maria del Fiore** (<http://www.duomofirenze.it>) (*Duomo*) (*Enter by right hand door in west facade; disabled access on south flank*). M-Sa 10:00-16:30, Su 13:30-16:45. The cathedral interior is to a basilica pattern; it's vast and at first feels dark and empty. Give your eyes time to adjust, and admire the stained glass windows, funeral monument of Bishop d'Orso, and altar of St Zanobius. Below is the **Crypt** (M-Sa 10:00-17:00) with remains of the preceding cathedral of Santa Reparata, and the tomb of Brunelleschi. Giotto is believed to lie here somewhere, but his tomb has yet to be identified. Above is the soaring cupola or **Dome**. The cathedral is free, but you need a pre-booked ticket and time-slot to climb the 464 steps up to the Dome (entrance north side of the church). Slots are available M-F 08:30-19:00, Sa 08:30-17:00 and Su 13:00-16:00.  (updated May 2019)
- **2 Giotto's Tower** (<https://www.ilgrandemuseodelduomo.it/monumenti/4-campanile>) (*Campanile di Giotto*). Daily 08:15-19:00. Almost 85 m (279 ft) tall, with 414 steps to climb, this richly decorated tower is topped by an open terrace with a panorama of the Duomo, city and surrounds. By ticket. 
- **3 Baptistery** (<http://www.museumflorence.com/monuments/3-baptistry>). M-F 08:15-10:15 & 11:15-19:30, Sa 08:15-18:30, Su 08:15-13:30. Octagonal plan, with a pyramidal roof covering its dome. It's famous for its bronze doors by Andrea Pisano (14th century) and Lorenzo Ghiberti (15th century) and a beautiful interior vault decorated with 13th-century mosaics. The interior is being

claiming to see many examples among first-time visitors to Florence.

Weariness and even dizzy-dos are not uncommon after a hard spell of tourism in this city, but think carefully before claiming to suffer from Stendahl Syndrome:

- a) It's not recognised in modern disease categories, so you'll be received with, at best, polite scepticism if you turn up at the local Emergency Room;
- b) Good luck trying to claim the ensuing expenses on your [travel insurance](#);
- c) When you return late to work, the response of your workmates and of your boss is likely to outdo Stendahl in theatricality, and your fear of falling to the ground will be amply justified.

So if you feel the well-spring of life drying up in you, head into a bar or café, bang down an espresso, and skip whatever museum or church you planned to see next. Simple.

restored and is unviewable as of April 2024, though the exterior can be seen. By ticket.   (updated Nov 2018 |)

- **4 Museo dell'Opera del Duomo** (<https://www.museumflorence.com/>) (*Museum of the Works of the Duomo*), Piazza del Duomo 9 (*Directly behind the dome end of the cathedral*). F-W 09:00-19:00, Th 09:00-17:00. This houses original artworks from the Duomo and surrounding religious buildings, including sculptures by Donatello, a Michelangelo Pietà (different from his version in Saint Peter's, Rome) and the losing entries in the 1401 contest to design the doors of the Baptistry. Plus models and drawings of the Cathedral. By ticket.    (updated Nov 2018 |)

## Museums

Book ahead for the big-name museums. All of these (plus Boboli Gardens) have a [combined booking portal](http://www.b-ticket.com/b-ticket/uffizi/) (<http://www.b-ticket.com/b-ticket/uffizi/>) and there are several combi-tickets. In practice, it's Uffizi that draws the biggest crowds and so is hardest to access; your options are:

- Just wait in line. On a good day this could mean a 4- to 5-hour wait, hopefully in good weather. On a bad day you wait hours outside in bad weather then they sell out and turn you away. This is especially likely on the first Sunday of the month when entry is free. Tuesday too is crowded, since it's closed Monday so there's pent-up demand.
- Go on an organised tour - these have a pre-booked slot and you step right in. *Caveat emptor*, as tour operations range from the shambolic and rushed to the sublime and educating.
- Buy a Firenzecard, so you skip the usual line. Upmarket hotels sometimes also have access to priority slots.
- Book online, paying €4 extra and pre-printing your email for a fixed time slot. Be there at least an hour ahead, because so many people are skipping line, there's a line to skip the line.
- Book by phone on +39 055 294883, likewise paying €4 extra for a fixed slot and arriving an hour early. It's not clear how long you'll typically wait to get through by phone.

- **5 Galleria degli Uffizi** (<http://www.uffizi.it/>), Piazzale degli Uffizi,  +39 055 294883. Tu-Su 08:15-18:50, M closed, last admission 18:00; you may not bring in water. Outstanding fine art museum with Renaissance paintings and sculptures from classical antiquity. It's in a late 16th-century palazzo designed by Vasari, in two wings enclosing a long narrow courtyard, effectively a street, an innovation in its day. Originally the palazzo was magistrates' offices (hence "Uffizi") and state archives; then it came to house the Medici's vast art collection. The artworks are on the first and second floors, they keep the lifts well hidden. Highlights include *Birth of Venus* by Botticelli, *Dukes of Urbino* by della Francesca, *Medusa* by Caravaggio, *Venus of Urbino* by Titian, *Annunciation* by da Vinci, *Pope Leo X and family* by Raphael, Velasquez' self-portrait, Rembrandt's final self-portrait, and many other big names. Allow three hours for a visit. Uffizi specialises in the Renaissance, so although later styles are represented, examples are few: you don't really come here for the 18th- to 20th-century material. The restaurant/café has a large balcony overlooking the main piazza with good views of the Palazzo Vecchio, and naturally their prices reflect the views. High season (21 Feb-9 Nov; 21 Dec-9 Jan): adult €29 (or €23 for early



The "Gates of Paradise" to the Baptistry, by Lorenzo Ghiberti



Galleria degli Uffizi - Daughter of Niobe is bent by terror of Gods

morning tickets: 08:15 and 08:30), conc €6, combi with Pitti & Boboli €38; low season: adult €16, conc €6, combi €18; including a booking fee of €4.  (updated Oct 2024 | )



Galileo's Original Instruments, Museo Galileo

- **6 Bargello** (<http://www.bargellomusei.beniculturali.it/>) (*Museo Nazionale del Bargello*), Via de' Proconsolo 4,  +39 055 294883. Daily Apr-Oct: 08:15-17:00, Nov-Feb: 08:15-14:00, but closed 2nd & 4th Su and 1st, 3rd & 5th M of each month. Used as a barracks and prison until the 19th century, this museum houses some of the best Renaissance and Mannerist sculpture. Big names here include Michelangelo, Donatello, Ammannati, Bandinelli, Andrea and Jacopo Sansovino, Desiderio da Settignano, Giambologna, and Antonio Rossellino. It also displays ceramics, textiles & tapestries, ivory, silver, armour and coins. Allow two hours. Not nearly as crowded as the Uffizi or Galleria dell'Accademia and paying a fee to book in advance is likely not necessary. Adult €11, conc €4, booking fee €3.  (updated Sep 2023 | )
- **7 Galleria dell'Accademia** (<http://www.galleriaaccademiafirenze.beniculturali.it/>) (*Accademia Gallery*), Via Ricasoli 58-60. Tu-Su 08:15-18:50. Highlights are Michelangelo's original *David* (the one in Piazza della Signoria is a copy) and his unfinished *Slaves*. It also includes Florentine painting, a museum of musical instruments, and Russian icons. No photography is allowed inside. N.B. the "Accademia di Belle Arti" next door is a university department, not connected with the Gallery. Adult €16, conc €4, booking fee €4.  (updated Nov 2018 | )
- **8 Palazzo Pitti** (<http://www.palazzopitti.it/>) (*Pitti Palace*), Piazza de' Pitti (200 m south of Ponte Vecchio). Tu-Su 08:15-18:50, last admission 18:00. The original Pitti was a banker; the palace has housed royalty but became best known for its Medici family treasures. It's now divided into four museums (same ticket): ground floor is the Treasury of the Grand Dukes; first floor houses the Palatine Gallery and the Royal and Imperial Apartments, second floor is the Modern Art Gallery and the Museum of Costume and Fashion. The Boboli gardens are just behind the palazzo. Mar-Oct: adult €16, conc €8, combi with Uffizi & Boboli €38; Nov-Feb: adult €10, conc €5, combi €18; booking fee €4.  (updated Nov 2018 | )
- **9 Palazzo Davanzati** (<http://www.bargellomusei.beniculturali.it/musei/4/davanzati/>), Via Porta Rossa. M-F 08:15-14:00, Sa Su 13:15-19:00. a house museum with antique fittings and furniture €6, conc €2.  (updated May 2019 | )
- **10 Museo Galileo** (<https://www.museogalileo.it/en/>), Piazza dei Giudici 1,  +39 055 265 311. 9:30-18:00. This museum shows the evolution of the instruments used in various scientific fields such as mathematics, physics, biology, chemistry, astronomy. The room of Galileo Galilei shows some of his original instruments as well as models from his drawings. The room of Spheres and Globes houses an excellent cartographic collection. In a rather macabre twist the museum also has the middle finger of Galileo's right hand on display. €10.  (updated May 2019 | )
- **11 Museo Horne** (<http://www.museohorne.it/en/>), Palazzo Corsi on via dei Benci, 6. Th-Tu 10:00-14:00. Displays art and furnishings of the 14th & 15th century. The building and art collection were owned by art historian Herbert Percy Horne. €7.  (updated May 2019 | )
- **12 Archaeological Museum** (<http://www.polomusealetoscana.beniculturali.it/index.php?it/198/firenze-maf-museo-archeologico-nazionale>), Piazza della Santissima Annunziata 9B. The Etruscan art collection is particularly good. €8.  (updated May 2019 | )
- **13 Museo Novecento** (<http://www.museonovecento.it/en>), Piazza Santa Maria Novella 10. Sa-W 11:00-20:00, Th 11:00-14:00, F 11:00-23:00, Firenze Cardholder free. Gallery of 20th- & 21st-century art, on three floors of a palazzo. Adult €8.50, concs €4.  (updated Nov 2018 | )
- **14 Museo Marini** (<https://museomarinomarini.it/en/>), Piazza di San Pancrazio. Sa-M 10:00 - 19:00, other days by reservation. Houses the work of that contemporary sculptor.  (updated May 2019 | )

- A Contemporary Art gallery is sited in **15 Palazzo Strozzi** [W](#), and there are several other collections around city centre.
- **16 Stibbert Museum** ([http://www.museumsinflorence.com/musei/stibbert\\_museum.html](http://www.museumsinflorence.com/musei/stibbert_museum.html)) (*Montughi hill, 2 km north of city centre*). M-W 10:00-14:00, F-Su 10:00-18:00. Has a great collection of armour and arms. €8.    (updated May 2019 | )

## Old town centre

- **17 Palazzo Vecchio** (<https://cultura.comune.fi.it/pagina/musei-civici-fiorentini/museo-di-palazzo-vecchio>). Old city palace/city hall, adorned with fine art. The replica of Michelangelo's "David" is placed outside the main door in the original location of the statue, which is a symbol of the Comune of Florence. The site displays an important collection of Renaissance sculptures and paintings, including the *Putto* by Verrochio and the series of murals by Giorgio Vasari at the Salone dei Cinquecento (Hall of the Five Hundreds) - the hall which used to display the now lost Renaissance masterpiece, that is, the so-called Battaglia di Anghiari, by Leonardo da Vinci. "Museum" or "Tower and Battlements": €12.50 adults, €10 concessions. "Museum" and "Tower and Battlements": €17.50 adults, €15 concessions.    (updated Aug 2022 | )
- **Piazza della Signoria** is the grand open space in front: not quite a square, as Palazzo Vecchio blocks out one corner. Sights here are the equestrian statue of Cosimo de Medici, the Fountain of Neptune, the statue of David, and Loggia dei Lanzi, an open arched gallery of Renaissance sculpture.
- **18 Ponte Vecchio**. The oldest and most celebrated bridge over the Arno, and the only Florentine bridge to survive World War II. The design is distinctive: it's a three-arched bridge supporting a parade of shops supporting another bridge. It dates to 1345 (hence Ponte Vecchio, "old bridge"), with earlier bridges being swept away by floods, rebuilt and swept away again. At street level it's a pedestrianised cobbled arch. It's lined by shops, which were butchers until Renaissance times then - in an insight as dramatic as the discovery of perspective in painting - they realised that goldsmiths' shops paid higher rents and didn't stink; so from then to this day it's just been overpriced jewellery shops and market stalls. Above these is the higher bridge, the Vasari Corridor, a private walkway added in 1565 so that the Medici Dukes could move between Palazzo Vecchio (Town Hall) and Palazzo Pitti (their blingy residence) without mixing with common folk. On the south bank, the Corridor nowadays continues as a gallery of the Uffizi, and there is sometimes talk of extending this over the bridge, or otherwise making the space accessible. Nothing's come of this so far, so the common folk will have to continue admiring the scene from street level. Free.    (updated Nov 2018 | )
- **19 Santa Croce** (<http://www.santacroceopera.it>). Contains the monumental tombs of Galileo, Michelangelo, Machiavelli, Dante, Rossini, and many other notables in addition to artistic decorations. There is also great artwork in the church. The Museo dell'Opera di Santa Croce (included in ticket) displays a flood-damaged but still beautiful Crucifix by Cimabue (Giotto's teacher), which has become a symbol of the disastrous floods of 1966. The ticket also includes



The Palazzo Vecchio

Pazzi Chapel, a perfectly symmetrical example of sublime neo-Classical Renaissance architecture. Adult €8, concs €6.    (updated May 2019 |)

- **20 Santa Maria Novella** (<https://www.smn.it/en/visit/>) (*near the train station*). A beautiful church with great artwork, including a Trinity by Masaccio that is being restored as of April 2024 but can still be seen from the scaffold for an additional charge of €1.50 and a great series of frescoes by Ghirlandaio behind the altar. Also, the museum near the Chiostro Verde, outside the church to its left (follow the signs in the church), contains gently restored frescoes of Old Testament scenes by Paolo Uccello which are quite unusual in style and well worth seeing. Off of another cloister is the wonderful Spanish Chapel which is covered in huge, impressive 14th-century frescoes. Also don't miss the Cappella Strozzi di Mantova, up a flight of stairs at the end of the left transept, with dramatic frescoes of Heaven, Hell and Purgatory by Nardo di Cione. The gift shop is in the Sacristy, which also contains paintings and other artwork. Allotting 1 1/2-2 hours to see everything would be reasonable. €7.50 adults, €5 concessions.   
- **21 Orsanmichele**. A beautiful old church from the 14th century, which once functioned as a grain market.   
- **22 San Lorenzo** (<https://sanlorenzofirenze.it/>). The façade of this church was never completed, giving it a striking, rustic appearance. Inside the church is pure Renaissance neo-classical splendor. If you go around the back of the church, there is a separate entrance to the Medici chapels. Be sure to check out the stunning burial chapel of the princes and the sacristy down the corridor. The small sacristy is blessed with the presence of nine Michelangelo sculptures.   
- **23 San Marco Convent** (<http://www.polomusealetoscana.beniculturali.it/index.php?it/190/museo-di-san-marco-firenze>). Houses frescoes by Fra Angelico and his workshop. Fra Angelico painted a series of frescoes for the cells in which the Dominican monks lived.   
- **24 Great Synagogue and Jewish Museum of Florence** (<https://www.jewishflorence.it/?lang=en>) (*Sinagoga e Museo Ebraico Firenze*), Via Luigi Carlo Farini 6 (*around the corner from Piazza Sant'Ambrogio*), ☎ +39 055 298 9879, [firenzebraica@operalaboratori.com](mailto:firenzebraica@operalaboratori.com) (<mailto:firenzebraica@operalaboratori.com>). Jun-Sep: M-Th 10:00 - 18:30, F 10:00 - 17:00; Oct-May: Su-Th 10:00 - 17:30, F 10:00 - 15:00. Closed except for religious services on Saturdays and Jewish holidays. Lovely Moorish-style synagogue built in 1882 and a museum with many artefacts and documentation of Florentine Jewish life going back many centuries; audio tours in multiple languages are available. €6.50 total for the synagogue and museum.    (updated Nov 2021 |)
- **25 The English Cemetery** (*Cimitero degli inglesi*), Piazzale Donatello (*a short walk from the Great Synagogue and Jewish Museum of Florence*). In the 19th century, the "English Cemetery" received anyone that the city's churchyards wouldn't receive, e.g. Orthodox Christians, but Britons and Americans were the majority. Famous names here include Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Fanny Trollope and Beatrice Shakespeare, a relative of William. There are lots of ornate gravestones with flowery inscriptions in multiple languages.    (updated Nov 2021 |)



Galileo's Tomb, Santa Croce

## South bank of the Arno

- **26 Santa Felicita** (<http://www.santafelicita.it>) (*just south of Ponte Vecchio*). Contains frescoes of the Annunciation and a painting of the Deposition of Christ by the brilliant and weird mannerist painter, Pontormo. They are to be found in the Barbadori Chapel, which is to your immediate right when entering the church.   

- **Pitti Palace:** see Museum listing above.
- **27 Boboli Gardens** (<http://www.polomuseale.firenze.it/musei/boboli/>). Elaborately landscaped and with many interesting sculptures, behind the Pitti Palace. Wonderful city views. Don't miss the Bardini gardens. Entrance to that is included in the combination ticket price for the Boboli, and it's a short walk from the Boboli Gardens. There are great views of the Duomo from the Bardini gardens. Adult €10.  (updated May 2019 !)
- **Natural History Museum** ("La Specola") is on Via Romana next to Pitti Palace. Open Tu-Su 09:00-16:00.
- **28 Santa Maria del Carmine**. Famous frescoes (Masaccio's Adam and Eve Banished From the Garden and others by Lippi and Masolino) in the Brancacci Chapel. 
- **29 Piazzale Michelangelo** (*Michelangelo Square*). Plaza on a hillside with a great view of the city. Go there by bus or climb the stairs and paths from the Lungarno della Zecca. 
- **30 San Miniato al Monte** (<http://www.sanminiatoalmonte.it/>) (*uphill from Piazzale Michelangelo*). The Sacristy contains frescoes by Spinello Aretino. In the cemetery near this church there are graves of famous people of Florence, including Carlo Lorenzi (Collodi) - author of the famous Pinocchio. Also, turn around when you reach the top of the stairs before entering the church, to see perhaps an even greater view of the city than from nearby Piazzale Michelangelo. 
- **Museo Stefano Bardini:** collection of early Florentine art, housed in the Palazzo Mozzi just south of Ponte alla Grazia. It's open F-M 11:00-17:00.



The Boboli Gardens seen from the Pitti Palace

## Do

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Great places to walk include along the Arno and across any of its bridges; through narrow, medieval back streets in the Santa Croce area; and in the Oltr'Arno, on the south side of the river, which is in many ways like Rome's Trastevere or Paris's Left Bank, but far, far smaller.



Campanile next to the Duomo

- **Climb the Duomo or Campanile:** Traverse the winding staircases inside the Duomo or the nearby bell tower to see some of the best views of Florence. Not only can you see the Tuscan countryside in the distance and the impressive palaces and churches of Florence in the fore, but it also shows you just how large the Duomo is.
- **Stroll the Boboli Gardens:** These extensive gardens behind the Pitti palace provide excellent views of the city of Florence and numerous sculptures in a relaxed environment. Stop in the hilltop café, grab a drink and a seat outside and enjoy the view.
- **Street performers** strut their stuff in front of Palazzo Vecchio of an evening. Performances can range from violin duets to people dressed as sculptures. A nice place to stop while you eat your after-dinner gelato.
- **Enjoy the view from the Piazzale Michelangelo.** It's a big square on a hill, but somewhat distant from the traditional tourist sites. It's easy to reach it even on foot using the stairs called "Rampe di

San Niccolò". They are on the side of the Arno River just in front of the national library. Do this during the summer and during the night to admire Florence's lights.

- **Join a monastery:** those aged 18-35 are invited to take a two-day spiritual retreat at Badia Fiorentina on Via del Proconsolo. Or just come to hear sung vespers at 18:00 and mass at 18:30 nightly in this peaceful church, filled with artwork. It's central yet virtually free of tourists.
- **Football:** ACF Fiorentina (<https://www.acffiorentina.com/it>) play soccer in Serie A, Italy's top tier. Their home ground Stadio Artemio Franchi (capacity 43,000) is 2 km northeast of city centre.

## Further out

- **Impruneta spa** (<http://terme.borghitoscani.com/terme-di-impruneta.asp>), Via Cassia 217, Terme di Firenze (*from the city of Florence, take the Autostrada Firenze - Siena and the SR2; the spa is on a lefthand turnoff from the R2, approximately 13 km south of the city of Florence*). The thermal waters of Impruneta spring from two sources and are used to treat respiratory diseases, liver, gastrointestinal, and skin allergies.

## Learn

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### Photography

- **Florence Photography Workshop & Tour** (<http://www.florenceinferno.com/walking-tours/photography-workshop/>), ☎ +39 348 840 0459, [info@florenceinferno.com](mailto:info@florenceinferno.com) (<mailto:info@florenceinferno.com>). 12:00-18:00 (13:30-19:30 in July and August). Discover Florence with your camera and with a professional photography teacher (a Vogue-featured American photographer) and an official Florence guide at your side.

### Italian language

- **ABC School** (<http://www.abcschool.com>), Via dei Rustici 7, ☎ +39 055 212001, fax: +39 055 212001, [info@abcschool.com](mailto:info@abcschool.com) (<mailto:info@abcschool.com>). 09:00-17:00. Italian language school offering language and cultural courses since 1982.
- **1 Centro Machiavelli** (<http://www.centromachiavelli.it/en/>), Piazza Santo Spirito 4, ☎ +39 0552396966, [school@centromachiavelli.it](mailto:school@centromachiavelli.it) (<mailto:school@centromachiavelli.it>). Italian language and cultural school for foreigners. The structure and the contents of the programmes for the levels are based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The school also organises a programme of cultural activities and excursions to complement the language classes and enable the students to come into contact with the Italian culture and practice Italian in the field.  (updated Aug 2016 | )
- **Istituto Galilei** (<http://www.galilei.it>), Via Alfani 68, ☎ +39 055 29 46 80, fax: +39 055 28 34 81, [info@galilei.it](mailto:info@galilei.it) (<mailto:info@galilei.it>). Italian language school specializing in one-to-one, personalized and small group (max 4 people) full immersion courses.
- **Michelangelo Institute** (<http://www.michelangelo-edu.it/>), Via Ghibellina 88, ☎ +39 055 240975, [michelangelo@dada.it](mailto:michelangelo@dada.it) (<mailto:michelangelo@dada.it>). Italian study programmes for foreign students. Cooking workshop, art history classes, plastic arts and visual arts programs are also taught in this academy.
- **2 Scuola Leonardo da Vinci Florence** (<https://www.leonardo-florence.com/>), Via Bufalini 3, ☎ +39 055 261181, [florence@scuolaleonardo.com](mailto:florence@scuolaleonardo.com) (<mailto:florence@scuolaleonardo.com>). M-F

08:00-17:30. Offers a wide choice of Italian language and culture courses for children and adults from beginning to advanced levels. 

## Cooking

- **Cooking Class.** Florence and Tuscany are becoming synonymous with "cooking class". Tuscan cuisine is appreciated worldwide and a cooking class experience is now more and more part of the attraction of Tuscany, as a way of carrying back home memories and improved cooking skills. There are many in the area, either in historical villas in the countryside or in central Florence, from Florentine use of tripe and giblets to the use of organic ingredients from the local producers, and classes range widely in size. During high season, make sure to book in advance.

## Buy

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There are a few places to buy things, from the high-end jewelry stores lining the Ponte Vecchio to some of the most famous shops in the world — Gucci, Pucci, Ferragamo, Valentino, Prada, Armani, Ermengildo Zegna, Buccellati, Frette — as well as many more wonderful shops that aren't yet world famous. Souvenirs related to art and Florence's sights can be found everywhere. Books, leather goods, art handcrafted journals, frames, pencils etc. in that gorgeous Florentine paper with swirls of color and gold are great gifts.



View from Piazzale Michelangelo

It is increasingly difficult to find bargains, but keen-eyed shoppers can still find good deals on smaller side streets running off of those above and elsewhere in the centre of town. Better stores in/near the city centre offer superb leather, sometimes at decent prices, perhaps after some bargaining. Goldsmiths on the Ponte Vecchio display beautiful, quality work but can be very expensive. Shops that are not in the very centre of the city are significantly cheaper. There are also superb shopping streets, such as Via Tornabuoni, Via del Parione, and Via Maggio. The San Lorenzo Market is now largely for tourists. There are also a couple of collections of "outlets" in the suburbs.

Some of the most uniquely Florentine shops and sights can be found in the Oltrarno, which is Florence's "Left Bank" and home to countless generations of artisans. This section of town can be found by crossing "Ponte Vecchio" (the old bridge) or Ponte Trinità from the center. This "undiscovered" Florence is a must-see.

- **Enoteca Mondovino**, Via S. Agostino 27-29/R, ☎ +39 055 215214. Decent wine and liquor store with interesting collection of potable bitters in the back (Italian and German).
- **1 Officina Profumo-Farmaceutica di Santa Maria Novella** (<http://www.smnovella.com/>), Via della Scala 16 N. With roots dating to 1221, this shop sells high-quality beauty products like soaps, shaving cream, eau de Cologne and Carta D'Armenia incense papers in a shop that was once the chapel of San Niccolò. Worth entering even just to see the space and smell the herbal products made from historic recipes. 
- **Pitti Vintage - Italian & European Vintage Clothing & Accessories** (<http://www.PittiVintage.com/>), Borgo degli Albizi 72r, ☎ +39 055 230 2676, [shopkeeper@PittiVintage.com](mailto:shopkeeper@PittiVintage.com) (mailto:[shopkeep](mailto:shopkeep))

[er@PittiVintage.com](mailto:er@PittiVintage.com)). Fendi, Ferragamo, Gucci, Lancetti, Valentino. Specializes in Italian and European designer and one-of-a-kind vintage pieces.

- **Cose Del 900 - Italian Glass Connection** (<http://www.ItalianGlassConnection.com/>), Borgo San Jacopo 45R (*Just two minutes from Ponte Vecchio.*), ☎ +39 055 283 491, [Shopkeeper@ItalianGlassConnection.com](mailto:Shopkeeper@ItalianGlassConnection.com) (<mailto:Shopkeeper@ItalianGlassConnection.com>). M-Sa 10:30-19:30. Since 1981 specializing in sized-to-order, affordable beaded jewelry featuring handmade Murano glass beads.
- **Ortigia SRL** (<http://ortigia-srl.com/>), Borgo San Jacopo 12R (*next to the Ponte Vecchio*), ☎ +39 055 282129. Luxurious soaps, scents, creams, candles and lotions inspired by the aesthetics, colours, and scents of Sicily.
- **Albrici** (<http://www.albrici.com>), Via dei Serragli 20R, ☎ +39 055211095, [info@albrici.com](mailto:info@albrici.com) (<mailto:info@albrici.com>). M 15:00-19:00, Tu-Sa 09:00-13:00, 15:00-19:00. Long-established antiques and home decor store located among the traditional artisans' workshops of Oltrarno. Within it, **Recollection** sells vintage clothing and accessories. (updated Nov 2018 | )

**Beware:** If the police catch you while buying a knock-off version of something with a brand from an (illegal) street vendor, you can be fined up to €10,000. You'll see plenty of people on the street selling imitation Gucci sunglasses, Rolex watches, and Prada purses dirt cheap. It's okay if the item doesn't have a real brand on it, but buying a knock-off is illegal.

## Eat

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Restaurants have separate prices for food that is taken away or is eaten standing up versus sit down; don't try to sit at a table after paying for food or coffee from the restaurant's take away booth. Also ask always beforehand for the price if you want to sit at a table. Otherwise you might be uncomfortably surprised. Cappuccino *al banco* i.e. standing up might cost €1-3, but at a table €4.

Florence's food can be as much of a treat to the palate as the art is a treat to the eye. There is good food for any price range, from fine restaurants to take out food from window stands. You will find the best price/quality ratio outside the historical centre, where locals go to eat. The worst ratio is probably in the neighbourhood of Mercato di San Lorenzo or immediately south of the Duomo where there are a lot of tourist restaurants. Conversely many of the best restaurants in the city are found in the Santa Croce district or across the river in the Oltrarno. In many trattorias requests for pizza may be met with a rebuff as not every trattoria will have a pizza oven. For local pizza look for smaller establishments in the Sant'Ambrogio district.

The best lunch places don't always turn out to be the best dinner places. Dinner in Florence really starts some time between 19:00 and 21:00. If a place looks like they're preparing to close before 20:00, it might not be the best option for an evening meal.

Typical Tuscan courses include *bistecca alla fiorentina* which is huge t-bone steak weighing from 500g to 1,500g. It has always price given per 100g, e.g. €3.5 *etto* (*an etto* is a "hectogram" or 100 gram-*ettogrammo*). *crostini toscani* are crostini with Tuscan liver pâté.



Santa Maria Novella, a wonderful church right near the train station

There is also a uniquely Florentine fast food with a 1,000-year history - *lampredotto*, a kind of tripe (cow stomach, or calf for preference, but a different part than the more familiar white "honeycomb" kind, dark brown in color; the name comes from its wrinkled appearance, which apparently reminds locals of a lamprey fish). The *trippaio* set their carts in the public squares in the centre, dishing out the delicacy straight from the cauldron in which it is being boiled with herbs and tomatoes, chopping it and slapping the portions between halves of a Tuscan roll; the top is dipped in the broth. A mild green parsley- or basil-based sauce or a hot red one goes with it.

There are many *gelato* (Italian ice cream) stands; some connoisseurs consider the better Florentine gelato the finest in the world. Often *gelato* is made in the bar where you buy it. Because of this there are many exotic flavors of ice cream like watermelon, spumante or garlic. It's hard to find a gelato place open very late, so after dinner might not be an option. Near the Duomo, though, there are a few places open after 22:00.

Tuscany is also the wellspring of *cantuccini*, also called *biscotti di Prato*. (In Italian, the singular of *biscotti* is *un biscotto*.) It's traditional to enjoy them after a meal by dipping them in *vin santo* ("holy wine"), a concentrated wine made from late-harvested grapes, but you can also buy bags of them in stores throughout the city and eat them however you like.

## Budget

There are numerous *caffè* and *pasticcerie* where you can find excellent sandwiches. Schiacciata sandwiches are one of the most famous Florentine specialities, and can be the most affordable meals available with a typical cost of €4-7. The most famous Sandwich shop L'Antico Vinaio near the Palazzo Vecchio has become extremely popular due to social media interest and one can queue for up to 45 minutes to buy one there. There are many equally good (if not better) and cheaper Schiacciata options available nearby.

Pizza sold by weight is an equally excellent solution for budget dining (vegetarian and vegan options are almost always available), as is any *caffè* displaying a "*Primi*" card in its window where you'll find pastas and other dishes at low reasonable prices. The delis (*rostiticcerie*) are very affordable (and the food is often quite good), and some also have dining tables if you don't want to take away.

You can buy the makings for a picnic or snack at the Mercato Centrale. This large market has everything you might need, often at lower prices than supermarkets. The stalls will also sometimes vacuum seal whatever you buy so you can take it home with you.

A general rule: the closer you are to the historic old town, the higher the price.

## Old Town

- **1 I fratellini** (<http://www.iduefratellini.it/>), Via dei Cimatori, 38R, ☎ +39 055 239 6096. Daily 10:00-20:00. Good street food: panini for €5 (Mar 2024) and wine for €2+ (Oct 2018) from a tiny hole in the wall. Patrons eat on the sidewalk while resting their glass of wine on small shelves nested along the street wall.  (updated May 2022)
- **2 Trattoria Mario**, Via Rosina 2/R (near Piazza Mercato Centrale), ☎ +39 055 218550. M-Sa 12:00-15:30. Lunch only, no booking, you'll be seated with other walk-ins. Good food, try to save room for a meat main course.  (updated May 2022)

- **3 Trattoria Le Mossacce**, Via Del Proconsolo, 55R (*Corner of Via del Corso*), ☎ +39 055 294361. M-F 12:00-14:30, 19:00-21:30. Reliable local eatery. Local produce and meats are prepared simply using traditional recipes and time-honoured tradition. Some pastas are made fresh daily, so ask for the daily special. If you want to experience Bistecca alla Fiorentina (Florentine-style steak), they do it amazingly without breaking your wallet. They sell and cut the steak from a larger rib slab in increments of 100g (with a minimum of 500g per serving). Primi: €3-6, Secondi €6-25 (Oct 2018).  (updated May 2022)
- **4 Self-Service Ristorante Leonardo**, Via de' Pecori 11 (*Corner of Via de' Vecchietti*), ☎ +39 055 284446. Daily 11:45-14:45, Su-F 18:45-21:45 f. Although there is a menu at the entrance, it is better to go straight in and pick what you like. You can also order Bistecca alla Fiorentina. Primi €3.5-4. Secondi €4.5-5.5. About €10 per person for a full-course dinner (Oct 2018).  (updated May 2022)
- **5 Tiona Asian Restaurant**, Via della Scala 24R (*near Piazza SMN*). Tu-Su 12:00-23:00. Not that you'd admit to wanting a break from Italian food, but this small friendly Sri Lankan restaurant makes a refreshing change. Ayubowan! mains €8 (Nov 2018).  (updated May 2022)
- **6 Pescheria Sugarello** (<http://www.sugarello.it>) (*ground floor of Mercato Centrale*), ☎ +39 347 487 0990, [pescheriasugarello@gmail.com](mailto:pescheriasugarello@gmail.com) (<mailto:pescheriasugarello@gmail.com>). Tu-Sa 08:30-14:30. Seafood. Excellent fried calamari and grilled fish fillet with vegetables. You can find also fresh oysters. Be there early, as it gets packed very easily. €10 (April 2022). 

## Around the bridge Ponte Vecchio

- **7 Amici di Ponte Vecchio** (<https://www.facebook.com/Amici-di-Ponte-Vecchio-201921333158731/?ref=hl>), Via dei bardi 39 (*Pontevecchio*), ☎ +39 055 205 3172, [stefano.masini@live.it](mailto:stefano.masini@live.it) (<mailto:stefano.masini@live.it>). 11.30 - 16.30. Pizza, schiacciata, homemade sandwiches, wine by the glass, takeaway.  (updated May 2022)

## North of the Old Town

- **8 Il Vegetariano** (<http://il-vegetariano.com/>), Via delle Ruote, 30 r, ☎ +39 055 475030. Tu-F 12:30-14:30, 19:30--22:30, Sa Su 19:30-22:30, M 12:30-14:30. Budget restaurant with more formal front room, the eclectic middle room, or the peaceful outdoor garden in the back. Daily changing menu with vegan and gluten-free items clearly marked, desserts, salads, soups, hearty brown bread, and a good selection of coffee, tea, wine, beer, and liqueur.  (updated May 2022)

## Mid-range

- **9 Trattoria Zà Zà**, Piazza del Mercato Centrale 26R. Daily 11:00-23:00. A very nicely decorated restaurant with many vegetarian choices. You can choose to sit inside or outside in the piazza. The menu is huge, lots of choices, and the prices are fair. Service is outstanding, they really cater to your needs. Make sure to try the chianti house wine. Note that they have two seating areas on the piazza: between are two other restaurants, Cantastorie and Garibaldi. €10-12 for a dish (Oct 2018).  (updated May 2022)
- **10 al Tranvai** (<http://www.altranvai.it/>), Piazza T.Tasso, 14 r (*400 m south of Ponte Vespuccio*), ☎ +39 055 225197. M 19:10-22:45 Tu-Sa 12:15-15:00, 19:10-22:45. Tourists seldom venture this far south. Traditional Tuscan food at decent prices. 1st courses at €7, mains at €10 to €16 and vino at €4 / 0.5L (Oct 2018). The rabbit, asparagus souffle and fiori fritti are excellent and the service very welcoming and warm.  (updated Sep 2022)
- **11 "Il Latini" Restaurant**, Via dei Palchetti, 6r, ☎ +39 055 210916. Sa Sun 12:30-14:30, 19:30-22:30, Tu-F 19:30-22:30. Fun place, communal seating and lively staff. The steaks are good.

- **Menu from €40 pp (Oct 2018).**  (updated Sep 2022 | )
- **12 Trattoria Palle D'Oro dal 1860**, Via S. Antonino, 43/45R (*200 m east of SMN train station*), ☎ +39 055 88383. M-Sa 12:00-14:30, 18:45-21.30. Long-standing family-run Tuscan restaurant. This is where the locals come, not least for the low prices. Fixed price 2-course lunch or €13, dinner €14 (Oct 2018)  (updated Sep 2022 | )

- **13 Trattoria Camillo**, Borgo San Jacopo 57/R (*50 m south of Ponte Santa Trinita*), ☎ +39 055 212427. Th-Tu 12:00-14:30, 19:30-22:30. Fairly good Tuscan cuisine, with a number of options for vegetarians and vegans. Make reservations or be there as they open.  (updated Sep 2022 | )



Façade of the Basilica of Santa Croce

## Splurge

- **14 Enoteca Pinchiorri** (<https://www.enotecapinchiorri.it/>), Via Ghibellina, 87 (*100 m north of Santa Croce*), ☎ +39 055 242777. Tu-Sa 19:30-22:00. Michelin-starred restaurant with exquisite meals at splurge prices. Starters from €80, mains €100 pp (March 2020).    (updated Sep 2022 | )
- **B-Roof** (<https://www.hotelbaglioni.it/en-bars-restaurants/b-roof>), Piazza Unità Italiana, 6 (*within Grand Hotel Baglioni*), ☎ +39 055 235 80, fax: +39 055 235 888 95. Daily 12:30-14:00, 19:30-22:00. Fine dining with wonderful night panorama of the city. (updated Sep 2022 | )
- **Il Cibreo**, Via Dei Macci, 118/R (*corner of V Andrea del Verrocchio*), ☎ +39 055 234 11 00, fax: +39 055 244 966. Daily 12:50-14:30, 18:50-23:15. Great choice of Tuscan food, with highly selected ingredients. €50-100 each (Oct 2018). (updated Sep 2022 | )
- **Trattoria da Tito** (<http://www.trattoriadatito.it/?lang=en>), Via S.Gallo 112/r. (*100 m south of Piazza della Liberta*), ☎ +39 055 472 475. M-Sa 12:30-15:30, 19:00-23:00. Although a bit of a walk from the main attractions, this restaurant speaks for itself with mandatory reservations. Great Italian food and atmosphere. Dinner often includes impromptu free drinks and lively table staff. €50-100 each (Oct 2018). (updated Sep 2022 | )

## Dessert

- **Gelateria dei Neri**, Via dei Neri 20r. Ice cream in many flavors, some experimental, all excellent.
- **Festival Del Gelato**, Via Del Corso 75. 50 flavors and has an upbeat atmosphere
- **Perché No** Via dei Tavolini 19. Freshly made daily from quality ingredients. The pear will be made with real pears and will taste of pears. Typically fruit flavors will be made with seasonally available fruits. Chocolate flavor will taste of cocoa rather than chocolate milk-powder. If you are a chocolate fan, this is the place to go. Specialties are "sorbetto" (ice cream made with water rather than milk, both with fruit and standard flavors, and "mousse" ice creams. Ask for the "special" taste of the day.
- **Vivoli**, ☎ +39 055 292 334. Via Isole delle Stinche, 7/R. Close to Piazza Santa Croce. Vivoli has a good gelato fruit selection, so definitely try the fragola, or strawberry. Make sure that you ask for the cream on top as well, because it adds another element to an already great dessert.

# Drink

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Tap water is safe but those who prefer bottled water will find it plentiful. Still (naturale) and sparkling (gassata) water is available for free from a fountain set into the wall of the Palazzo Vecchio.

Make sure to sample the excellent wines of the region.

Chianti is the local wine that can be ordered cheaply. Many eateries will offer carafes of various sizes of "house chianti", usually for under €4.



Stories from the Legend of St Benedict, frescoes by Spinello Aretino in San Miniato al Monte

## Bars

- **La Cite** (<http://www.lacitelibreria.info/>). A very nice and cozy cafe/bookstore. Good prices, nice atmosphere, good books. Borgo San Frediano 20r.
- **Enoteca Le volpi e l'Uva**, ☎ +39 055 2398132. The must of the tasting wines and savory titbits. Piazza dei Rossi, 1.
- **Uffizi Museum** The bar at this museum offers an amazing view overlooking *la Piazza della Signoria*, but it's only accessible through the museum, so you'll have to buy a ticket.
- **Irish Pub** (The Fiddlers Elbow) Piazza Santa Maria Novella. This pub has plenty of seating, in addition to live music and great staff.
- **Bebop**-great coverbands everynight and a €4 pint. Can be found north of the Duomo on the right on Via Dei Servi, before you reach Piazza d Annunziata.
- **Ambrosia** - Found in Piazza de Ambrosia. This is primarily a wine bar, and you can sample some great wines at a low cost provided you come with friends and share the price of whole bottles.
- **Rivoire** Piazza della Signoria. Founded in 1872 this terrace facing the *Palazzo Vecchio* is a Florentine institution.
- **Paszkowski or Gilli**. On the *Piazza Republica*, next to the hotel Savoy. The terraces on the other side of the *piazza* are equally pricey.
- **Été**, Via Faenza 63. A lovely little café with warm service and good local beer and wine. €3 draft beer.

## Clubs

- **Cavalli Club**, Piazza del Carmine, 8. Roberto Cavalli, Italian fashion designer, has one his beautiful clubs in Florence. The inside has a stage with a projector of Roberto Cavalli's fashion shows running non-stop. The upstairs can be a private lounge for parties or VIP section on certain nights. This club was the most popular on Wednesday nights, but it's open on the weekends as well. It's black and leopard interior fits the natural and animalistic designs Roberto Cavalli creates. Roberto and his two sons are frequently at the club so look out! All ages are appropriate and the dress attire here is rather upscale. This is not just a seasonal club so all year visitors are encouraged to go. Drinks run about €10 each.

- **1 Bamboo Lounge Club** (<http://www.bambooloungeclub.com/>), Via Giuseppe Verdi, 57/R, ☎ +39 3394298764, [info@bambooloungeclub.com](mailto:info@bambooloungeclub.com) (mailto:[info@bambooloungeclub.com](mailto:info@bambooloungeclub.com)). 23:00-04:00. Bamboo Lounge Club is a great place for young adults and students to party. The music is great from European to American techno and many other worldwide DJs. Bamboo Lounge Club offers VIP tables and has two midsized bars. It is very clean and safe to be in. It is located on Via Giuseppe Verdi not far from the Duomo. Dress is a little more than casual, but not too upscale. The loud music, dancing, and exciting atmosphere gives people a chance to let loose and have fun. The club features mostly house, techno and hip hop music. Women free entrance until 01:00; men €10. 
- **Tenax** (<http://www.tenax.org/>), Via Pratese, 46. If you love house and electronic music this is the best club to go to. It's a two-story club, located on the outskirts of Florence, features DJ's from all around Europe, America, and Australia. This club also holds many concerts during the winter and summer. Many people come from all over to enjoy this club's atmosphere. The dance floor is extremely large and is always very crowded. Be smart where you keep your bag and wallet because it's very easy to get pick pocketed in large clubs like this. This club usually has a cover of €20 and the drinks are rather expensive, but it is a great place to experience at least once. It is very different than most of the clubs in Florence because of the multi-story building. To venture here would be best by taxi or bus. Since it is located in the outskirts of Florence walking could be difficult and not advised. There are many people who can help in directions in the Santa Maria Novella Station.

## Sleep

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As elsewhere the price of hotels in Florence has been climbing quickly in the last few years. The golden rule here is if you want something cheap you'll have to stay outside of the historic center. The area around the train station is cheaper, but not as safe, especially for women travelers at night. If you are looking at big chain hotels you should be aware that they are usually quite a distance from the centre, the Novotel for instance is almost at the airport.

Certain hotels, particularly those oriented toward business travellers offer special reduced rates during the weekend (e.g. Starhotel Michelangelo) or during slow weeks like Baglioni. Sometimes you can also get a substantial discount by reserving online. In the train station there is a tourist information office which also offers hotel reservations; you can often get good deals through them at the very last minute, but it's not guaranteed.

## Budget

There are quite a number of one or two star *alberghi* within a short distance of the station. Young women can find accommodation with certain convents at very low prices, and usually in historic locations. On the other hand, you'll have to forget about any late-night Tuscan craziness.

## Camping

There are campsites round the edge of town: to SW is Ostello Tasso Ente, north is Elite Firenze Gestioie SRL, NE is Camping Albergue, east is Me & Mom in Tuscany, and 3 others further east in Rovezzano. Camping Michelangelo south of town has closed.

## Hostel

- **1 Hostel Florence Experience** (<http://www.hostelflorence.net/>), Via Maggio, 9 (*Close to Ponte Vecchio and Palazzo Pitti*), ☎ +39 055 293215, fax: +39 055 293215, [florenceexperiencehostel@gmail.com](mailto:florenceexperiencehostel@gmail.com) (<mailto:florenceexperiencehostel@gmail.com>). A hostel in a historic Florentine noble palace built in the 14th century and modified in the 17th century. Rooms are occasionally clean. from €18 (dorm) and €22 (private double room/per person).  (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hostel Archi Rossi** (<http://www.hostelarchirossi.com/>), Via Faenza, 94r (*Close to SMN train station*), ☎ +39 055 290804, fax: +39 055 2302601. Never mind the renaissance-kitsch walls. Rooms are clean and rates include breakfast, dinner (except Saturdays) and internet access. from €18 (dorm) and €26 (private room/per person). (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hostel 7 Santi** (<http://www.7santi.com/>), Viale Dei Mille, 11 (*Campo di Marte, 10 min from the center by bus*), ☎ +39 055 5048452, fax: +39 055 5057085, [info@7santi.com](mailto:info@7santi.com) (<mailto:info@7santi.com>). A converted 19th-century convent. Rooms are clean and quiet. Has dorm bunks and private rooms. Dorms from €20. (updated Oct 2018 | )

## Bed and breakfast

- **B&B Duomo View** (<http://www.duomoviewbb.it/>), Piazza San Giovanni, 6, ☎ +39 055 288290, fax: +39 055 288290. Large choice of double bedrooms. Services are in common and some of the guestrooms boast a fantastic view of the Duomo. Internet connection and breakfast also available. Doubles from €80. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **B&B Giglio Bianco** (<http://www.gigliobianco.it/>), Via Romana 28 (*close to Pitti Palace*), ☎ +39 055 225873, fax: +39 055 7349599. This B&B has just the one room, the Camera Verde. They feature gourmet meals and cooking classes directed by Chef Vary. from €100. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **B&B di Piazza del Duomo** (<http://www.duomorooms.com/>), Via dell'Oriuolo 49, ☎ +39 055 285018, fax: +39 055 285018, [dipazzaduomo@yahoo.it](mailto:dipazzaduomo@yahoo.it) (<mailto:dipazzaduomo@yahoo.it>). A small B&B, rooms with private bathroom and shower, A/C, LCD TV, free Wi-Fi. Doubles from €60. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **B&B Tourist House Battistero** (<http://www.touristhousebattistero.it/>), Via dei Cerretani, 1, ☎ +39 333 8379256, [info@touristhousebattistero.it](mailto:info@touristhousebattistero.it) (<mailto:info@touristhousebattistero.it>). A lovely B&B in the centre, with the Duomo just 30 m away. Doubles from €90. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Florence Stadium B&B** (<http://www.florencestadium.it/>), Via Campo d'Arrigo, 15/A (*across footbridge from Campo di Marte Station*), ☎ +39 055 212617, [info@florencestadium.it](mailto:info@florencestadium.it) (<mailto:info@florencestadium.it>). 3-star with clean, spacious rooms near the Stadium and Mandela Forum. B&B double from €75. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Giulia Residence** (<http://www.residenzagiulia.com/>), Via Porte Nuove 19 (*NW of rwy station*), ☎ +39 055 3216646, [info@residenzagiulia.com](mailto:info@residenzagiulia.com) (<mailto:info@residenzagiulia.com>). Decent 3-star, access through clanky iron gate in apartment block. Doubles from €60. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Opera Boutique B&B** (<https://www.operabeb.it/en/>), Via Lorenzo il Magnifico, 62, ☎ +39 388 0585005. Historic building of the late nineteenth century. Doubles from €75 breakfast included. (updated Jan 2021 | )

## Hotels

- **2 Arizona Hotel** (<http://www.arizonahotel.it/>), Via Luigi Carlo Farini 2, ☎ +39 055 245321, fax: +39 055 2346130, [info@arizonahotel.it](mailto:info@arizonahotel.it) (<mailto:info@arizonahotel.it>). Check-in: 12:00, check-out: 11:00. This 3-star hotel is in a renovated villa from the 18th century. Doubles from €100.  (updated Oct 2018 | )

- **Convitto della Calza** (<http://www.calza.it/>), Piazza Della Calza 6 (*at Porta Romana 1 km south of centre*), ☎ +39 055 222 287. 3 star in converted 16th-century cloister, with frescoed rooms and a modern conference centre. Doubles from €80. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Desirèe** (<http://www.desireehotel.com/>), Via Fiume, 20, ☎ +39 055 2382382, fax: +39 055 291439, [info@desireehotel.com](mailto:info@desireehotel.com) (<mailto:info@desireehotel.com>). Friendly 3-star with 18 rooms, next to railway station. Doubles from €90. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Byron** (<http://www.hotelbyronflorence.com/>), Via della Scala, 49, ☎ +39 055 280852, fax: +39 055 213273. Three-star hotel with parking. Doubles from €60. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Casci** (<http://www.hotelcasci.com/>), Via Cavour 13 (*500 m from SMN train station*), ☎ +39 055 211 686. This small 2-star is in a 15th-century palace and has some original fresco ceilings. Composer Gioacchino Rossini lived here in the 19th century. Doubles from €100. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **3 Hotel Dali** (<http://www.hoteldali.com/en/home-page.html>), Via dell'Oriuolo 17, ☎ +39 055 2340706. One star, consistently clean & cosy, good location, owners Marco and Samanta helpful and fluent in English. Doubles from €50. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Fiorita** (<http://www.hotelfiorita.com>), Via Fiume, 20, ☎ +39 055 283189, +39 055 283693, toll-free: 800 280722, fax: +39 055 2728153. Next to railway station, on 3rd floor of building that has two other hotels. Rooms have a/c, TV and a safety deposit box. Some rooms also have modem sockets. Doubles from €80. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Masaccio** (<http://www.hotelmasaccio.eu/>), Via Masaccio, 228 (*300 m east of Piazza della Libertà*), ☎ +39 055 578153, fax: +39 055 578153, [hotelmasaccio@yahoo.it](mailto:hotelmasaccio@yahoo.it) (<mailto:hotelmasaccio@yahoo.it>). Cozy one-star in a 20th-century villa, with restaurant. Doubles from €40. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Giglio** (<http://www.hotelgiglio.fi.it/>), Via Cavour, 85, ☎ +39 055 2381752, fax: +39 055 461163, [info@hotelgiglio.fi.it](mailto:info@hotelgiglio.fi.it) (<mailto:info@hotelgiglio.fi.it>). Simple 3-star on edge of centro storico. Doubles from €80. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Kursaal & Ausonia** (<http://www.kursonia.com/>), Via Nazionale, 24, ☎ +39 055 496 547, fax: +39 055 462 6615. A small 2-star, basic but clean. Doubles from €60. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Lorena** (<http://www.hotellorena.com/>), Via Faenza 1, ☎ +39 055 282785, fax: +39 055 288300. Two-star hotel in the historic centre, simple but comfy. Doubles from €50. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Montreal** (<http://www.hotelmontreal.com/>), Via della Scala, 43, ☎ +39 055 2382331, fax: +39 055 287491, [info@montreal.com](mailto:info@montreal.com) (<mailto:info@montreal.com>). Two star, central but basic and dated. Double room €100. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Palazzuolo** (<http://www.hotelpalazzuolo.com/>), Via Palazzuolo, 71 (*very close to the main train station.*), ☎ +39 055 214611, fax: +39 055 212101, [info@palazzuolo.com](mailto:info@palazzuolo.com) (<mailto:info@palazzuolo.com>). Basic 2-star, many stairs & no lift, but central. Doubles €60. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Romagna** (<http://www.hotelromagna.it>), Via Panzani, 4, ☎ +39 055 211005, fax: +39 055 2396105. Two-star hotel near SMN train station. 22 bedrooms en suite, internet connection and satellite TV. Cosy (ie small rooms, basic), no lift to upper floors. B&B double from €90. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Delle Tele** (<http://www.hoteldelletele.net/>), Via Panzani, 10, ☎ +39 055 238 2419, fax: +39 055 290 797. Central 3-star near SMN Duomo. Doubles from €80. (updated Oct 2018 | )

## Mid-range

- **Albergo Firenze** (<http://www.hotelfirenze-fi.it>), Piazza Donati, 4 (*Just off Via del Corso*), ☎ +39 055 268301, fax: +39 055 212370, [info@albergofirenze.net](mailto:info@albergofirenze.net) (<mailto:info@albergofirenze.net>). 2-star hotel, central but basic. Double room from €50. (updated Oct 2018 | )

- **Il Bargello B&B** (<http://www.firenze-bedandbreakfast.it/>), Via dei Pandolfini 33 (*In the historical centre*), ☎ +39 055 215330, [info@firenze-bedandbreakfast.it](mailto:info@firenze-bedandbreakfast.it) (<mailto:info@firenze-bedandbreakfast.it>). Clean friendly 3-star. Double rooms with private bath €120. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **FH Calzaiuoli Hotel** (<http://www.calzaiuoli.it/>), via Calzaiuoli 6, ☎ +39 055 212 456, fax: +39 055 268310, [info@calzaiuoli.it](mailto:info@calzaiuoli.it) (<mailto:info@calzaiuoli.it>). Central 4-star going on 3. B&B double from €150.
- **Hotel Caravaggio** (<http://www.hotelcaravaggio.it/>), Piazza Indipendenza (*800 m east of main train station*), ☎ +39 055 496 310, fax: +39 055 480852. Good 3-star, consistently clean, well-run & helpful. Doubles from €120. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Galileo Hotel** (<http://www.galileohotel.it/en/index.htm>), Via Nazionale, 22/a, ☎ +39 055 496645, fax: +39 055 496447. 3 star in an elegant 19th-century building, but a/c and wifi erratic. Single rooms from €80, doubles €120. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Basilea Florence** (<http://www.hotelbasileafirenze.it/>), Via Guelfa 41, ☎ +39 055 214587, fax: +39 055 268350. This 3-star hotel offers 38 bedrooms, single, double, twin, triple and 2 large suites, all with private bath, television and internet connection. B&B double from €85. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Boston** (<http://www.hotelbostonfirenze.it/>), Via Guelfa, 68, ☎ +39 055 496747, fax: +39 055 470934. 3-star hotel with 16 bedrooms, not all en-suite. Clean but small and basic. B&B doubles from €80. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Crocini** (<http://www.hotelcrocini.com/>), Corso Italia 28 (*In the centre*), ☎ +39 055 212905, fax: +39 055 210171. Central 2-star, not all rooms en suite. Doubles from €80. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel La Gioconda** (<http://www.hotellagioconda.it/>), Via Panzani 2 (*Near Santa Maria Novella*), ☎ +39 055 211023, fax: +39 055 213136. 3-star hotel. Doubles from €85. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Il Guelfo Bianco** (<http://www.ilguelfobianco.it/>), Via Cavour 29 (*In the heart of the city*), ☎ +39 055 288330, fax: +39 055 295203. 3-star in a 15th-century building. Doubles from €100. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Malaspina** (<http://www.malaspinahotel.it/>), Piazza Indipendenza, 24, ☎ +39 055 489869, fax: +39 055 474809. 3-star in charming a late 19th-century residence, enriched with modern comforts. Doubles from €90. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Marignolle** (<http://www.marignolle.com/english/>), Via di San Quirichino a Marignolle 16 (*8 km southwest from centre*), ☎ +39 055 2286910, fax: +39 055 2047396. 4-star in hills outside town, in bosky Tuscan scenery. Outdoor pool May to October. Doubles from €150. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Mario's** (<http://www.hotelmarios.com/>), Via Faenza 89 (*Near Santa Maria Novella*), ☎ +39 055 216801, fax: +39 055 212039. Central 3-star. B&B double €90. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Mia Cara** (<http://www.hotelmiacaraspera.it/>), Via Faenza, 90 (red), ☎ +39 055 216053, fax: +39 055 2302727. Small 3-star a short walk from Santa Maria Novella. Friendly English-speaking staff. B&B double from €60. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **4 Hotel Morandi alla Crocetta** (<http://www.hotelmorandi.it/en-index.php>), Via Laura, 50 (*500 m northeast of Duomo*), ☎ +39 055-2344748, [welcome@hotelmorandi.it](mailto:welcome@hotelmorandi.it) (<mailto:welcome@hotelmorandi.it>). Comfy 3-star in a Dominican 16th-century convent. On-site garage parking is available. Doubles from €100. (updated Nov 2018 | )
- **Privilege Hotel** (<http://hotelprivilege.hotelinfirenze.com/>), Lungarno della Zecca Vecchia, 26, ☎ +39 055-2478220, [info@hotelprivilege.it](mailto:info@hotelprivilege.it) (<mailto:info@hotelprivilege.it>). 3-star hotel on the bank of the Arno, with single, double, triple and "Family" rooms. Breakfast buffet, hotel bar and garage available. B&B doubles from €80. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Relais Villa Antea** (<http://www.villaantea.com/>), Via Puccinotti 46 (*200 m northwest of Piazza della Liberta*), ☎ +39 055 484106, fax: +39 055 484539, [info@villaantea.com](mailto:info@villaantea.com) (<mailto:info@villaantea.com>). Check-in: 14:00, check-out: 12:00. Historical residence in an old palazzo with friendly staff. Rooms are spacious. Doubles from €120. (updated Oct 2018 | )

- **5 Hotel Rivoli** (<http://www.hotelrivoli.it/>), Via della Scala 33 (*near Basilica SMN*), ☎ +39 055 27861, fax: +39 055 294041, [info@hotelrivoli.it](mailto:info@hotelrivoli.it) (mailto:[info@hotelrivoli.it](mailto:info@hotelrivoli.it)). Check-in: 14:00, check-out: 12:00. 4-star in a former 14th-century Franciscan convent. Doubles from €100.  (updated Oct 2018)
- **Hotel De Rose Palace** (<http://www.florencehotelderose.com/>), Via Solferino, 5 (*near SMN railway station*), ☎ +39 055 068 1097. 4-star hotel in a traditional Florentine mansion. Doubles from €100. (updated Oct 2018)
- **Hotel Savonarola** (<http://www.savonarolahotel.it/>), Viale Giacomo Matteotti, 27 (*north edge of Centro Storico, on Piazza della Liberta*), ☎ +39 055 587824, fax: +39 055 587824. 3-star with one single and 15 twin, double, triple and quadruple rooms. All with private bath, Wi-Fi connection, telephone and breakfast included. Doubles from €50. (updated Oct 2018)
- **Novotel Firenze Nord Aeroporto**, Via Tevere 23, Osmannoro (*2 km northwest of airport*), ☎ +39 055 53821, [H1798-RE@accor.com](mailto:H1798-RE@accor.com) (mailto:[H1798-RE@accor.com](mailto:H1798-RE@accor.com)). 4-star handy for airport. Well out of city but they have free shuttle to the city center. Doubles from €80. (updated Oct 2018)
- **Villa il Mosaico** (<http://www.villailmosaico.it/>), Via di Monticelli, 9-15 (*south bank, 1 km west of centre; tram to Sansovino*), ☎ +39 055 7135481, fax: +39 055 71 30 898. Elegant villa, ten self-catering apartments with kitchen, living room, bathroom, internet connection and TV. Private parking and 100 square metre terrace with solarium. Doubles from €80. (updated Oct 2018)
- **Residence Select Executive** (<http://select-executive.florence-hotels-it.com/en/#main>), Via G. Galliano 13/a (*500 m northwest of SMN railway station*), ☎ +39 055 330342, fax: +39 055 351506. 4-star hotel; 12 rooms, some with kitchenette. Doubles from €80. (updated Oct 2018)
- **Hotel Unicorno** (<http://www.hotelunicorno.it>), via dei Fossi, 27 (*Near Santa Maria Novella*), ☎ +39 055 287313, fax: +39 055 268332. Small 3-star hotel in a 17th-century building. Double rooms from €80. (updated Oct 2018)

## Splurge

- **6 Grand Hotel Adriatico** (<http://www.hoteladriatico.it>), Via Maso Finiguerra 9 (*200 m west of SMN railway station*), ☎ +39 055 27931, fax: +39 055 289661, [info@hoteladriatico.it](mailto:info@hoteladriatico.it) (mailto:[info@hoteladriatico.it](mailto:info@hoteladriatico.it)). Check-in: 14:00, check-out: 12:00. Modern 4-star hotel in the historical centre, very close to the train station. Rooms and suites are suitable for couples, families, single travellers and group of friends. The hotel features a Tuscan restaurant, a private car park, complimentary breakfast served on a terrace on the ground floor and free minibar for direct bookings.  (updated Dec 2018)
- **Grand Hotel Cavour** (<http://www.albergocavour.it>), Via del Proconsolo, 3, ☎ +39 055 266271, fax: +39 055 218955. Friendly, efficient hotel in a 13th-century palazzo. Former residence of the Strozzi-Ridolfi dynasty. €150-300. (updated Oct 2018)
- **J and J Hotel** (<http://www.jandjhotel.net>), Via di Mezzo, 20, ☎ +39 055 26312, fax: +39 055 240282. 4-star hotel in former convent. Has double, twin, junior suite, suite, and double rooms for single use, all en-suite services. B&B single €195, double €225. (updated Oct 2018)
- **Kraft Hotel** (<http://www.krafthotel.it>), Via Solferino, 2, ☎ +39 055 284273, fax: +39 055 2398267, [info@krafthotel.it](mailto:info@krafthotel.it) (mailto:[info@krafthotel.it](mailto:info@krafthotel.it)). 4-star hotel near the centre with swimming-pool, restaurant and 5th-floor terrace with bar. B&B doubles from €200. (updated Oct 2018)
- **Hotel Laurus al Duomo** (<http://www.florencehotellaurusalduomo.com>), Via dei Cerretani 54/r., ☎ +39 055 2381752, fax: +39 055 268308, [reservations@florencehotellaurusalduomo.com](mailto:reservations@florencehotellaurusalduomo.com) (mailto:[reservations@florencehotellaurusalduomo.com](mailto:reservations@florencehotellaurusalduomo.com)). A historic 4-star hotel, close to the Cathedral and Firenze SMN railway station. Suite rooms with view from €150. (updated Oct 2018)
- **Milu Hotel** (<http://www.hotelmilu.com>) (*formerly La Residenza*), Via Tornabuoni, 8, ☎ +39 055 217103. Central 4-star with roof garden with a charming view. Double from €200. (updated Oct 2018)

- **Hotel Mirage** (<http://www.hotelmirage.it/>), Via Francesco Baracca, 231 (interno 18) (*500 m from Florence airport, 5 km northwest of centre*), ☎ +39 055 352011, fax: +39 055 374096. Comfortable straightforward 4-star hotel with restaurant. Regard this as an airport hotel and you won't be disappointed. Single from €110, doubles from €140, triples from €160, apartments from €300 per week. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Monna Lisa Florence** (<http://www.monnalisa.it/>), Borgo Pinti, 27, ☎ +39 055 2479751, [info@monnalisa.it](mailto:info@monnalisa.it) (mailto:[info@monnalisa.it](mailto:info@monnalisa.it)). Four-star hotel, and yes it's Monna, that's not a typo. In a restored 14th-century Florentine noble palace. Gym facilities, sun terrace and meeting rooms. €200-550. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Ponte Vecchio Suites & Spa** (<https://www.pontevecchiosuites.com/>), Via De' Belfredelli, n° 9, ☎ +39 055 217379, [info@pontevecchiosuites.com](mailto:info@pontevecchiosuites.com) (mailto:[info@pontevecchiosuites.com](mailto:info@pontevecchiosuites.com)). 4-star hotel with modern rooms and suites. The hotel offers a private spa for two with a hot tub. Continental breakfast and free Wi-Fi. (updated May 2019 | )
- **NH Porta Rossa** (<http://www.nh-hotels.com/nh/en/hotels/italy/florence/nh-porta-rossa.html>), Via Porta Rossa, 19, ☎ +39 055 2710911. Gorgeous hotel built in the 12th century. From €150. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **L'Orologia** (<https://www.hotelorologioflorence.com/ita/hotel-firenze/hotel-firenze>) (*L'O*), Piazza di Santa Maria Novella, ☎ +39 055 27 73 80. Swanky boutique 4-star hotel with rooms themed on watches. Nice view of Piazza & Basilica from breakfast room. Doubles from €150. (updated Nov 2018 | )
- **7 Orto de' Medici** (<http://www.ortodeimedici.it/>), Via San Gallo 30 (*Centro storico*), ☎ +39 055-483427, fax: +39 055-461276, [hotel@ortodeimedici.it](mailto:hotel@ortodeimedici.it) (mailto:[hotel@ortodeimedici.it](mailto:hotel@ortodeimedici.it)). Check-in: 14:00, check-out: 11:00. 4-star hotel in a 19th-century building with gardens. Doubles from €150. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Palazzo Magnani Feroni** (<http://www.palazzomagnaniferoni.com>), Borgo San Frediano, 5 (*just south of Ponte Carraia*), ☎ +39 055 23 99 544, fax: +39 055 26 08 908. It's in a 16th-century building that belonged to Marquis Feroni. It has twelve comfortable suites with classic furniture and original frescoes. Doubles from €300. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Residence La Repubblica Florence** (<http://www.residencelarepubblica.com/>), Piazza della Repubblica, 4, ☎ +39 055 214496, fax: +39 055 214496. 21 self-catering apartments for a maximum of six people, all with kitchenette, private bath, internet connection, satellite TV and cooking facilities. Short stays (eg single night) welcome. One-person apartment: €160; three/two bedroom apartment: €170. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel Pitti Palace al Ponte Vecchio** (<http://www.florencehotelpittipalacealpontevacchio.com/>), Via Borgo San Jacopo, 3 (*south end of Ponte Vecchio*), ☎ +39 055 2398711, fax: +39 055 2398867, [reservations@florencehotelpittipalacealpontevacchio.com](mailto:reservations@florencehotelpittipalacealpontevacchio.com) (mailto:[reservations@florencehotelpittipalacealpontevacchio.com](mailto:reservations@florencehotelpittipalacealpontevacchio.com)). 4-star overlooking the bridge; you're paying for the location. Doubles from €150. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Villa Poggio ai Merli**, Via di Giogoli 5, Scandicci (*6 km southwest of centre*), ☎ +39 055 250257, fax: +39 055 250718. A historic residence on edge of city, in large park. Doubles from €200. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Villa la Vedetta**, Viale Michelangiolo 78 (*on hill just south of Ponte Niccolo*), ☎ +39 055 681631, fax: +39 055 6582544. 5-star luxury hotel with panorama of Florence's skyline. Doubles from €200. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **Hotel degli Orafi** (<http://www.hoteldegliorafi.it/english>), Lungarno Archibusieri, 4, [info@hoteldegliorafi.it](mailto:info@hoteldegliorafi.it) (mailto:[info@hoteldegliorafi.it](mailto:info@hoteldegliorafi.it)). Boutique 4-star in Florence city centre, overlooking river near Ponte Vecchio. Doubles from €150. (updated Oct 2018 | )
- **8 Palazzo Vecchietti** (<https://www.palazzovecchietti.com>), Via degli Strozzi, 4, ☎ +39 055 2302802, [info@palazzovecchietti.com](mailto:info@palazzovecchietti.com) (mailto:[info@palazzovecchietti.com](mailto:info@palazzovecchietti.com)). Historic residence a few steps from Piazza della Repubblica, in the centre of Florence. Few suites, elegant and

modern. The hotel also offers two apartments in the central area. Gluten-free products and breakfast included in the room rate.    (updated Nov 2018 |)

- **9 Hilton Florence Metropole** (<https://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/flrhfhi-hilton-florence-metropole/>), Via del Cavallaccio, 36,  +39-055-78711, fax: +39-055-78718020, [florencemetropole\\_info@hilton.com](mailto:florencemetropole_info@hilton.com) ([mailto:florencemetropole\\_info@hilton.com](mailto:florencemetropole_info@hilton.com)). Check-in: 14:00, check-out: 12:00. A 4-star hotel with views of the city. A spa, fitness centre, room service and business centre are available on site. from €80 for a King Guest Room to €150 for a suite.  (updated Oct 2020 |)
- **Ad Astra Florence** (<https://www.adastraflorence.it/>), Via del Campuccio 53 (*in the Oltrarno district*),  +39 055 0750 602, [info@adastraflorence.com](mailto:info@adastraflorence.com) (<mailto:info@adastraflorence.com>). Check-in: 14:00, check-out: 10:00. A historic residence with 14 rooms enriched by frescoed ceilings and individually furnished with elegant vintage, classic and contemporary touches. The most prestigious rooms and the living room are surrounded by a terrace overlooking the Torrigiani Garden. (updated Jul 2022 |)
- **10 Palazzo Firenze by Baglioni Hotels & Resorts** (<https://florence.baglionihotels.com/>), Via Ghibellina, 87,  +39 55 234 - 2230, toll-free: +39 055 0949960. Check-in: 15:00, check-out: 12:00. 5-star hotel in Florence's historic Santa Croce district, set in an elegant 18th-century palazzo. Offers classic Florentine-style rooms with high ceilings, marble bathrooms, and parquet floors. Refined and quiet, with gourmet dining and easy access to major landmarks (meals not included).   (updated Jul 2025 |)

## Connect

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Florence has 5G from all Italian carriers, but as of Sept 2021 coverage remains patchy.

## Stay safe

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Florence is generally safe and healthy, but beware the inevitable purse-snatchers and pickpockets. They thrive in crowds, particularly around SMN railway station and on the buses, sometimes working with a decoy such as an insistent beggar. If you have a bag with a classy, noiseless zipper, it will be opened.

Also beware at night around tourist spots such as Ponte Vecchio where pickpocketers may approach you pretending to be drunk and friendly, and then snatch your belongings when your guard is down.

## Go next

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- Florence is a great starting point and base for a tour of Tuscany. Attractive day trips include [Pisa](#), [Lucca](#), [San Gimignano](#), [Arezzo](#), [Pistoia](#), [Fiesole](#), [Lucignano](#), [Siena](#), and of course the wine zone of [Chianti](#). [Greve in Chianti](#) is the market town of the Chianti zone and it is in the hills surrounding Greve that you can rent a B&B room or a small apartment on a working vineyard for less than a hotel in Florence. The SITA Pullman buses take you to Greve and [Panzano](#) in about an hour. From then on you see few cars and many cypress and olive trees.

The SITA bus station is just west of the train station in Florence. This is where to go to catch a bus to Siena, San Gimignano, and so on. If you're at the roundabout, facing the train station, go

90 degrees left and stay on the left until just past the fork. You will see the entrance to the SITA garage on your right.

- **1 Fiesole.** A town in the hills above Florence, only a short bus ride away from the centre. It offers a beautiful view of the sunset, and a small museum located on ancient Roman and Etruscan ruins of a temple, an amphitheatre and a pretty, small duomo.  
- **2 World War II Florence American Cemetery and Memorial** (<http://www.abmc.gov/cemeteries-memorials/europe/florence-american-cemetery>) (12 km (7.5 miles) south of Florence on the west side of Via Cassia. The Rome-Milan highway passes near the cemetery. 20 min bus ride from the Sita Station, just ask agent (get a return ticket)). Open daily except for 25 December and 1 January; 09:00-17:00. The cemetery is the final resting place

for 4,402 American military dead lost during the capture of Rome and the battle for the Apennines. A monument is inscribed with the names of 1,409 Americans whose remains were never found or identified. The atrium of the chapel contains marble maps of World War II Italy campaign. Free to enter. 

- **Biking options** outside of the city include the Chianti area, where you can fully enjoy the hills and the elegance of the landscape surrounding you, which has been taken care of endlessly through centuries. Strong scents can be enjoyed in Spring. The warm temperatures and usually stable weather in the good seasons can make the ride even more enjoyable. If you feel more energetic, ascents to Vallombrosa from Pontassieve through Tosi can be very enjoyable. You start from the Arno river plain and you end up in a thick, shady, fresh forest. In all cases, avoid the hottest hours in Summer and be aware of the traffic, which can be heavy and not cyclist-savvy, until you get in secondary or less populated roads.
- **UNESCO World Heritage Listed** rural building complexes (Medici Villas and Gardens) are scattered around Florence:

- **3 Gardens of Pratolino** (*Parco Mediceo di Pratolino*). A park containing 14-m-high colossus sculpture  

