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Italy Overview

Full Name:	Italian Republic	capital:	Rome
Area (square kilometers):	301,338 (equivalent to Guangxi)	Population ('000):	60,300
Location	<p>The boot-shaped Apennine Peninsula, which extends from the European continent into the Mediterranean Sea, and two major islands, Sardinia and Sicily, make up the Italian waters: the Adriatic Sea in the northeast, the Ionian Sea in the southeast, the Tyrrhenian Sea in the southwest, and the Ligurian Sea in the northwest.</p> <p>The Apennines form the backbone of the peninsula and extend northwestward for about 1,000 kilometers to meet the Alps. The arc-shaped Alps embrace the north of Italy. There is a large alluvial plain in the north: the Po-Venetian Plain. Famous rivers include: the Po River, the Tiber River, the Adige River and the Arno River. The highest point in Italy is Mont Blanc at an altitude of 4,810 meters, and Mount Etna (3,323 meters) is the highest volcano in Europe. The largest lake is Lake Garda (367.94 square kilometers).</p> <p>Italy has a varied climate, with the northern part of the country having a humid subtropical continental climate. The coastal areas of Liguria and much of the Italian peninsula south of Florence have a Mediterranean climate*. The climate of the coastal areas of the peninsula varies greatly with altitude and topography.</p>		
Origin of the country name	<p>The name Italy is derived from the Greek Oscan word <i>Víteliú</i>, which means the land of young cattle. "Italy" first appeared in the works of the Greek writer Herodotus. In the past, it was only used to refer to the area of southern Italy. The Greeks gradually used "Italy" to refer to a wider area. During the reign of Augustus, the term Italy included the entire Apennine Peninsula.</p>		
National flag, national anthem, national flower	<p>The national flag is rectangular, with a length-to-width ratio of 3:2. The flag is composed of three parallel and equal vertical rectangles connected together, with green, white and red colors from left to right. The original color of the national flag was the same as the French flag, and the blue was changed to green in 1796. According to records, Napoleon's Italian Legion used the green, white and red tricolor flag designed by Napoleon himself during the war in 1796. The Italian Republic was established in 1946, and the green, white and red tricolor flag was officially stipulated as the national flag of the Republic. The national emblem is circular. The central pattern is a five-pointed star with a red edge, symbolizing the Italian Republic; behind the five-pointed star is a large gear, symbolizing workers; the gear is surrounded by olive branches and oak leaves, symbolizing peace and prosperity. The red ribbon at the bottom reads "Italian Republic" (Repubblica Italiana) in Italian. National Anthem: "Song of the Italians"</p> <div>   </div>		
history	<p>It can be traced back to the Paleolithic Age about 200,000 years ago. In the 8th and 7th centuries BC, the Greeks established colonial city-states. The ancient Roman Empire rose in the 8th century BC. After the 2nd century, it gradually weakened and split into the Western Roman Empire in the West and the Byzantine Empire in the East in 395. The Italian peninsula was divided for the next 14 centuries.</p>		

	<p>The late Middle Ages consisted of many city-states and different independent countries. Due to frequent wars, it was not until the 19th century that it could become a unified country. In order to fill these political power vacuums, many prominent families emerged to dominate politics. The most famous examples include: the Medici family in Florence, the Visconti family in Milan, and the House of Scaliger in Venice. Italy during this period was also famous for its open business activities. Some cities that actually practiced oligarchic politics completely dominated the conduct of business activities, although they were open to loose academic freedom and artistic development. The four famous maritime republics in Italy are the Republic of Amalfi, the Republic of Pisa, the Republic of Genoa and the Republic of Venice. These maritime republics were closely related to the Crusades to obtain political benefits and trade opportunities. In the 15th century, it was one of the most progressive regions in Europe, and the Renaissance movement also originated here. Among them, Florence, located in central Italy, is considered the center of this cultural movement.</p> <p>16th century, the Spanish Habsburg dynasty ruled Italy. In the 18th century, Austria gained control of the Kingdom of Milan and the Kingdom of Naples. After three wars of independence, the Kingdom of Sardinia in northern Italy incorporated the Papal States into the Italian territory. In 1861, Italy was unified and the capital was moved to Rome. (Giuseppe Garibaldi - an important general in the unification of Italy)</p> <p>Mussolini seized power in 1922. The Allies invaded Sicily in July 1943, leading to the destruction of the fascist regime and the arrest of Mussolini. In 1946, Italy officially became a republic and the kingdom ended.</p> <p>2011, Italian debt crisis</p>
Political system	<p>The Italian Parliament is composed of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. The Italian President has symbolic power. The Prime Minister is the head of government, elected by the two chambers of the Italian Parliament and appointed by the Italian President.</p> <p>Italy was ruled by the Italian Christian Democratic Party for a long time after the war, and the government changed frequently. Between 1960 and 1980, Italy experienced a serious economic crisis and social unrest. The people were tired of political disputes and corruption, and the country was burdened with huge debts. The Christian Democratic Party encountered serious political disputes in 1993 and stepped down and dissolved in 1994. Today, there are two major political camps: the left-wing coalition led by the former Italian Communist Party and the Left Democratic Party, and the right-wing coalition led by media tycoon Silvio Berlusconi.</p>
economy	<p>Milan is the world's seventh largest economy, one of the four largest economies in Europe, and a member of the G8 and the European Union. It consists of large, well-developed private industries in the north and agriculture in the south. Major industries include commerce, agriculture, automobile and electrical industries, tourism, and fashion design. Milan is an economic and industrial center and the fashion capital of the world. Fortune 500 companies include ENI, Assicurazioni, Fiat, Finmeccanica, Olivetti, E.ON, and Edison.</p>
Nationality, language, religion	<p>Italian. Of the Romance languages, Italian vocabulary is considered to be closest to Latin.</p> <p>Catholicism is the largest religion in Italy</p>
Culture,	<p>Italy has a long tradition in art, science and technology, and has a total of 59 UNESCO World Heritage</p>

famous people	Sites (53 cultural , 6 natural), making it the country with the most World Heritage Sites in the world (China has 56).
Main Specialties	Italian cuisine, pizza, pasta and risotto.

*Mediterranean climate is distributed in the west coast of the continent in the mid-latitude region (approximately 30 to 40 degrees north and south latitude), including the Mediterranean coastal areas, the Black Sea coastal areas, California in the United States, Perth in southwestern Australia, southern Adelaide, southwestern South Africa, and central Chile.

The Mediterranean climate is distributed in a very rare area around the world and is characterized by dry summers and rainy winters, which often results in the crop growing season being unable to coordinate with the rainy season. Therefore, crops grown in Mediterranean agricultural areas are often drought-resistant fruits and vegetables, and the irrigation system is also very developed, which is one of its major features.

Mediterranean pine: It is a tree of the genus Pinus, native to all low-altitude areas around the Mediterranean Sea, and common in Italy and Spain. It can only grow in Mediterranean climate areas.

Best of Italy

The oldest university in the world is the University of Bologna in Italy, which was founded in 1088.

The earliest bank in the world was in Italy. In 1397, the Medici family established a bank in Florence; in 1407, the Banca San Giorgio was established in Genoa; in 1472, the Banca Monte dei The bank was founded in 1912 and is still in operation today and is one of the four largest banks in Italy.

The world's first highway also appeared in Italy, from Milan to Varese (Varese is located on the border between Italy and Switzerland). In 1908, the first closed road dedicated to cars appeared in Long Island, New York, USA. In 1921, a fast road dedicated to racing cars was built in Berlin, Germany. The modern civil two-way highway appeared in Italy in 1924.

The world's first botanical garden (used for medical and botanical research) began in Pisa.

The world's earliest epidemiological studies began in Verona.

The world's earliest patent law, border quarantine, and double-entry accounting system all appeared in Venice.

Glasses are also a great invention of Italy, and they still affect the daily life of people all over the world. As for glasses, it is recorded that the ancestors of the four ancient civilizations all had tools to assist vision. However, glasses with vision correction function first appeared in Italy, made by a Florentine craftsman named Alessandro di Spina da Firenze. By 1301, Venice already had an optical guild. In 1352, the image of the archbishop wearing glasses appeared on the mural. Today, Italian glasses are world-famous and popular. There are brands such as Gucci, Prada, Fendi, Versace, Nannini , Bersol , etc. Of course, if you wear a Gucci belt, you must wear a pair of Gucci glasses; if you carry a Prada bag, you must wear a pair of Prada sunglasses; and Nannini often customizes sports glasses for sports car companies, and Nannini reading glasses are also quite famous.

In addition, Italy has nearly 100 inventions, including thermometers, sphygmomanometers, thermometers, anemometers, parachutes, slide projectors, batteries, centrifugal pumps, typewriters, carbon paper, etc. Italians also value eating, drinking and enjoying life. Ice cream, hazelnut spread, pizza and tiramisu are all Italian inventions; opera, ballet , piano and violin are

also invented by Italians.

Italy is the country with the most famous brands in the world, followed by the United States, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. In addition to world-famous brands such as BVLGARI, Zegna, and Ferragamo, Italy also has some lesser-known small brands, small factories, and small workshops that produce limited quantities of fine products and serve niche groups.

Italian Coffee

The first thing to do when drinking coffee in Italy is to forget all the concepts and terms about coffee that chain coffee shops like Starbucks have given you, because in Italy the same word may mean something completely different, and there are basically no different kinds of coffee in Italy. There are all kinds of private coffee shops in the streets and alleys of Italy.

The world's first modern coffee house was founded in Italy in 1640. Caffè Florian, which still stands in Piazza San Marco in Venice, is the oldest coffee house in the entire European continent. Italian consumers are known for their stubbornness and pride. Apart from some North African and Arab countries that drank coffee earlier, Italians were the first in the entire Western world to come into contact with coffee beans and promote this beverage to the world. As one of the countries with the strongest coffee drinking tradition in the world, it is very difficult to accept the American coffee taste. In a country where more than 80 million cups of espresso are consumed every day, respecting habits is far more important than being unconventional.

In 1983, Howard Schultz, an American guy, came to Milan, the fashion capital of Italy, for the first time. It was an ordinary business trip. He originally came to attend an industry exhibition. After the exhibition was successfully opened, he wandered around the city and sat down in a small bar on the street. Bars in Italy are different from those in the United States. Bars in Italy mainly sell coffee. Many years later, Howard Schultz recalled this wonderful history in his memoirs: "In each shop I visited I began to see the same people and interactions, and it dawned on me that what these coffee bars had created, aside from the romance and theater of coffee, was a morning ritual and a sense of community. In each coffee shop I visited, I saw the same people and the same interpersonal interactions. I realized that these coffee bars not only provided a romantic coffee stage, but also created a morning ritual and a sense of social belonging." This is the origin of the Starbucks concept store - as steaming and full of fireworks as Italian coffee shops.

Howard Schultz, who later became the CEO of Starbucks, became the coffee king with more than 30,000 stores in 80 countries and regions around the world under his leadership. After becoming popular all over the world, on September 7, 2018, Starbucks finally opened its first store in Italy in the center of Milan, Italy, its spiritual hometown, and the first store was the top-notch Starbucks Reserve Roastery. From site selection to decoration, from products to publicity, this Milan flagship store is really impeccable. The flagship store also captures the consumer psychology of young Italians very well, including the social needs of the Instagram and Tiktok generations.

However, what does it mean to open such a luxurious coffee shop in Milan? It is like a challenge! ! ! Or a roar like "I will beat 10 people"! It is as provocative as opening a Pizza Hut in Naples, the birthplace of Italian pizza! For Starbucks, which only entered this market in 2018, being able to gain a foothold here is already an achievement worthy of praise.

In Italy, the correct way to open coffee:

Authentic Italian coffee is made without milk. Only shops that sell breakfast can sell cappuccino. Italians only drink cappuccino before 11 a.m. If you say "caffè" directly, espresso will be served. But if you tell the Italian waiter that you want a latte, they will mistakenly think you need a glass of milk, because the pronunciation of milk in Italy is "latte". Anyone who orders cappuccino after 11 a.m. is considered a foreigner who doesn't know the rules by Italians!

Espresso is the essence of Italian coffee, and its characteristic is that it uses steam pressure to extract coffee liquid instantly. All milk coffee or fancy coffee are made based on Espresso. Therefore, Espresso is the key to testing the quality of a cup of coffee. In the early 20th century, an "impatient engineer" near Naples, Italy, was impatient with the long time it took to brew drip coffee, so he came up with a way to shorten the time by brewing coffee at high temperature and high pressure. He invented the world's unique Italian coffee fast conditioning, which not only saves time on brewing coffee, but also makes the brewed coffee fragrant and rich. The meaning of Espresso in Italian is very simple, which is "under pressure", which is the same as the English "Under pressure". Traditional Italian espresso, a single shot is made from 7g of coffee powder, with hot water at a temperature of about 90 degrees, and 9 to 10 atmospheres of pressure for about 25 seconds to extract 1oz (about 28.35ml) of espresso; a double shot is made from 14g of coffee powder, and 2oz of espresso is extracted in about 25 seconds. Espresso usually only takes up 1/3 of a small coffee cup, and can be drunk in one gulp, just like drinking a shot, it is a very concentrated and rich coffee. Many Italians will order a cup of espresso at the bar, drink it up in one go, and then go to work with the caffeine they just replenished in their bodies.

In any occasion in Italy, anyone who attempts to order a cup of Caffè americano (American coffee) will attract the sympathetic eyes of the Italian people - this person is so pitiful, coffee is really wasted. Americano is made by mixing two portions of espresso with hot water. It tastes lighter and does not have the strong taste of espresso. There is a saying that the name of Americano comes from the Second World War. When the US military arrived in Italy, they wanted to drink coffee and ordered espresso, but they were not used to the strong taste of espresso and it was too small, so the US military asked to add hot water to the espresso, which resulted in a larger cup and a less strong taste, hence the name of Americano.

Italians tend to stand in front of the coffee bar, drink coffee and chat, and then quickly pay the bill and leave. It may also be because standing and sitting to drink coffee are two different prices, so standing is more economical.

Six times a day is the standard: after getting up in the morning, have a cup of coffee in a daze; have another cup with croissants during breakfast, with the icing mixed with the bitterness of espresso or the mellow aroma of cappuccino; have a cup to refresh yourself after working for two or three hours. Immediately after lunch, have a cup of espresso to clear the taste of food in your mouth. If there is no aperitif in the afternoon, then have another cup of coffee, and chat with old friends when you meet them. After dinner, have another cup of espresso to make your day perfect.

Drink one cup and leave one. Italians have a loving habit. If you want to do something good but don't know where to start, you can just say to the waiter, "caffè sospeso" (leave one cup of coffee and pay for two).

Attached are some common coffees:

Ristretto : Strong coffee. From a semantic point of view, ristretto means restriction, so ristretto is

actually espresso with limited flow rate during the production process. For example, if espresso uses 18g of coffee and extracts 36g of espresso in about 25 seconds, then ristretto uses 18g of coffee powder and extracts 18g of espresso in about 25 seconds, so ristretto will be very strong and can be regarded as a concentrated version of espresso.

Caffè Lungo : ' Lungo ' means "long" in Italian. Simply put, it is coffee extracted using twice the normal amount of water using the Espresso method.

Cappuccino: The name can be traced back to the Capuchin Church in the 16th century. The monks of the Capuchin Church wore brown robes and pointed hats, and this combination was called Cappuccio . Later, when Italians were drinking coffee, they discovered that if they poured steamed milk on top of the strong coffee, the color of the coffee would be like the turbans on the dark brown coats of the monks of the Capuchin Church. Thus, the name of Cappuccino was born! The orthodox cappuccino method is to add a portion of espresso and steamed milk. The thickness of the milk foam is about 2 cm, which accounts for about 30% of a cup of coffee. It is usually sprinkled with cocoa powder or cinnamon powder .

Caffè Latte : A small cup of espresso and a cup of milk (150-200 ml). Latte has more milk and less coffee, which is very different from cappuccino. It is usually drunk for breakfast.

Caffè macchiato : Macchiato means "mark, brand" in Italian. The classic way to make Macchiato is to add a little bit of milk foam to espresso, which is like the milk "branding" the coffee.

Moccha (Mocca) : Regular coffee with a hint of chocolate.

Caffè Doppio : Double espresso

Granita di caffè con panna : coffee sorbet topped with fresh cream

Caffè Freddo : cooled and sweetened espresso, sometimes with ice cubes

Caffè shakerato : before pouring into the cup, ice cubes are added to the cocktail shaker to shake and mix to produce foam. You can also request to add some alcohol, such as rum or whiskey, or a little milk or cream to mix together to increase the flavor.

Caffè Corretto : Espresso with a strong alcoholic beverage such as grappa (Italian brandy), sambuca (Italian liquor)

Latte macchiato : hot milk with espresso

Mochaccino : Cappuccino with chocolate milk

Marocchino : basically espresso + whipped cream + melted chocolate + milk sprinkled with cocoa

Barbagliata : A popular coffee in Milan, it is made with espresso, cocoa and fresh cream. It is suitable for both winter and summer. In summer, it can be made into iced coffee.

Bicerin : It is a specialty coffee drink in Turin, a northern Italian city. It is a perfect combination of chocolate, coffee and liquid cream.

Caffè in ghiaccio : This is an iced coffee popular in southern Italy. If you order this kind of coffee in a coffee shop, the waiter will bring a cup of coffee made with espresso and another cup full of ice cubes. Guests can directly add ice cubes to the coffee to cool it down.

Italian

An authentic Italian meal is generally divided into five courses: appetizer (Antipasto), first course (Primi), second course (Secondi), dessert (Dolce) and coffee (Caffè).

Bruschetta is made by lightly toasting bread and then putting tomatoes, basil leaves, garlic, onions and buffalo cheese on one side, and adding olive oil before eating.

Insalata Caprese is also a classic Italian cold cut that appears frequently. It is mainly composed of buffalo mozzarella, tomatoes and basil leaves. What's more interesting is that the colors of the three ingredients (white, red and green) coincide with the three colors of the Italian flag, which gives this Italian cold cut a unique meaning.

Antipasti Assortiti or ta agliere Samali platter of various hams and sausages

risotto alla Milanese . Milanese , as a representative of superior risotto, the rice grains are cooked but not soft, chewy and elastic, and have a creamy aroma brought by butter. It also contains one of the most expensive spices in the world - saffron!

Pasta is a general term for pasta. Pasta has different lengths, thicknesses and shapes. There are at least 500 kinds of pasta in the world. Here are some types of pasta. As the legal raw material for pasta, durum wheat is the hardest wheat variety with high density, high protein and high gluten. The pasta made from it is yellow, resistant to cooking and has a good taste. In addition, the sauce for pasta is also very important. Generally speaking, pasta sauce is divided into red sauce (Tomato Sauce), green sauce (Pesto Sauce), white sauce (Kream Sauce) and black sauce (Squid-Ink Sauce). Red sauce is a sauce mainly made of tomatoes. The most classic one is spaghetti bolognese. Some are mainly made of cheese and cream, which is a famous Italian pasta. It is the most common at present; green sauce is made of basil, pine nuts, olive oil, etc., and its taste is more special and rich; white sauce is made mainly of unsalted butter, mainly used for baked noodles, lasagna and seafood pasta; black sauce is made of cuttlefish ink, which is mainly used for cuttlefish and other seafood pasta (cuttlefish pasta).

Spaghetti (long spaghetti) is the most traditional spaghetti shape and the most common spaghetti we see. It is the basic spaghetti and a versatile spaghetti. It can be paired with red sauce made from tomatoes or green sauce with basil and olive oil as the main ingredients, or with cheese. However, the most common way is to eat it with Italian tomato meat sauce.

Fettuccine (Italian wide noodles) is a bit like the rice noodles we usually eat, but Fettuccine tastes more elastic and chewy.

Pappardelle (extended pasta) is wider than Fettuccine, with a width of 2.5-3cm. It is also very common in Italy. It is suitable for various sauces and is also chewy.

Tagliatelle (Italian dry noodles) are slightly narrower than Pappardelle and are classic with white truffles.

Penne (slanted tube pasta) has pointed ends, and its beveled mouth is similar to the shape of a quill pen tip. The hollow part and shallow carvings on the surface can maximize the flavor of the sauce. Not only can it be added with tomatoes, garlic, cooking oil and red pepper to make the oldest Italian dishes, but it can also be combined with minced meat, onions, celery, carrots and tomatoes to make Bolognese dishes.

Fusilli is like an enlarged version of a screw. Its spiral shape can better roll up the sauce and is one of the most suitable pasta shapes for making salads.

Farfalle (bow-knot pasta) is shaped like a bow, and is loved by children and girls because of its cute shape. It is best paired with a sauce made of tomatoes and cream, or a sauce made from various vegetables.

Conchiglie, as the name suggests, is a pasta shaped like a shell. It is suitable for finely minced meat or tuna sauce, or a simple

cream sauce. The more delicate shells can be used to make noodle soups or in salads with vinaigrette.

Lasagne is usually made of fresh dough with meat filling, cheese or vegetables in the middle. Most of them are square and baked. Sometimes they are topped with a white sauce made of unsalted butter. It is also Garfield's favorite .

Ravioli is like a square dumpling, but Italians rarely put meat filling in it, but cheese, ham, eggs or other vegetable fillings. Unlike Chinese dumplings, the taste of the Ravioli dumpling filling and the taste of the sauce outside the dumpling are very important. The light taste of the dumpling filling needs to be matched and supplemented with the rich taste of the sauce, so as to achieve a perfect fusion of tastes.

Orecchiette (cat ears) is a small and exquisite pasta. It is first made by mixing durum wheat flour and mountain spring water in a specific ratio, and then manually extruding and shaping it into cute "cat ears" using a copper mold. The soft inside and tough outside of the pasta have a unique chewy texture and charming wheat aroma. It is very suitable whether it is paired with sauce as a staple food or mixed with olive oil and other ingredients into a salad as a side dish.

Alphabets are delicious and fun noodles, and are a favorite among children. Cute girls also love them, and you can also put a few in other pasta.

Macaroni is also called macaroni, a famous Italian noodle. It is said that the daughter of a noodle and pasta shop owner was very naughty when she was young. When she was playing, she rolled the pasta into hollow strips and hung them on the clothesline. The shop owner cooked the hollow strips and mixed them with tomato sauce, and the world-famous macaroni was born.

Aperol Spritz is an Italian specialty drink, available in two types: alcoholic and non-alcoholic.

Italian wine

According to the Italians themselves, Italy is one of the first countries in Europe to acquire wine-growing technology. The output and quality of Italian wine far exceeds that of France, and French wine is simply "stolen" from Italy. The history of winemaking in Italy has exceeded 3,000 years. The ancient Greeks called Italy the country of wine (Enatria). In fact, Enatria is a noun in ancient Greek, meaning southeastern Italy. It is said that when ancient Roman soldiers went to the battlefield, they brought grape seedlings with their weapons, and planted grapes there when the territory expanded. This was the beginning of the spread of grape seedlings and winemaking technology from Italy to various European countries. Italian red wine is generally divided into four levels: first, ordinary table wine. Second, IGT (Indicazione Geograph Tipici) Although the label does not look very prominent, you can actually find many good wines in this level. Origine Controllata) must be produced

in a specific production area. Origine Controllata Garantita is the highest level of Italian wine. Only in a specific production area and in accordance with the specified production standards can it be crowned with DOCG. There are 18 production areas belonging to this level. This level of Italian wine is not only printed on the wine label (usually under the wine name), but also often appears in the form of a long pink seal on the tin foil shrink film at the mouth of the bottle.



Italy is very suitable for growing grapes, so they are grown all over the country. The best quality wines are mainly produced in three major regions: Veneto, Tuscany and Piedmont.

1. Veneto

Veneto is located in northeastern Italy, with Venice as its capital. It is the most famous of the three major wine regions in northeastern Italy and the region with the largest wine production in Italy. Veneto has 14 DOCG and 11 DOC regions. The three most important DOC regions are Valpolicella, Soave and Bardolino.

The climate of Veneto is moderated by the mountains in the north and the ocean in the east. It is mild and stable, which is suitable for the growth of grapes. Half of the area of the region is plains, and the surface of the soil is covered with silt, clay and calcareous rock fragments. The main grapes grown here are Garganega, Trebbiano and Corvina.

2. Tuscany

Tuscany is located in central Italy and is the most famous star wine region in Italy. Tuscany is to central Italy what Bordeaux is to France. This red wine-producing region has 11 DOCG and 34 DOC wines, most of which have an excellent reputation. In addition, many IGT and VDT wines here are also impressive. Some IGTs are actually the highest quality Italian wines, such as Piedmont or Tuscany's high-quality wines of this level, which enjoy a high reputation all over the world.

Tuscany has a Mediterranean climate with mild winters and hot, dry summers. Most of the territory is rolling hills, and the soil is mostly alkaline limestone and sandy clay. Sangiovese is the main grape variety in the region.

3. Piedmont

Piedmont is located in the northwest of Italy. Its position in the northwest of Italy is like that of Burgundy in France. The region now has 16 DOCG and 44 DOC wines, far ahead of other regions.

The grapes used in Piedmont winemaking are almost all native varieties, and are mostly used to make single-variety wines. There are many types of grapes here, and the important red grape varieties include Nebbiolo, Barbera and Dolcetto, and the main white grape variety is Moscato.

Some Italian wines only have the region of origin on the label, but not the grape variety used for making wine. However, some Italian wines have both. For example, if the label says "Fiano di Avellino", it means that the wine is produced in Avellino and the grape used for making wine is Fiano; if it says "Barbera d'Alba", it means that the wine is produced in Alba and the grapes used for making wine are Barbera.

In addition, it should be noted that Italian wine is divided into grades (VDT, IGT, DOC and DOCG). The higher the grade, the more and stricter the relevant regulations on the production area, grape variety, grape yield, alcohol content, wine aging time, etc., and the higher the quality.

Italian Classic Wines

Sparkling wine

(1) Franciacorta Sparkling Wine

In addition to Champagne from France, Italy's sparkling wine is also well-known. Italy's high-quality sparkling wine is concentrated in Franciacorta, which is Italy's first DOC sparkling wine producing area. It is located in the heart of Italy's

Lombardy region and close to the international city of Milan. Franciacorta sparkling wine, like Champagne, is made from Pinot Noir (Pinot Nero in Italian) and Chardonnay (Chardonnay) grapes, but Pinot Blanc (Pinot Bianco in Italian) may also be used. The style of the sparkling wine will be indicated on the wine label, such as non-vintage, rose, Saten (Blanc de Blanc) or vintage sparkling wine (Millesimato). Franciacorta sparkling wine is made using the traditional method, with a secondary fermentation in the bottle to obtain the bubbles, so it can also be called Metodo Classico (traditional fermentation sparkling wine).

(2) Prosecco

Perhaps we hear more about Italian sparkling wine Prosecco. Prosecco is produced in Veneto and Friuli-Venezia-Giulia using the Charmat Method. The Charmat Method, also known as the tank method, involves secondary fermentation in large barrels, so there is no time-consuming and labor-intensive riddling and disgorgement process, and of course no lees aging, which makes Prosecco cheaper. Because it does not age on the lees, the flavor and structure of Prosecco is not as complex as Franciacorta, but it is still good as a table wine or party wine.

(3) Lambrusco

Lambrusco is made using the Charma method, and the grapes used are Lambrusco grapes. Lambrusco has a bright and unique color and can be classified as rosé or red. It is mainly produced in Emilia-Romagna. Lambrusco from Lini and La Collina is also good, with a rich fruity flavor but not too sweet, and is worth trying.

(4) Moscato d' Asti sweet white sparkling wine

Moscato d'Asti is also made using the Charma method, using aromatic grapes such as Moscato grapes as raw materials, mainly produced in the Asti region of Piedmont. The quality of this sweet sparkling wine varies, but if it is an excellent Moscato d'Asti, it is a good wine to accompany meals and is perfect with fruit desserts.

White wine

(1) Although Pinot Gris (Pinot Grigio in Italian) is used to make white wine, its skin is rosy blue. Pinot Gris grapes are mainly produced in Veneto, Trento and Alto-Adige in northeastern Italy. There are many famous wines in these regions, but Pinot Grigio wine is no less good. High-quality Italian Pinot Grigio white wine has a signature golden color and a dry taste with the flavor of melons, fruits and peanut shells. Representative Italian Pinot Grigio white wines come from Venica & Venica in Friuli and Elena Walch in Alto-Adige.

(2) Garganega wine. The Soave region is the most famous white wine producing region in Italy. The wine here is mainly made from Garganega grapes from the Veneto region. Therefore, white wine made from Garganega grapes can also be called Soave white wine. However, Soave white wine is not necessarily made from 100% Garganega. Sometimes Verdicchio, Pinot Blanc or Chardonnay grapes are mixed into this wine, but the proportion of these grape varieties generally does not exceed 30%. High-quality Soave white wine has a fresh taste, with the flavor of apples and peaches, and sometimes you can find the creamy taste after aging in oak barrels. If you are a novice, if you want to try this kind of wine, you can start with Inama Winery and Pieropan Winery.

(3) Trebbiano wine

Catarrato in Sicily. There is a large group of "Trebbiano families" that, despite the similar name, are completely different types of grapes. The two most important types are Trebbiano Toscano and Trebbiano Abruzzo. d'Abruzzo). Trebbiano Toscano grapes are grown mainly in Tuscany and Umbria. The famous DOCG Chianti wine was once required to include Trebbiano Toscano grapes, but with the abolition of this regulation, Trebbiano Toscano's importance has also diminished. Today,

Trebbiano Toscano is mainly used to make the traditional Italian Tuscan sweet wine "Vin Santo", which has a refreshing taste and fresh citrus flavors. Trebbiano d'Abruzzo grapes are mainly grown in the Abruzzo region. White wines made from Trebbiano d'Abruzzo have a complex flavor, especially those from the legendary winemaker Valentini, which can burst with peach, honey, white flowers and straw mushrooms.

(4) Vermentino vs. Verdicchio

Vermentino and Verdicchio are both very common. When the two meet, how should we choose? Vermentino grapes are grown throughout Italy, and the white wines brewed have a salty taste and prominent citrus aromas. Vermentino white wine is a favorite of Tuscans and Piedmontese; in the Ligurian coastal region, its name is Pigato; in Sardinia, Vermentino is the main grape variety. Vermentino white wine performs best in Marche, and its aromas and flavors are reminiscent of Beijing lime, white peach and almonds.

red wine

(1) Nebbiolo wine

Italy's Nebbiolo red wine is amazing. Many Nebbiolo wine fans are willing to spend a fortune on a bottle of this wine and then store it for decades before opening it. Italy's Nebbiolo red wine has an intoxicating aroma. Once you smell it, you will be attracted by the aroma of dried cherries, rose petals and truffles, which makes people linger. The strong tannins of Italy's Nebbiolo red wine are not easy to drink when they are young, but with braised lamb and Italian fettuccine, it can enhance the flavor.

The most famous Nebbiolo producing areas are Barolo and Barbaresco, both of which are adjacent to the town of Alba in Piedmont. Nebbiolo grapes can perfectly adapt to the climate and soil there. Generally speaking, Barolo Nebbiolo wines are complex and more powerful in style, while Barbaresco tends to be more floral and elegant in style. Wines from these two regions will have their origin and aging standards marked on the wine label, and the price is higher than similar wines from other regions.

In addition to Barolo and Barbaresco, there are also Nebbiolo red wines from Roero, Langhe, Ghemme, and Gattinara. The tannins of these wines are softer, with the classic flavors of cherry and rose petals. In the Valletta Aosta region of the Alps, Nebbiolo is called Picotendro, and the wines produced are lively and refreshing. In the Valtellina region in northern Lombardy, the locals call Nebbiolo Chiavannesca. The Nebbiolo vineyards here are at a higher altitude, and the wines produced are also refreshing.

(2) Barbera

Barbera is one of the easiest wines to drink in Italy. It is not too tannic, but has a rich aroma of purple fruits and dried vanilla flavors. Barbera grapes are grown throughout Italy, but the best wines come from Piedmont, especially Barbera del Monferrato Superiore and Barbera d'Asti in the Piedmont Mountains, which are classics. In addition, Campania and Puglia in southern Italy also produce red wines based on Barbera grapes. Barbera can be paired with roasted chicken legs and risotto.

(3) Sangiovese wine

Sangiovese is Italy's most widely planted red grape, but the best Sangiovese red wines come from Tuscany. Sangiovese wines feel like a plate of pasta with sun-dried tomato slices, oregano and thyme, and a few drops of balsamic vinegar. Although they can sometimes be heavy and tannic, they are balanced by high acidity.

Around the cities of Florence and Siena in Chianti, Fiasco wine is produced, which is wrapped in straw and is a typical entry-level table wine in central Italy. Most Chianti wines are made from Sangiovese, but local grape varieties such as

Canaiole and Colorino are also allowed, as well as Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Chianti Classico, a sub-region of Chianti, has been renowned for its high quality wines since 1716. Sangiovese wines labeled "Chianti Classico" are subject to many restrictions, such as aging time and the proportion of other grape varieties in the blend.

In the southern part of Chianti, Brunello di Montalcino DOCG (often referred to as Brunello) is a region that produces wines made from 100% Sangiovese grapes and aged for at least 5 years. The wines are strong and concise. Rosso di Montalcino is also made from 100% Sangiovese and is often seen as Brunello's little brother (because these wines usually come from younger vines and are aged in barrels for a shorter period of time). It is more affordable and you don't have to wait so many years before you can open the bottle to drink it. It is well worth a try.

(4) Super Tuscan wines

The well-known red wine Super-Tuscan is actually made from international grape varieties (not native Italian varieties) such as Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. At the beginning, the Italian government did not support these foreign grape varieties, so the wines made from these new varieties could only be classified as ordinary table wines. It was not until 1968 that the famous Tenuta San Guido produced Sassicaia, a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Sassicaia wine was a blockbuster and received high international acclaim, and was called the "Lafite" of Italy. From then on, wines made from international grape varieties were allowed to be marked with higher grades on the wine labels.

(5) Montepulciano wine

This Montepulciano is not related to the Vino Nobile di Montepulciano in Tuscany. In fact, the Vino Nobile di Montepulciano is not made from Montepulciano grapes, but only from the town of Montepulciano. The grape itself is juicy and complex, and is often blended with Sangiovese grapes. In Abruzzo, Montepulciano red wines are generally DOC. Most Montepulciano red wines may not be amazing, but Emidio Pepe winery has used its amazing winemaking skills to make a complex Montepulciano red wine. Montepulciano red wine is a great dinner wine with rich cherry, strawberry and earthy flavors.

(6) Aglianico wine

Aglianico, like Negroamaro and Primitivo, thrives in the warm, sunny climate of southern Italy. Aglianico red wines are often considered the "Barolo of the South" because of their strong tannins, complex flavors, and great aging potential. The volcanic soils of Aglianico vineyards are fully reflected in the wines, which have flavors of plum, chocolate, and spice. High-quality Aglianico red wines generally come from Campania and Basilicata, but they are also produced in Molise, Puglia, and La Brea.

(7) Black Pearl Wine

Once known for its sweet Marsala wine, many Sicilian winemakers are now turning to dry reds, with Nero d'Avola being a standout. Nero d'Avola often has notes of dark plum and chocolate, especially when blended with Syrah, Merlot or Cabernet Sauvignon. Some producers prefer lighter-bodied Nero d'Avola, adding the delightful aromatic grape Frappato. To try Nero d'Avola, start with Chateau Cos- d'Estournel and Arianna Occhipinti near Cerasuolo di Vittoria, or try the more affordable Planeta.

(8) Corvina Wine

The Corvina grape, which is mainly grown in the Veneto region, produces one of Italy's most outstanding wines, Amarone della Valpolicella. To make Amarone, the grapes are placed in a well-ventilated room for 3 to 4 months of air drying (Appassimento) to make the grapes more mellow before winemaking. Amarone wine is full-bodied, high in alcohol, and has flavors of cherry, plum and almond. This wine is excellent with stewed veal steaks.

Because Amarone wine has to go through a drying process, it is very expensive and the price of the wine is also high. We can try the affordable Valpolicella Ripasso wine. This wine is made by adding the lees left over from the production of the top

sweet wine Amarone to the daily table wine Valpolicella Classico, and then fermenting it again. In this way, the Ripasso wine has the rich fruity flavor of the classic Valpolicella wine, and adds complexity and richness to the wine, and of course the alcohol content is also increased. If the wine label only indicates "Valpolicella", then this wine is just a normal, light-bodied Valpolicella wine made from Corvina grapes.

Italian Gelato

Gelato

There is a saying that there are no two identical gelatos in the world. The rich flavors and innovations are just like the Italians. In terms of food, they have always perfectly demonstrated their natural and relaxed national character. When it comes to Italian gelato, it will definitely make you shine. Whether it is the fresh and juicy fruit and vegetable flavor or the dense and rich chocolate flavor, it will bring an unforgettable feast to diners all year round.

The word Gelato comes from the Italian word Gelare (to freeze). According to legend, in the Middle Ages, a chicken farmer named Giuseppe once again presented a dessert called Sorbetto (smooth ice) to the court banquet of the Medici family, which deeply attracted Princess Catherine at the time. After she married into the French Kingdom, she brought the production process of this dessert to France. Then in the 18th century, the first store mainly selling Gelato opened in Paris, France.

As we all know, ice cream and pizza both come from Italy but were popularized by foreigners. Tens of thousands of traditional ice cream workshops on the Apennine Peninsula produce different flavors of Gelato every day. It is precisely because of this non-systematic and non-uniform standard that you can find different flavors of Gelato that amazes your taste buds in every corner of Italy.

What is the difference between Gelato and Ice Cream?

Fat content: The milk fat content of Gelato is kept between 4% and 8%, while that of Ice Cream is above 15%. Therefore, those who love sweets but are worried about gaining weight do not need to worry too much when eating Gelato.

Air content: The general production process of Gelato is to adhere to the rule of low-speed stirring, so as to allow as little air as possible to enter the food, thereby maximizing the taste and making it more dense and solid when eaten.

Sugar content: Generally, the sugar content of Gelato is higher than that of Ice Cream because glucose syrup is added during the production process. Fruit flavors are added with a lot of fresh fruit juice, which makes Gelato have more flavor options.

Compared to Ice Cream, Gelato adheres to the concept of freshness first, so it is usually stored at around -25°C to -18°C .

The invincible Italian army

Italy launched a colonial war against Ethiopia in 1895. The Italian army of 17,000 armed with rifles and cannons faced the Ethiopian army of 120,000 armed with only spears and swords. As a result, 11,000 Italians were killed or wounded, and 4,000 were captured. They were defeated. Ethiopia became the only country in Africa that successfully defended its sovereignty by using force to resist European colonizers.

During World War I, Italy turned to the Allies and attacked the Austro-Hungarian Empire. From 1915 to 1917, the Italians fought 11 battles on the Isonzo River, with more than 1 million casualties, but they gained nothing except causing almost the same losses to the Austro-Hungarian army. Once, the German-Austrian coalition launched a fierce attack on Italy, and the

Italian army fled. At that time, the Italian king was in the Italian army's headquarters on the front line. He fled a few hours before the German-Austrian coalition rushed to the headquarters and almost became a prisoner. In this battle, 10,000 Italian soldiers were killed, 30,000 were wounded, and nearly 300,000 were captured. In addition, 400,000 troops became stragglers.

Italy's contribution in World War I was negative. When the spoils were divided at the Paris Peace Conference, it was good enough that you were not divided. What else do you want? So Italy had nothing to say. Moreover, Italy was not interested in Germany. It was interested in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The territories it wanted were all on the Adriatic coast of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire. At the same time, Britain, France, and the United States did not take Italy seriously, which made Italian Prime Minister Orlando very angry. This guy has a strong personality. He went back home when he was angry - I won't hold the meeting this time. No one tried to stop him when he went back. It's not that if you leave, the meeting will not be held. You go, it's better to leave. There will be one less person eating for free, and the meal ticket will be saved. When he went back, the domestic parliament asked, what did you bring back from Paris? He said he brought nothing back. Those guys were angry with me, so I came back. The parliament was not happy, you go back and continue the meeting. He returned to France again, but no one was surprised when he came back. No one said, "Oh, you are back. We are waiting for you." No one, if you want to leave, leave. If you want to come, come. One more or one less will not make a difference. His situation is closely related to Italy's national strength.

During World War II, Italy formed the Axis Powers with Germany and Japan to fight against the Allied Forces of Britain, the United States, the Soviet Union and China. The German army said:

If Italy remains neutral, we can deter them by stationing 10 divisions on the border.

If Italy joins the Allies, we can destroy them with just 5 divisions.

But Italy has joined us, and now we need 20 divisions to protect them!

Why? Because the Italian army is so cute:

On the battlefield 10 kilometers away from the supply station, the whole army cooked pasta because they were hungry, and then the whole army was easily captured by the enemy...

Italy's military uniforms are gentleman's suits, and they bought 30 million tons of black tea from all over the world. The packaging of a famous Italian red wine has a slogan like "If you are drunk, you will not be afraid of fighting." Among the supplies captured by the enemy, the amount of red wine is more than the amount of ammunition...

The prisoners captured by Italy can eat luxurious meals every day... A British pilot was captured by Italy and thrown into a prisoner concentration camp. That night, he got his own dinner in prison. It was a dish that was luxurious to the point of being unnatural, from appetizers to macaroni and meat, and even the fruits and red wine at the end. "Is this the so-called last supper..." The next morning, a general officer who looked very high-ranking appeared in front of him: "We made a small mistake yesterday. We provided you, the general, with a dinner for ordinary soldiers. This was definitely not intentional abuse of prisoners. Can you forgive the guard who made the mistake for my sake?"

Mussolini felt that Europe was full of powerful enemies, so he set his sights on North Africa across the Mediterranean. Before the outbreak of World War II, he annexed Ethiopia, so he naturally turned his attention to the North African desert with full confidence and ordered the Italian army stationed in Africa to invade Egypt to provoke the British.

In fact, Africa was a minor battlefield in World War II and had little impact on the final outcome of the war. However, Mussolini rashly joined the war regardless of his own strength, dragging his ally Germany into a battlefield that it did not want to enter, and dragging it further and further. Germany did not want to fight Greece at first. As long as it stabilized the Balkans, it could concentrate its forces to deal with the Soviet Union. As a result, Mussolini disrupted it and attacked Greece and

Yugoslavia. After finally taking control of the Balkans, Mussolini now pulled the front line to the more distant Africa.

In 1940, Mussolini ordered the army to invade Egypt. As a result, the order was not executed two days after it was issued. Seeing that his order was not executed, Mussolini instructed Marshal Graziani, the then commander-in-chief of the Italian Army in North Africa, that Germany's "Sea Lion Plan" was about to begin and Germany was about to land in Britain. You can't even fight Egypt, and we have nothing to do with dividing the spoils in the future. Under such circumstances, Graziani started the attack. However, the official attack was on September 8, a full month later than the time when Mussolini ordered it. It is hard to imagine that the German generals could delay the war for a month when Hitler ordered it to start, but this is Italy!

In less than 10 weeks of fighting, the British captured 130,000 Italian prisoners of war. In fact, the British commanders did not want to capture these Italians. They had to feed them after they were captured. The British commanders actually wanted to eliminate these people. But Western countries are all signatories to the Geneva Convention 63, and you have to accept their surrender. Therefore, the British commanders had no choice but to accept the surrender of the Italians. The Italian prisoners of war were all model prisoners of war. They never resisted or violated discipline. They walked into the prisoner-of-war camp in an organized manner under the leadership of their superiors and happily put down their guns. There was once a British tank battalion that destroyed and captured hundreds of Italian tanks with only 29 tanks. Although the Italians were imprisoned in prisoner-of-war camps, they still had to eat pasta. They could not live without pasta. As long as they were given pasta to eat, the Italians were all good babies. The problem was that the British could not eat pasta on the front line, so how could they have so much pasta to feed the prisoners of war.

Because the Italian prisoners of war were model prisoners of war, the British did not strictly guard the prisoner-of-war camps. Some prisoner-of-war camps did not even have guards. They just let the Italians watch over themselves, put them in a circle, and let them fend for themselves. It is said that a riot broke out in an unguarded Italian prisoner-of-war camp, and all the Italians ran away. When the British prisoner-of-war camp commander learned about it, he felt very strange. Italians never behaved like this. They knew the rules very well. How could they run away in groups? He could not imagine that these escaped Italian prisoners of war lined up in an orderly formation and entered the next prisoner-of-war camp. Because they heard that there was pasta to eat in that prisoner-of-war camp.

Italy's lesser-known attractions

San Quirico d'Orcia d'Orcia , meaning "San Quirico in Orcia", is located in Tuscany's picturesque Val d'Orcia, not far from Pienza. The town is surrounded by beautiful scenery, with small churches, solitary trees, and small forests dotted among the rolling hills.

Odell Formation, Dolomites, Dolomites

Some say that God gave the most beautiful scenery of the Alps to Italy, and Italy gave the most beautiful Alps to the Dolomites... Dolomites National Park is a natural scenery that cannot be missed in northern Italy. The continuous mountains composed of white rocks make this area unique. It was listed as a World Natural Heritage in 2009. There are different scenery to watch throughout the year. In Italian, it means "Dolomite" because this mountain range is mainly composed of dolomite.

The most amazing place on Capri Island is the bizarre Blue Grotto, where the water is so blue that it seems like a fairyland. The Blue Grotto is 145 meters deep, and the entrance is under the cliff. It is so small that it can only be entered by boat. It is known as one of the seven wonders of the world and is also the most attractive diving destination.

Pitigliano is located in the province of Grosseto in southern Tuscany. It is a beautiful country town located on the top of a steep rock with spectacular scenery. It has an ancient Jewish historical community "Little Jerusalem", which witnesses the mark left by the Jews in the history of the town's development.

Alberobello, a gray and white town full of "cone hats"

Lipari (Aeolian Islands)

Aeolian Islands (Italian: Isole Eolie , Sicilian: Ìsuli The Eoli , also known as the Lipari Islands, is a volcanic archipelago located in the Tyrrhenian Sea north of Sicily. It is named after the demigod Aeolian god of the wind. The largest island in the Aeolian Islands is Lipari, which is listed as a World Heritage Site.

Portofino is a fishing village in the province of Genoa, Liguria, Italy. It is considered one of the most beautiful ports in the Mediterranean and is a landmark that marks the boundary between Golfo Paradiso and Golfo Tigullio. It attracts a large number of tourists from all over the world every year.

Urbino is built on a hill, and the city walls surrounding the town are well preserved, making it a picturesque place. In the 15th century, it became an important cultural and artistic center under the sponsorship of the Duke of Urbino, and many exquisite buildings and works of art were created during that period. In addition, this small town is also the hometown of Raphael.

Burgos, Sardinia

Sardinia is located 200 kilometers west of the coast of the Italian peninsula. It is the second largest island in the western Mediterranean after Sicily, with Cagliari as its capital. Sardinia has a unique Italian culture and is also one of the oldest regions in Europe. Sardinia is a quiet and peaceful place. The charm here is a wonderful and unique coastline. On this island full of myrtle and wild thyme, the tranquil atmosphere everywhere is especially suitable for tired urban people.

Orta San Giulio (Novara) is a small town in the province of Novara, with one of the most beautiful town streets in Italy. It occupies half of the eastern shore of Lake Orta, with the main residential core of the town located on the lakeside, across the water from the Isola San Giulio, which is also part of the city.

Positano is a small town located on the Amalfi Coast in Campania, Italy. The main part of the town is located on the flat land between the mountains and the sea. A writer described it this way: Positano is a dreamland. When you are there, it is not very real, but after you leave, it becomes vivid.

Spello is a town in the province of Perugia, Italy. It is located at the foot of Mount Subasio and is known as the most ancient Roman town.

Alberobello is a small town in the Bari Province of Puglia, Italy, with a population of about 11,000. The Trullo buildings in the city are world-famous and were listed as a World Cultural Heritage by UNESCO in 1996. The characteristic of Trullo is that the walls are painted white with lime and the roof is made of gray flat stones piled into a cone shape. It is said that the locals built them to evade taxes. When collecting taxes, they removed the roof to indicate that no one lived there.

Lake Misurina (Belluno)

Lake Misurina is also known as Princess Lake (Lago di Misurina). It is known as the "Pearl of the Dolomites". It lies quietly between the mountains, singing songs for thousands of years. It is said that there is a beautiful legend about Princess Lake: Misurina is a fickle and cunning little princess. Her giant father, King Sorapis (one of the mountains in the Dolomites), has held her in his palm since she was a child. In order to satisfy her wish to get the magic mirror from Queen Cristallo , the king did not hesitate to transform into a mountain. During the transformation, the king saw the princess's fall after getting the magic mirror, and his sorrow turned into a lake. Princess Misurina eventually sank to the bottom of the lake with the magic mirror. This legend is also widely circulated because of Claudio Baglioni's song " Sabato Pomeriggio ". The proportion of negative ions on Princess Lake is high, which can purify the air, so it is also a famous health resort center in Europe.

Sicily (Reggio Calabria)

Goethe once said: "If you don't go to Sicily, it's like you haven't been to Italy. Sicily is the source of Italy's beauty!"

Sant'Agata de' Goti (Benevento) dei Goti is located in the Benevento Province of Campania, about 35 kilometers from Naples. It is a small town built on a ridge, and the scenery on the edge of the city looks weird and spectacular. The town is divided into two parts, one half is the ancient city area that originated in the ancient Roman period and built on tuff, and the other half is the modern city area built in the late 19th century.

Cefalu (Palermo) One of the filming locations of "The Godfather" is Palermo, the capital of Sicily and the city with the most Sicilian flavor. The location of the Cinema Paradiso is called Cefalu, which is now also an important resort in Sicily. It can be reached by taking a half-hour train ride along the seaside from Palermo. The seaside in Cefalu is a bit shabby, just like in the movie. There are no yachts, no villas, and no private beaches. The simplest fishing boats and people sunbathing are the absolute protagonists.


San Leo is the artistic capital of Dante's Divine Comedy and the heart of Montefeltro. The unique rocky cliff terrain makes it occupy an important position in Rimini's military, religious and architectural achievements. The ancient city center combines a magical combination of rigor and primitiveness, presenting the extraordinary charm of ancient Romanesque architecture. You can admire the parish church, the cathedral, the bell tower and the Medici Palace, the Renaissance Museum of Religious Art, the Palazzo della Rolle and the residence of Count Severini-Nardini. Going to the top of the mountain, it is the fortress, the work of Francesco di Giorgio Martini, where Giuseppe Balsamo, the famous Count of Calivostro, was imprisoned from 1791 until his death.

Cala Harbour, Levanzo Island

Levazo, the smallest of the Aegadian Islands, is home to just 220 people and is sometimes like a time machine, transporting guests back to an age before motorised transport.

Milan

Bus Stops	Bus: Drop off/pick-up: Park : Piazza Castello, 26 , 20121 Milano MI , Italy Car park: Parcheggio Piazza Meda , Piazza Meda 2/A , 20121 Milano (2m) Parcheggio Garage Zeus , Verziere , 11, 20122 Milano, Italy (suitable for a full day stop)		
Latitude and longitude	45 degrees north latitude	Equivalent to China ...	Songyuan, Jilin
Area (square kilometers):	186	Population ('000):	1,3 72
City status	The second largest city in Italy. Fashion, cars, tourism, exhibitions It is a major transport and industrial center, commercial and financial center in Europe. The GDP of the urban area accounts for 4.8% of the country. If Milan were a country, it would be the 28th largest economy in the world, almost as large as the economy of Austria. It is one of the most densely populated and industrially developed regions in Europe. Milan is a		

	<p>major center for the production of textiles and clothing, automobiles (Alfa Romeo car brand), chemicals, industrial tools, heavy machinery, books and music publishing. It is recognized as the world's fashion and design capital.</p> <p>Business, industry, music, sports, literature, art and media all have a global influence. The fashion shops on Via Montenapoleone are world-famous, and the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II is considered the oldest shopping mall in the world. Milan is particularly famous for its musicals, especially traditional opera, and has also produced several important composers (Verdi). It has hosted the 1906 and 2015 World Expos. The new RHO exhibition grounds in Milan cover an area of 2.5 million square meters, with an exhibition area of 460,000 square meters, making it the largest exhibition ground in the world. Two famous football teams: AC Milan and Inter Milan.</p>
Origin of the name	Once known as Mailand , the name still used in German today, comes from the Celtic Mid- lan , meaning "center of the plain".
Basic historical information	<p>The earliest traces back to around 400 BC, when a branch of Celts settled here. It was occupied by Rome in 222 BC and gradually became a major commercial and trading city and an important area of Western civilization. It became the capital of the Western Roman Empire from 286 to 402. It was a center for the promotion of Christianity. In 313 AD, Emperor Constantine issued an edict here to legalize the Christian Church. This famous "Edict of Milan" has an important position in the history of the development of Christianity.</p> <p>Milan was ruled by the Visconti family from 1277 to 1447. From the 1450s to 1500, Milan was ruled by the Sforza family and became a major city in the Renaissance in terms of art. From the 15th to the 18th century, it was ruled by France, Spain, and Austria respectively. In 1859, it became part of the Kingdom of Sardinia and gradually became part of the Kingdom of Italy. During World War II, Milan was severely carpet-bombed. After the war, it was rebuilt and once again became an important financial and industrial center in Italy.</p> <p>Milan has the oldest and largest Chinese community in Italy, with about 35,000 people. Among the Chinese in Italy, whether they hold Chinese nationality or have obtained Italian nationality, the ancestral home of Wenzhou, Zhejiang, accounts for an extremely large proportion. Since the 1920s, Wenzhou people have begun to immigrate to Milan and have been engaged in the textile and leather industries there.</p>
City logo	
other	Milan is recognized as one of the four major fashion capitals in the world. Many world-renowned luxury brands have made Milan their headquarters, including but not limited to Armani, Prada, Versace and Valentino. As a result, it is also the venue for the famous Milan Fashion Week and Milan Furniture Fair, both of which are among the world's largest exhibitions in terms of number of visitors and sales revenue. The entire city is full of luxury hotels and is the fifth city in the world in terms of the number of Michelin-starred restaurants .

Area C Entry Fee

- The car can be purchased at the city center parking garage after paying the parking fee before leaving. Activation is done on the same day via the website <https://areac.atm-mi.it/Areac/iweb/Attivazione.aspx> .
- Purchase a city entry fee for large vehicle parking.

The Visconti family was an Italian noble family from the Middle Ages to the early Renaissance. In the mid-13th century, members of the family became Archbishops of Milan and Popes, which increased the family's power. In 1277, the Visconti family overthrew the Della Torre family and became the lords of Milan. In 1395, they were named Dukes of Milan by Holy Roman Emperor Wenceslas IV. The family ruled Milan until 1447. The family still has descendants today, among whom the most famous is the famous Italian director Luchino Visconti.

Milan Central Station is a first-class work of art. The word "grand" can be used to describe this beautiful train station. Its super-high arcades, huge stone columns, exquisite carvings, and endless flow of people leave an unforgettable first impression on first-time visitors.

Sempione was built in 1807 and is modeled after the ancient Roman Arco di Costantino (Arch of Constantine) and Arco di Settimio Severo (Arch of Severus) and the modern Arc du Carrousel in Paris (Arch of Carrousel), which adopts the form of three domes. Construction stopped after the fall of Napoleon in 1814. In 1826, Emperor Franz Joseph I of Austria ordered the construction to continue and it was completed in 1838. It was first called the "Arc de Triomphe" to celebrate the great achievements of Emperor Napoleon. Later it was renamed the "Arch of Peace" to commemorate the end of years of bloody conflicts and wars in Europe. The main body of the Peace Gate is made of Baveno granite, and the outside is decorated with Crevola d'Ossola and Ornavasso marble. There are four Corinthian columns on the bases on the outside of the two sides of the gate; the top beams of the columns form an integral part with the middle part, and the frieze is carved with floral decorations. In 1859, the top was replaced with the current inscription to commemorate the country's independence. Above the Peace Gate is the majestic Sestiga The Arch of Peace is a bronze sculpture of the chariot of peace, with four statues of Vittorie a cavallo (Goddess of Victory on horseback) at the four corners. In addition, there are four statues of people on the top of the column, representing the four main rivers in Lombardy and Venice: the Po River, the Ticino River, the Adige River and the Tagliale Mondo River. The reliefs on the Arch of Peace mainly describe the story of the restoration of the monarchy. The area where the Arch of Peace is located is also one of the nightlife centers of Milan.

Sforza Castle Castello Sforzesco

Once the residence of the Sforza family, who ruled Milan. The original building on this site was built in the 14th century. In 1450, Francesco Sforza I began to rebuild the castle, and his descendants made further modifications. Many rooms originally had exquisite interior decorations, the most famous of which is the "paneled room" – Sala Delle Asse, with ceiling paintings by Leonardo da Vinci.

After the French victory at the Battle of Marignano in 1515, the defeated Maximilian Sforza, his Swiss mercenaries, and the Cardinal of Sion retreated to the Castello Sforza. However, King Francis I of France followed them into Milan, and his engineers laid mines under the castle, so the defenders surrendered. After the unification of Italy in the 19th century, the castle was restored, but no longer used for military purposes, and was handed over to the city of Milan. The restoration work was led by Luca Beltrami. The central tower above the main city entrance was rebuilt between 1900 and 1905 as a monument to King Umberto I. In 1943, during World War II, Milan was bombed by the Allies and the castle was severely damaged. After the war, it was rebuilt by BBPR Architecture and used as a museum, including the Museum of Ancient Art, the Museum of Furniture, the Museum of Musical Instruments and Applied Arts, the Egyptian and Prehistoric Department of the Archaeological Museum, but the most famous is the Pinacoteca del Castello Sforzesco. The halls in the Museum of Ancient Art preserve Michelangelo's last unfinished work, "The Pietà of Lendinara". In addition, the castle has an art gallery and a collection of furniture from the 15th to the 19th century; from the Rocchio Tower, you can admire the Museum of Decorative Arts, such as ceramics; gold and silver jewelry, the largest collection of musical instruments in Europe; the Trivulzio tapestries, the Armory,

the Museum of Prehistory and Protohistory; the Egyptian Museum and the Visconti Halls for exhibitions and temporary exhibitions.

Finally, the Castello Sforza houses some important archives and libraries, such as the Art Library, the Historical Archive, the Trivulziana Library, the Archaeological and Numismatic Library, the Center for Advanced Studies in Visual Arts, the “Achille Bertarelli” Print Collection, the Photographic Archive and the Leonardo da Vinci Collection, which houses the original Codex Trivulzianus by Leonardo da Vinci .

Sempione Park

Parco Sempione is a large urban green space in Milan, Italy, located behind the Castello Sforza. The name dates back to the Sempione Tunnel in 1906. The eponymous Via Sempione begins behind the park.

The Royal Palace of Milan (Palazzo Reale di Milano) was the seat of government in Milan, Italy for many centuries. Today it is an important cultural center that often hosts fairs and exhibitions. The Royal Palace of Milan was originally designed as a structure with two courtyards. Later, part of it was demolished to build the Milan Cathedral. The Royal Palace is located on the right side of the facade of the Cathedral, facing the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II. The facade of the building is located along the location of the ancient courtyard, forming a recessed part of the Cathedral Square, called the Royal Square (Piazza Reale) . Of particular importance is the “Hall of Caryatids” on the first floor, located on the site of the old theatre that burned down in 1776 and the only one to have survived the bombing of 1943, which lost its neoclassical interior design.

Milan Cathedral Duomo di Milano

Milan Cathedral is the largest Gothic cathedral in Italy. It is located in the center of Milan and is the spiritual center and symbol of Milan. The cathedral is built entirely of white marble from northern Italy and is one of the largest marble buildings in Europe . There was a church on the original site of the cathedral in the 4th century. After reconstruction in the 9th century, the current Milan Cathedral was built in 1386 and was basically completed in 1813. A bronze door under the cathedral was installed in 1965, which is considered to be the completion of the whole construction.



Sitting east and facing west, the Milan Cathedral covers an area of more than 15,000 square meters, is 158 meters long and 92 meters wide, and is in the shape of a Latin cross. The highest spire is 108.5 meters high, and the highest vault in the middle is 45 meters high. It is the largest cathedral in Italy. It ranks second in the world in size, second only to St. Peter’s Basilica in the Vatican, and is also one of the most influential churches in the world. The architectural style includes Gothic, neoclassical, and Baroque. The lower part is a typical Baroque style, with 6 groups of large square stone columns and 5 large bronze doors on the front. Each bronze door is divided into many squares, and the squares are engraved with the history, mythology, and biblical stories of the church. It is decorated with sculptures from top to bottom, which is extremely complex and exquisite. It is a representative building of the Renaissance. It was once praised by Mark Twain as “a chapter of marble music score.”

The upper part of the front of the church is in typical Gothic style. There are 135 spires on the roof, which is known as the Marble Mountain. There is a statue on each spire. The church has 33 crisscrossing marble bridges connecting the various parts of the roof. The stone bridge walls and other places are also

engraved with stone sculptures of various shapes and forms. There are a total of 3,159 statues on the outside of the church, and more than 6,000 statues inside. It is the building with the most sculptures and spires in the world. There is a 4.2-meter statue of the Virgin Mary on the top, which is plated with gold.

The church architecture art in medieval Europe was mainly Gothic, characterized by vertical lines, pointed towers, and stained glass windows. The interior decoration was relatively simple. Gothic originated in France and swept the whole of Europe for hundreds of years. Therefore, France has the most and purest Gothic churches, and early representative works include Notre Dame de Paris and Rouen Cathedral (Rouen, which Monet always liked to paint). Italy is different: Italy is the native land of ancient Rome, and later it was deeply influenced by the architectural style of Byzantium (Eastern Roman Empire), so the most churches are Romanesque, which is earlier than Gothic, such as Florence Cathedral and Pisa Cathedral. Even when Gothic was popular throughout Europe later, Italy was half-hearted, such as the local Venetian architecture, which mixed Gothic and Eastern Byzantine styles and became a school of its own. Therefore, in Italy, it is rare to see such pure Gothic masterpieces as those in France and Germany. The Milan Cathedral is one of the largest churches in Europe, ranking sixth in terms of volume: St. Peter's in the Vatican, second in Seville, Spain, third in Cologne, fourth in Amiens, France, fifth in York, England, sixth in Milan, seventh in Bologna, Italy, and eighth in London. Many travel books and travel notes say that "Milan Cathedral is a masterpiece of Gothic style", and its original architect was indeed hired from France. In fact, it is a variant of the late Gothic style, the "Gothic Flame Style", with complex and gorgeous decorations, and has been mixed with some oriental styles. The real pure Gothic style is simple and powerful.

The five large bronze doors have the following themes from left to right:

- Emperor Constantine's life included the promulgation of the "Edict of Milan". On the eve of the decisive battle, Emperor Constantine had a dream in which an angel said that as long as he converted to Christianity, he would win. Some people also said that he was motivated by strategic considerations. At that time, Christianity was developing too fast and he could not hold it back, so he had to let it go. Later, when the war was really won, he promulgated a policy of tolerance for Christianity.
- The life of Saint Ambrose, the patron saint of Milan. The most amazing thing about this man is that he once criticized the Roman Emperor Theodosius I, who regarded Christianity as the state religion, and insisted that he kneel down and repent for a massacre. He also left a sentence: "The bishop is the emperor's judge, and the emperor is not the bishop's judge." Because of this sentence, the power of the church often overwhelmed the power of the king throughout the Middle Ages.
- The life of the Virgin Mary. This door is in the center and weighs 37 tons. Look carefully, there is a painting of the Annunciation. The Virgin Mary had a child before marriage, and the angel Gabriel ran over and said, you are pregnant with God's child, and you will call him Jesus.
- Battle of Legnano. German Emperor Frederick launched many attacks on Italy and massacred Milan in 1162. But more than a decade later, the Milanese fought a comeback in the Battle of Legnano.
- The history of the cathedral,

There are 26 large glass windows, all with colorful glass mosaics depicting Bible stories. Four huge columns and 62 smaller columns in the hall support the vaulted roof weighing 14,000 tons. The four large columns were repaired and reinforced in the 1980s. The large altar in the church was designed and built in 1581.

It has a large canopy supported by eight copper columns and a tabernacle on the stage, which looks very luxurious. The organ next to the altar is composed of 13,000 pipes.

There are many art treasures in the cathedral. A huge iron nail is hidden in the gilded cross on the wall of the choir behind the altar. There is a small red light in the middle of the gilded cross. It is said to be the nail that nailed Jesus to the cross. Every May 3, the nail is taken down, and a grand ceremony is held. The pilgrimage lasts for three days to commemorate Jesus. On May 6, the nail is put back on the roof for preservation. In the 15th century, when Leonardo da Vinci was working for Duke Sforza in Milan, he found it too troublesome to take the nail every time, so he invented the elevator.

There is a metal strip running from north to south on the ground inside the church, and there is a small hole on the roof. At noon every day, sunlight shines through the small hole and falls on the metal wire. This is the "sun clock" that people think is very magical.

The sculpture of Saint Bartholomeo apostolo located in the south chapel of the church was martyred by being skinned alive. This sculpture depicts the saint holding his own folded skin in his hands.

St. Bartholomew was one of the twelve disciples of Jesus. In addition to being one of the twelve disciples, Bartholomew was listed as a witness of the ascension. According to Syrian tradition, Bartholomew's original name was Jesus, so he changed his name. It is said that after Jesus ascended to heaven, Bartholomew took Matthew to India to preach. Legend has it that he was crucified while preaching in Armenia. There is also a saying that he was martyred by being skinned by a mob while preaching in India. The ancient church used three skinning knives as a symbol to symbolize the spirit of this faithful apostle who was martyred for his zeal in preaching the gospel. In works of art, he is often shown holding a skinning knife, such as Michelangelo's "The Last Judgment" in the Sistine Chapel of the Vatican, which we mentioned earlier, holding his own skin. August 24th of each year is St. Bartholomew's Day.

This statue in Milan Cathedral is extremely impressive. This statue, carved from pure white marble, has become more three-dimensional after years of age, with shiny convex parts and dark concave parts. The sculptor's extremely precise understanding of human anatomy and extraordinary expression ability have made this legendary figure in religious history who was ready to die show a strong shocking power. This shows that the power of art ultimately depends on the artist's talent. Look more closely. This skinned body is solid and upright, with strong feet and a calm gaze looking forward. The skin he holds in his hand is like a floating cloak. The calmness of the figure makes people respect him.

Standing under the cathedral, it is hard to imagine how people put the 2,000 decorative statues on the top of the spires that pierce the sky in the second half of the 14th century. If there is an earthquake or typhoon, how can we ensure that these marble buildings will not break and fall one by one, destroying this rare work of art? The roof of the church is open to the public. It costs 5 euros to walk up, and there is only one way up and down, so it is inevitable to avoid "traffic jams" on the way. However, you have to climb up anyway, because you will get a super value and a unique experience. Walk around the top of the church and watch the dense spires and sculptures on the top of the cathedral from different angles of sunlight. Its exquisite carving and dangerous architectural craftsmanship are amazing. You can also climb to the highest level along the escalator. Here, you can overlook the Milan Cathedral Square and the city through the gaps between the towering spires and statues. It is so spectacular that it makes your heart beat faster. You will see many couples on the top. They come from different corners of the world, but they all choose Milan Cathedral to

have a perfect romantic experience.

Napoleon was crowned King of Italy in Milan Cathedral in 1805. During World War II, the front door of the cathedral was bombed, and the scars can still be seen today.

- Visit the church + museum package. There is a toilet next to the ticket office. The museum entrance is in the square on the left side of the church and opens at 10:00 .

Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II

Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II, located on the north side of Piazza del Duomo, was named after the first king of Italy after the unification of Italy. It was built between 1865 and 1877 and connects Milan Cathedral and La Scala Opera House. The gallery is lined with various brand-name shops and is the largest fashion shopping center in Milan. The spacious and gorgeous arcade is covered with a glass dome and decorated with magnificent mosaics.

There is a floor tile with a Turin bull pattern on the ground at the entrance of the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele. Stepping on the pattern representing the Turin bull and stepping on the bull's testicles with your heels, rotating clockwise for 3 times, means good luck is coming. This tradition originated from an ancient belief that doing so can bring good luck. Many tourists perform the "ritual" in this way in order to seek good luck. This activity not only increases the interaction between tourists and the ground, but also adds a touch of fun and expectation to their trip to Milan .

Walking out of this magnificent arcade is the world-famous La Scala Opera House, the largest in Italy. Piazza della **Scala** is located opposite the Scala Opera House. It is connected to the main square of Milan, Piazza del Duomo, through the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II . On the southeast side is the Marino Palace, the town hall of Milan. On the northeast side of the square is the Palazzo della Banca di Italia. On the southwest side of the square is the entrance to the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II and the Beltrami Palace. In the center of the square is the monument to Leonardo da Vinci, a great artist and scientist of the Renaissance. Leonardo da Vinci settled in Milan twice, and there are four statues of his favorite students (Andrea Salaino , Gioantonio The statue is the work of sculptor Pietro Magni, made of white marble from Carrara and large blocks of granite from Baveno .

The idea of creating a statue for this genius of Tuscany began in 1856 at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts, when a competition was held to create a marble and bronze monument for the Brera Palace. Two years later, the jury judged all the drafts of the competition and selected the design of the Milanese artist Pietro Magni . He then decided to erect the monument in Piazza della Scala, as his work was already completed and it was necessary to adjust some parts, and in consultation with the gallery, they unanimously chose this solution because the figure was more important.

At this time, the construction of the monument was intertwined with the new Italian government, which announced in 1860 that it wanted to bear the cost of the work and asked the city of Milan to participate. Although there were financial resources, it still required the sculptor to work for a long time, which lasted for ten years. In 1872, the monument was inaugurated by King Viotto II, coinciding with the Second National Exhibition.

Teatro alla Scala La Scala

was the second theatre to be rebuilt on the original site, after the first theatre was destroyed in a fire. It was designed by architect Giuseppe Piermarini. The original site was the church of Santa Maria alla Scala, hence the name La Scala. It was severely damaged during World War II, but reopened in 1946 when supplies were scarce and life was difficult after the war, which shows its status in the hearts of Italians. The theatre has a plain exterior, but the interior is very ornate, and it also houses the La Scala Museum, which exhibits early posters and mannequins of Verdi's operas that premiered here. La Scala is the premiere site of many famous operas, including the famous opera "Falstaff" by composer Verdi.



The theater has more than 3,000 seats and a hall. The auditorium is horseshoe-shaped and has 6 rows of boxes, a total of 409 seats. The front of the curtain is 26 meters wide and 27 meters high, and the stage is 20 meters high. It is known as the building with the most reasonable sound effects and viewing experience. La Scala is the premiere venue for 350 operas (Turandot, Madame Butterfly). From 2002 to 2004, the renovation project was carried out to expand the backstage to accommodate more devices or scenery; screens were added to the seats to display the script in English, French, and Italian so that the audience can understand the content of the opera. European dignitaries are proud to have private boxes at La Scala.

Relationship between the theater and Verdi: Because the theater orchestra had modified several of Verdi's pieces, Verdi banned his works from being performed at La Scala for several years.

Tickets: 6 euros per person, 3 euros per person for students. Tickets for performances range from 9 euros to 2,000 euros. You can buy tickets on the official website, in the Duomo subway station (ticket purchase time is Monday to Friday 12:00–18:00) and at the theater (no performances in August). You need to buy tickets one to two months in advance to watch performances, especially for famous plays and performances by famous musicians. The chances of buying tickets on site are slim. If you just want to experience the art of opera, you can try your luck at the theater on the day, or buy tickets for performances in the coming days on the official website.

The statue of Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807-1882) in the Cairoli Castello round square was an Italian general, patriot and politician. He played an important role in Italian history. He devoted himself to the Italian unification movement and personally led many military campaigns. He was called the sword of Italian unification. Together with Cavour and Giuseppe Mazzini, he was called the three heroes of the founding of Italy by Liang Qichao. In addition, he, Vittorio Emanuele II, Cavour and Mazzini were jointly regarded as the fathers of Italy.

Giuseppe Parini on Piazza Cordusio is an 18th-century Italian Enlightenment writer and neoclassical poet who lived in Milan for a long time.

Near Milan:

Church of Santa Maria delle Grazie

The Church of Santa Maria delle Grazie is located west of the center of Milan. It is famous for the mural "The Last Supper"

(Ultima Cena) created by Leonardo da Vinci in the convent refectory. It is one of the most famous works of art in the world. It vividly depicts the scene when Jesus was dining with the twelve disciples before being arrested by Roman soldiers. He predicted that "one of you will betray me", and the traitor Judas showed a panic expression and secretly clenched his money bag. On August 15, 1943, the church was bombed by Allied aircraft. Most of the convent refectory was destroyed, but the wall painted with "The Last Supper" miraculously survived. "The Last Supper" was severely eroded for various reasons in the years after it was painted. It was carefully restored from 1977 to 1999. In order to protect the murals, the church limits the number of visitors every day. It only allows 25 people to visit for 15 minutes each time. It is best to make reservations in advance.

Pinacoteca Ambrosiana

The Galleria Ambrosiana is located in the first public library in Europe. The building was built in 1609 and has an art gallery. Famous exhibits include Caravaggio's (1571-1610) "Basket of Fruit" (Canestra di frutta, 1599) and Leonardo da Vinci 's (1452-1519) "Portrait of a Musician" (Ritratto di musico , c.1485).

Pinacoteca di Brera

This gallery is one of the most important collections of Italian painting and is housed in the Brera Palace along with the Brera Accademia. Raphael's The Marriage of the Virgin is an important early painting in the collection, as well as Caravaggio's Supper at Emmaus, Tintoretto's The Discovery of the Body of St. Mark and Francesco Hayez's The Kiss.

Villa Reale di Milano

The Royal Villa in Milan was built in the 18th century and was once Napoleon's temporary residence. It houses a modern art gallery that exhibits a large number of works from the 19th century Milan neoclassical period.

Basilica of Sant ' Ambrogio

One of the oldest churches in Milan, it was built by St. Ambrose between 379 and 386. The area where it is located is where countless martyrs who died in Roman persecution are buried. The original name of the church was Basilica Martyrum .

In the following centuries, the building was restored and partially rebuilt several times, and in 1099 it was rebuilt to its current Romanesque appearance. Its flat, cottage-like facade is typical of Lombard medieval architecture. It has two loggias, the lower one with three arches of equal size and the upper one with five arches of different heights, following the roof. Here the Bishop of Milan blessed the people outside the church.

Leonardo da Vinci Museum of Science and Technology

This is a science and technology museum named after Leonardo da Vinci. The building was originally a monastery in the 16th century. It was destroyed by artillery fire during World War II and was rebuilt after the war and completed in 1953.

The museum mainly collects Leonardo da Vinci's relics and models and designs related to him. Among the exhibits, there are a large number of manuscripts that reflect Leonardo da Vinci's scientific imagination. There is a dredging boat he designed to solve the siltation of the canal, and the shape of the dredging shovel is roughly the same as that of modern times; his bicycle drawings, the chain driving the rear wheel is the same as the modern structure; his ideal city architecture drawings and models are very magnificent.

Stadio Giuseppe Meazza / Stadio San Siro

The Meazza Stadium (San Siro Stadium) is located in the San Siro district in the western suburbs of Milan. It is the shared stadium of Milan's two Serie A teams, Inter Milan and AC Milan, and is recognized as the holy land of Italian football. The official name of the stadium is the Meazza Stadium, but the fans of the two teams have different names for the stadium. The stadium can accommodate 85,398 spectators and has three levels of stands. The annual Milan derby is the highlight here.

Milan Fashion Week

Milan Fashion Week is one of the four famous international fashion weeks (Milan, Paris, New York, London Fashion Week), held twice a year, divided into Spring/Summer Fashion Week (September and early October) and Autumn/Winter Fashion Week (February and March), each time holding more than 300 high-level fashion shows in about a month. The brands released include: Gucci, Prada, Versace, Giorgio Armani, Fendi, etc.

Milan Fashion Week is not only a super gathering platform for the world's top brands and big-name designers, but also a fashion show for international celebrities. Every year, Milan Fashion Week attracts a large number of international stars to show their fashion charm to the world.

Dolomites Dolomites

The Dolomites in northern Italy is a prestigious outdoor resort and holiday paradise in Europe. It is also the hometown of high-end mountaineering shoe brands such as Scarpa and Crispi, the originators of outdoor shoes. It is also the birthplace of Via ferrata, an outdoor sport that became popular all over the world after World War I...

The Dolomites belong to the eastern section of the Alps, spanning the two regions of Trentino Alto Adige and Veneto in Italy. There are 18 peaks over 3,000 meters above sea level and 41 glaciers. It is a world heritage site. The canyons are like coiled dragons, and the ridges are like sawtooth, which are all natural and ingenious.

Dolomites is the transliteration of dolomite. These gray-white boulders have various shapes, forming a series of exposed peaks and ridges, which are called "world masterpieces" by the architect Le Corbusier. Every sunset, the mountain peaks will be reflected in pink by the sunset, and the locals call it "Enrosadira" (Light of the Alps).

Dolomites is not a point or a place name, but a unique dolomite mountain system bred by the Alps in northern Italy. It was listed as a World Natural Heritage by UNESCO in 2009 because of its rare and magnificent natural landforms. It is pure and niche enough, with a new view at every step, from delicate to magnificent, from color to shape... Only by hiking deep into it can you appreciate its extraordinary beauty. At different times and seasons, the three-finger peaks can always present different colors. The rock mass here is steep and spectacular, and there is almost no grass on the surface. Walking through it is like walking on the surface of Mars, and people can't help but be impressed by its grandeur.

Cortina d' Ampezzo

Cortina d'Ampezzo is a historic ski resort located in the northern part of the Belluno Province. The winter sports here are well-known in Europe. As early as 1897, skiing competitions were held here, followed by the Alpine Skiing World Championships, the World Winter Games and the 1956 Winter Olympics.

Of course, Cortina d'Ampezzo, known as the "Pearl of the Dolomites", not only has advanced and complete ski resorts, but also has vast, beautiful and ever-changing natural scenery that is even more breathtaking. Although it is located in the mountains, it has convenient transportation, is prosperous and lively, and is full of life. The town is surrounded by mountains, and many Dolomites-specific dolomite peaks stand tall, steep and majestic. The city is bustling with people, and all kinds of restaurants, markets, hotels and entertainment venues are available. Festivals are often held, full of a joyful atmosphere, and it is a must-visit place for traveling to the Dolomites.

With Cortina d'Ampezzo as the center, there are many wonderful and beautiful secret places worth visiting around it, especially in summer, which is very suitable for outdoor sports. Cinque Torri is a hiking route close to Cortina. Many high-altitude trails (Alte Vie) pass through here, and there is also a World War I memorial nearby that is worth visiting. Due to the special location of this place during World War I, you can also see many war relics from the First World War when hiking near the mountain pass. If you are a military history enthusiast, you can go to these tunnels and tunnels to explore and feel the cruelty of the war back then.

Lago di Sorapis is also a scenic spot not far from the town, where you can experience the purest hiking fun. It is 1,923 meters above sea level and is known as "the most beautiful lake in the Dolomites". The lake is rich in minerals and presents a rare turquoise color, like a transparent gem under the sun. The clear water, clear sky, green forests and majestic peaks are like a fairyland.

To the south of the Five Pagodas and to the north of the town of Alleghe, there is a high mountain pasture called Passo Jaou . Giau is located at the foot of Monte Nuvolau (2574 meters above sea level) and Monte dell'Averau (2647 meters above sea level) . It has the most gorgeous dolomite nearby, and at sunset, it is colorful and beautiful.

About 20 kilometers northeast of Cortina, there is another lesser-known but beautiful secret place called Lake Misurina . It is 1,754 meters above sea level, with clear water, fresh environment and almost no pollution. It is a well-known health resort in Italy. It is commented as "one of the most photogenic lakes in Europe and one of the most photographed lakes in landscape photography". Take a leisurely stroll along the lakeside at sunset and you can truly experience what a paradise on earth is. The majestic appearance of the surrounding mountains is reflected on the calm lake surface. The most distinctive one is undoubtedly the rugged and steep Tre Cime di Lavaredo , with the highest point at an altitude of 2,999 meters. Its strange shape and unique shape, like a knife and an axe, are magnificent and majestic, and can be called one of the landmarks of the Dolomites.

At the foot of the Three Peaks is a classic hiking route, the Funas Trail, which is very popular in summer and even crowded. It is 10 kilometers long, with an altitude difference of 340 meters and beautiful scenery. The starting point is at the Rifugio Auronzo . Auronzo , passing the Cappella Degli Alpini), and then arrive at Rifugio Locatelli , which is also the best angle to admire the three peaks.

If you have enough time, you can also visit Lago d' Antorno , which is surrounded by forests and not far from Misurina . The lush trees here make it even more quiet, as if you are the only one talking to the mountains and clouds.

Val Gardena

The Dolomites are a vast area, and it would take at least a month to explore them all. In addition to Cortina d'Ampezzo, there are many famous towns scattered in Val Cismon , Val Funes , Valle Isarco , Val Badia and Val Gardena. They are quite charming and should not be missed. Let's focus on Val Gardena, which is located in the core area of the Dolomites and has scenery that is no less beautiful than Cortina. Passo Gardena can also enjoy the mountains and rivers, and is the only way to Ortisei .

The popularity of the town of Ortisei is comparable to that of Cortina. Whether in winter or summer, the hotels here are almost always fully booked. It is both a ski resort and a hiking paradise. You can take a cable car to the Seceda Mountain in the north of the town . The meadow on the top of the mountain has a wide view, and you can see the famous Puez Geisler Peak in the east from a high altitude . The scenery is so beautiful that you don't want to blink.

Santa Magdalena and the halfway point of the mountain are both popular check-in spots for internet celebrities, especially from the halfway point you can capture the most beautiful scenery of Mount Geisler.

If you want to find a quiet place, Santa Cristina, not far east of Ortisei, is a good choice. It is small, elegant and cozy, with more tranquility and literature, and less hustle and bustle. The neighboring town of Selva is also unique and full of romance.

Sella Pass is 2,218 meters above sea level, located south of Selva, and is also a great viewing point worth visiting. Looking around, you can see many classic and famous peaks. Among them are the towering Langkofel Mountain and the Marmolada Mountain, known as the "Queen of the Dolomites". It is covered with snow, green grass, thousands of rocks and rivers, as if the soul is intoxicated and never wants to wake up.

Crossing the Passo Fedaia , overlooking the highest peak of the Dolomites, Marmolada, from the dam. Then reach the rainbow lake Lago Di Carreza .

Alpin Panorama Hotel Hubertus , infinity pool

Lake Como

Lake Como is located 50 kilometers north of Milan. It is a glacial lake in the Alps with an area of 146 square kilometers . It is the third largest lake in Italy and a famous tourist and summer resort. It is the most famous of the five lakes in the Alpine lake area at the junction of northern Italy and Switzerland. Lake Como is surrounded by mountains and rivers, and is Y-shaped. The lake water is clear and the mountains are beautiful. The most famous attractions are Bellagio and Lenno , where Villa Del Balbianello , which was the filming location of the movie "Star Wars", is located . You can take a cruise to visit the lake area, take a cable car to the town on the mountain to see the beautiful scenery of the lake area, or make an appointment to take a seaplane to travel between the lake and the mountains. It is a very pleasant and relaxing place.

Como is located 40 kilometers north of Milan, Italy, near the Swiss border. It is named "Silk City" because it is located on the shore of Lake Como. It covers an area of 37 square kilometers and has a population of 84K. There are Gothic and Renaissance buildings such as the Town Hall built in 1215 and the 14th-century Marble Church.

Bus parking : Piazza Roma, 1-47 , 22100 Como CO, Italy

Car parking: Arena del Teatro Sociale , Via Vincenzo Bellini, 21, 22100 Como CO ground parking lot. Same entrance and exit, small entrance space.

Como Cathedral (Cattedrale di Santa Maria Assunta) is the cathedral of the Catholic Diocese of Como. The cathedral was built in 1396 and completed in 1770. It combines Gothic, Romanesque and Renaissance architectural styles. The style of Como Cathedral is similar to that of Milan Cathedral. The yellow and white marble walls and the sculptures on the outside are very exquisite. Except that the square is a little smaller, it is not inferior to Milan Cathedral, especially its interior is more upscale. The church has a "frog door", which is named after a frog sculpture on the lintel on the left side of the entrance. Legend has it that touching this frog will bring happiness and joy. Perhaps there are too many people who come here to touch the frog, and the frog has become blurred and black.

Como is the silk town of Italy. In the 14th century, the silkworm industry was introduced from China to Italy and took root in Como. After World War II, the heavy silkworm industry left Como and returned to China, but the final stage of silk weaving remained and became more and more sophisticated. The silk produced locally in Como is world-class in terms of texture, material, workmanship, and printing and dyeing. These precious and exquisite silks are ordered by the top luxury brands. In this small city with a population of less than 90,000, there are 800 companies producing silk and other high-end textiles.

Don't miss the famous Como lobster noodles if you pass by. The best one is called li carrettiere . The location is a bit tricky, but it is very close to the station. The lobster noodles here are delicious and cheap. 19.5 euros per serving, enough for three people, and a plate of grilled or fried seafood

Fornaio , a 50-year-old bakery

Address: Piazza Boldoni,15, 22100, Como, Italy

Bellagio is located in the middle of the herringbone-shaped Lake Como. It is built beside the lake and on the mountain, like a small mountain town by the lake. Looking up the hillside along the lakeshore, stone paths extend upwards one after another. On both sides of the paths are various specialty shops selling local traditional handicrafts, colorful silk products, various leather goods and glittering glassware. Even those stalls selling typical tourist souvenirs to tourists passing by in a hurry. The Bellagio Hotel in Las Vegas, USA, is unique among the top luxury hotels in the gambling city with its magnificent "fountain ballet", and has become one of the most famous local landscapes.

The most famous ice cream shop is Gelateria del Borg

Car parking: Via Lungolago Europa, 5, 22021 Bellagio CO 1.5 euros/hour, coins only

- Bellagio to Co omo is narrow and it is difficult for buses to pass.

Villa Melzi D' EriL (9:30-18:30 from late March to October, ticket price 6.5 Euros per person)

A stroll through this neoclassical garden is a real treat for garden lovers. It was built in 1808 by one of Napoleon's lieutenants, and the whole garden is particularly charming in the spring when it is decorated with azaleas. There are also various sculptures scattered throughout the garden, and it is the first English-style garden on Lake Como.

Villa Balbianello

A garden with a great location by the lake, it descends from a high cliff. The villa was built by Cardinal Angelo Durini in 1787 and is now used to house a variety of collections. Join the guided tour before 16:15 (usually in Italian)

to walk to the villa from Lenno Pier on Tuesdays and weekends , a distance of 1 km; on other days, you need to take a taxi boat from Lecco (7 euros round trip)

Opening hours: mid-March to mid-November (Tuesday and Thursday to Sunday 10:00-18:00)

Varenna is a small town in the middle of Lake Como, Italy.

Bergamo

Car parking: Parcheggio - Piazza Libertà , entrance: Via Zelasco Giovanni e Rodolfo, 7, 24121 Bergamo BG

1 Piazzale Della Repubblica, Bergamo, BG 24122, 24035 Bergamo BG (underground)

Park Bus Bergamo: Via dello Statuto , 43, 24128 Bergamo BG

Funicolare Citta ' Alta, 24123, Via Vittorio Emanuele II, 24036 Bergamo BG Cable Car Station

- Piazza Vecchia There are paid toilets

A city in the Lombardy region in northwestern Italy, located about 40 kilometers northeast of Milan, with an area of 39.6 square kilometers and a population of 121,000 .

Bergamo is characterized by its modern city at the foot of the mountain . bassa (Lower Bergamo) and the medieval city built on the hill alta (Upper Bergamo) . Italian: citt ò It's a town, bassa It means low / short, and alta means tall.

In ancient times, people have lived here. It was an autonomous city in the Roman era and was later conquered by Charlemagne. After the Renaissance, it became part of the Republic of Venice. Walking in the old town, you can still see traces of the Republic of Venice. Later, Napoleon and the Austro-Hungarian Empire ruled here successively until it became part of Italy after the unification of Italy. After the 20th century, Bergamo transformed into one of the most important industrialized cities in Italy, and it was also one of the few Italian cities that was not severely destroyed during World War II.

The most worth visiting is the high city *città alta*, from where you can see the whole of Bergamo, towards the *città Funicolare*. The cable car takes only a few minutes to reach the city *città alta*. If you want to hike, you can also go up the small stairs next to the cable car station and walk for 20 minutes to reach the destination. When you go up the mountain, you will see Porta S. Giacomo, which is the entrance to the ancient city of Bergamo. The entire ancient city of Bergamo is surrounded by a 5-kilometer-long wall. This high city *città alta* has a strong medieval character.

Main Square: Piazza Vecchia and Piazza Duomo. The square is the so-called old square. It is square in shape and is surrounded by the Santa Maria Maggiore Church, Municipal Tower (Torre del Campanone, Civic Tower), Contarini. Surrounded by fountains and libraries, it is almost the center of the upper town. The famous French architect Le Corbusier once said that this square is "so perfect that no stone needs to be moved". The white building in the north of the square has been the library since 1873. The center of the square is surrounded by white marble lions. Contarini The fountain is a tourist attraction surrounded by many tourists to take photos. To the south is Palazzo della Ragione, built in the 12th century, the lion sculpture on the front of the building shows that Venice once ruled this place for a long time. It was destroyed during the Napoleonic era. The original building from the 15th century was copied in the early 20th century. On the other side of the square is the Municipal Tower (Torre del Campanone). Campanone It means a huge bell (Great bell). It was built in the 12th century. In the 14th century, part of it was used as a prison. It has been rebuilt several times. The Municipal Tower is about 52 meters high. You can have a panoramic view of the upper town when you go to the top of the tower. For only 3 euros, you can see the Alps connecting Bergamo, the Lombardy Plain and the upper town. There is an elevator directly to the top of the tower, so you don't have to worry about climbing stairs. There is a big bell on the top of the tower, which will ring 100 times in a row at 10 o'clock every night to remind residents to close their doors and windows, which also means the curfew has begun.

Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore. This church combines the architectural styles of Romanesque, Gothic and Renaissance. The chapel is estimated to have been built around 1472-1476. This church commemorates a famous figure in Bergamo's history: Bartolomeo Colleoni, the commander of a mercenary corps in the 15th century. Colleoni was a native of Bergamo, arrogant by nature, fearless and full of desire for success. Between the rulers of Milan and Venice, he constantly changed his position according to the situation, accumulated a lot of wealth, and even wanted to become the monarch of Milan. When considering his own affairs after death, he felt that it was far from enough to bury his grave in the church. He wanted a memorial church dedicated to his coffin, located next to the square, for everyone to see.

It took him only five years from 1472 to build the church. The design work was handed over to Giovanni Antonio Amadeo, the most promising young designer at the time, and it became one of the most important architectural works of that era. The church will have an unparalleled visual effect on visitors, which is enough to feel the technical level of the designer. Colleoni hopes that his "monument" can overshadow the Cathedral of Our Lady behind. In order to attract people's attention from the larger cathedral, Amadeo designed a large number of exquisite decorations that are enough to attract people's attention. From the octagonal dome and colored marble decorations, we can see that its design style is mainly developed with respect for the church. The front of the chapel is decorated with red, black and white diamond marble. The main entrance is a rose window-shaped round arch, and the arch is a statue quoting biblical stories.

All the decorations in the chapel are dedicated to this general. You will see Colleoni standing with many ancient greats, such

as Hercules in ancient Greek mythology, Moses in the Old Testament, or representatives of Catholic virtues. Even the large rose window is designed to look like a wheel of fortune, and Colleoni, who is at the top of the soldiers, is frozen in the peak of his life, as if facing his great achievements, even time has stopped. The 12 lines radiating from the center of the wheel of fortune are outlined to look like cannons, which is what Colleoni is best at. There are busts of two kings above the two window panes. But Colleoni presents a posture of far more achievements than the king.

The comma-like figure on the iron fence shield at the entrance of the church is the three testicles of a man , all of which are rubbed to shine. Colleoni's original surname was Collinos, which means "testicles" in Italian. He was very proud of his surname and even drew three pairs of testicles on his shield. It is said that touching the brightest one will bring good luck.

The white church next to it is the Duomo . Normally, the cathedral should be the most worth seeing. But in Bergamo, it is the Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore , which looks ordinary .

There are many towers and bell towers of different heights in the ancient city, which are skyscrapers in the Middle Ages. These towers were built by some powerful families here at that time to protect and guard the small city, and also to show others their family's reputation and status here.

Torre del Gombito was built in the 12th century. The special thing about it is that it has only four very small windows at a height of 51.6 meters. Its appearance has not changed much since the Middle Ages. In the small garden of La Rocca , you can take a close look at the row of towers.

From city to alta Next to Piazza Cittadella , there is another small cable car station (Funicolare San Vigilio) that can take you to San Vigilio , which is higher up . Or you can follow the signs and walk up the 162- step Scaletta Scorlazzone ,

The main square Piazza Vecchia , the 538 -year-old Caffè del Tasso , has great gelato

Polenta e osei is a famous local pastry. There is a tradition of eating cornmeal in northern Italy, and this pastry is also made of cornmeal.

Straciatella , the chocolate chip ice cream that is now sold all over the world , originated here in 1962 .

The best gelato in Bergamo : Gelateria La Romana

Via G. Tiraboschi , 42, 24122 Bergamo BG, Italy

Cremona

Car: Parcheggio Saba Piazza Marconi , Piazza Guglielmo Marconi, 26100 Cremona CR (2.1M)

Cremona is a city in the Lombardy region in northern Italy. Cremona is one of the birthplaces of violins, gathering many excellent violin makers and producing the world's finest violins, violas and cellos. The grapes produced locally can be used to produce grape seed oil.

The Cathedral of the Assumption of Our Lady in Cremona (Duomo di Cremona Santa Maria Assunta) is the cathedral of the Catholic Cremona District. It was built in 1107. The cathedral is one of the most famous Romanesque-Gothic buildings in northern Italy. Another annex, the Cremona Baptistery, is also an important medieval building. Its bell tower is the famous Cremona Bell Tower, a symbol of the city. It is 112.7 meters high and is the second tallest brick bell tower in the world, second

only to the bell tower of Landshut Cathedral in Bavaria. The construction was divided into four stages: 1230s, 1250 to 1267, around 1284, and 1309. The fourth floor has the world's largest astronomical clock, built between 1583 and 1588.

Loggia dei The Militi is a historic building in Cremona. According to an inscription on its façade, it was built in 1292. The Loggia was the meeting place for the local militia societies. It consists of two rectangular rooms with the coat of arms of Cremona under the portico.

Statue in Antonio Stradivari Square Antonio Stradivari (1644?-1737) was a string instrument maker (including violins, violas, cellos, guitars and harps, etc.) from Cremona, Italy. He is considered one of the greatest string instrument makers in history.

Trento

In Italy's annual per capita happiness index ranking, there is a city that always ranks among the top. It is not a metropolis such as Milan, Turin, and Rome, nor a tourist hotspot such as Florence, Naples, and Venice, but a somewhat unexpected name - Trento.

Although it is the capital of the Trentino-Alto Adige Autonomous Region, Trento is not very big. The train station seems to occupy almost 1/3 of the city. The train station looks very modern, which is a bit beyond my expectation. The streamlined ceiling and glass curtain wall add a lot of youthful vitality to the historic and quaint city. Trento is located on the Adige River. The Adige River is the second largest river in Italy. It originates from the Alps and flows into the Adriatic Sea. It is 410 kilometers long and has a drainage area of 12,200 square kilometers.

Dante Square is located right opposite the train station. It is the first impression of the city for every distinguished guest who comes from afar. A small square in the downtown area is decorated by locals with the temperament and environment of a park. The warm afternoon sun melts the silence and coldness of the morning in the mountains, and Dante Square is full of vitality. The towering ancient pine trees exude a strong pine scent with the breeze, and the cheerful laughter of groups of children playing can be heard under the mottled shadows of the trees. Although it is winter, the pond in the square is not frozen. Several wild ducks play leisurely in the water, and occasionally climb ashore to bask in the sun. This seems to be their exclusive playground.

On the high platform in the middle of the square stands a bronze statue of Dante, holding a copy of "Divine Comedy" in his left hand, and pointing his right hand to the distant mountains and the flowing Adige River. He lowered his head slightly, staring at the peaceful town and the serene and comfortable life in front of him. Perhaps he can see that the beautiful scenery composed of mountains, rivers and castles is far better than the "paradise" described in the book.

The Duomo Cathedral Square in Trento is less than 1 km away from Piazza Dante, but it vividly shows the other side of the city. The latter is a quiet corner in the bustling city, while the former is a carnival center for indulgence and entertainment. The magnificent and historic Catholic Church is the symbol of the entire city. The pure white exterior walls highlight the holiness, the towering bell tower embodies the solemnity, and occasionally you can hear the pleasant Bible chanting coming from the church.

In the middle of the square stands the beautifully carved Poseidon Fountain. The statue of Poseidon holding a steel fork and riding the wind and waves is majestic and lifelike, adding a touch of artistic atmosphere to the solemn church. The daytime in the northern region is short. Just after 4 pm, the night slowly climbs up from behind the mountains. This does not mean the

end of the day, but the beginning of the real carnival in the church square...

The lights were bright and shining. As Christmas was approaching, the huge Christmas tree also lit up with silver lights, making people feel like falling stars. Several large speakers played dynamic rock music, which created a party atmosphere very appropriately. People who were leaving get off work and school kept pouring into the church from all directions. The bars, restaurants and small shops around the square began to become crowded. Gradually, every chair in sight and even the steps beside the fountain were occupied. The hustle and bustle of talking about everything and the excitement of drinking and toasting echoed in the desolate valley.

Ferrari Trento or Cantine Ferrari is a local brand of sparkling wine and wine in Trento. The production method of sparkling wine is basically the same as traditional champagne, and the fermentation time of the wine ranges from at least 2 years to 15 years.


From 2021 to 2025, Ferrari Trento becomes the official champagne of Formula 1, replacing Carbon Champagne. The sponsorship contract is renewed for three years in 2022. In 2022, Ferrari Trento's vineyards made a breakthrough in William Reed's ranking of the world's best vineyards, rising 50 places in a single period. Ferrari Trento also owns a two-Michelin-star restaurant, Locanda Margon .

Local restaurants:
Ristorante Pizzeria Chistè Trento
Via delle Orne, 4, 38122 Trento

Forsterbräu Trento German beer house
Via Paolo Oss- Mazzurana , 38, 38122 Trento TN, Italy

Verona

Bus Stops	Ponte Aleardi , 37122 Verona VR, Italy (Via Pallone)		
Latitude and longitude	45 degrees north latitude	Equivalent to China ...	Songyuan, Jilin
Area (square kilometers):	206	Population ('000):	260
City status	Located on the Adige River in Veneto, northern Italy, near Lake Adda and Venice, it is a tourist destination and the economic center of the Veneto region. It has a long history and is considered the second largest ancient Roman city in Italy. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Shakespeare's famous work "Romeo and Juliet" is set in this city, which is known as the "City of Love".		
Origin of the name			
Basic historical information	The earliest inhabitants of Verona are believed to be Euganeans (perhaps related to the Etruscans), who were annexed by the Gauls of Cisalpine in 550 BC. The name Verona may also be derived from the Etruscan language, meaning the Venetian city on the Adige River. In 89 BC, Verona became a Roman colony, and in 49 BC, it became an autonomous city with the approval of Caesar. In 452 AD, Attila the Hun (the Hun king), the Scourge of God, swept across Italy		

	<p>and was persuaded to return near Verona by Pope Leo I. Attila subsequently died mysteriously and Leo I was deified.</p> <p>Verona is located at the intersection of many trade routes. The Augustus Via, the Gallic Via and the Bostome Via all pass through Verona, making it an important city in Europe. In the 12th century, the city gained autonomy. In the 13th and 14th centuries, the Scala family ruled Verona for more than 120 years, and the surrounding areas such as Padua, Vicenza and Treviso were also ruled by the Scala family.</p>
City logo	
other	Valpolicella is a famous wine producing area in the Verona area.

The Adige River is the second largest river in Italy after the Po River. It originates from the Alps at the border of Switzerland, Austria and Italy, flows south to Verona, and then flows eastward into the Adriatic Sea.

Verona Arena

The Roman amphitheater is the third largest amphitheater in the world. The first is undoubtedly the Colosseum in Rome, and the second is the Capua Arena near Naples. That theater is not as well preserved as here and can no longer be used as a theater, but is just an open-air museum.

The Verona Arena was built in 30 AD. After two thousand years, it is still well preserved. The oval arena has a long diameter of 138 meters, a short diameter of 109 meters, and a height of 30 meters. The arena is divided into two circles, the inner and outer circles. In the third century AD, a wall was built to protect it. It was destroyed in an earthquake in the 12th century, leaving only four arches and a short section of the wall. The inner circle is divided into two layers, with 72 arches around it. Looking at the appearance of the arena, you can know where the design of today's sports stadiums comes from.

The center of the Verona Arena is the performance venue, and the surrounding steps are the auditorium, which is larger and larger than the previous one, and can accommodate more than 30,000 people. Today, it still plays the role of an open-air theater. During the Verona Opera Festival from June to August every year, many famous plays such as "Turandot", "Aida" and "Carmen" are performed here. More than 500,000 people come here to enjoy opera works, and each performance can be watched by 20,000 people (now limited to 15,000 people for safety reasons). Former German Chancellor Schröder is a loyal audience of the opera performance.

The Verona Arena is well-preserved, and there is a reason for that. It is still used for performances. After continuous renovations, it is a little different from the Roman Arena, with a sense of combining the ancient and the modern. Because it is still usable, Verona has an indissoluble bond with music and opera, and these performances have also made more people know the Verona Arena.

Let's start with the talented musician Mozart, who performed at the Verona Arena when he first visited Italy at the age of 14. The famous composer Vivaldi also performed here. It doesn't matter if you are unfamiliar with Vivaldi's name. When the melody of "The Four Seasons Suite" rings in your ears, you will sigh that such beautiful music comes from the hands of Italian composer Vivaldi. Verona Arena is such a good place to enjoy opera. Back in 1856 and 1859, this ancient theater was used to perform operas by Rossini (representative work "The Barber of Seville") and Donizetti (representative work "The Elixir of Love").

After being abandoned and renovated for several times, the performance of the opera "Aida" here in 1913 brought great glory to the Verona Arena. That year was the 100th anniversary of the birth of Italian composer Verdi. Verona's local singer Zenatello proposed to perform Verdi's famous work "Aida" to celebrate, so he began to rehearse urgently in the arena. Without the use of microphones, the singing heard in the corner of the theater was very beautiful. This made Zenatello, who was still worried about the effect, overjoyed, and officially performed "Aida" on August 10 of that year.

The opera had a huge cast, and it was very suitable to be performed in this open-air arena. It involved 120 orchestral performers, 180 chorus actors, 35 ballet dancers, and 400 extras. The performance even used real cows, horses, and camels. The plot, which was based on Egyptian history, was performed in a grand manner. The entire theater was packed, and even attracted music masters such as Puccini (representative work "Turandot"), Mascagni (representative work "Cavalleria Rusticana"), and Pizzetti (representative work "Fedra"), as well as well-known writers such as Kafka and Gorky.

Nowadays, famous operas are performed here every summer, which has become one of the most important events in the city of Verona every year. It only costs a few euros to visit the Verona Arena on weekdays, but during the summer performance season, it is difficult to get a ticket here, and you have to book it a year in advance. In order to ensure safety and order and to protect cultural relics, each performance is limited to 15,000 people. Famous operas such as "Aida", "Turandot", "La forza del destino", "Gioconda", "La Traviata", "The Artist's Life" and so on are performed in turn. In addition to operas, you can also see Shakespeare's plays and ballet performances here.

Looking up at the open-air arena, you can see stars decorating the Verona sky. There are performers off the stage, and the audience sits on the stone steps. The light sources held by the audience are also like stars, decorating the ancient Verona Arena. And the performers' singing decorates the dreams of everyone who is about to fall asleep on a summer night.

The neoclassical building behind the Arena is called Palazzo Barbieri, named after its designer. It is now the town hall of Verona and was built between 1836 and 1848.

Romeo and Juliet

One of William Shakespeare's famous plays. The story tells that Montague and Capulet are two major families in Verona, but the two families are enemies. Juliet from the Capulet family and Romeo from the Montague family fall in love. Romeo was exiled because he accidentally killed Juliet's cousin. In order to be together, Juliet first took fake poison and planned to elope with Romeo after waking up. However, because the person responsible for telling Romeo the news of Juliet's fake death failed to deliver the message in time, Romeo committed suicide because he did not want to be alone. Juliet woke up and found that Romeo had committed suicide, so she also committed suicide. The story ends with the reconciliation of the two families.

Juliet's balcony Casa di Giulietta

The story of Shakespeare's play "Romeo and Juliet" takes place in Verona. Romeo once proposed to Juliet on the balcony of Juliet's house. This tragic love story and Juliet's balcony have been passed down to future generations. Juliet's former residence is still preserved in Verona, and "Juliet's balcony" in the former residence attracts millions of tourists every year. Although the earliest version of this play took place in Siena rather than Verona, "Juliet's balcony" does not actually exist. The people of Verona have to explain this regrettable fact to the tourists who come here again and again, but for the purpose of tourism, they still built a symbolic balcony in the backyard of the former residence according to Shakespeare's masterpiece for tourists to worship this "holy place of love", and countless tourists' love vows are graffitied on the

walls of the former residence. There is a bronze statue of Juliet under the balcony, and the right breast has been touched by tourists to shine because it is said to bring good luck.

The Scala family

In the 12th century, Verona was ruled by the Scala family . The Scala family here is the Scala of the famous Milan Scala Theater. The Scala Theater was named after Beatrice, the wife of the Grand Duke of Milan, a noble from the Scala family of Verona. The ladders (Scala) that can be seen everywhere in Verona all point to this family. The Scala family cemetery is still in Verona.

Piazza Erbe

This ancient and exquisite square is located in the center of Verona. The ancient Verona Fountain on the square gushes water happily, and a series of medieval buildings such as the Court, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Lamberti Tower surround the square. There is a regular market here every week.

Typical medieval architecture: Merchant's House (Domus Mercatorum)

Palazzo Maffei was once the residence of the Scala family, and its Baroque facade decorated with frescoes is very eye-catching.

The Arco della Costa separates Piazza delle Erbe from Piazza della Signoria and has a whale's rib hanging from it.

Piazza dei Signori

It is centered on the statue of Dante and surrounded by many Renaissance buildings. The Loggia of the Consiglio Town Hall, built in the 15th century, is considered the finest Renaissance building in the area. It is said that the green marble used for decoration came from China, thanks to the trade activities between the Ming Dynasty at that time (Silk Road). On the right is the Palace of the Governors (Palazzo del Podestà or Palazzo del Governo), which was originally a palace built by the Scala family on the ruins of Rome, roughly completed in 1311 during the reign of Cangrande I. Dante and Giotto both lived in this palace.

The statue of Dante in the middle of the square was built in 1865. In 1301, after being exiled from Florence, Dante first went to Verona. From 1312 to 1318, at the invitation of Cangrande I, Dante lived in Verona for another 6 years, living in the newly built Cangrande Palace. Although Cangrande I was a dictator, he was an art lover and patron. In 1321, Dante died in Ravenna and was buried there forever.

of Piazza dei Signori is the beautiful cloister and the cemetery (Arche Scaligere) of the Scala family, a prominent family in Verona. The interior of the cemetery is not open to the public, but even from the outside you can see the magnificent walls engraved with coats of arms and exquisite carvings, as well as the statue of Cangrande I riding on a horse on the roof. Adjacent to the cemetery is the Church of Santa Maria del Fiore, where the tomb of Cangrande I is located.

Palazzo della Ragione was built in 1228. Before the 18th century, the Palazzo degli Giudiciali was mainly used to carry out public administrative affairs, such as courts and notaries. In 1773, the expanded Palazzo degli Giudiciali was mainly used to store judicial archives. The Torre dei Lamberti bell tower can be climbed to overlook the old town of Verona. Since 2007, the Palazzo degli Giudiciali has become the Verona Contemporary Art Gallery, which often hosts important art exhibitions. The works displayed here are mostly about the history and development of Verona from 1840 to 1940. The most distinctive feature is the Judicial Stairs in the courtyard, which are very beautifully shaped. Walking down from it will give you a solemn feeling of traveling back to ancient times.

Lamberti Tower was built in the 12th century.

Verona Cathedral

Verona Cathedral is actually the city's cathedral. It was built in the 11th century and is a combination of Romanesque and Gothic styles. The Gothic rose window was left when the church was renovated in the 14th century, while the Baroque elements on the upper floors were added in the 17th century. The church houses many Renaissance paintings, the most famous of which is the representative painter of the Venetian school, Titian . Vecellio 's "Assumption of the Virgin".

The Castelvecchio Civic Museum houses the works of masters such as Bernini and Caravaggio, and is located in the Castello di Verona. The Castello di Verona was the most important military building during the reign of the Scala family. It had strong defense and practical functions, and very few decorative elements. The M-shaped battlements on the walls of the castle and bridges are the most prominent features, and are also the characteristics of the architecture under the rule of the Scala family. The Castello di Verona was the filming location for the scene in the 2013 film "Romeo and Juliet" where a fight broke out between the two families, leading to Romeo's murder and escape.

Venice

Bus Stops	Tronchetto Coach Drop off & Pick Up Isola Nova del Tronchetto , 311, 30135 Venezia VE, Italy Free for half an hour, ticket required		
Latitude and longitude	45 degrees north latitude	Equivalent to China ...	Songyuan, Jilin
Area (square kilometers):	414,5	Population ('000):	265, 180,000 in mainland China
City status	Venice is a famous tourist and industrial city in northeastern Italy, the "Water City", the capital of the Veneto region, and one of the most romantic cities in Europe. The main island of Venice is 7.8 square kilometers, equivalent to the Summer Palace, with 118 islands, 401 bridges, and 177 waterways. Currently, due to the impact of tourism, the island has a permanent population of only 58,000.		
Basic historical information	<p>The port was first built in 453 BC during the Roman Empire. In the 5th and 6th centuries AD, the Germanic people migrated southward because they could not defeat the Huns. The residents near the Adriatic Sea were threatened by the Germanic people and had to flee to the sea. Finally, they settled on the islands on the inland lagoon, forming the prototype of today's Venice. In the 7th century AD (697), the Republic of Venice began. In 829 AD, a merchant brought back the remains of St. Mark from Egypt, which became the spiritual symbol of Venice.</p> <p>Venice began to develop in the tenth century, relying on maritime trade. Subsequently, Venice gradually established its position as a maritime hegemon by winning or making profits in a number of wars, including fighting off pirates together with the Byzantine Empire, and serving as the starting point for the Fourth Crusade from 1202 to 1204.</p> <p>The strategic location at the top of the Adriatic Sea, as well as its powerful navy and commercial power, made Venice flourish at the time. It was impossible for Western Europe to bypass the Byzantine Empire or Islamic countries to conduct trade exchanges. Small Venice</p>		

	<p>expanded rapidly, controlling the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea and most of the islands in the Aegean Sea, including large coastal areas of Croatia and Greece and two large islands in the Mediterranean, Crete and Cyprus. The local Byzantine culture also had a significant impact on the Venetians, who had been ruled by the Byzantine Empire for centuries.</p> <p>By the end of the 13th century, when it reached its peak, Venice had become the most prosperous city in Europe, with more than 3,300 ships and 36,000 sailors. It dominated commercial activities between Europe and Asia and looked down upon all directions. It was a rare region in the Middle Ages that believed in Catholicism but was not bound by the Pope of Rome. The local archbishop was nominated by the Senate, and the consul would then inform the Pope.</p> <p>In the 14th century, Venice defeated Genoa and established its maritime hegemony. After Constantinople was occupied by the Ottoman Empire in 1453, many treasures looted from the Byzantine Empire were brought back to Venice, including the symbol of Venice - the Winged Lion of St. Mark. After the 15th century, the Asian trade center moved from the Mediterranean to the Indian route. Venice's maritime power was no longer so important. Portugal became the main medium for trade between Europe and the East. In 1797, Napoleon invaded Venice, ending the thousand-year history of the Republic of Venice.</p>
City logo	 <p>Features of the water city (water lanes, gondolas, floods) When there is a flood, table boards are used to pave the bridge. There are two tides a year, and people are not allowed to live on the first floor</p> <p>Wood piles, underwater forest (wet thousand years, dry thousand years)</p>
other	<p>(Sightseeing time is generally within 2 hours)</p> <p>Venetian Mask</p>

Venice floodgates

Floods have always been a serious problem for Venice. There was even a saying that floods would engulf Venice by the end of this century. After many twists and turns, a new \$3 billion flood gate construction project was finally scheduled to start in October 2009. Despite this, some scientists still have objections to the project. They believe that on the one hand, the implementation of the project will damage the ecological environment; on the other hand, the rising sea level caused by global warming will cause the project to fail. Water was once the patron saint of Venice, but it has become Venice's biggest enemy. Every 100 years, Venice sinks 1.3 centimeters. After World War II, in order to meet the needs of industrial and agricultural development, people exploited a large amount of groundwater. Although this behavior was later banned, the consequences were irreversible: the entire city sank 30 centimeters in 20 years, and St. Mark's Square, the center of Venetian life, was only 30 centimeters above the warning water level. Whenever a flood occurs, St. Mark's Square will be submerged 10 centimeters below the water surface, and the situation is getting worse. In 1966, Venice suffered a major flood, and the water level in the city reached 1 meter. In January 2001, Venice suffered the worst flood in its history. The flood lasted for four days and four nights, and most of the city was submerged in water. Since 1951, 90,000 people have left Venice, and the current 60,000 citizens are very worried that a flood like the 1966 flood will happen again. For this reason, some people have proposed to build 79 floating sluice gates, which will separate the lagoon from the Adriatic Sea once the water level exceeds the warning line by 1 meter. Similar flood control gates have been built in London, England and Rotterdam, the Netherlands,

but these gates look very inconsistent with the entire city. However, the Italian government is convinced that they will not follow suit, because when the water is normal, the 300-ton sluice gates are filled with water and remain stationary at the bottom of the water, invisible to people. When the flood level is about to exceed the warning line by 1 meter, air is injected into the sluice gates, the water is discharged, and the sluice gates will float up. When the water level drops, the sluice gates are refilled with water to sink to the bottom of the water. Many environmental organizations oppose the construction of sluice gates. They believed that the long-term isolation of the lagoon from the Adriatic Sea would cause the lake water to stagnate, thus threatening the organisms in the lake. Therefore, the relevant parties implemented a number of supplementary plans. Among the supplementary plans, the most daring one is to fill the ground and foundations of the low-lying areas of the city to 1 meter, which can not only protect the areas most vulnerable to floods from water damage, but also avoid the activation of sluice gates when it is not necessary. So far, 960 hectares of low-lying land have been filled, completing 80% of the target task. The entire project is expected to be completed in 2017.

In October 2015, UNESCO sent a team to Venice to investigate and wrote a 78-page report. They pointed out that the boats on the canals of Venice were in chaos and lacked a unified management policy. In particular, the cruise ships passing through the lagoon in front of Piazza San Marco were the biggest threat to the water city. Every year, 700 large ships like tall buildings on the sea pass by in front, which not only cause pollution, but also aggravate the erosion problem in Venice. Too many tourists have seriously affected the lives of local residents. Last year, the total number of tourists reached 30 million, while there were only 56,000 local residents in the center of the ancient city. UNESCO asked the Venice authorities to propose emergency response measures before February 2017, otherwise they will be blacklisted and may eventually be removed from the list.

Gondola

It is the unique and most representative traditional rowing boat in Venice, Italy. For centuries, gondola has been the main means of transportation in Venice.

The gondola is about 12 meters long and 1.7 meters wide. It is a black flat-bottomed boat with gorgeous decorations. The two ends are high and crescent-shaped. The hook-shaped bow can easily explore the height of the bridge hole. The entire bow of the gondola is in an "S" shape. The bow is covered with steel skin. There are 6 copper decorations with steel teeth on the tip of the boat, which symbolize the hat of the Governor of Venice and the 6 administrative districts in the center of Venice. The horizontal bar on the other side (plus the 6 steel teeth on the other side, it can be regarded as the 7th steel tooth) represents the crescent-shaped Giudecca Island (Giudecca) far away from St. Mark's Square. Each gondola is driven by a gondolier. The gondolier stands on the left side of the stern of the boat, facing the bow, and pushes the water in the water on the right side of the boat with a single oar. The hull adopts an asymmetrical design. When moored and sailing, the hull tilts slightly to the right. When sailing, it can offset the weight of the gondolier standing on the left and the paddling of the oar, so that the gondola can move straight and avoid turning in circles.

Gondolas are completely handmade. It takes more than 280 pieces of wood from eight different types of wood to make a gondola, and the cost is about 100,000 euros. In order to maintain a good appearance, gondolas must be repaired from time to time. Today, there are only a few hundred gondolas left in Venice. The appearance of gondolas was originally of various designs. In the 16th century, gondolas were extremely gorgeous. Nobles often rode gondolas decorated with satin and silk and exquisitely carved to show off their wealth. In order to curb this extravagant atmosphere, the Venetian government issued a decree in 1562, stipulating that all gondolas must be painted black and unified its specific style, which has been maintained to this day.

The Bridge of Sighs Sospiri

One of the most famous bridges in Venice. Completed in 1600, it is an early



Baroque style. The closed arch bridge is made of limestone and is shaped like a house. The upper part is covered with a dome. The closed arch bridge has only two small windows on the stone beam facing the canal. The Bridge of Sighs spans the Rio di Palazzo River and was designed by Antoni Contino, whose uncle Antonio da Ponte was the designer of the Rialto Bridge.

The Bridge of Sighs was named by Lord Byron, a British poet and "a master of romantic literature" in the 19th century. At that time, the bridge was used to pass serious criminals. It was a closed arch bridge to prevent serious criminals from jumping into the water. It connects the Doge's Palace in Venice and the prison. The court is on the second floor of the Doge's Palace. Only important political prisoners and economic prisoners who have been tried in the court are qualified to walk across the bridge to the death row on the opposite side. The death row is dark and there is almost no chance of survival. Therefore, the criminals know that once they walk on this bridge, it means there is no return. Through the two small windows on the bridge, take a last look at the free sky and sigh. The "Bridge of Sighs" got its name from this. The old people in Venice also call this bridge the Bridge of the Dead. There are many thieves on the bridge, especially in summer. Don't look at the Bridge of Sighs. If you sigh, your things will be lost.

Statue next to the Bridge of Sighs: Noah in a drunken state. Biblical story: Noah escaped the flood in an ark, and he and his sons Shem, Ham, Japheth, their wives and the animals on the boat survived. God had hoped that his second venture would have a successful start, but Noah got drunk, and his youngest son Ham laughed at his father's drunken state, so Noah drove him to Africa and he became the ancestor of black people. The descendants of Shem and Japheth later did something that displeased God, and were driven to the Euphrates River Basin and built the city of Babylon. When they were building the tower, God suddenly made them forget their common language and speak different languages. Some spoke English, some spoke Russian, some spoke Chinese, and some spoke Polynesian, so they had to break up and go their separate ways.

Palazzo Ducale

Also translated as the Doge's Palace, it is a Gothic building that was once a government agency and court, and also the residence of the Doge of Venice. The Doge's Palace is to the south of the Venice Lagoon, to the west of St. Mark's Square, and to the north of St. Mark's Basilica. It was built between 1309 and 1424. It was damaged by a fire in 1574, and the reconstruction continued the original Gothic style, but also had some classical features. It is now a museum where you can enjoy paintings of Venice depicted by Tintoretto and Veronese.



The Doge was the governor of the Republic of Venice, elected by the parliament composed of nobles. Several Doges passed the position of governor to their own family members, so in 1172, it was enacted that the position of Doge could not be passed on privately, and it was stipulated that it must be elected by the 40-member noble parliament. Most Doges were held by respected elders. The Doge was a lifelong system, and it lasted until death. In 1229 AD, the two candidates for Doge each received 20 votes, and both sides refused to give in, so the parliament was changed to 41 people to avoid a tie again. Don't think that you can do whatever you want after you are elected as a Doge. The Doge is just a servant elected by the nobles to serve the people. The real big things are decided by the Senate composed of 120 people and the three giants of the Senate. In addition to general administration, the Doge's own behavior cannot be too excessive. There is a Grand Council chamber in the Doge's Palace that can accommodate 2,000 people. There is a frame where the portraits of the previous Doge are displayed. There is no portrait on it because the Doge was too excessive and was "executed" by the Senate.

's Palace has experienced two fires in total , and what we see now is the third reconstruction. The floor in the Doge's Palace looks like marble , and it will shake slightly when someone walks nearby , just to reduce the weight. The main structure is wood , and the floor is also wooden , with only a thin layer of small marble on the surface , and then polished to form the floor we see. There are many paintings by masters in the Doge's Palace , such as the huge painting left by Tsukino in the hall , which was unfortunately damaged in the fire . When it was restored , it was not as bright as before. On the lintel of the Doge's Palace is the Doge wearing a Doge hat , and the symbol of Venice – the flying lion .

Piazza San Marco

In the whole of Venice, only Piazza San Marco is qualified to be called "Piazza (Italian for square)", while other squares, no matter how big or small, are only qualified to be called " Campi ". Campi means almost the same as "a piece of open space" in Chinese.



Piazza San Marco: First built in the 9th century, it was expanded to its current size in 1177. It is about 170 meters long, 80 meters wide on the east side, and 55 meters wide on the west side. The two stone pillars used to be the national gate of Venice. This national gate is very special, that is, there is no wall or garrison, because water is the natural barrier of Venice. Before Columbus's Age of Discovery, Venice was the gateway to Europe, and its fleet dominated the Mediterranean. Trade between the East and the West was completely controlled by the Venetians. Standing on the two pillars are the patron saints of Venice in different periods. The person on the right hand holds a spear in one hand and a shield in the other, and steps on a crocodile. This is the patron saint of ancient Greece, St. Theodore. The crocodile symbolizes the dragon. Taming the dragon means taming the sea and blessing peace. The flying lion on the left hand is the current patron saint, the incarnation of St. Mark. It is the symbol of Venice. Seeing this flying lion in any international occasion represents Venice. The highest award of the Venice Film Festival, the oldest film festival in the world and one of the three major film festivals in Europe, is called the Golden Lion Award, which is a smaller version of the flying lion. China's Zhang Yimou, Jia Zhangke, Ang Lee, and Hou Hsiao-hsien have all won the Golden Lion Award. There are rules for walking through the national gate. If you walk from the outside to the inside, you are a VIP, but don't walk from the inside to the outside, because in the past, death row prisoners were taken out and beheaded from here. Real Venetians enter through the main gate and exit through the side gate. They don't go out from the middle of the national gate.

The Governor's Palace on the small square was the former political center. The beautiful building opposite was once the Royal Library, and is now the National Library, which is the cultural center of Venice.

Piazza San Marco: Highest water level mark, November 10, 1966. Piazza San Marco is the largest square in Venice, where major political, religious and cultural events are held. On both sides are the old and new parliament halls. Venice was once a republic, where the supreme head of state, the governor, was elected by the senators, who worked here. The old parliament hall is more than 700 years old, while the new parliament hall is more than 600 years old. The new parliament hall has steps, while the old parliament hall does not. The building connecting the old and new parliament halls is called the Napoleon Wing, also known as the Napoleon Palace. The neoclassical Napoleon Wing (Ala Napoleonica) has Greek-style arches with reliefs of ancient gods. During his brief reign in Venice, Napoleon forcibly left his mark. Around 1810, he demolished the wings of the old and new administrative residences and the San Geminiano Church (Chiesa di San Geminiano) connecting the two buildings and changed them to their current appearance. It is said that this caused strong

hostility from the Venetians; Napoleon often received guests in Piazza San Marco, which he called the most beautiful living room in the world, and only the blue sky and white clouds were qualified to be its roof. The part where the new parliament building and Napoleon's wing are connected is now the famous Museo Correr, which houses various old objects such as statues, paintings, coins, ancient maps, weapons, navigation equipment and governor's supplies from Venice throughout the ages;

On the right, between the old administrative palace building and St. Mark's Basilica is the St. Mark's Clock Tower (Torre dell'Orologio). The bell tower is 98 meters high and is the tallest building in Venice. It is now an observation tower. The history of the bell tower can be traced back to the end of the 15th century. The large bell designed for navigation purposes can be seen throughout the lagoon, showing off Venice's wealth and glory from a high position. The bronze statues of two Moors striking the bells at the top of the bell tower are particularly eye-catching. At every hour, the two brothers will strike the bells with hammers in their hands to tell the time. The arch under the bell tower leads to the city's main street Merceria, connecting St. Mark's Square with the city's commercial center Rialto. Below is the Christian Annunciation Angel statue, the flying lion of St. Mark on the left, and the goddess of justice on the right, the symbol of the city. There are four white windows on the top, where astronomer Galileo tested the world's first astronomical telescope. The most critical component of a telescope is the lens. Under the conditions at that time, to obtain a good lens, you must come to Venice. The Venetians invented optical lenses as early as the 13th century. Galileo got the lens in Venice and tested his astronomical telescope here. The world's largest eyewear group is located near Venice, precisely because of this historical heritage. Many famous brands of lenses are made by them, with an annual output value of 8.9 billion euros. Its owner is the second richest businessman in Italy.

Piazza San Marco is the lowest point in Venice, so it is the first place in Venice to be flooded during high tide and heavy rain. There are two famous coffee houses on the Grand Piazza. Caffè Florian has a white canopy and opened in 1720. It is the earliest coffee house in Italy. The interior decoration of the coffee house retains the appearance of the early 19th century, with marble tabletops, red velvet seats, and exquisite Rococo walls. It is divided into several coffee rooms such as the Chinese Room, the Oriental Room, the Four Seasons Room, the Mirror Room and the Liberty Room. Byron, Goethe, Dickens, Chateaubriand, Rubinstein and Hemingway all loved to come here for a drink. Venetians especially love this ancient place. The "Hemingway Chair" with a small bronze plaque "Ernest Miller Hemingway" on the back of the chair by the window is particularly famous. It is said that "The Old Man and the Sea" was born on this seat. If you also want to sit in a chair and compose a piece like Hemingway, you can put aside your extravagant hopes: it is not easy to sit in a chair or take a photo without waiting in line for a while.

Caffè Lavena and Caffè Quadri on the opposite side of the old administrative palace building are equally famous. The former is favored by the great composer Wagner, while the latter has Stendhal, Alexandre Dumas, Proust and other big-name customers. The "Oil Painting" Café (Caffè Quadri), which opened in 1775, was invested by Austrians. At that time, the relationship between the Republic of Venice and the Austro-Hungarian Empire was tense, so Quadri became a stronghold for pro-Austrian people, while Florian on the opposite side was the camp of localists. Time flies, and today these two countries have disappeared, but the cafes on the north and south sides of the square still maintain the rhythm of competing with each other. The supporting bands of both sides take turns to perform, playing their own extraordinary performances in the noise of the square all day long. When there are performances in summer, a cup of coffee and a seat for the performance cost about 20 euros. Piazza San Marco is also the most romantic square. Venetians often say that people who come here for their honeymoon usually come in groups of two and leave in groups of three or four.

- The price difference between drinking while standing and drinking while sitting.
- Meeting point, clearly marked

St. Mark's Basilica

St. Mark's Basilica was built in 828 AD. It is the Catholic cathedral of Venice, the religious center of Venice, and the largest and most magnificent church among the 120 churches in Venice. The inauguration of the Governor of Venice and the mass were both held here. It was opened to the public as the main church in 1807. The church is dedicated to the current patron saint of Venice, St. Mark. There are two Marcos in Venice, one is St. Mark and the other is Marco Polo. St. Mark is a saint and Marco Polo is a businessman, and the difference between the two is more than a thousand years. St. Mark is the grandson of Jesus and the disciple of St. Peter. The Old Testament of the Bible is the covenant between God and the Jews, and the New Testament is the new covenant between God and Christians. There are four gospels in the New Testament, Matthew, Mark, John, and Luke. The author of the Gospel of Mark is St. Mark. The statue of St. Mark is located at the highest point of the dome of the cathedral, with a halo on his head and a book in his hand, which is the Gospel of Mark. Below is a golden lion, which is his incarnation.

St. Mark was originally a missionary in Alexandria, Egypt, but was strangled to death. In the 9th century AD, Egypt became a Muslim-ruled region, and Muslims destroyed Catholic churches and holy relics everywhere. Two Venetian merchants, in order to protect the holy bones of St. Mark, In 828 AD, the remains of St. Mark were smuggled back to his hometown from Alexandria, Egypt. They commissioned two Moors to steal the holy bones. In order to conceal their tracks, they covered the holy bones with fresh pork. Since Muslims considered pork unclean, they were able to pass through customs smoothly. At that time, Venice had just gotten rid of the rule of the Byzantine Empire and was in urgent need of finding a reason to enhance the city's reputation and status. In the Middle Ages, when divine power was above all else, the emergence of news about holy objects and miracles had a great impact on the people and was the best shortcut for a city to increase its popularity. Therefore, the trick of stealing the remains of the saint emerged from the minds of the cunning Venetians, and as the author of the Gospel of Mark, one of the four gospels, St. Mark's status obviously met their requirements.

After the skeleton arrived, the Senate of Venice immediately passed a proposal to nominate St. Mark as the new patron saint of the city (poor St. Theodore, the original patron saint of the city, was not strong enough after all), and quickly built a church with a mausoleum to protect and commemorate the remains of the saint. As for the name of the church, it was of course named after St. Mark. This was the 1.0 version of the cathedral. Four years later, the simple St. Mark's Basilica was renovated and rebuilt. The 2.0 version of the new church lasted for more than 100 years and was burned down in a city rebellion in 976 AD; the St. Mark's Basilica we see now is the third version, which was formed in 1063 and completed in 1094. Legend has it that when the cathedral was rebuilt for the third time, the remains of St. Mark were hidden in the pillars of the church for safety reasons, but they disappeared strangely. It was not until 1094 when the church was completed that they were rediscovered by Vitale Faliero, the then governor of Venice, next to the pillars. Such a coincidence, whether you believe it or not, the Venetians believed it anyway.

The church, which was rebuilt three times, finally has a dazzling and magnificent posture. The length of the front reaches 51.8 meters and is divided into two levels: the lower level has five circular arches, decorated with gorgeous marble columns, exquisite lunette windows, bronze doors and a series of reliefs and gilded mosaics; the upper level starts from the Renaissance fence at the top of the arch, decorated with complicated statues and murals. The church reflects different styles in different periods. The main

body is Byzantine style. From the 15th century, as Portugal and Spain opened the Age of Discovery, Venice began to decline from prosperity, and Venice's status as an international trade center gradually lost its security. The shrewd and pragmatic Venetians immediately began to embrace the thighs of the West, and their cultural aesthetics gradually converged with Western Europe. So in the 15th century, St. Mark's Basilica was mixed with a large number of Gothic decorations such as pointed arches and statues; in the 17th century, a wave of Renaissance decorations were added, such as the columns under the arches.

The most beautiful part of the church is the murals on the arches. These murals are not painted, but are inlaid with pieces of crystal glass and metal, which are special products of Venice. The golden color is because of the inlay of 24K gold foil. The murals on the roof of the church are also inlaid murals. More than 8,000 square meters of murals used a total of 6 tons of gold, so it is also called the Golden Cathedral. It is magnificent under the sun. The murals tell the stories of the Bible, which makes it easier for illiterate people to understand the Bible.

At the commanding height in the center of the front stands the statue of St. Mark holding the Gospel of Mark and surrounded by six angels; on the pointed arch facade decorated with typical Byzantine starry sky patterns at his feet, the golden city symbol – a winged lion is particularly eye-catching, with the lion's left foot holding a page of the holy book, on which is engraved the Latin oracle of God: "Rest in peace, Mark, my evangelist."

Although the Venetians have also found various excuses to whitewash their theft: for example, they argued that the Venetian merchants smuggled the remains out to protect the holy relics, because the Muslim-ruled Alexandria was planning to burn the remains of St. Mark; or they concocted a myth that St. Mark was almost shipwrecked in Venice when he was preaching in Europe, and an angel came to his rescue and predicted that he would coexist with Venice. But in general, the Venetians' attitude towards this period of history of taking other people's treasures for themselves is exactly the same as when deciding the style of the church: "I did it, what can you do about it?"

Above the five arches of the cathedral, mosaics of St. Mark's deeds with different themes are magnificently decorated, revealing the smugness of the Venetians after their conspiracy succeeded:

- ▲ The first painting: "St. Mark entering St. Mark's Basilica"
- ▲ The second painting: "The remains arrive in Venice";
- ▲ The third painting: The Last Judgment, with the arch in the center;
- ▲ The fourth painting: "Hymn to the Myth of Saint Mark";
- ▲ The fifth painting: "The Return of the Remains of St. Mark".

The last painting in particular records in detail the process of Venetian merchants concealing the truth: they covered the remains of St. Mark with pork, and took advantage of the Muslim custom of not touching pork to fool the inspectors, thus successfully transporting the remains out.

In 1202, the 41st Doge Enrico **Dandolo** , who was blind but not blind in heart, solemnly swore in front of **St. Mark's Basilica** and led the Venetians to join the **Fourth Crusade**, which brought unexpected wealth and gains to Venice. Under Dandolo's command, the Crusaders not only failed to reach the Holy Land of Jerusalem, which was supposed to be recovered, but also plundered all the way from Zadar on the east coast of the Adriatic Sea to Constantinople, the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire (now Istanbul). This long march not only allowed the Crusaders to conquer the capital of the Orthodox Church, but also brought the Republic of Venice 3/8 of the vast territory of the former Eastern Roman Empire (including many ports along the Aegean Sea

and the Adriatic Sea and the island of Crete). The four bronze horse statues standing above the central arch of the cathedral are the spoils of that expedition. The history of these four bronze sculptures, now called "Horses of St. Mark", can be traced back to ancient Greece. They are said to be from the hands of the great sculptor Lysippos in the 4th century BC. The Byzantine Emperor Theodosius II transported the bronze horses from their place of origin, Chios Island, to Constantinople, where they were placed outside the Hippodrome of Constantinople for several centuries. In 1254, the Venetians decorated their own cathedral with the stolen bronze horses until Napoleon moved them to Paris after conquering Venice. Soon after, with the fall of Napoleon, the bronze horses returned to Venice. However, the four bronze horses on the door of the cathedral are only replicas to prevent corrosion from sea breezes, while the priceless originals are collected in the museum inside the church.

When you walk into the church, you will understand that the title of "Golden Cathedral" is well-deserved: the sky above the entire church is completely covered with mosaics with a total area of more than 4,000 square meters. The elegance and brilliance of gold, copper and various gems will make people dizzy and weak in the knees for a moment.

The themes of the mosaics depict the preaching of the Twelve Apostles, the Passion of Christ and portraits of various saints. Since these mosaics need to be frequently repaired and replaced, many great painters such as Paolo Uccello, Castagno, Paolo Veronese, Tintoretto and his son Domenico Tintoretto have participated in the painting work here.

d'Oro) at the deepest part is the treasure of the church. It is located behind the tomb of St. Mark. The 3.48-meter-wide and 1.4-meter-high golden screen is inlaid with more than 80 tiles depicting Jesus, the Virgin Mary and St. Mark, and is decorated with more than 2,500 diamonds, rubies, pearls, topazes, emeralds, amethysts and other treasures. People can't help but marvel again: where did Venice get so many treasures?

After capturing Constantinople in 1204, the Crusaders carried out a frenzied looting and destruction of the great city that lasted for several days. They smashed the jewel-encrusted altar in Hagia Sophia into pieces and divided them among themselves, led horses into the church to carry gold and silver, and even let a prostitute sit on the patriarch's seat and sing obscene songs.

The rule set by the Venetian government in 1075 (when St. Mark's Basilica was being built) that "all ships returning to Venice from overseas must hand in a precious gift to decorate the House of St. Mark" also brought countless treasures to the cathedral. Today, in the museum of the cathedral, you can still see these spoils and tributes from all over the world.

Although the glory of the cathedral is no longer comparable to its glorious past, the shrewd Venetians have not given up the idea of making another fortune from these treasures: free entry to the cathedral is obviously just a bait, and the jeweled golden altar, museum and church cloisters all require separate payment.

Under the magnificent dome, St. Mark's Basilica has countless stories to tell: the marble floors paved with opus sectile and opus tessellatum techniques , the porphyry statue of the Four Emperors in the southwest corner, the paintings painted by local Titian for the sacristy, the Chapel of St. Isi famous for its mosaics, and the Baptistry.

Venetian crystal glass production process

In the early 16th century, Murano glassmakers invented the method of making colorful glass from colorless and transparent glass according to a certain formula. For example, copper or cobalt compounds were added to the glass to make blue glass. The most famous Murano blood-red glass was made by adding gold according to a secret recipe. Murano glassmakers also invented the technology of fusing multiple layers of glass of different colors to create mixed-color glass, and invented a variety of high-quality glass varieties.

The popular saying in the upper class of medieval Europe was: Chinese ceramics, Venetian glass. Chinese ceramics, tea, and Indian spices all entered Europe via Venice. Venetian crystal glass was a commodity for trade exchange between the East and the West. Crystal glass was once a luxury item exclusively for princes and nobles. The crystal chandeliers, mirrors, cups, and tea sets used in major European palaces such as the Palace of Versailles, the Louvre, the Schönbrunn Palace, and the Palace of Sanssouci were all customized in Venice. The luminous cup in the Chinese ancient poem "Grape wine and luminous cup" refers to this kind of glass. Glass craftsmen can wear swords and marry the daughters of nobles. Glass is the pillar industry of Venice. Glass craftsmen are so important to Venice that they are forbidden to leave Venice to prevent the outflow of technology. If you leave the island without permission, the lightest punishment is to have your hands and feet broken, and the worst is to be beheaded. After more than a thousand years, the technology of making crystal glass has spread throughout Europe. Now you can see the production of crystal glass in Germany, Romania and other places.

Enrico Dandolo

In 1192, Enrico Dandolo became the 41st Doge of Venice. He was over 70 years old at the time, and despite his old age and blindness, he was still ambitious.

In 1202, the Crusaders gathered in Venice. The key reason for the change in the goal of the Fourth Crusade was the transportation agreement signed between the Crusaders and Venice. In April 1201, the six representatives of the Crusaders agreed to pay 85,000 silver marks to the Venetians, and the Venetians provided enough ships to transport 4,500 horses, 4,500 knights, 9,000 followers and 20,000 infantry (a total of 33,500 people) to the battlefield, and sent 50 single-deck sailing ships to escort the transport fleet. The Crusaders' negotiators obviously overestimated the number of troops. On the agreed departure date of June 29, 1202, less than half of the Crusaders arrived in Venice, and they could only take out 51,000 silver marks at most.

The Doge of Venice, Enrico Dandolo, was furious. The Venetians, whose country was founded on commerce and trade, had spent a year preparing for the expedition. All other business opportunities had been abandoned, and all the docks were used to build ships for the Crusaders. And because the Crusade was delayed, the Venetians had to provide additional accommodation and food supplies. The Venetian government was facing a serious financial crisis and even a food crisis. Dandolo almost imprisoned the Crusaders in tents on the island of San Nicola near Venice, and threatened to cut off food and water supplies if they were not paid in full.

Dandolo took the opportunity to take revenge on the Crusaders and attacked the Hungarian port of Zara. On November 24, Zara was captured and looted. The Pope then excommunicated the entire Crusaders and the Venetians. After the Crusaders returned the loot to the King of Hungary and vowed not to attack Christians again, the Pope lifted the punishment for the morale of the Crusaders and the expected crusade. But the Venetians did not admit their mistakes and the punishment remained. At this time, Alexius Angelus (later Alexius IV), the son of the deposed Byzantine Emperor Isaac II, asked Enrico Dandolo to help him regain his position

on the condition that he would help the Crusade in the future.

Dandolo had mixed feelings about Byzantium. Venetian merchants had many privileges in the Byzantine Empire, even rights that Greek merchants in Byzantium did not have. In 1171, all Venetians in the Venetian Concession in Constantinople were arrested and merchant ships were seized. Dandolo, then ambassador to Byzantium, rescued 5,000 Venetians, but since then, most of Venice's trade privileges have been transferred to its competitors Pisa and Genoa. In 1182, a massacre against Latin Europeans occurred in Constantinople, and the Venetians suffered again. During Dandolo's tenure as governor of Venice, Alexius III, who usurped the throne, still favored Pisa and Genoa in commercial trade policy. In helping the prince ascend the throne, Dandolo obviously considered Venice's economic interests and had revengeful motives.

However, under the strong lobbying of Boniface and Dandolo, who had a strong motive for revenge, the main fleet of the Crusaders finally sailed to Asia Minor. In 1204, Constantinople was captured and looting, destruction and massacre were carried out for three days and three nights. Hagia Sophia was looted, the Royal Library was burned, and more than one-sixth of the city was destroyed. A large number of authentic religious relics were transported back to Western Europe. Afterwards, it was calculated that the value of the looted property was as high as 500,000 silver marks. Enrico Dandolo played an important commanding role in it. In 1205, Enrico Dandolo died and was buried in Hagia Sophia.

Venetian Mask

"mask" (maschera) comes from the Lombard "maska", which means a dead person or the soul of a dead person. Venice's mask culture is unique in European civilization. It is one of the few cities where masks are integrated into daily life. Venetians have a long history of using masks as part of their daily lives. Venetians have an unwritten rule that they never deliberately reveal the identity of the masked person. Therefore, masks have made Venetians indulge themselves. Venice is too small. In order to indulge their nature without losing their dignity, Venetians have had a tradition of using masks to conceal their identities since the Middle Ages. Although people never know exactly when Venetians began to wear masks, they know that as early as the 13th century AD, there were laws regulating the use of masks. Before the 18th century, Venetian residents' lives were completely inseparable from masks. People, both men and women, had to wear masks and cloaks when they went out. This tradition continued until the end of the 18th century, when Napoleon led his troops south and conquered Venice, disintegrating the "masked guests" who had been surviving for many centuries, and the masked guests disappeared from then on. However, the Venetians have never changed their bold character. In 1979 AD, Venice restored the Carnival and masks became popular again.

The biggest feature of the Venice Carnival is its masks, followed by its gorgeous costumes. This tradition can be traced back to 1,700 years ago. The custom of the Carnival originally originated from the Venetian nobles who liked to hide their identities and go to the casino to gamble. Later, it evolved into the most exotic and colorful festival in Europe. Carnival means carnival, and Carnal means flesh and lust. It can be seen that the Carnival is a festival for people to indulge. The princes and nobles put on exaggerated masks and gorgeous retro costumes, gathered by the river or took a night boat cruise. The masks concealed everyone's true identity, so people could revel without any scruples.

The Venice Carnival is one of the three most famous carnivals in the world. The Venice Mask Carnival is held on different dates every year, starting roughly from the day before Lent between early February and early March, and lasting for about two weeks. Masks have now become a symbol of the Venice Carnival, and mask makers have both followed ancient methods and continued to innovate. They spread layers of paper on

the clay model, and after it dries, a layer of glue on the surface makes the face look like porcelain. Before digging the eye holes and decorating, they must first be polished and coated with a layer of white glaze. Masks are basically based on theatrical shapes, and the themes are divided into two types, one representing brilliance and joy, and the other is to drive away evil and bless the soul. These masks have different styles and shapes, including the death of the skull mask, the noblewoman with a silver face, the cat with a weird curly beard, the colorful owl with golden patterns, and so on. There are all kinds of exquisite and gorgeous Venetian masks, each of which is expensive, and the most common and ordinary small mask costs 8 euros. At the carnival, the most common dress is a hat, a black silk or velvet cloak and a black or white mask. If you don't want to spend money on a mask and want to join in the fun, you can also ask a local street artist to paint an impromptu mask on your face for only 2 euros. Taiwan's "Foodie Players" program has an episode dedicated to the Venice Carnival, which can be watched online if you are interested.

Venetian masks are generally divided into:

1. Traditional Venetian masks, such as Bauta, larva , etc.
2. Stage masks are props commonly used in European dramas, so these masks have certain "personalities".
3. Now the fantasy mask, this is a new mask style created by the creativity of mask art artists.

These masks, with rich styles and exquisite workmanship, have become the city symbol of Venice and the most popular tourist souvenirs in Venice, selling well all year round.

The Rialto Bridge

is the oldest of the three bridges that span the Grand Canal. It is 48 meters long, 22 meters wide and 7.5 meters above the water.



It was originally a floating bridge. It was called the Coin Bridge (the mint was located near the east entrance). Later, due to the gradual development of the Rialto Market on the east bank, it was converted into a wooden bridge. There are two inclined bridge decks connected in the middle of the bridge, which can be moved to allow boats to pass. Later, it collapsed several times because of the crowds of people who crowded on the bridge to watch the boat parade. The single-arch stone bridge Rialto Bridge was designed by Antonio da Ponte and completed in 1591. The inclined bridge on both sides is led to the central porch, becoming one of the representatives of Venetian architecture. Shops and stalls fill both sides of the Rialto Bridge, making it a major tourist attraction in Venice.

Burano Island

is 7 kilometers away from Venice, and the boat ride takes 40 minutes. Lace and colorful exterior walls.



Murano is

an archipelago located 1.6 km north of Venice. It was named the "Glass Island" in 1291 and is famous for its colorful Murano glassware, especially the brushed thermoplastic.

In 1291, the Republic of Venice feared that a fire in a glass factory would cause a fire in Venice, which was full of wooden houses, and ordered all glass factories to move to Murano. From then on, Murano became

the center of colorful glass manufacturing. In the 14th century, glass products began to be exported, and it was famous for its glass beads, glass mirrors and glass chandeliers. Murano also became a holiday resort for Venetians, and many palaces were built on the island. Famous attractions on the island include the Basilica of Santa Maria San Donatini, which is famous for its 12th-century Byzantine mosaic walkway.

Lido is

a large sandbar 18 km long southeast of the main island of Venice. Many tourists come here every summer for vacation. The Venice Film Festival is held here every year in late August and early September. At least half of the length of the island facing the Adriatic Sea is a beach. Most of it belongs to summer resort hotels. Via Santa Maria Elisabetta is about 700 meters long and has many hotels, shops and restaurants. Boats go to Venice (15 minutes), the Italian mainland (35 minutes), other islands and Venice Marco Polo Airport (60 minutes).

Venice Film Festival

Founded in 1932, it is the world's oldest film festival, held every year from late August to September on the Lido Island in Venice, Italy. The Venice Film Festival, the Berlin Film Festival in Germany, and the Cannes Film Festival in France are the three major international film festivals recognized by the International Film Federation. The highest award of the Venice Film Festival is called the Golden Lion Award. China's Zhang Yimou, Jia Zhangke, Ang Lee, and Hou Hsiao-hsien have all won the Golden Lion Award.

Venice check-in points:

Italian ice cream

Gelatoteca Suso

Sotoportego de la Bissa , 5453, 30124 Venezia VE

Gelateria Gallonetto

Salizada S. Lio , 5727, 30122 Venezia VE, Italy

A 300-year-old cafe in St. Mark's Square. The prices are expensive, espresso is 7 euros, and the decoration is antique.

Caffe Florian

P.za San Marco, 57, 30124 Venezia VE

Ponte di RialtoThe most famous bridge – Rialto Bridge

30125 Venice

Libreria Acqua Alta Shipwreck Bookstore, known as the most beautiful bookstore in the world

C. Longa Santa Maria Formosa, 5176b, 30122 Venezia VE

1000 Gourmet Venezia is a famous pizza restaurant with long queues in restaurants

C. Specchieri , 475, 30124 Venezia VE, Italy

Bologna

Bologna was founded in the 6th century BC, when it was called Felsina . In the 4th century BC, the city was occupied by the Gauls and renamed Bononia , and later occupied by the Romans. It was once part of the vast Roman Republic and gradually developed into a large city in the northern Apennines. A fire in the 1st century AD caused Bologna to decline, and it did not return to prosperity until the 5th century AD under the leadership of Bishop St. Petronio . In 1088, the University of Bologna was established, and it became a top cultural center in Europe. During World War II, Bologna was an important transportation hub for the German army and was subjected to several tragic bombings. After the war, Bologna underwent a long period of reconstruction and recovery, and is now an industrial center in the north. It is the capital of the Emilia-Romagna region.

As one of the best-preserved medieval cities, Bologna is surrounded by a dozen gates of various types. The solid and historic exterior walls of the city buildings are like Giorgio Morandi 's oil paintings, with a very elegant color scheme of earthy red and yellow-gray. The 40-kilometer-long corridor in the old city provides shelter for people from the wind and rain, and also distinguishes this city from other cities. The colonnade is also a gathering place for Bologna merchants. Various types of markets and book stalls can often be seen inside, which is elegant and full of market atmosphere. In 2021, the Bologna Porch was included in UNESCO for its special artistic and social and cultural value.

Bologna's porticoes began to be built in the 12th century, with a total length of 62 kilometers, of which 42 kilometers are in the historic center. The expansion of the porticoes accompanied the prosperity of the city of Bologna in the Middle Ages. The University of Bologna was founded in 1088, attracting students and scholars from Italy and around the world. The rapid increase in population made the city space crowded; people tried to expand living space without occupying public land, and local commercial and craft activities also needed more area. The portico was an ideal solution, allowing the building to extend above while providing shelter from the wind and rain. From 1288, a decree was passed that porticoes could be added to existing houses, and new buildings must have porticoes; the intersection of old and new formed the urban portico complex. Bologna's most famous and longest portico is the Portico di San Luca, which is 3,796 meters long and has about 666 arches, extending all the way to the Church of St. Luke on the Colle della Guardia outside the city (Santuario It is said that in the 15th century, people held up the image of the saint and prayed for good weather and good harvests. After the prayer was answered, the ceremony was repeated every year. In order to protect the saint's procession and the image from rain, the road from the city center to the temple on the mountain was paved, covered and covered with porches.

Piazza Santo Stefano is one of the most beautiful squares in Bologna, surrounded by greenery, where cultural events, antique markets and concerts are often held. Starting from this emblematic place, you can admire the different styles of porticoes from the Middle Ages to the late 19th century; in Santa Maria dei Under the Gothic cathedral, Servi Basilica, people can see the widest porch. It was built around 1300 to accommodate citizens who were unable to attend religious ceremonies because they were not baptized. Of course, you can also go to Santa Caterina, Palazzo della Explore the porticoes of Mercanzia , Via Zamboni, Piazza Cavour and Via Farini one after another and enjoy the special views that have attracted locals and tourists for centuries;

Piazza Maggiore is located in the center of Bologna's old town. It is the largest public square in Bologna.

The square is rectangular and surrounded by several important medieval buildings, such as the Basilica San Petronio , the Notary's Palace , and the Palazzo d'Accursio . In the northwest corner of the square is the city's symbol, the Fountain of Neptune (Fontana Nettuno). The square often hosts large and small festivals, such as the Republic Day parade and the year-end fireworks. The square is the most lively in summer, with open-air cinemas and various concerts, and in winter there is a Christmas market built with wooden townhouses.

Fontana del Nettuno

The Fountain of Poseidon and the Due Torri are both known as the landmark buildings of Bologna. The fountain consists of a bronze statue called "Giant" and a pool base. It was created by Jean de Boulogne, a French master who was active in Bologna in 1566. Above the fountain is Poseidon holding a fork. The four corners of the second layer of the base are made up of bronze statues of children holding fish. The bottom layer of the base is a statue of four half-naked girls touching their breasts. Every night when the lights hit the fountain, the image of Poseidon is projected onto the opposite wall, appearing graceful. If you stand behind Poseidon and look closely towards the cathedral, you will see that Poseidon has become a naked man. It is said that this was left by the designer as a joke to the Pope at the time. It is also known as one of the seven secrets of Bologna. On the left side of the fountain is the city hall, and on the right are the Palazzo di Re Enzo and the Palazzo della Padestà. Podestà).

The Due Torri , the iconic building in the center of Bologna, is located in Piazza di Porta Ravegnana . The Due Torri, as the name suggests, consists of two towers. The taller one is called Torre degli Asinelli. Asinelli is 97.2 meters high, while the lower and leaning like a drunk is the Garisenda Tower , 47 meters high. The twin towers were built in the 11th century and are still strong today. In the Middle Ages, the major families in Bologna built high towers to show their power. The more prominent families at that time were the Asinelli family and the Garisenda family, but the Garisenda family lacked confidence, and when the tower was half built, it collapsed due to a weak foundation, leaving the current scene. The Asinelli Tower still stands today and is the third tallest tower-shaped building in Italy. In addition, there is a legend in ancient Bologna that local college students cannot graduate if they climb the tower. To this day, students are still taboo about this and do not go back to climb the twin towers until after graduation.

- Nothing to say

Museums: Museo della Storia di Bologna, Bologna City History Museum, ticket price is 10 euros. There is also the Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna, Bologna National Gallery, which houses the works of masters such as Titian and Raphael, and ticket price is only 6 euros.

Bologna Cathedral Cattedrale Metropolitana di San Pietro is a large Baroque church located on Via Indipendenza , which is out of tune with the surrounding gallery-style buildings. It is the real city cathedral of Bologna. It was named by Pope Gregory VIII in 1582. The cathedral was built in the 5th century AD. After experiencing several natural disasters and man-made disasters over the centuries, it was rebuilt into a Roman Baroque building in 1605. Unlike the Basilica of San Petronio, the decoration inside the church is dazzling, and you can still vaguely find traces of the once prominent Catholicism. On the right side of the church is a group of replicas of the sculpture called "Death of Jesus", the original is stored in the Chiesa di Santa Maria della Vita near the Quadrilatero . As the city's main cathedral, it hosts various large-scale religious celebrations, such as Christmas Eve Mass and Easter Mass. The bell tower on one side of the church can be climbed to the top for a visit.

There is one thing that Bologna is the best in Europe - in 1088 AD, the earliest university institution

in Europe was established here. So much so that some of the scenes about the Citadel in "Game of Thrones" were also shot here.

University of Bologna degli Studi Bologna

The ancient University of Bologna pioneered the world's university education and occupies an important position in the history of human civilization. It is the glory and pride of this city. After its establishment, Bologna became a model. Many teachers and students moved out to establish new universities. Bologna became a special "alma mater" for other universities. Some European countries also used Bologna as a model to establish their own universities. The wind of higher education gradually blew throughout Europe. Bologna's pioneering achievements are indelible. However, there is no exact founding date for this important university, because the universities at that time were gradually formed.

In the 1880s, some European universities held school celebrations to commemorate their founding anniversaries and sent letters to Broad University to pay tribute to their "alma mater". However, Broad University had never held a school celebration because it did not have an exact founding date, which was a pity. So someone roughly calculated the founding year of Broad University based on the data, and finally the municipal authorities and the university reached a consensus and selected 1888 to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the founding of the university. From then on, people regarded 1088 as the year when Broad University was born.

In the Middle Ages, cultural education in Europe was very backward. Schools were monopolized by the church, ordinary people were illiterate, and government notices were written in Latin, which was mastered by only a few priests. With the development and prosperity of cities and industry and commerce, there was a demand to learn ancient Roman law and break the church's monopoly on schools, because Roman law was, after all, "the highest and most complete form of law based on private ownership" and was therefore supported by capitalist factors.

In the second half of the 11th century, some scholars and young people in Bologna broke the monopoly of church schools and set off a craze for studying Roman law, which was later called the "Bologna Renaissance". At this time, scholars held law lectures one after another, and students and teachers spontaneously organized themselves on this basis, gradually forming a multi-disciplinary association-style university (Lo Studio, which was not changed to "university" until the end of the 18th century - l' Universit à degli The university quickly grew in size, with medical and philosophy departments established in 1200 and theology department added in 1360. By the end of the 14th century, all departments were basically complete, becoming a beacon of higher education in Europe. Students from all over the world came to study there, and by the 13th century, the number of students reached more than 10,000.

In the universities at that time, teachers taught certain courses according to their own talents and formed different groups. The word "department" in modern universities is derived from the Latin word "talent". Students were also divided into different groups according to their birthplaces, called "school halls", each with its own dormitory, canteen, dormitory supervisor and tutor. Later, it developed into "colleges" and is still used today. Universities are managed by students, and students have great autonomy. There is no fixed place for classes, sometimes in the teacher's home, sometimes in a rented private house. Teachers do not have a fixed salary, and students raise funds to provide living allowances for teachers. At that time, most universities taught by teachers and students took notes, and there were very few experiments. However, there were experimental classes in Broad University. Despite the opposition of the church, the

university conducted the world's earliest human dissection. The anatomy classroom (Il Teatro Anatomico) at that time was on the upper floor of the old site of this university. It is well preserved and visitors can visit.

In the hundreds of years since its founding, the University of Bologna has cultivated countless outstanding talents. Famous poets Dante and Petrarch, and astronomer Copernicus have studied or taught at the University of Bologna. Marconi, who was born in Bologna in 1874, is also the pride of the University of Bologna. Marconi, who graduated from the University of Bologna, successfully developed the first radio transmitter and receiver in human history in 1895, thus ushering in the era of radio and its widespread application. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1909. At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, Carducci and Pascoli, two of the three great Italian writers, taught at the University of Bologna. Carducci won the first Nobel Prize in Literature for Italy in 1906. Today, busts of these great men are still placed in the main building of the university.

Bologna is now famous both at home and abroad. It is a comprehensive university with a huge scale, complete disciplines, strong faculty and advanced teaching equipment. It has 13 colleges (Facoltà) including law, language, literature and philosophy, economics and trade, medicine and surgery, pharmacy, veterinary medicine, agronomy, mathematics and natural sciences, industrialization and engineering. It has more than 4,000 faculty and staff, about 70,000 students, of which about 47% are female students, and about 3,000 are foreign students. The school occupies a building area of about 500,000 square meters, with an average of less than 10 square meters per person. There are 450,000 residents in Bologna. It is difficult for so many students to find housing in Bologna. Many people have to live in nearby small towns and take trains or cars to the university for classes every day.

The university has advanced teaching facilities. Each college has its own laboratory and audio-visual classroom. The Department of Astronomy has an observatory. The School of Medicine has a clinical clinic. The university also has museums, archives, collections, libraries, botanical gardens, gymnasiums, swimming pools, courts and other sports facilities.

The campus of Bologna University is located in the city center, mainly near Via Zamboni in the northeast of the ancient city. Its main building is **Palazzo Poggi**, which was built in the 16th century. In addition to classrooms and teaching and research rooms, there are also libraries, historical archives and 8 museums. Palazzo Poggi is also the Museum of the University of Bologna. The exhibits in the museum are very rich, ranging from plant specimens, anatomical wax figures, models of the birth process of infants to ancient city fortifications, and finally to the huge and spectacular warships of the Age of Discovery. In addition, there are many experimental instruments used by professors who have taught at the University of Bologna, etc. The rich exhibits and teaching supplies reflect the good intentions of the University of Bologna in teaching. The Carducci Classroom (Aula Carducci) opposite the stairs at the entrance of the museum is the classroom used by Giosuè Carducci, the Nobel Prize winner in Literature, when he taught Italian at the University of Bologna. The third floor of the museum is a museum about the life of the University of Bologna, displaying cultural relics and student supplies from the Middle Ages to the present.

Palazzo dell' Archiginnasio is located on the east side of the Basilica of San Petronio, and consists of a long corridor and a three-story rectangular building. It was built between 1562 and 1563 AD and designed by architect Antonio Morandi. It is the former site of the Faculty of Law and Art of the University of Bologna, which was severely damaged in the air raids of World War II. Now, when you walk into the gate, you will see a magnificent wall covered with badges designed by Bologna students from all over the world.

at that time; on one side of the second floor is the Bologna Municipal Library, and the long wooden tables in the library seem to take you back hundreds of years, and feel that countless literati and poets stayed here.

On the other side of the second floor is the Anatomical Theater (Teatro Anatomico), the world's first human anatomy laboratory. In the 16th century, Europe was still under strict control of the Catholic Church, and the blasphemous act of dissecting the human body was prohibited. However, the University of Bologna, as the mother of universities, could have medical school professors show students the actual dissection process under the supervision of clergy. The dissection experiments conducted here also laid the foundation for contemporary medicine. On one wall of the theater, you can see a doctor holding a long object, which is actually a nose, so this is considered to be the earliest place for human plastic surgery research. The flames of World War II left this place devastated, and it took nearly half a century to rebuild after the war, and now it has regained its glory.

The Archiginnasio Palace is free; you need to deposit your bag and leave your ID in the library to enter for a long reading; the ticket for the Anatomy Theater is 3 euros

The University of Bologna has its own classrooms and offices in many places in the city. Its earliest school building is the University Hall (Archiginnasio), which is still intact and is now a public library. Many creative paintings can be seen on the walls along the streets of the main campus, and Piazza Verdi in the middle of Zamboni Street is where university students gather to rest during class breaks. Various concerts and other cultural activities are held here every summer.

Bologna Football Club 1909 is a veteran club founded in 1909. It was the champion of Serie A for many times before World War II. Because of its red and blue jerseys, it is nicknamed "RossoBlu". Although it was relegated to Serie B for various reasons in the past few years, it has now returned to Serie A.

Outlet Fidenza Village

This small-town discount village is well-known in Europe. It is only an hour's drive from Bologna and is home to many popular European and American brands. The discount village is arranged in a straight line, and its main brands are located next to the central gate, such as Armani, Versace, Michael Kors, etc., with 30%-50% discounts all year round.

Address: Via San Michele Campagna, Fidenza

Bologna is definitely a land of gourmet food. Bologna and Naples are two gourmet cities in the south and north of Italy, and are known as the "City of Fat". Bologna meat sauce (Ragu' Bolognese) is the representative of Bologna's food. The carefully cooked red meat sauce is often used as a partner for Italian wide noodles (Tagliatelle). Tasting authentic Bologna meat sauce in Bologna is an indispensable travel arrangement for foodies. In addition, Parma ham and cheese were born here. Italian balsamic vinegar, which has teased the world's taste buds for hundreds of years, was invented here. Here are a few more dishes with the highest click rate in Italian restaurants around the world:

- tagliatelle al ragu' Bolognese
- mortadella ham
- tortellini
- lasagne alla Lasagna Bolognese

These are all from Bologna.

If you come here in autumn, it's like a mouse falling into a rice jar – bacon, aged cheese, fresh butter, truffles, hazelnuts and local specialty porcini in the air, it makes you completely forget that there is such a thing as weight loss in the world. Eataly World's food world officially opened to the public on November 15, 2017. Here is everything about food and how to make food.

Time-honored brand:

The best pastries in Italy: Paolo Atti & Figli

All kinds of cooked Tamburini

Local cuisine Osteria del Sole. The history of this restaurant dates back to 1465. There is no service yet, so you have to make your own food.

Market Mercato delle Erbe or Mercato di Mezzo

Trattoria Valerio is a century-old restaurant. Since 1898, the spaghetti bolognese and meatballs here are the best in Italy. The coffee here is also of high quality, which will make your mouth pregnant.

Go to the Biblioteca Salaborsa, like an ordinary college student, takes a cup of coffee and a piece of bread to experience how wonderful knowledge + coffee is.

Gela to:

- Pellegrino Antica Gelateria Artigianale 1936
- Gelateria Gianni
- Cremeria Funivia
- Gelateria Galleria 49

Emilia-Romagna, where Bologna is located, is one of the most important regions in Italy. During the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, it was an important transportation route connecting the two major business circles of Venice and Florence. The prosperous trade promoted the development of the city here. In addition to Bologna, there are many more towns worth exploring and discovering on this land.

Modena

Modena is the closest medium-sized city to Bologna. In the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, this city had long been a rival of Bologna, and there were constant conflicts and wars between the two cities. The main attractions in Modena are the Cathedral, the Civic Tower and the Piazza Grande, which are listed as World Cultural Heritage.

Modena's Duomo e Torre Ghirlandina is a Romanesque church built in the 12th century to commemorate the saints who once lived in the city. Gothic elements were gradually added to the church in the later period. The outside of the church wall is carved with a relief of "Genesis", which is the work of architect Lanfranc, depicting many saints and prophets.

What is even more interesting is the Citizens' Tower (Torre Ghirlandina) on one side of the church. A wooden barrel in the tower is a tourist highlight. Don't underestimate this ordinary wooden barrel. According to legend, this wooden barrel was originally in Bologna in the Middle Ages, and was later brought to Modena

for unknown reasons, which then triggered a protracted war between the two cities for the wooden barrel. This barrel war has also been ridiculed by many as one of the most absurd wars in history. Whether the legend is credible is no longer verifiable, but the political hostility between the two cities in history is an indisputable fact.

Modena is the hometown and burial place of the great singer Pavarotti . Balsamic vinegar is also known as traditional balsamic vinegar (Balsamic vinegar of Modena). Traditional balsamic vinegar is made from white grapes, the most typical of which is Tribiano. The grapes are pressed immediately after harvesting and the resulting must is boiled to evaporate the water until the volume is reduced to 30% of its original volume. The must is then slowly fermented and, over the course of several years, the vinegar gradually intensifies, sweetens and thickens in wooden barrels. A portion of the balsamic vinegar evaporates during the process, and this portion is called the "angels' share", a term also used in the production of whiskey and certain other alcoholic beverages. The vinegar matures for at least 12 years before it can be removed. At maturity (12, 18 or 25 years), the vinegar is removed from the smallest barrel and is then filled with vinegar from a slightly larger barrel, which in turn is filled with vinegar from a slightly larger barrel. [4] This method of maturation is known as the solera method. Balsamic vinegar of Modena is a commercial grade balsamic vinegar, an imitation of traditional balsamic vinegar that does not involve any maturation process and can be produced in the hundreds or even thousands of bottles a day.

Modena is more well-known as the birthplace of car brands such as Ferrari and Lamborghini. Today, the headquarters of these companies are located in Modena or nearby towns, and travelers can make an appointment to visit their museums and factories.

Ferrara

The ancient city of Ferrara, located at the mouth of the Po River, was an important city during the Italian Renaissance. Today, many of the city's buildings still retain the style of the Renaissance, and the entire city has been listed as a World Cultural Heritage by UNESCO. Unlike Bologna and Modena, Ferrara during the Renaissance was not an autonomous city-state, but a feudal territory under the rule of the Duke of Ferrara.

The most conspicuous building in the city is therefore the feudal castle Largo Castello built by the Este family, the lords of Ferrara. The Este Castle is a typical medieval fortress, surrounded by a moat and accessible only by a drawbridge. The interior of the castle is equipped with rooms with different functions, including living rooms, kitchens, gardens, prisons, etc.

The castle walks towards the cathedral through Piazza Savonarola , with a statue in the center of the square of Girolamo Savonarola .

Girolamo Savonarola (1452–1498) was born in Ferrara and was an Italian Dominican monk. Savonarola preached the idea of abandoning worldly wealth and pursuing the spiritual salvation of Jesus Christ, which won the support of many middle and lower class civilians. In 1494 , King Charles VIII of France invaded Florence, and the ruling Medici family was overthrown. Savonarola became the new spiritual and secular leader of Florence. He established the Florentine Religious Republic and began to make various rules and regulations into laws. His most famous political achievement was in 1497 , when he and a group of followers set a blazing

fire in the Piazza del Comune in Florence, which Savonarola called the "bonfire of the vanities." He sent children from house to house to collect "worldly pleasures", including: mirrors, cosmetics, portraits, pagan books, non-Catholic sculptures, gambling game equipment, chess, lutes and other musical instruments, finely crafted clothes, women's hats and all classical poetry, and then threw all the collected things into the fire. Many great works of art from the Renaissance were burned forever. Scholars such as Mirandola became his followers during this period. Sandro Botticelli, a famous Renaissance painter who once loved pagan themes, was also addicted to Savonarola's preaching in his later years and personally threw many of his late works into the fire.

1498. Shortly after his death, the Medici family regained power, overthrew the Republic, and proclaimed themselves Grand Dukes of Tuscany.

Ferrara Cathedral of San Giorgio

Built in the 12th century, the Cathedral of San Giorgio in Ferrara is a well-deserved witness to the history of the city of Ferrara. Its pink and white facade is covered with elaborately carved arcades, stained glass windows and sculptures, which emit a charming glow under the sun. The lower part of the facade shows the typical features of early Romanesque architecture, while the strong vertical lines and pointed arches in the upper part are obviously Gothic. The Madonna holding the Child stands on the central colonnade, and the scene of "The Last Judgment" is carved on the upper triangular lintel. The church bell tower built in the Renaissance was also built with pink and white marble, but it has always been unfinished. The interior of the church was destroyed by fire in the 18th century, and the subsequent reconstruction was completely Baroque style.

The Diamond Palace Palazzo Diamanti , located at 21 Corso Ercole I d'Este in Ferrara , is one of the most famous palaces in Italy and one of the most influential examples of Renaissance architecture in Europe. It was built between 1493 and 1503 as a residence for the Este family. The most notable feature of the building is the 8,500 white (with pink veins) marble carvings on the façade, representing diamonds, hence the name. They reflect the maximum amount of light away from the building, creating a unique visual effect.

Restaurant Recommendations

Hostaria Savonarola, Piazza Savonarola, 14/16/18, 44121 Ferrara FE, Italy

Al Brindisi was founded in 1435 and is known as the oldest tavern in the world

Via Guglielmo degli Adelardi , 11, 44100 Ferrara FE, Italy

BANCHINA 52 - FERRARA New Seafood Restaurant Chain

Via Guglielmo degli Adelardi , 21A, 44121 Ferrara FE, Italy

Local specialities : coppia bread Baguette , " zia " garlic salami and muskmelon

Ravenna

Ravenna, a small town in the eastern part of Emilia - Romagna, is a veritable mosaic city . This inconspicuous city today was once the capital of the Western Roman Empire in the 5th century AD , and later experienced

the rule of the Ostrogothic Kingdom and the Byzantine Empire. A series of early Christian churches and mausoleums built in Ravenna at that time are still preserved today. The exquisite mosaics inside the churches are one of the most exquisite works of art in Europe in the early Christian era, and have had a significant impact on the history of European art.

San Vitale is an early Byzantine church built in the 6th century. In the eyes of most travelers, the exterior of the church is not very eye-catching, but the interior of the church is a different scene. The interior walls of the church are decorated with exquisite and complex plant patterns and portraits of saints with mosaics, creating a scene of heaven on the ceiling. The two most important mosaics on the wall, one depicts the Byzantine Emperor Justinian and his court officials, and the other depicts Queen Theodora and her inner palace attendants. The characters in the paintings are lifelike and are exemplary works of mosaic art.

Mausoleo di Galla Placidia

The Mausoleum of Galla Placidia next to the Basilica of St. Vitus is actually a small cross-shaped chapel, in which the sarcophagus of Galla Placidia, the late Queen Mother of the Western Roman Empire, is buried. The interior of the chapel has a ceiling like a blue starry sky and mosaics depicting stories from the Bible.

Arian Baptistry

The octagonal Arian Baptistery is the oldest existing building in Ravenna. The church was originally built by the Arians, a heretical branch of early Christianity. The most eye-catching part of the church is the large circular mosaic on the dome, which shows the scene of John the Baptist baptizing Jesus on the banks of the Jordan River. The colors are bright and full of vitality, and the saints are surrounded by the picture, which is very sacred and solemn. If you look closely, you will see that Jesus in the center of the picture is naked, which is unacceptable in orthodox Christianity.

Tuscan

Tuscany is a central region of Italy with an area of about 23,000 square kilometers and a population of about 3.68 million. Its administrative capital is Florence. This region is where the Renaissance originated.

The earliest inhabitants of Tuscany admired the Apennine culture and the Velanovian culture. They appeared more than 1,000 years BC and maintained trade relations with the Greek Minoans and Mycenaeans. In the 8th century BC, the Etruscans came to this fertile hill and developed quickly. Due to the lack of prehistoric records, these inhabitants of unknown origin seem extremely mysterious, and their language is not like any language in Europe and South Asia. But in any case, they developed a brilliant Etruscan civilization here and left many traces in Tuscany and even the whole of Italy. For example, the irrigation agriculture and animal husbandry that the Etruscans are good at shaped the original landscape of the Tuscan countryside and have always been the pillar industry here; many of the towns they established have been preserved, including Arezzo and Volterra. Most importantly, their name (Etruschi , Latin: Tusci) and the name of this land-Tuscany (Toscana, Latin: Tuscia) are forever linked together.

After the 6th century BC, Rome, which developed from a small village on the Tiber River, gradually conquered and assimilated the Etruscans and established four colonial cities in Tuscany: Florence, Siena, Pisa and Lucca. According to Roman custom, these cities were uniformly planned into a square grid, divided by two perpendicular avenues, with a public square in the center and a circular arena built on the outskirts of

the city. Traces of this planning can still be seen in the city center of Florence or the oval square in Lucca.

In the 5th century AD, after the fall of the Western Roman Empire (that is, the Roman rule in Europe), Tuscany was ruled by the Goths, the Eastern Roman Empire (also known as the Byzantine Empire) and the Lombards from the Germanic region, and finally fell into the hands of Pepin the Short, the leader of the then-powerful Germanic Frank tribe. In 774 AD, Charlemagne occupied Tuscany and brought it under the rule of the Carolingian dynasty. During this period, Lucca has been the capital of the region. The long-lost peace has allowed this already fertile land to develop again, and commercial city-states have sprung up like mushrooms after rain, presenting a prosperous scene.

In 1115, with the death of Countess Matilda, the Tuscany region under her control gradually broke free from the shackles of feudal power and split into several autonomous city-states, including Florence, Siena, Arezzo, Pisa, Lucca, etc. These wealthy city-states were independent and conflicts of all sizes continued. The biggest contradiction came from their different attitudes towards the conflict between the Holy Roman Emperor and the Pope. The different cities led by the Ghibellines who supported the emperor and the Guelphs who supported the Pope broke with each other and became mortal enemies. The most typical example was the long-term dispute between Florence and Siena. However, the chaotic political situation did not affect economic development at all. Relying solely on agriculture was a thing of the past. Commerce and banking showed great vitality. Soon, bankers from Florence gained the same reputation as Venetian merchants in Italy and even throughout Europe. Almost every European is familiar with the following story. Florence, a name that is almost synonymous with the "Renaissance", appears repeatedly in the history of Tuscany from the 14th to the 16th century. In fact, since the 15th century, Florence has ruled the entire Tuscany except Lucca. Even the Black Death that swept across Europe in 1348 did not prevent it from becoming the birthplace of Western humanistic literature and art. Of course, the prosperity of the Renaissance is inseparable from the support of the Medici family, the largest ruler and sponsor of the city at that time. There were seven Tuscan grand dukes in this family, and their family emblems were therefore spread all over the big and small cities in Tuscany. However, the fate of the rich is sometimes unpredictable. Such a prominent family was eventually cut off because there was no successor, which made future generations sigh while praising them for leaving behind a huge legacy.

With the death of the last heir, the rule of the Medici family ended in 1737, and Tuscany fell into the hands of the Duke of Lorraine in France. Subsequently, in the struggle between various regimes, it was successively incorporated into Austria, France and the Kingdom of Sardinia, and finally became part of the Kingdom of Italy in 1861. Perhaps it was the lingering aftereffects of the glorious history of the Renaissance that Florence soon became the capital of the new kingdom. But just six years later, it had to give up this position to Rome. In 1946, Italy became a republic through a referendum, and the Tuscan region became one of the 20 regions in the country, and Florence naturally became the capital here.

Tuscany is the most fertile and productive region in Italy, with 63,633 hectares of vineyards, so the wine industry in this region is also very famous. Tuscany has eight DOCG-level wines, and Brunello di Montalcino is the first wine to be named DOCG in Italy. To this day, Brunello is still the most famous and expensive wine in Italy. There are also very famous wine estates in this area, such as IL PARADISO, which has always used traditional natural craftsmanship and a family-run model. It only produces about 9,000 bottles of wine each year. Because of its small scale, the owner can be meticulous in every link, focusing on quality and pure naturalness, ensuring that every bottle is the best of Italian wine. The price has also remained high.

The Chianti region of Tuscany is a prestigious wine-producing region in Italy, and the ancient grape plantations in the Orcia Valley are listed as a World Heritage Site. The abundant and bright sunshine is the biggest wine-making capital of Tuscany, and Sangiovese is the most noble grape variety in Tuscany. The wine made from Sangiovese has a rich fruity aroma and tight tannins. Under the care of the Tuscan sun and soil, it often has the fragrance of soil and a hint of spiciness.

The Val d'Orcia is a region of Tuscany in central Italy, stretching from the hills south of Siena to Monte Amiata. The area is characterized by gently undulating, carefully cultivated hills. The area was replanned and developed when it was incorporated into the national territory in the 14th and 15th centuries. The pale plains are dotted with conical cypress trees and dotted with villages, towns, medieval monasteries, etc., giving it a unique beauty, a testament to the well-managed agricultural beauty of the Renaissance. It is interspersed with valleys and picturesque towns such as Pienza (the "ideal city" rebuilt by Pope Pius II in the 15th century), Radicchiello and Monticchiello, the best wine producing area in Italy). The landscape is well known from Renaissance paintings to modern photography. In 2004, the Val d'Orcia was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The cities in this area are also very interesting. Vinci, the hometown of Leonardo da Vinci. Pistoia, where the famous revolver is made, is called Pistole in German, named after the city of Pistoia. The author of "The Adventures of Pinocchio" is Italian Carlo **Lorenzini**, whose hometown is **Collodi**, a small town near Lucca. In this beautiful small village at the foot of the mountain, the world's most famous puppet Pinocchio can be seen everywhere. The walls of the houses on the roadside are painted with a big carriage to the children's park, which is crowded with naughty children. The shops are also full of puppets of all sizes, each with a nose that has grown longer because of lying. There is also a park in the town with the shapes of all the famous characters in "The Adventures of Pinocchio".

Pienza

Located in the green hills of the Orcia Valley in the Siena Province: on the endless hills, the town's earth-colored buildings and the towering church towers are surrounded by cypresses and grass, forming a perfect Tuscan style picture. Compared with other towns in the Orcia Valley, Pienza can be said to have concentrated the essence of the Tuscan rural landscape – the pocket town is connected by a main road, and the alleys on both sides of the road are not blocked by tall buildings. You can enjoy the warm sunshine and you can also see the scenery on the hillside outside the city at a glance. The outstanding scenery also made the entire town successfully selected into the World Heritage List in 1996.

Six hundred years ago, Pienza was just an ordinary village in the valley. Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, who was born here in 1405, grew up in the new wind of the Renaissance and became a famous humanist and Pope Pius II. He returned to his hometown and rebuilt Pienza according to his "ideal town". The urban planning concept based on human needs – rather than imperial power or divine power – became a reality in his hometown.

Today, Pienza is world-famous, and tourists flock here to find a trace of pastoral life in their hearts. Cheese, wine, and colorful Tuscan porcelain are piled up in the small shops on both sides of the main road, so that the whole road is filled with a strong smell of cheese. Pope Pius II's ideal has been realized, but who is this "land of comfort" now?

Palazzo Piccolomini, located in the center of Pienza, was newly built with funds from Pope Pius II. The

palace is one of the earliest Renaissance buildings. The simple and elegant exterior design was created by the sculptor and architect Bernardo Rossellino (the main road in Pienza is also named after him), who largely referred to the Palazzo Rucellai designed by his teacher Leon Battista Alberti in Florence . Compared with the carefully decorated rooms, the most attractive thing about Palazzo Piccolomini is its garden to the south: in the small garden, neatly trimmed shrubs and orange trees separate the gravel paths. Walking along the path to the loggia at the end, you can overlook the breathtaking and invincible beauty of the entire Orcia Valley. To visit Palazzo Piccolomini, you must rent an interpreter (in English) and follow the guide. After that, you can freely enjoy the garden. The whole journey takes about 45 minutes.

The Concattedrale di Santa Maria Assunta is the cathedral of Pienza . This Renaissance building has a classically divided geometric facade. It was also designed by Bernardo Rossellino and funded by Pope Pius II.

San Quirico d'Orcia d'Orcia is a small town in the Val d'Orcia, once one of the Etruscan settlements. The medieval city walls and street layout are still almost intact, and the pale yellow houses within the city walls extend along the ridge. The town is small and it takes more than 2-3 hours to visit it. It is suitable for stopping for lunch and strolling on the way from Siena to Pienza (get off at the stop before Pienza).

Montalcino is located west of Pienza, in the rolling hills of the Val d'Orcia. It is a beautiful mountain town known as the home of Brunello black wine. It is the origin of Brunello wine, one of the most precious wines in Italy. In the sunny Montalcino, the grapes on the north slope receive less sunlight and have a fragrant smell, while the grapes on the south slope receive more sunlight and have a mellow smell. Smart local wine merchants plant grapes on both the north and south slopes, and mix the ripe fruits in proportion, so that the flavors of the two complement and sublimate each other, creating the mellow "black wine" Brunello.

According to the Italian law of origin, authentic Brunello wine must be stored in barrels and bottles for a specified period of time. If the regulations are violated, there may even be imprisonment. In Montalcino, you can enjoy the beautiful scenery of the production of this top-quality wine while sipping the traditional Brunello wine. This combination of food, wine and beautiful scenery is the greatest charm of Montalcino and the entire Tuscany region.

La Fortezza di Montalcino, a medieval fortress located on a small hill not far from the center of the town, is pentagonal in shape with towers on each corner. Now, it has become a local activity center and a gathering place for tourists. The bottom floor of the tower at the entrance has been converted into a bar and restaurant, and the two-story rooms upstairs are used to hold some small art exhibitions. To climb the tower, you need to buy a ticket at the cashier of the bar first. From the pentagonal tower, you can overlook the entire town and the surrounding hills, which is very beautiful. The pentagonal wall is very suitable for taking pictures, and you can get beautiful photos as memories. Of course, if you plan to buy wine, you can also buy it in the bar with a huge wine storage here.

Montepulciano is a Renaissance-style town located on a limestone ridge at the junction of the Chiana Valley and the Orcia Valley. It is about an hour's drive from Siena and only 20 minutes' drive from Pienza. Even more famous than its architecture is its title of "the land of fine wine". The history of grape cultivation and winemaking here can even be traced back to 790 AD. The Montepulciano d'Abruzzo wine produced here has a soft taste and a special fruity aroma. It is the icing on the cake with Italian cuisine and is very popular locally. Another noble wine (Vino Nobile di Montepulciano) is world-famous. Its mellow taste has been praised

by many famous writers, including Alexandre Dumas' "The Count of Monte Cristo". It should be noted that Montepulciano wine is made from the local Montepulciano grape, which is grown all over Italy; while the main ingredient of Noble Wine is Sangiovese grape, which has the DOCG certification of origin. Please distinguish clearly when purchasing.

Tuscany countryside photography locations:

- Circular pine: 43° 03' 49.9"N 11° 33' 31.3"E
- Square Farmhouse: 43° 03' 54.0"N 11° 36' 41.1"E
- The nickname of Cappella Madonna di Vitaleta should come from the sentinel trees on both sides of the chapel that are like ears: 43 ° 04' 27.7 "N 11° 37' 36.1"E . The best coordinates for viewing the Cappella Madonna di Vitaleta from the road are 43° 04' 25.3"N 11° 37' 32.0"E
- Orchha Valley: 43° 03' 19.4"N 11° 41' 55.8"E
- S-shaped asphalt road shooting point: 43° 03' 43.4"N 11° 43' 23.6"E

The Apennini Mountains are located on the east side of the Apennine Peninsula. They are the main mountain range of the Apennine Peninsula, starting from the southern foot of the Alps in the north and ending at the southern tip of the Apennine Peninsula in the south. The total length is over 1,000 kilometers. The entire area is under the jurisdiction of Italy.


Prato

Chinese immigrants run nearly 5,000 garment factories in Prato, producing clothing that can be proudly labeled "Made in Italy," making these garments different from those produced in China. Cheap labor and raw materials, coupled with the "Made in Italy" brand, have made Prato a major center of Italy's garment manufacturing industry, but also a symbol of uncontrolled immigration and rampant labor exploitation. Prato has a total population of 191,000, of which 16,000 are Chinese. But including those who work illegally, the actual number of Chinese may be as high as 50,000. A large number of illegal workers work long hours in factories during the day and rest in makeshift houses behind the factories at night, living in extremely poor conditions. In December 2013, a fire broke out in a Chinese factory, killing seven workers who were sleeping in cardboard houses in the workshop.

In some cases, local Italian officials have also been implicated. A city council employee was arrested on suspicion of issuing fake residence permits to more than 300 Chinese immigrants since May, charging between 600 and 1,500 euros for each permit.

Pisa

Bus Stops	Parking lot Checkpoint/ Parkplatz "bus turistici " (Via Pietrasantina) Walk about one kilometer to the Leaning Tower. Car park: 8, Via Vecchia di Barbaricina , 2, 56122 Pisa PI		
Latitude and longitude	43 degrees north latitude	Equivalent to China ...	Siping, Jilin
Area (square kilometers):	185	Population ('000):	88

City status	
Origin of the name	
Basic historical information	It was built in the 1st century BC, occupied by the Romans in the 2nd century BC, and developed on a large scale during the Roman period. In the Middle Ages, Pisa was an important maritime republic in central Italy, and the first city in Italy to become an independent city-state. After being defeated by Florence in 1406, it was incorporated into the city-state. In 1860, it became the capital of the Province of Pisa in the Kingdom of Italy.
City logo	
other	Half of the residents are university students (University of Pisa, Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa). The University of Pisa is one of the oldest universities in Europe. Leaning Tower (1173-1372, bell tower, reasons for tilt, protective measures) Galileo, an Italian physicist born in Pisa, once conducted a free fall experiment on the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

The Leaning Tower of Pisa (Piazza del Duomo)

The Leaning Tower of Pisa is an independent bell tower of the Pisa Cathedral, located behind the Pisa Cathedral. Construction began in 1173 and was completed in 1372. A group of religious buildings are scattered on the square, including the Cathedral (built in 1063–13th century), the Baptistery (built in 1153–14th century), the Bell Tower (i.e. the Leaning Tower of Pisa, built in 1173–1350) and the Cemetery (built in 1278–15th century). The exterior walls are all made of milky white marble. Each is relatively independent but forms a unified Romanesque architectural style. The architectural complex of the Piazza dei Miracoli was selected as a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

The Leaning Tower of Pisa is 58.36 meters high from the foundation to the top of the tower, and 55 meters high from the ground to the top of the tower. The width of the bell tower wall on the ground is 5.09 meters, and the width at the top of the tower is 2.48 meters. The total weight is about 14,453 tons. The Leaning Tower of Pisa was designed to be built vertically. In 1185, when the bell tower was built to the fourth floor, it was found that the bell tower had tilted to the southeast due to uneven foundation and soft soil. The project was suspended several times. In 1372, the top floor where the bells were placed was completed. There are 7 bells in the 54-meter-high 8-story bell tower, but they have never been rung because the bell tower is in danger of collapse at any time. The current tilt is about 10%, or 5.5 degrees.

The reason why the Leaning Tower of Pisa is tilted is due to the special nature of the soil under its foundation. There are several layers of soil with different materials under the Leaning Tower of Pisa, with various soft silt sediments and very soft clay alternating, and about one meter deep is the groundwater layer. This conclusion was drawn after observing the composition of the foundation soil. The latest excavation shows that the bell tower was built on the edge of the ancient coast, so the soil had already been sanded and sunk during construction. After 11 years of renovation since 1990, at a cost of about 39.6 million US dollars, the Leaning Tower was straightened by 44 centimeters, basically achieving the expected effect. Experts believe that as long as there are no irresistible natural factors, the repaired Leaning Tower of Pisa will not collapse within 300 years.

- Photography Tips
- There is drinking water on the right side of the entrance
- The architectural style of the independent church is unique to Tuscany.

- Go to the restroom after getting off the bus
- On the way to and from the scenic spot, try to get everyone through the traffic lights at once.
- There are too many people in the restroom in the scenic area, so don't tell them. You can come back and use it at McDonald's (on the left side of the entrance, free with a food and beverage receipt, otherwise it will be charged) or the parking lot.

Church of Santa Maria della Spina

This Gothic chapel is located on the south bank of the Arno River in Pisa and was built in 1230. The rectangular church is surrounded by exquisitely carved Gothic columns and triangular pediments, and two rose windows are inlaid on the symmetrical facades. The interior is simply decorated and houses the Gothic masterpiece "La Madonna del Latte" completed by the great sculptors Nino Pisano and Andrea Pisano.

National Museum of San Matteo

The museum located on the north bank of the Arno River in Pisa was originally a medieval monastery. It now preserves a rich collection of paintings and sculptures from the 14th to 16th centuries, including works by Nicola Pisano, the designer of the altar of Siena Cathedral, Donatello, a famous Renaissance sculptor, and Masaccio, the first famous painter to use perspective, among many others.

Palazzo Blu

The Blue Palace stands out among the yellow houses on the south bank of the Arno River because of its light blue walls. It exhibits some modern and contemporary artworks from Pisa all year round, mainly oil paintings, and there are also some temporary contemporary art exhibitions. For specific exhibitions, you can refer to the official website, call or ask at the tourist information center.

Romanesque architecture.

Romanesque churches have dark and long halls. From a compositional point of view, the horizontal and vertical arms form the focus of the entire church, highlighting the location of the altar. In addition, the long hall has a clear distinction between the main and the secondary, which is more suitable for religious ceremonies. At this time, the plane form of medieval churches - the Latin cross plane - was formed.


Although Romanesque churches inherited the cross-arch load-bearing structure of ancient Rome, their application was immature and the construction quality was not as good as that of the ancient Roman period. Therefore, in order to make the building strong and durable, the walls are generally very thick and the windows are squeezed very small. In addition, the cross-arch, as the main load-bearing structure, will produce a large lateral thrust. Therefore, the buttresses on both sides of the atrium must be built very high and thick to resist the lateral thrust. At the same time, it also makes it impossible to open large windows, and the interior is very dark. The structural force transmission is also not very clear.

Gothic churches inherited some characteristics of Romanesque churches and developed them. A great progress in architectural structure is that the load-bearing structure has been changed to a frame type. Rib arches and skeleton vaults appeared. When you enter a church and look up at its roof, if you see a rib-like structure radiating from the roof and gathering into columns to the ground, well, that is a skeleton vault. The benefits of frame-type weighing are undoubtedly huge. First of all, the structure of the building has become significantly lighter, and the church can be built taller. Secondly, the light structure also greatly reduces the lateral thrust, and the buttresses that resist the lateral thrust have also evolved into lighter flying buttresses. Thirdly, the load-bearing wall has become a frame, and the gaps between the frames can be used

to open windows, and they are huge window holes that are full height. The slender frame, the towering building, and the huge windows filled between the frames make Gothic architecture feel light and agile.

Special mention should be made of buttresses and flying buttresses. As unique components of the buildings of this period, they can be said to be one of the most prominent features of these two types of buildings. The buttresses on Romanesque buildings are really walls, very thick. This is because its weight itself is also very heavy. The buttresses on Gothic buildings are frame-type because of the weight, and the buttresses are also changed into sections. The structure on the buttresses is more simplified, directly crossing the side corridor and supporting the bottom of the skeleton vault. This structure is called a flying vault. If you have a little knowledge of architecture, you must have heard of this term, which comes from Gothic architecture.

Florence

Parking spot	B us pick up/drop off: Lungarno Guglielmo Pecori Giraldi , 8, 50126 Firenze FI Car park: Parcheggio Beccaria, Piazza Cesare Beccaria, 50121 Firenze FI Parcheggio Sant'Ambrogio, Largo Pietro Annigoni , 9, 50122 Firenze FI Piazzale Michelangelo: Piazzale Michelangelo, 50125 Firenze FI buses are free, cars are at least 1 Euro		
Latitude and longitude	43 degrees north latitude	Equivalent to China ...	Siping, Jilin
Area (square kilometers):	102	Population ('000):	380
City status	The capital of the Tuscany region and the province of Florence in central Italy, it is the region's largest and most populous city, and a major historical, cultural, and commercial center.		
Basic historical information	It became a resettlement village for retired soldiers in 59 BC. It was under the control of the Medici family for a long time. It was an important cultural, commercial and financial center in medieval Europe and was once the capital of unified Italy (1865-1871). It is the birthplace of the Renaissance. Many cultural celebrities were born and lived here in history, including the poet Dante, the painter Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, the scientist Galileo, the political theorist Machiavelli, the sculptor Donatello, etc. The historic center of Florence is listed as a World Cultural Heritage.		
City logo	 Pansy Pattern		
other	The origin of the beautiful name of Florence is that when Xu Zhimo went there for vacation, he was moved by the beauty of the lakes and mountains there, so he translated the Italian word "Firenze" into "Florence" which is closer to Italian. He also wrote two essays, "A Night in Florence" and "Chatting about the Mountain Life in Florence".		

Piazzale Michelangelo

is the most famous place in Florence with a beautiful panoramic view of the city. It is located on the south bank of the Arno River, on the hill of the Oltrarno district south of the city center. It was built in 1869 and designed by architect Giuseppe Poggi. The square is used to commemorate the great artist of the Renaissance, Michelangelo, and is dotted with replicas of some of his famous works left in Florence, such as the bronze David in the center of the square and the allegory of the Medici Chapel in the Basilica of San Lorenzo in Florence.

- There is no shelter, so avoid the hottest time in summer. Go first in winter. There are no toilets in the square.

The Ponte Vecchio

was built in 1345 by Taddeo Gaddi. It is one of the famous landmarks of Florence and is also considered to be the oldest existing stone arch bridge with closed spans in Italy. The bridge can be divided into three parts, with the central arch spanning 30 meters and the two side arches spanning 27 meters. The shops on the bridge were originally butcher shops. In order to enhance the prestige of the Ponte Vecchio, the Grand Duke of Medici banned butchers from operating here in 1593, and their original shops were immediately occupied by some gold merchants. Now, most of them are jewelry stores and tourist souvenir shops. The Ponte Vecchio was not destroyed by the German army during World War II. It is said that this was because of an order issued by Hitler. There is a secret passage on the top of the Ponte Vecchio, and the Medici family could take a carriage directly from the town hall to the new royal palace on the other side of the river.

The Basilica di Santa Maria del Fiore

is the cathedral of Florence, Italy. It is a Gothic cathedral. Construction began in 1296 and was completed in 1436. Designed by architect Arnolfo di Cambio and built with Filippo Brunelleschi's famous dome, the cathedral has a 19th-century Gothic Revival facade designed by architect Emilio Defabris. Its exterior is paved with white, green and pink marble blocks of different shades, which are colorful and harmonious. The white marble comes from Carrara, the red from Siena, and the cyan from Prato, all of which are famous marble production areas. The entire church complex is located in Piazza del Duomo, consisting of the Cathedral, the Baptistery of St. John and the Giotto Bell Tower, and is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore is one of the largest churches in Italy. Its dome is the largest brick dome ever built and one of the three largest domes in the world (the other two are the Pantheon and St. Peter's Basilica).

The three buildings were built one after another. The first one to be built was the Baptistery of St. John, located a few meters west of the Cathedral. It was built in the 7th century and remodeled into its current form in the 11th century. It is a white octagonal Romanesque building. All children in Florence were baptized here, including celebrities such as Dante and Machiavelli. The three bronze doors of the Baptistery are engraved with bronze reliefs of stories from the Old Testament, two of which were made by Ghiberti and praised by Michelangelo as the "Gates of Heaven". This masterpiece, which took Ghiberti 21 years to complete, divides the story of the "Old Testament" into ten scenes. From left to right and from top to bottom, they are Adam and Eve being expelled from the Garden of Eden; Cain killing his brother Abel; Noah getting drunk and offering sacrifices; Abraham and Isaac offering sacrifices; Esau and Jacob; Joseph being sold into slavery; Moses receiving the Ten Commandments; the defeat of Jericho; the war with the Philistines; Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. The reliefs are inlaid in the frames of the bronze doors. The works on the doors today are replicas, and the originals are on display in the museum of the cathedral.

The beginning of the Renaissance was marked by the competition between two talented sculptors, Lorenzo Ghiberti and Filippo Brunelleschi, for the contract to design the bronze doors for the Baptistery of the Florence Cathedral in 1401.

On the right side of the church, there is an 85-meter-high bell tower, which is made of six layers of square structures stacked up into a column, and is clad with Tuscan white, green and pink granite. It is a Gothic building, which is rare in Italy. There are 370 steps in the building, and you can climb up to overlook the whole city. The designer of the bell tower was Giotto, a great fresco artist who was a contemporary of the poet Dante in the early Italian Renaissance, so it is also called Giotto's Bell Tower. Such a high bell tower is rare in medieval church architecture. Giotto only designed the first floor, and the second and third floors were designed by his apprentices and grandchildren, so there are slight differences in style.

Designed by Arnolfo di Cambio, the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore is the main part of the entire complex. It was built in 1296, when Florence was prosperous. The church is in the shape of a Latin cross. The nave is wide, 82.3 meters long, and consists of four 18.3-meter-square bays, which is a unique shape. The south, north and east sides of the church each have a semi-octagonal chamber, and the outer perimeter of the chamber contains five radially arranged chapels. The cathedral was dedicated on March 25, 1436. However, the facade of the church was not completed until 1587. In order to complete this project, several competitions were held. It was not until about three centuries later that the plan of architect Emilio de Fabri was selected in 1871 and completed in 1887.

The huge dome of the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore

At the end of the 13th century, the city of Florence decided to build an unprecedented huge church, hoping to have a huge dome to express its respect for the Virgin Mary and Christ. To this end, several architects participated in the design and construction, and their ultimate goal was "the most magnificent and magnificent building that human skills can achieve." However, the plan was too grand, so grand that when the construction reached the 50-meter-high wall and faced the final dome with a width of more than 40 meters on the opposite side, everyone was at a loss.

Under the technical conditions at the time, not only was the building itself a huge project, but even building the surrounding scaffolding over 50 meters high became a thorny problem. At the critical moment when no artist could do it, Brunelleschi appeared. After thinking about and completing the draft of the dome, he spent several years traveling around Rome, measuring the ruins of temples and palaces, and even recording the details of gables, arches, and column bases. Through these magnificent ancient buildings, he has mastered the construction rules of large classical buildings and successfully integrated the beauty of classics into the conception of the cathedral. After a long time, he returned to Florence and finally completed the formulation of a detailed construction plan for the church dome. In 1420, Florence issued a public tender for the design of the church dome. Brunelleschi finally stood out among many famous architects with his design.

However, many architects believed that Brunelleschi's design was too crazy. They collectively opposed it and spread rumors that if he did what he said, it would take more than 100 years to complete the construction. Brunelleschi realized that his plan might face conspiracy from competitors. Therefore, in order to avoid his competitors from snatching his design sheet, he did not draw a sketch or keep any calculations. He carried out the construction completely based on his inner thoughts and spatial imagination. The whole project became his inner secret. For a period of time, he was imprisoned. However, faced with a huge project, his opponents did not know how to start, and finally had to continue to ask him to complete it.

Brunelleschi used an octagonal vault and double-layered structure to solve the load-bearing problem brought by the huge dome. He absorbed the essence of technology from classical and Gothic architecture, but also applied it in an absolutely ingenious and novel way. In addition, he also carefully considered the details of the dome, such as light and drainage, and

solved them perfectly one by one. Faced with the scaffolding problem, he did not use the traditional construction method, but directly built a simple working platform using the completed building parts at high altitude. In order to speed up the construction and facilitate the transportation of building materials to high altitude, he invented a set of mechanical vertical transportation devices, which greatly advanced the construction period. Finally, when this huge building with a height of 91 meters and a maximum diameter of 45.52 meters stood before people, no one denied that it was a masterpiece of architectural genius. Some people stood in front of the cathedral and were very excited. They admitted that they saw a composer's beautiful work in the spatial rhythm of the dome, saw dancing notes at the end of the light, and found the beauty of musical variation at the connection of the building. A new architectural form was born. This crystallization, which stood out from classical art and was very different from Gothic architecture, was a unique achievement of the Renaissance.

This dome became a symbol of Florence and the entire Renaissance spirit, and is also the first representative work of architectural art in the history of the Renaissance.

The Pazzi Chapel in Florence was built by Brunelleschi for the Pazzi, a powerful family in Florence. Brunelleschi combined columns, pilasters and arches in his own unique way to achieve a light and elegant effect that was unprecedented. There is no Gothic architecture. A hundred years later, Michelangelo built a similar dome in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, but he sighed: "I can build a dome bigger than this, but it can never be more beautiful."

Inside the dome is a huge ceiling painting "The Last Judgment" by the 16th-century Florentine painter Giorgio Vasari. He admired Michelangelo in art and considered himself his disciple. However, his artistic style was mixed, pursuing formalism, and belonged to the Mannerist school. In 1568, Vasari took over a 3,600-square-meter large dome painting project entrusted to him by the Medici family - "The Last Judgment". He completed some important parts of the mural and demonstrated superb fresco techniques. Six years later, Vasari died suddenly. After that, Federico Zuccari and others spent another five years to complete the project in 1579.

But Vasari's achievements were not limited to this. He was also an outstanding architect. The Uffizi Palace (now the Uffizi Gallery) was his masterpiece. In addition, Vasari's achievements in art history research were superior to his artistic creation. His book "Lives of the Most Famous Artists" (1550) is more than one million words long and details the painters, architects and sculptors since Cimabue. The book formally used the term "Renaissance" and proposed that the development of new art could be divided into three stages according to the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries. It is the most important material on Italian Renaissance art and has a great influence on later generations. At the same time, he was hailed as the founder of world art education because he founded the Accademia di Diano (now the Academy of Fine Arts in Florence, Italy) in 1562.

In addition, on the north wall of the nave there is Uccello's "Monument to Giovanni Aguto" and "Dante and the Divine Comedy" painted to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Dante's birth.

Next to the bell tower are statues of the cathedral's architects, left: Arnolfo di Cambio, right: Filippo Brunelleschi.

Giotto, the "Father of European Painting" (c. 1266/1276-1337)

Giotto di Bondone broke the medieval painting tradition and paved the way for modern realistic painting. As a pioneer of Italian Renaissance painting, he was also an outstanding sculptor and architect. In June 1334, Giotto was responsible for building the bell tower of the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore and designed many exquisite reliefs. This is the world-famous Giotto Bell Tower. This square building has five floors and is 85 meters high, full of Gothic art style. 370 steps lead directly to the top of the building. The

outer wall is inlaid with red, white and green marble. You can see the whole city of Florence from the top of the building. In terms of bright colors and tall and beautiful architectural style, Giotto perfectly achieved harmony and unity between this Gothic building and the Romanesque decoration of the surrounding buildings. The lower two floors of the bell tower are full of exquisite relief creations, including "Bread Field", "Textile", "Vineyard" and "Sculptor" and other works reflecting ordinary life materials, as well as works derived from Christian sacred stories. The upper three-story windows are extremely exquisite, decorated with fine patterns, and are representative works of Gothic art.

This exquisite building is the epitome of Giotto's artistic essence, showing the highest artistic level and architectural attainments. It has been renowned for hundreds of years and has become a milestone in Giotto's artistic life. It is still the most outstanding building in Florence, which is home to various art masterpieces. Giotto ushered in a new era of art. Because medieval art has always been centered on theology, it was just a means for the church to promote doctrine, and the creative elements derived from life were completely abandoned. Therefore, medieval art did not have any personal feelings, and asceticism, mysticism and obscurantism ran through it. All works were of the same model. It was the appearance of Giotto that completely changed this situation. Art historians believe that "since the appearance of Giotto, the stained glass paintings on the walls of buildings have been replaced by creative murals", which fully expresses the affirmation of all his innovative attempts.

When he was young, Giotto made a living by herding sheep. In his spare time, he liked to paint on stones. One day, the famous painter Cimabue passed by and saw a lamb standing alone on a rock in the distance. When he got closer, he found that it was painted on it. The painter was amazed by such a realistic and vivid painting. Although the lines were crude, he still discovered the talent hidden in it. So he found the shepherd boy and took him as his apprentice. From then on, the 9-year-old Giotto became a thousand-mile horse discovered by Bole. Once he got started, he could not stop and embarked on the road of painting art. Under the care of Cimabue, Giotto quickly mastered the painting skills. Legend has it that once Cimabue found a fly on a portrait he painted, but he couldn't get rid of it. Later he realized that it was painted by Giotto.

"Heaven's Gate"

In 1401, Florence planned to decorate a bronze door on the north side of the Baptistery of San Giovanni and issued an open tender. The works of Brunelleschi and the famous sculptor Ghiberti were finally selected. They made two completely different creative ideas on the common competition title "The Sacrifice of Isaac", a story from the Bible. Ghiberti created it according to the traditional Gothic style, focusing on form and ignoring the idea of picture presentation, but Brunelleschi's work was completely innovative. First, the protagonist Isaac was designed as a classical nude shape, and then he focused on creating a tense atmosphere in the whole picture and depicting the imaginative space of the story plot. The main body of the picture is placed on Abraham's hand holding up the sharp knife and Isaac's rebellious expression. The former conveys the determination to execute Christ's command, and the latter reflects Isaac's resistance to survival as an ordinary person. In addition, the depiction of natural scenery and foil characters forms a sharp contrast with the traditional practice of simply narrating a biblical story, reflecting the humanistic concern for people and life. This work has become an unsurpassed classic with its vivid characters and tense plot shaping, and is still treasured in the Florence Art Museum.

Although Brunelleschi's work was more vivid, the work of Ghiberti, who was only 25 years old, was finally chosen for the relief decoration of the bronze door of the Florence Baptistery. Brunelleschi's "The Sacrifice of Isaac" has a complex and powerful composition, and attempts to create a certain degree of depth of field on the relief. However, due to the limitations of the craftsmanship, the decorative frieze in the foreground

of the relief is flat and does not produce an ideal sense of space. Ghiberti did not adopt the compact composition style of his opponent, but used diagonal lines that were easier to achieve across the relief, thus creating a clear space and depth of field, and finally won the favor of the judges. In artistic creation, there is often a gap between theory and practice, and this gap needs to be filled with a more advanced technical level.

It took Ghiberti more than 20 years to complete the door. The whole door is divided into 28 panels, 20 of which tell about the life of Christ, 4 describe the apostles, and the remaining 4 tell about the doctors of the church. In 1425, Ghiberti was hired to make a corresponding door for the east side of the baptistery – the “Gate of Heaven”. He used 10 panels to present the scenes of the Old Testament, from God creating mankind to the Queen of Sheba visiting Solomon. The scenes are beautiful. He used nearly perfect mosaics and exquisite and lovely animal and plant decorations on the edges of the panels to form 20 pictures.

The scenery in the background of the characters’ actions in these paintings is almost completely in line with the principles of perspective, and the exquisite depiction is also ingenious, comparable to the best paintings of the time. Michelangelo believed that “the Door of Paradise is good enough to decorate the entrance to heaven”; Vasari declared that “every detail of this sculpture is perfect, whether it is the best masterpiece in the world, whether it is ancient or modern”. Ghiberti was also selected as a member of the leadership group because of this immortal “Door of Paradise”. “Door of Paradise” still stands today, and Ghiberti has also been recorded in history with “Door of Paradise”.

Piazza della Signoria was built in 1268. It is an “L” shaped square in front of the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, named after the Palazzo Vecchio (Palazzo della Signoria). It is a gathering place for Florentines and many tourists. It is called the political center because it is the place where the citizens of the Republic of Florence gather for meetings. People will ring the bell to call the people to come. Citizens will erect statues or replicas in the square to record major events in Florence’s history. It is called the cultural center because this square leads to the Uffizi Gallery and the Palazzo Vecchio.

In addition to the Palazzo Vecchio and its crenellated towers, the square also houses the Loggia della Signoria, the Uffizi Gallery, the Tribunal della Signoria (1359) (now the Department of Agriculture), and the Palazzo Uguccioni (16th century, with a facade that may have been painted by Raphael). In front of the Palazzo Vecchio is the Renaissance-style Associati Assurance Company (1871).

The Tribunale della Mercanzia was founded in 1359. It is the place where disputes between Florentine merchants and guilds can be judged. It is also the economic and legal center. Of course, it is also a good place for leisure and entertainment. Not only tourists stroll here, but also local Florentines have long been accustomed to gossiping here.

As early as the ancient Roman period, the Piazza della Signoria was already a central square, surrounded by theaters, baths and dyeing workshops. In the 1980s, the ground was repaved here, and many archaeological relics were discovered underground, including artifacts from the Roman and Etruscan periods, the Middle Ages, and even the Bronze Age, dating back to the Neolithic Age. However, under public pressure, the excavation was stopped in 1989, and the government buried those precious cultural heritages for future generations to discover. Therefore, it is not an exaggeration to call the Piazza della Signoria an “open-air + underground” museum.

There is a simple metal plate in the square, recording the most important historical event that took place here – the fanatical Dominican friar Savonarola was burned at the stake here on May 23, 1498. Just one year

before Savonarola burned himself, in 1497, he also ignited another heartbreaking flame here – the “Bonfire of the Vanities”.

On February 7, 1497, Savonarola, who preached asceticism, set fire to thousands of cosmetics, paintings, books, music scores, sculptures, mirrors, toys, clothes, and even musical instruments. The reason? “They are extravagant and deviate from ‘original sin’! Christ would have done the same!” What is particularly unbearable is that Botticelli was also one of Savonarola’s followers. In this “bonfire of vanity”, Botticelli, who once painted the most beautiful Venus in the world, set fire to many of his famous paintings...

It is not difficult to imagine that if there had not been this “Bonfire of the Vanities”, there would have been many more Botticelli masterpieces in the Uffizi Gallery, which was only a hundred meters away, and many people would have been fascinated by them. As for Savonarola’s “glorious deeds”, those who are interested can watch the American TV series “The Borgias”, which tells the details.

As time goes by, Savonarola is finally proven by history to be just a clown in the history of human civilization. The Piazza della Signoria still occupies an important position in the hearts of Florentine citizens, and new sculptures are constantly added to the square to prove the glory of Florence. With these sculptures, the Piazza della Signoria is an open-air museum, where the masterpieces of masters hundreds of years ago meet us face to face. The sound of hammers and chisels seems to still echo in our ears. Although the marble powder can no longer choke our throats, we can still see the traces of time on them.

There are many striking statues in the square:

At the entrance to the Palazzo Vecchio is a replica of the David statue. Michelangelo’s original is kept in the Gallery of the Academy of Arts. Opposite is the white statue of Poseidon, also known as “Hercules”.

- Equestrian statue of Cosimo I by Giambologna (1594)
- Fountain of Poseidon by Bartolomeo Ammannati (1575)
- “The Lion”, Donatello (replica)
- “Judith and Holofernes”, Donatello (copy)
- “Hercules and Cacus”, Bandinelli (1533)

* There is a drinking fountain behind the Poseidon Fountain, which can be used as a gathering point.

The most famous one is Michelangelo’s David. The little fresh meat here is just a replica, the original is in the Florence Academy of Fine Arts Museum, and the replica is only half the size of the original, the momentum is completely different.

The Equestrian Statue of Cosimo I by Giambologna, a late Renaissance Mannerist sculptor. He was the first Tuscan Grand Duke of the Medici family. During his reign, he founded the Uffizi Gallery, the Pitti Palace, and the Boboli Gardens behind it. These were all his achievements. Vasari, Cellini, Pontormo, and Bronzino all received his sponsorship. In 1554, accompanied by many people, he witnessed the birth of Cellini’s stunning work “Perseus and the Head of Medusa”. Today, his statue and Cellini’s works are also erected in this square, receiving the admiration and praise of the world.

The “Equestrian Statue of Cosimo I” is magnificent. In the square, there is also a “lion” guarding the “red lily” of Florence’s emblem, which is majestic. This lion is called “Marzocco”, the guardian of Florence. It is a replica of Donatello’s work. The most profound impression of Donatello in the art king is the delicate, delicate, and even slightly erotic “David”. This lion does not seem to be as majestic as the other two lions

in the square. These two lions are located at the entrance of the Loggia della Signoria in the square and were completed by sculptors Fancelli and Vacca.

"Hercules subduing Cacus".

This story happened during the hero Hercules' tenth mission, which was to bring back the red bull raised by Geryon. After Hercules successfully captured Geryon's red bull, he passed the Tiber River on his way back and encountered the three-headed giant Cacus, the son of Hephaestus, the god of fire, and Medusa. Cacus stole the red bull while Hercules was not paying attention, and the bull's cry startled Hercules, who immediately chased after him and killed the giant. The sculptor who created this work is called Bandinelli. Looking at Hercules's strong back and waist, a real muscle man, does it remind you of Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling painting and "The Last Judgment"?

There is also a famous fountain in the square – the Fountain of Neptune, created by Bartolomeo Ammannati. After the work was completed, the Florentines, who were used to seeing top works of art, did not buy it and called it a "white giant" and mocked the sculptor: "Ammannati, Ammannati, you have ruined so much marble!" Indeed, compared with other works in the square, the statue of Neptune is indeed not outstanding.

The name "Loggia della Signoria" dates back to the reign of Grand Duke Cosimo I, when the formidable German mercenaries were stationed here. After the renovation, the Grand Dukes of the Medici family watched the ceremonies in the square from it. It consists of a wide arch open to the street, three bays wide and one bay deep. The main statues that exist are:

- "The Rape of the Sabine Women", Giambologna

In ancient Italy, there was a nation called the Sabines. They lived in the central area of the Apennine Mountains, adjacent to the Romans. After the establishment of Rome, Romulus recruited vagrants, craftsmen, and peddlers from all over the country to settle there in order to make Rome prosperous. These people were of low birth, and few women were willing to marry them, so Rome faced a serious problem of procreation. Romulus came up with a despicable plan to solve Rome's problem. He invited the nearby Sabines to be his guests under the pretext of holding the "Poseidon Festival". He took the opportunity to sneak into the Sabine city and robbed many beautiful Sabine women and their property. A few years later, the Sabines became powerful and wanted to take revenge, but the women who were robbed had already become Roman wives and had children for the Romans. At this time, the Sabines would inevitably make them orphans and widows. In order to prevent their fathers and brothers and the Romans who had married them from continuing to sacrifice, the Sabine women dragged their children out to stop the fight between relatives.

This impressive work was carved from a single block of flawed white marble, the largest block ever brought to Florence. [6] Giambologna wanted to create a figura serpentina, a work that would spiral upwards from all sides. This was the first time in European sculpture that more than one figure was represented, but from no vantage point. It could be seen equally from all sides. With the possible exception of the earliest Laocoön, this was the first time in European sculpture that more than one figure was represented.

- The most famous work in the loggia is Cellini's masterpiece "Perseus and the Head of Medusa", Benvenuto Cellini (1554)

From Greek mythology. Perseus is the son of Zeus and Danae. Legend has it that the king of Argos asked the oracle for his childlessness, but the answer he got was that he would not only be childless but also die at the hands of his grandson. So he locked his daughter Danae in a bronze tower and isolated her from the world, but the almighty Zeus came down to earth and had a night with Danae and gave birth to a half-human, half-god Perseus. In a rage, the king put his daughter and grandson in a wooden box and threw them into

the sea, but they were adopted by the fisherman Dictys. The movie "Clash of the Titans" begins with this scene. Dictys' brother is the owner of the island where they live. He tried to possess Danae, so he tried to get rid of his brave son Perseus. He asked Perseus to cut off Medusa's head.

Medusa had a special ability. Anyone who looked into her eyes would immediately turn into stone. Medusa was originally a very beautiful girl with long hair. But she thought she was good-looking and even overestimated her ability to compete with the goddess of wisdom. Athena was enraged. She cast a spell and turned her hair into countless snakes. The two had a grudge from then on. It is said that the logo of the Italian brand Versace uses the head of Medusa. According to Athena's guidance, Perseus first found the three sisters of the Graeae, hoping to find the Hesperides through them in order to get the magic bag that could hold Medusa's head. The three sisters had a characteristic that they shared an eye and passed it to each other. Perseus suddenly snatched the eye in the chaos and forced them to tell the whereabouts of the Hesperides. After getting the magic bag from the Hesperides, Perseus got the Harpe sword from Zeus, the winged flying shoes from Hermes, and finally a smooth shield from Athena. Unable to look Medusa in the eyes, Perseus cleverly used the shield in his hand as a mirror, and when he got close to Medusa, he swung his sword and cut off her head.

This sculpture shows the moment when Perseus raised the bloody head of Medusa high. After Medusa died, a Pegasus was released from her body. Perseus put the head into the magic bag and rode back on the Pegasus. When passing through Ethiopia, he saw a beautiful woman chained to the rocks on the shore. She was Andromeda, the daughter of the King of Ethiopia. Because her mother boasted that her daughter was more beautiful than the daughter of Poseidon, Poseidon was furious and sent the whale monster Keto to deal with them and ordered them to sacrifice their daughter. Perseus heroically saved the beauty, turned Keto into stone with Medusa's head, and finally married Andromeda. Perseus returned to the island with his wife. The island owner did not believe that he could take off Medusa's head. As a result, he took out the head to show the island owner, and the island owner also turned into stone. The story is not over yet. After Perseus learned about his life experience, he decided to return to his hometown to tell his grandfather in person that he would not kill him. When the Argonaut king heard that Perseus was coming, he fled the city and went to Larissa, a nearby town. Unfortunately, Perseus was participating in a discus throwing competition in Larissa. The discus he threw just hit the old king, and Perseus was destined to kill his grandfather with his own hands. The heartbroken Perseus gave up the Argonaut throne, gave the head of Medusa to Athena, and came to the Peloponnese with his wife to establish the city of Mycenae.

In 1554, the sculptor Cellini spent nearly ten years to finally complete this bronze work. He encountered countless difficulties and failed many times. When he tried again, the furnace temperature was too high and damaged the bronze casting. Cellini ordered his furniture, about 200 plates and kitchen utensils to be thrown into the furnace, which made the bronze flow again. After the bronze cooled, the statue was miraculously completed, with only the three toes on the right foot added later. Like Michelangelo in his youth, he engraved his name on the strap on the statue's chest. He also made a beautiful base, engraved with other characters in the story, and engraved Zeus on the front, called Jupiter in Roman mythology. The best angle to appreciate this statue is to face Perseus' gaze. Athena is carved on the right, called Minerva in Roman mythology. Hermes is carved on the back, called Mercury in Roman mythology. Danae and Perseus as a child are carved on the left. There is also a bronze plate under the front base, which depicts the scene of Perseus fighting the whale monster Ceto to rescue Andromeda.

- Menelaos lifted up the body of Patroclus

Menelaus was the king of Sparta in Greek mythology and the husband of the beautiful Helen. After Helen was

abducted by Paris, Menelaus and Agamemnon summoned almost all the kings in Greece to go to war against Troy. Patroclus was one of the Greek heroes who died in the Trojan War. He was as close as a brother to Achilles, the strongest general in the Spartan army, and some said they were homosexuals. In the early days of the Trojan War, Achilles refused to fight because he did not like the commander of the army at that time. At this time, Patroclus took the initiative to put on Achilles' armor and went into battle to kill the enemy, causing the Trojans to mistakenly think that it was Achilles and hate Achilles very much, which prompted Achilles to join the war. To put it bluntly, this war was because the queen of Sparta was abducted, so King Menelaus was very grateful to Patroclus. In the battle, Patroclus was unfortunately killed by Hector, the bravest warrior in Troy. This sculpture shows the king holding up the recently sacrificed Patroclus in his arms with grief. Later, his good brother Achilles killed Hector to avenge him. The statue itself is a replica of an ancient Greek work, found in Rome. Pope Pius V gave it to Cosimo I, Grand Duke of Florence. It was originally placed at the south end of the Ponte Vecchio and later moved here. There is also a marble sculpture of the same theme from the ancient Roman period in the Pitti Palace, which is an imitation of the original Pergamon in the middle of the 3rd century BC.

- Hercules fighting the Centaur Nessus (1599)

This is also a work by Giambologna. Hercules is the Hercules in ancient Greek mythology. He once pursued Iole, the daughter of Eurytus, in Ochiaia. At this critical moment, the cow of Eurytus' family was lost. So Hercules hurriedly went out with Eurytus' son to find the cow. The queen of heaven Hera, who had always hated him, cast a magic spell to make him crazy and killed Eurytus' son. Not only did he not find the cow, but he also killed the son. This time he would definitely not be able to marry his daughter, and he would have an enemy from then on. Once he took his wife to Trachis, and asked the centaur Nessus to carry his wife across the river on the way. Unexpectedly, Nessus wanted to do something unruly to Ianella, and was shot by Hercules with a poisoned arrow. Before he died, Nessus lied to Ianella and said that his blood could rekindle Hercules' passion for her when she was cold. Ianella collected his poisonous blood for use. When Hercules attacked Ochiaia, he captured his former lover Ionera. Fearing that she would be ignored, Ionera gave her husband a shirt smeared with poisonous blood. After Hercules put on the shirt, he felt unbearable pain and finally committed suicide by throwing himself into the fire. This sculpture shows the scene of Hercules fighting with the Centaur Nessus.

- The Rape of Polyxena. Pio Fedi (1865)

The Trojan princess Polyxena is a character in the tragedy "The Trojan Women" by the ancient Roman tragedy writer Seneca. This story happened during the Trojan War. Speaking of the origin of the Trojan War, it is a bit bloody. Its root was caused by an apple, which is the famous Golden Apple incident. The daughter of the Aegean Sea god got married. The wedding invited various gods. In order to maintain harmony, the goddess Eris, who was in charge of disputes, was not invited. As a result, she came uninvited and decided to disrupt the situation. She put a golden apple engraved with "Belongs to the Most Beautiful" on the banquet. Queen Hera, goddess of wisdom Athena, and goddess of love Aphrodite all wanted to get the golden apple, so they asked Zeus to judge. Zeus did not want to offend anyone and gave it to Trojan Prince Paris to judge. So the three goddesses promised him wealth, honor and beauty in private. The lustful prince chose beauty, but offended Hera and Athena. Aphrodite fulfilled her promise and helped Paris kidnap Queen Helen of Sparta, causing a war between the two countries. Achilles was the most valiant and skilled warrior in the Spartan army. He was invulnerable to swords and spears because his mother, in order to train him when he was a child, held his heels with her hands and soaked him in the holy water of the Styx. The soaked parts were like armor. In the battle, Achilles killed Hector, the bravest warrior in the Trojan army. At this time, the Trojan princess Polythene proposed to exchange her brother Hector's body for her slavery, so Achilles kidnapped

the princess. The sculpture shows Achilles holding Polythene in his left hand, stepping on Hector, who he killed, and using the sword in his right hand to drive away Hecuba, the Queen of Troy, who tried to stop him. However, Paris later learned from Apollo that Achilles' fatal weakness was in the heel that had not been soaked in holy water, so he shot Achilles in the heel with an arrow and killed him.

After the fall of Troy, the Greek hero Achilles, who had died in the battle, appeared and claimed that she was his trophy, so she was killed and sacrificed in front of his tomb. After the 4th century BC, as the myth became more and more popular, later generations added the love story between her and Achilles during his lifetime.

Uffizi Gallery

Construction began in 1560 and was completed in 1581. It was originally the office of Cosimo I de' Medici (Uffizi is a homophone of the Italian word for "office").

Since Cosimo I, the Medici family has been passionate about art, and most of the artworks collected by the family for generations are placed here. The last direct descendant of the family, Anna Maria Medici, left a will before her death, donating all the Medici family's collections to the government and preserving them as Florence's heritage. Uffizi naturally became a museum and was officially opened to the public in 1765.

Due to the large number of collections, some of the works had to be moved to other museums in Florence. Some sculptures were placed in the Bargello. The Uffizi Gallery was expanded from 2006 to 2011. The Uffizi is the most popular tourist attraction in Florence. In the peak season, especially in July, the waiting time to enter the museum can be very long.

- The online booking fee is 4 Euros per person, and you can specify the entry time. If you arrive late, you can still enter after exchanging your ticket.

Palazzo Pitti is a large Renaissance palace in Florence. It is located on the south bank of the Arno River, a short distance from the Ponte Vecchio. It was originally the residence of a banker, Luca Pitti. In 1549, it was purchased by the Medici family and used as their main residence. Historically, it was the power center of Napoleon, and later the new Italian royal family also lived here for a short time after the unification. It is now the largest art gallery in Florence open to the public.

Dante's House

Dante, the greatest poet of the Renaissance, is known as the last poet of the Middle Ages and the first poet of the new century. His most famous quote is: Go your own way and let others talk. Born in 1265 in a declining noble family in Florence, he wrote many works in his life, among which the most valuable is undoubtedly "The Divine Comedy". Through the author's dialogues with various famous figures in hell, purgatory and heaven, this work reflects the achievements and some major issues in the field of medieval culture. It has the nature of an "encyclopedia", and the dawn of humanistic thought in the Renaissance can also be vaguely glimpsed from it. In this epic poem of more than 14,000 lines, Dante resolutely opposed the obscurantism of the Middle Ages and expressed the idea of persistent pursuit of truth, which had a profound influence on the poetry creation of later generations in Europe.

Dante had always had a crush on a woman named Beatrice. Perhaps Beatrice didn't even know it. Dante first met Beatrice at the age of 9 in the Dante Church in front. It is said that they met again 8 years later in the famous Ponte Vecchio. Beatrice died a few years after she got married. Dante was extremely sad, so he created a series of works to express his feelings.

Dante later joined politics and became the consul of Florence, but he was involved in the struggle between the black and white parties and was expelled from Florence forever after his defeat. He eventually went to Ravenna and died there. Later, the Florentines wanted to take back Dante's body, but the Ravenna people refused to do so, saying that you drove the poet away when he was alive, but you want to take him back after he died. There is also an empty tomb of Dante in the Basilica of Santa Croce in Florence.

The Basilica of the Holy Cross is the largest Franciscan church in the world. It is said that it was founded by Francis himself. Francis was originally a rich boy. When he was young, he did not make progress. His father took him to the bishop in a rage and announced the abolition of his inheritance rights. He was stimulated and took off his clothes on the spot and left, starting his life of poverty. After studying the Bible, he decided to do what Jesus told his disciples to do when they preached the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven, without bringing money, crutches, or shoes. He believed that "once we have something, we need weapons to protect it and ourselves, which is why there are many quarrels, wars and lawsuits." The Franciscan Order he founded in 1209 was approved by the Pope. His propaganda made many people who lost faith in the church because of corruption return to the church. His love for nature made him the patron saint of the natural environment. His influence spread all over the world, and San Francisco in the United States was named after him. In the early days, the church did not look like the present one. In 1294, Cambio designed the Gothic architecture, and in the 19th century, the bell tower and marble facade were rebuilt. Above the facade, you can see a very obvious David Star symbol, which was designed by Jewish designer Matas.

You need to buy a ticket to enter the church and its monastery, 6 euros per ticket. This should be relatively rare in Italy, but it is a feature of Florence. Under normal circumstances, churches should be free to visit, and only monasteries, baptisteries, bell towers or climbing to the top require money. But in Florence, many churches have started to charge fees. If there are no fees for the church, they will also transfer important items to the museums attached to the church for ticket sales, and the ticket price for the museum is definitely not cheap. We feel that the commercial awareness here is obviously stronger than that of Rome. The streets are full of small shops or vendors, and the cars on the street will not easily stop and wait for you to cross the road. Walking into the church, I found that a choir was rehearsing for the evening performance. Today is Sunday, and many churches will have activities in the evening.

The Basilica of Santa Croce is also known as the "Pantheon of Italy". 276 great men in Italian history are buried here. This is the tomb of Galileo, holding a telescope and a globe in his hands.

Opposite is the tomb of Michelangelo, designed by his student Vasari. In the mural with a strong sense of three-dimensionality, an angel pulls aside the curtain, and the tomb niche in front seems to appear in front of you from the curtain. In the middle is the bust of Michelangelo, and the three goddesses below represent painting, sculpture and architecture, indicating the outstanding achievements Michelangelo has made in these three aspects.

Next to it is the tomb of Dante. Dante sat there quietly with his chin in his hand, thinking. Below him was a line of words: Great and Glorious Poet. The goddess on the left held a scepter, symbolizing justice; the goddess on the right held a laurel wreath and lay on a thick book, symbolizing Dante's achievements in poetry and the injustice he suffered. Dante was born in 1265. He was the last poet in the European Middle Ages and the first poet in the new era. All literary works before him were completed in Latin, while his poems written in the Tuscan language of Italy played a milestone role in the formation of modern Italian. He was called the founder of modern Italian. Dante was born into a declining noble family. His family belonged to the royalist faction in the political struggle in Florence, but he yearned for independence and said

the famous "Go your own way and let others talk". After the failure of his White Party, Dante was exiled and never returned to Florence. He died in a foreign land in 1321, so there is only an empty tomb here without Dante's body.

Across another tomb, we found Machiavelli's tomb. Machiavelli is a famous Italian political philosopher. He was born in 1469. At the age of 25, he participated in the uprising against the rule of the Medici family and established the Florentine Republic. He served as the second head of the State Council, in charge of national defense and foreign affairs. In 1512, the Medici family overthrew the republic and returned to power. He was arrested and imprisoned. Although he was later released, he was penniless. In order to return to the political stage, he began to write "The Prince", emphasizing that the political tactics, cruelty, hypocrisy, and even betrayal that are unscrupulous in order to achieve the goal are legitimate as long as they are conducive to the monarch's rule, and dedicated this book to the ruling Lorenzo Medici. This book made him one of the founders of modern political thought. It is said that Napoleon, Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin and others all regarded it as a must-read book on their desks. Later, he was appointed and wrote "History of Florence" and dedicated it to Pope Clement VII, who came from the Medici family. However, fate played a trick on him again. In 1527, the Medici family fell and Florence restored the Republic. This famous fence-sitter wanted to return to the Republican government to serve, but was not appointed and eventually died of depression in the same year.

Some tombs are on the ground, and we were careful not to step on them. In addition to the tombs of celebrities, there are many precious works of art from the early Renaissance in the Basilica of Santa Croce. On the wall next to Machiavelli's tomb is Donatello's Annunciation niche. Donatello was born in 1386 and was a first-generation artist in the early Renaissance. He studied under Ghiberti and had a deep foundation in sculpture art. His work "David" when he was 46 years old was called the first work to revive the ancient tradition of nude statues. It can be seen in the Bargello Museum. The work in front of you shows the angel Gabriel telling Mary that she is pregnant.

The small rooms behind the main altar are filled with religious paintings from the 14th century, which are set off by the colored stained glass windows and look very gorgeous. This mural is the birth of Jesus painted by Taddeo Gaddi. The middle left piece describes the angel informing the shepherds of the birth of Jesus, and the middle right piece describes Mary giving birth to Jesus in a manger accompanied by Joseph. Taddeo Gaddi was born in 1290 and is considered Giotto's best student.

There is a side door in the temple that leads to a large courtyard. Walking down the steps, you can enter the Bazzi Chapel designed by Brunelleschi. This chapel was built in 1470 and is mainly used as a meeting hall. The ceiling inside the chapel is painted with constellations in the sky, which is a rare non-religious ceiling painting in Florence. The dome in the middle maintains the simple style of the Franciscan Order. The monastery restaurant next to the courtyard has now been opened as a museum, displaying paintings from different periods.

On the wall at one end of the restaurant are the murals "Tree of the Cross" and "The Last Supper" painted by Taddeo Gaddi. The cross on it evolves into a big tree, with Jesus on the main trunk in the middle and his disciples distributed on the branches, representing that Christianity will continue to grow and develop. "The Last Supper" is a common theme in the dining halls of churches or monasteries. This painting is similar to what we see in the Sistine Chapel, both of which have Judas sitting alone on the other side of the table, forming an opposition with the others.

Walking out of the church, there is a statue of Dante standing at the door. No matter how many grievances he has had with this city, he will always be the pride of the Florentines.

Santa Maria Novella, the Basilica di Santa Maria Novella is the first papal basilica in Florence and the main church of the Dominican Order in the city. The basilica, together with the adjoining convent, houses a collection of priceless art treasures, particularly frescoes by Gothic and early Renaissance masters, thanks to the generosity of Florence's most important families.

The church is called the "New" Santa Maria Maggiore because it was built on the foundations of a 9th-century monastery. It was the first papal church in Florence, and was the main church of the Black Friars Dominican Order, as opposed to the Basilica of Santa Croce of the Grey Friars. Construction began in the mid-13th century (around 1246) and was completed around 1360. The black and white marble facade was designed by Leon Battista Alberti, a famous Renaissance genius architect. .

, the Medici family often visited Santa Maria Novella for mass. On April 26, 1478, which was Easter Sunday, a group of opponents (the Pazzi family) instigated by Pope Sixtus IV and the Archbishop of Pisa assassinated Lorenzo and his brother Giuliano de' Medici while they were worshipping in the church. Lorenzo escaped with injuries, but Giuliano was assassinated. Afterwards, Lorenzo bloodily suppressed the action, ordered the assassination of the Archbishop of Pisa, and exterminated the Pazzi family, a banker who participated in the assassination. This period of history has even been included in the popular historical fantasy game series "Assassin's Creed II", translated into Chinese as "Assassin's Creed II: The Tomb" (Secrets of Santa Maria Novella). The key is that the ancestors of the Pazzi family participated in the First Crusade and were closely related to the catacombs of Santa Maria Novella.

The most important works in the church are Giotto's Christ on the Cross (1290-1295), tempera and gold paintings on wood, and Masaccio's Trinity fresco. Born in 1401, Masaccio, the father of Renaissance painting, was the first artist to express scientific perspective in his short 27-year life. He rejected the popular International Gothic style of painting at the time, describing the real space of human nature and fully reflecting the solemn beauty of the classics. In the art of painting, he pursued the expression of humanity and science, and the rigorous modeling and composition, which established the standard for the Florentine painting style of the Renaissance. There are also works by Botticelli, Brunelleschi, Vasari and others in the church.

Palazzo Rucellai

David

is a masterpiece of Michelangelo during the Renaissance, carved between 1501 and 1504. The statue is a standing male nude carved from white marble, 5.17 meters tall and weighing about 6 tons. It is used to represent the Jewish hero King David in the Bible. The original work is currently placed in the Academy of Fine Arts in Florence, Italy, and attracts about 1.2 million visitors every year.

The sculpture project began in 1464. The sculptor Donatello was contracted to complete a statue of David. He carved the outline of the lower limbs, torso and clothing on a piece of white marble from the Carrara quarry in the Alps, and most likely made a hole between the legs. But for some reason, he did not continue the sculpture, and Donatello died, leaving the statue unfinished. So the authorities decided to find another artist to complete the work. Michelangelo, 26, was chosen, and it took him more than two years to complete the work. In 1504, it was placed at the entrance of the Palazzo Vecchio, the town hall of Florence. In 1873,

for the protection of the statue, the statue was moved to the Gallery of the Academy of Fine Arts in Florence. In 1910, a replica of David was placed in the original site. In Florence, there are two replicas of David in public places, one in the center of Piazzale Michelangelo and the other in front of the door of the town hall. In 1991, a madman damaged the toe of the statue's left foot with a hammer hidden in his coat, and was then controlled without causing further damage.

Throughout history, there are countless paintings and statues with David as the subject. In addition to Michelangelo's (youth) statue, the more famous ones include Donatello's bronze David (boy) – housed in the Bargello Museum in Florence and Bernini's David (adult) – housed in the Borghese Gallery in Rome.

The Story of King David

David was the king of the United Kingdom of Israel in the 10th century BC. He is described in the Bible as the most righteous king and an excellent warrior, musician, and poet. According to the Bible, Jesus' father, Joseph, was a descendant of David.

When David was a child, he was raising sheep at home. During this time, he did two great things:

- for King Saul (also known as Samuel) – David was good at playing the harp and was recommended to serve Saul. By playing the harp, he drove away the demons in Saul, making Saul feel comfortable and refreshed.
- Relying on the Lord to Kill Goliath – When the whole country was in panic, David bravely went to the battlefield, threw a stone to kill Goliath, the Philistine warrior who frightened the Israelites, and caused the arrogant Philistines to be defeated.

After David killed Goliath, he became a national hero. At the celebration banquet, women praised him, saying "Saul killed thousands, David killed tens of thousands," which aroused Saul's jealousy and pursuit. David had to flee everywhere, even pretending to be crazy to avoid harm. David did not become cynical because of his unfair experience. He still treated people with love and saved the residents of Keilah. During his escape, he had two chances to secretly kill Saul, but David did not kill Saul.

After King Saul was killed in battle, David was made king of Judah, and later king of all Israel, reigning for a total of about forty years.

King David is an important figure in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, and is considered a prophet sent by God to the Israelites.

Medici Family

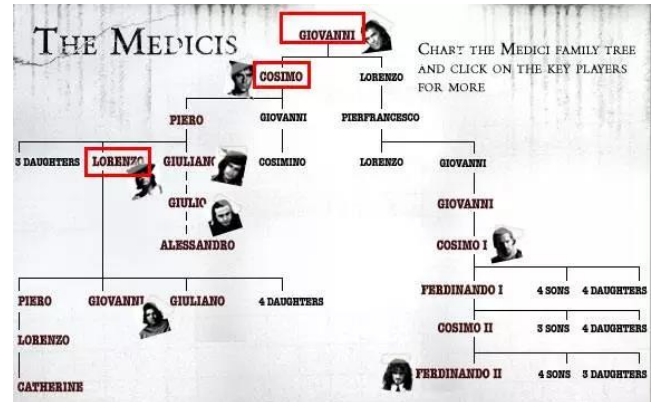
The red ball on the Medici family's coat of arms represents pills or cupping jars, because the Medici, as their surname suggests (doctor is medico in Italian, medicin in French, which has the same origin as Italian, and medicin means medicine in modern English), may have originally been doctors or pharmacists.

This family existed for a long time, from the 13th century to the 17th century when it died out. The story of four centuries can be summed up in three stages:

- The first generation of Giovanni laundered the capital accumulated by usury.
- The second generation Cosimo led the family from being a wealthy family to becoming an aristocratic class.
- Lorenzo, the fourth generation of the wealthy, supported a large number of artists and promoted the development of the entire Renaissance.

The wealth, power and influence of the Medici family came from business, wool processing and activities in the wool textile guild. However, it was the financial business that really made the Medici prosperous. At the end of the 14th century, Giovanni emerged from the family. He shrewdly used the bank to successfully whitewash the family, turning from a lender to a banker, and the family embarked on the road of legal tycoons.

In the Bible, people who lend money will go to hell after death. Although Giovanni had successfully whitewashed himself as a banker, he was still very afraid. So, in order to atone for his sins, he came up with the idea of using money to support artists to paint for churches and religious paintings to show his sincerity. The Renaissance began in the late 13th century and gradually intensified in the 14th and 15th centuries. At that time, the Medici family was in Florence, Italy, the center of the Renaissance. The first artist sponsored by Giovanni was named "Masaccio". He was later called the founder of Italian Renaissance painting.



The Medici family, who became bankers, became richer and richer. When it came to Giovanni's son, Cosimo, who was a pure rich second generation, he had so much money that he had to think seriously about how to spend it. However, he did not intend to just support painters like his father did, but started real estate. The popular trend in Europe at that time was to build churches! The Pope had extremely high secular power, and he would naturally praise him for building churches for free and building them very well. Don't be fooled by the round and pointed roofs of various European buildings now. They are so beautiful. They were very laborious to build at that time. At that time, there was only one popular book in Europe, the Bible, and there were no engineering reference books at all. The body of a church was built, but the craftsmen didn't know how to cap it, so they kept repairing it for decades... Seeing that the popes were about to collapse, this rich second-generation Cosimo was lucky enough to find an architectural manuscript from the ancient Greek and Roman era in a dark corner of the church! Damn! There were even mechanical and engineering drawings, and finally a dome could be built for the church. God really helped me! Cosimo was ecstatic. He commissioned the designer Brunelleschi to quickly apply this knowledge to the construction of the unfinished cathedral. It was not easy, and he finally successfully capped the church! This church, which took 16 years to repair the roof, was the most beautiful in Europe. When it was born, it was the largest church at that time—the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore, and it also became the first landmark building of the Renaissance. To this day, it is still a must-visit place for European art tourism.

The church was built, and the popes fulfilled their promises. In this way, Cosimo successfully entered the officialdom, and the designer Brunelleschi gained both fame and fortune. Based on this drawing and the practical work of repairing the church, he finally invented the perspective method and became the ancestor of modern Western architecture. They used the word "renaissance" to describe this building, implying the revival of the civilization of the ancient Greek and Roman eras, and set off a Renaissance in architecture. Cosimo also seriously sponsored a group of artists such as Donatello and Ghiberti. The Piazza Civica in Florence, which is called the "Forbidden City" by the locals, is their official residence. The Uffizi Gallery, one of the four major art galleries in the world, with a collection of 130,000 pieces, is their family office. The Pitti Palace, the largest art gallery in Florence, is also one of their palaces.

By the fourth generation of the Medici family, that is, the time of Cosimo's grandson Lorenzo, the family

had become the most famous art patron during the Renaissance, and Lorenzo's cultural accomplishment was even better than his grandfather and great-grandfather. He himself was a poet, and he liked to invite people from all walks of life in literature, philosophy, and art to communicate and create; he held salons and parties in the private St. Mark's Garden. At the same time, the artists he "kept" were also famous in the history of art, such as: Sandro Botticelli, Leonardo da Vinci, Andrea del Verrocchio, Michelangelo... These sponsored artists came to tailor-make artworks. For example, draw the sponsor into the painting, or draw portraits for them, etc. Of course, most of the themes still revolve around the two major cultural sources "Greek mythology" and "Bible".

But no one knows what gods look like. Artists usually use the most ideal person in their minds as a model to create, and sometimes they use the image of someone in the sponsor's family as a model. After all, the sponsor pays for the artist's food and clothing, so of course there must be some artistic return. Most of these paintings were hung in the homes of the Medici family and eventually entered major art galleries. Today, most of our understanding of the images of the gods in Greek mythology still comes from these paintings. We may just remember the faces of some people in the Medici family.

For example, Botticelli's classic Venus is the lover of Lorenzo's brother, Vespucci. Let's take a look at "Venus and Mars", which tells a tragic story caused by the bad relationship between the Pope and the Medici family. So later the Medici family simply became popes themselves, and this led to several popes.

The most famous are the three masters of the Renaissance - Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, and Michelangelo: Leonardo da Vinci was sponsored by him and often appeared in his court gatherings; Raphael painted a portrait based on Lorenzo, which was sold at a sky-high price of 230 million yuan in London in 2007. Michelangelo was closely related to the Medici family throughout his life. He used members of the Medici family as prototypes to create many classics in art history. For example, the plaster statue of David is Lorenzo's brother - Giuliano! It is said that this sculpture was originally placed on Giuliano's tomb, similar to the photos on our tombstones today. The reason why he is called "David" is because the hair on his forehead is very similar to the hair of "David", both of which are works of Michelangelo... The name is so casual!

This family produced four popes (Pius IV was from the Medici family of Milan, a distant relative of the Medici family of Florence), several Florentine rulers and Grand Dukes of Tuscany, two French queens, and other European royal family members. Michelangelo was commissioned by the Medici Pope Leo X to design the mausoleum and all the statues in it for the Medici family, and this project lasted 15 years... Michelangelo created many famous sculptures that we are familiar with, such as "Day", "Night", "Morning", and "Evening". We can also clearly see that the people in the sculptures are Lorenzo and Giuliano of the Medici family, the sponsors.

The period of the Three Masters was the peak of the Renaissance and the peak of the Medici family. In 1737, the once sensational Medici family disintegrated due to the extinction of the family line!

Florentine Gelato

—Gelateria Santa Trinita

The ice cream shop can have up to 38 different options, and the fruits used are fresh, not jam-made. The interior is spacious and you can taste the ice cream in the store. Recommended flavors: Hazelnut Black Sesame Peanut and Dark Chocolate Yogurt Strawberry

Address: Piazza Frescobaldi, 11-12/r (Ponte Santa Trinita) 50125 - Firenze

— Gelateria La Carraia

Ms. Ailian founded this handmade ice cream shop in 1990, which has always interpreted the traditional flavor of Florence. It is an ice cream shop frequented by locals. In the summer evening, the queue of people can extend all the way to the road beside the Arno River. The staff is warm and thoughtful, and the most important thing is that the portion is large and the price is not expensive. Recommended flavors: Baci , Cheesecake, Mousse, Yogurt (in fact, except for the fruit-flavored smoothies, all others are delicious)

Address: Piazza Nazario Sauro , 25, 50124, Firenze

— Mordilatte

It is located in the alley behind the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore. There is a cute big cow logo at the door. The specialty of this shop is fresh milk. They guarantee to provide high-quality milk as raw materials for ice cream every day, which is made and sold on the spot. Therefore, some flavors are not yet made when I went there at noon. Through the glass window of the kitchen, you can clearly see the centrifuge stirring the ice cream at full capacity. Recommended flavors: yogurt, white milk, cream

Address: Via dei Servi , 10r, 50122, Firenze

—Antica Gelateria Fiorentina

Located in the center of Florence, the ice cream shop has a simple decoration. The owner has been making handmade ice cream for more than ten years and is very sincere about his work. The location is easy to find, just behind the Church of San Lorenzo, very close to the Chinese restaurant. Recommended flavors: Special rose water flavor Saffron flavor

Via Faenza, n. 2A, 50123, Firenze

— Perche no!...

Founded in 1939, it is one of the oldest ice cream shops in Florence. Using traditional artisan methods, ice cream is made every morning to ensure freshness. All processing steps are carried out in a dedicated workshop and the corresponding ingredients are carefully selected. No preservatives and emulsifiers are used, and no hydrogenated vegetable fats are contained. First-class quality and rich taste.

Address: Via de Tavolini 19Rosso, 50122, Firenze

— Festival del Gelato

Just like its name, "Ice Cream Feast". The ice cream shop has a wide variety of flavors, from strawberry, pear, peach, orange, blueberry, cherry, cantaloupe, banana...every kind of fruit flavor you can think of. Of course, there are also fresh fruit smoothies to choose from. Located in the center of Florence's tourist area, there are seats in the shop, and the air conditioning is very strong in summer. You can order an ice cream here and sit down to rest your feet. Recommended flavors: Fruit flavors Pistachio Hazelnut

Address: Via del Corso, 75/red, Firenze

—Grom

Grom is a famous Italian ice cream chain. The first store was opened in Turin in 2003 and then spread throughout Italy. It also has branches in Dubai, New York, Osaka, Paris and other cities. The principle of this ice cream shop is "only the best quality raw materials" and no emulsifiers, flavors or pigments are used. The

ice cream is of first-class quality and inexpensive. Recommended flavor: Hazelnut dark chocolate

Via del Campanile, Florence, Italy is just a small road away from the Duomo

— Venchi

Venchi is a chocolate brand from Turin, Italy, with a rich and mellow taste. The ice cream product launched in 2006 strives to restore the original taste of Venchi chocolate while giving customers a brand new experience. There are three stores in Florence, one opposite Coin, one on the street leading to the Ponte Vecchio, and the last one at the train station. The one opposite Coin is very easy to recognize, and you can see the flowing chocolate on the wall from a distance. In this store, you can not only taste ice cream, but also choose chocolate gifts.

Address: Via Calzaiuoli 65/R Firenze

Via Calimaruza , 18 Angolo P.zza del Mercato Nuovo 6/7 Firenze

Stazione Santa Maria Novella – Piazza della Stazione , 1 Firenze

— Bottega del Gelato

Finally, the main product of this shop is popsicles. In the hot summer, if ice cream with a high milk content can't save you, come to this shop to eat popsicles!

Address: Via Por Santa Maria, 33 r, Firenze

One of the best ice cream in the world:

Gelateria dei Neri , Via dei Neri , 9, 50122 Firenze FI

Vivoli , Via dell'Isola delle Stinche , 7r, 50122 Firenze FI

Florentine T-bone steak

Florentine steak has a long history. In 258 AD, San Lorenzo of the Roman Church was persecuted and smoked to death on the grill. Later, on August 10th every year, in order to commemorate San Lorenzo, the whole city of Florence lit bonfires and grilled beef. Over time, steak became popular. Today, Florentine steak has become a world-famous delicacy. A real T-bone steak must come from precious Chianina cattle. The steak should be grilled on charcoal, and only salt and pepper are added after it is cooked.

One of the world's 101 best steakhouses

Trattoria Dall'Oste

Borgo S. Lorenzo, 31, 50121 Firenze FI, Italy

the 5th floor of the Rinascente Firenze department store overlooks the Republic Square and the Duomo Cathedral, with a good view. There is a free toilet on the 4th floor

Piazza della Repubblica, 4, 50123 Firenze FI

Famous tripe buns

Da Nerbone

Piazza del Mercato Centrale, 50123 Firenze

Italian ice cream gelato

Vivoli Ice cream coffee affogato is famous

Via Isola delle Stinche , 7r, 50122 Firenze

The Mall Outlet

Via Europa, 8, 50066 Leccio FI, Italy

Arezzo

Arezzo is located in Tuscany in central Italy. It is the capital of Arezzo Province and the hometown of Renaissance poet Petrarch and architect Vasari. It has a long history and has been inhabited since the Etruscan period. In simple terms, the entire city can be divided into two parts: the lower part and the upper part. Many monuments were destroyed in the bombing of World War II. Today, most of the buildings and straight streets are the result of reconstruction. The upper part is concentrated with well-preserved monuments and buildings. It is the most important historical center and tourist area of Arezzo.

Arezzo has a historic Renaissance-style old town that is small enough to explore on foot. The ancient city of Arezzo is built on a steep slope, and there are many slopes to walk on, so it is suitable to wear flat shoes. The ancient city of Arezzo is surrounded by walls and has a total of 5 entrances and exits. The 5 city gates were used for different purposes in the past. Porta San Clemente is still in use today.

Many scenes of the movie "Life is Beautiful" were filmed here. "Life is Beautiful" was written and performed by director Roberto Benigni, and won the 1997 Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film, Best Actor, Best Film at the European Film Awards and many other international awards. The movie tells the story of an Italian Jewish father and son who were sent to a Nazi concentration camp. The father couldn't bear to see his five-year-old son suffer so much terror that he used his rich imagination to lie that they were in a game and had to accept the various rules of the concentration camp in exchange for points to win the final prize. On the night before the German army surrendered, in order to prevent his son from being harmed, he made up another game to let his son hide in a box and slowly wait for the arrival of the US army, but the father died under the random gunfire of the Nazi guards.

The Church of San Francesco in Arezzo was built in the 14th century. The highlight is Piero della Francesca's fresco "The Legend of the True Cross", which is divided into ten parts, until the end when Jesus was crucified. It is one of the great works of the Renaissance. This series of paintings is painted on the four walls of the Maggiore Chapel (La Cappella Maggiore) in the church. The technique is meticulous and the composition is symmetrical. It is his largest and most outstanding work, and it is also one of the representative works of early Renaissance painting. Tickets are 6 euros and need to be booked in advance online or by phone.

Piazza Grande is the most beautiful square in Arezzo. It is the historical center of Arezzo. Surrounding Piazza Grande are some remarkable old buildings, which are maintained and restored twice a year. The Palace of the Lay Fraternity, Vasari Loggia, Episcopal Palace, Palazzo Cofani-Brizzolari, etc. are built around the square. The knight competition is held on the third Sunday of June every year.

of Palazzo Pretorio are decorated with family crests and emblems. This was originally a palace of Arezzo nobles in the 14th and 15th centuries, and was later replaced by Albergotti, Sassoli and other buildings. The Lodomeri family moved in, so many different family crests were carved on the walls to indicate their extraordinary status.

The Cathedral of St. Donato of Arezzo (Cattedrale di SS Donato e Pietro) , commonly known as Arezzo Cathedral, is located in the old town on the top of the hill, with the lush Medici Fortress Park behind it. It was built in 1278, and the current facade was rebuilt in the 20th century. Because it is built on a sloping hillside, there are steps on three sides of the church, and it is very comfortable to sit here and enjoy the sunshine.

the Parco della Fortezza Medicea on the top of the mountain , there is a large statue of the Italian poet Francesco Petrararch . From the city wall, we can overlook the houses and green vineyards on the distant hills. The beautiful Tuscan countryside is in full view.

Statue in the city center garden square Guido Monaco (Guido Monaco), also known as Guido of Arezzo, 991/992 – after 1033, was an Italian medieval music theorist, often considered the inventor of modern musical notation (staff).

Casa Vasari , Via XX Settembre , 55, Arezzo

Giorgio Vasari, born in Arezzo, was a famous painter and architect during the Renaissance. He designed and built countless palaces, buildings and paintings for the Medici family throughout his life, including a series of murals in the Florence Town Hall. Although he became famous in Florence, Vasari never forgot his hometown of Arezzo. He designed and decorated his own house in the local area, which is now the Vasari House. There are also some paintings by other Tuscan painters that he collected here.

Famous local restaurant: La Lancia d' Oro

The Saracen jousting event Giostra del Saracino

It is one of the most important traditional events in Arezzo, held every year on the second Saturday evening in June and the first Sunday afternoon in September. It originated in the Middle Ages and aims to show the noble "chivalry" through martial arts competitions between knights. In the competition, the two contestants will simulate the enemy and the enemy in the battle, one is a knight, and the other is a puppet representing the enemy-Saracens (Arabs). In the Middle Ages, this event not only appeared in major celebrations and commemorative occasions, but also at noble weddings and carnivals. Now, as an important event for Arezzo to carry forward traditional culture, the jousting is held grandly every year, trying to reproduce the medieval admiration and respect for "chivalry". Before the game, the captains of the teams from the four regions of the city must take a solemn oath ceremony, and the mayor will hand the golden spear symbolizing victory to the priest and ask him to keep it for him until the end of the event. On the morning of the day of the competition, the contestants, the parade and the tourists gathered in the square in the city center, waiting for the announcement of the start of the event. Afterwards, the flag bearers, drummers, knights and infantry will march to the churches in their respective regions to ask the priests for their blessings of victory. Then, everyone will gather in the Piazza del Arezzo to watch the music performances and flag bearers' performances while waiting for the start of the competition. The champion will be rewarded with a golden spear.

Tickets: Seat tickets, 38–60 Euros depending on the viewing position; standing tickets, 6–50 Euros depending on the position.

Siena

Parking spot	Escalator to Duomo, Via del Costone , 9, 53100 Siena SI, Italy Car: Parking Santa Caterina Via Esterna di Frontebranda , 53100 Siena SI, Italy Bus checkpoint: Parking Fagiolone - Check Point Bus Str. di Pescaia , 53100 Siena SI, Italy (shuttle bus to escalator)		
Latitude and longitude		Equivalent to China ...	
Area (square kilometers):	118	Population ('000):	5 3,9
City status	It is a city in Tuscany, Italy, and the capital of Siena Province. The old city center was listed as a World Cultural Heritage by UNESCO in 1995. Siena is one of Italy's famous tourist attractions, famous for its unique cuisine, art, museums, medieval landscapes and horse racing festivals.		
Origin of the name			
Basic historical information	<p>The symbol of Rome's origins is the brothers Romulus and Remus, who were suckled by a she-wolf. The mosaic floor of the Siena Cathedral has Siena in the center. The eight circles around it are symbols of other cities in central Italy. According to this legend, Siena was founded by Senius, the son of Remus . Statues and other artworks depicting the she-wolf suckling the twins Romulus and Remus can be seen throughout Siena.</p> <p>Siena was a prosperous city-state that also played an important role in the wool trade and in the money lending business. Siena declared independence from the bishop in 1167. By 1179, Siena had a written constitution. The Republic of Siena was caught up in a struggle between the nobles and the popular parties, and the republican government often opposed its main rival, Florence, politically, and in the 13th century supported the Ghibellines against the Guelphs in Florence (the background of these conflicts also appears in Dante's Divine Comedy). The Ghibellines defeated the Guelphs in Florence at the Battle of Montaperti in 1260. To this day, if the two cities meet in any sporting event, Siena supporters will ask Florentine supporters to "Don't forget Montaperti !".</p> <p>Siena's artistic level was comparable to that of Florence throughout the 13th and 14th centuries: Duccio, an important painter in the late Middle Ages, was from Siena. He also traveled all over the Italian peninsula. The frescoes in Siena's Town Hall were painted by Ambrogio Lorenzetti. Siena's Town Hall is one of the representatives of late medieval/early Renaissance art, and also represents the embodiment of the city's utopian social conception. Siena was hit by the plague in 1348, killing two-thirds of the 100,000 population, and financial companies also suffered bad luck. The Bank of Siena was established in 1472 and is still active today, making it the oldest bank in the world.</p>		

	Siena surrendered to Charles V in 1555, and the Republic of Siena was destroyed. The Medici family established the Grand Duchy of Tuscany here until the unification of Italy in the 19th century.
City logo	
Culture, famous people	
Main Specialties	
other	

Siena, known as the most perfect medieval town in Italy, is located on a hill and is a historic town. The streets in the city are built along the hills, with ancient buildings with red brick roofs on both sides. Its unique medieval atmosphere is full of Tuscan style, as if you have traveled through time and arrived in the distant Middle Ages.

The Duomo di Siena Cathedral is a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary and is located at the highest point of the ancient city. Its surface is inlaid with black and white marble. Built in the 12th century, this cathedral was designed by Giovanni Pisano. After being expanded in the 14th century, it was once the largest church in the Christian world. The front facade of the church reflects the architectural styles of two eras: the three Giovanni Pisano-style doors in the lower half are Romanesque, and the continuous half-moon arches emphasize the unity on the horizontal plane; while the upper half is Gothic, which is the masterpiece of architect Camino. The large rose windows and Gothic decorations added by him and later architects all emphasize the rising power of the building, and the two parts form a strong visual impact.

The church is mainly divided into five parts, including the Cathedral (Catedrale), the Baptistery of San Giovanni (Battistero di San Giovanni), the Chapel (Oratorio), the Cripta (Crypt) , the Opera Museum (Museo dell'Opera) and the unfinished Facciata wall. Among them, the most distinctive feature of the interior of the Cathedral is the marble floor, which continues the white and dark green striped marble on the facade. The 56 mosaic tiles describe the Bible and historical stories. The stained glass windows in the choir area and the hexagonal roof designed by Gian Lorenzo Bernini are the highlights of the church. There is also the "Maesta" (Maesta) by Duccio di Buoninsegna , the founder of the Siena School of Painting, in the church. This painting caused a great sensation in the local area when it was first completed.

Santa Maria della Scala , located opposite the Siena Cathedral, was once one of the oldest and largest hospitals in Europe, with a history of more than 1,000 years. After careful restoration and renovation, it has become one of the largest cultural centers in Europe, displaying many precious historical relics, religious relics and works of art, and now also hosting some temporary themed art exhibitions from time to time.

Piazza del Campo is the soul of Siena and one of the largest medieval squares in Europe. Piazza del Campo was rebuilt from a market before the 13th century and was built on a hillside near the confluence of three ridges. Its unique shell shape is a masterpiece in architectural history. Looking down from a high place, the square is in the shape of a huge fan. In 1349, the square was paved with red bricks with a fishbone pattern. The square is divided into nine parts by boundary stones, symbolizing the nine-member committee that ruled Siena.

The white marble Fountain of Joy (Fonte Gaia) on Piazza del Campo is rectangular and decorated with many bas-reliefs on three sides. It was completed in 1419, replacing the fountain completed in 1342. Under the guidance of the Nine-Man Committee, a long tunnel was built to divert water to the fountain and then drain it to the surrounding fields. Today, Piazza del Campo is still the center of Siena's public life, with a total of 11 narrow streets radiating throughout the city.

The town hall and various noble palaces are arranged around the square, with a harmonious roofline. This is due to the Siena decree that "... in accordance with the beauty of Siena, which pleases almost everyone, all new buildings along the streets... should be in harmony with the existing buildings, and the buildings under construction should not stand out from the others, but can be arranged accordingly, so as to achieve the most beautiful effect in the city." The harmony of these late Gothic houses is partly due to the fact that they have the same wall bricks: brickmaking is a monopoly of the city and maintains a certain standard. However, there is one exception, **the Torre del Mangia** .

The Torre Mangia was built between 1325 and 1344, designed by the painter Lippo Mayer, using machine-made red bricks. The tower is designed to be 102 meters high, with a total of 332 steps, which is higher than the neighboring rival Florence and can be seen from anywhere in Siena. The height of the Torre Mangia is exactly the same as that of the Siena Cathedral, marking that the regime has obtained the same power as the church's divine power. It is also the second tallest tower in medieval Italy, second only to the bell tower of Cremona Cathedral. The walls of the Torre Mangia are 11 feet thick. The stairs to the top of the tower are very narrow, and most tourists need to dodge their heads when climbing the tower. Now only 25 people are allowed to enter the tower at the same time.



There are several important replicas of Mangia's Tower, including the Joseph Chamberlin Clock Tower at the University of Birmingham, England (completed in 1908); the train station in Waterbury, Connecticut, United States (completed in 1909 and now used as the headquarters of a local newspaper); and the Pilgrim Monument in Provincetown, Massachusetts (built between 1907 and 1910 to commemorate the landing of the Pilgrims on the Mayflower on November 21, 1620, and is the tallest all-granite structure in the United States).

Pubblico), adjacent to the Torre Mangia , was built in 1297. Its original purpose was to house the republican government composed of the governor and the nine-member committee. The Nine-member Council Hall (La Sala dei Nove) is a witness to the rule of Siena's "Nine Regime". The exterior of Siena Town Hall is an example of Italian medieval architecture influenced by Gothic. The ground floor is built with stone, while the upper floors are built with bricks. The main facade of the building is slightly recessed inward to adapt to the shape of the Piazza del Campo and form the focal point of the square. After more than 700 years of regime changes, today's Town Hall serves as the office of the municipal government. Of course, if you like, you can also hold a simple wedding ceremony here. There is also a Municipal Museum (Museo Civico) inside, which shows visitors the history of Siena through various collections, including the famous series of murals "Good Government, Bad Government" (Allegoria ed Effetti del Buono e del Cattivo Governo), these murals were the first to reflect the likes and dislikes of government administration through the preservation of urban buildings.

Piazza Salimbeni , Palazzo Salimbeni in the middle and Palazzo Cantucci and Palazzo Spannocchi on both

sides. A statue of Bandini Sallustio (died in 1780), an 18th-century economist, stands on the square. Palazzo Salimbeni was built in the 14th century as a Gothic palace and was restored and renovated by local architect Giuseppe Partini in the 19th century. The palace witnessed the development of Siena's early banking industry, and today it is also the oldest bank in the world, Banca Monte dei Siena. The headquarters of the Paschi di Siena (1472).

Palio delle Contrade Siena is Siena's most famous traditional festival. This ancient sport began in the 12th century and has a history of more than 800 years. The horse racing festival is held on July 2 (the day when the Virgin Mary performed miracles in Siena) and August 16 (the day when the Virgin Mary ascended to heaven). The earliest horse racing festival would select 10 regions from the 17 regions of Siena to participate in the competition. These regions have their own regional flags and traditional costumes. Therefore, during the period close to the competition, the whole city of Siena is flying colorful flags, and from time to time there will be parades and rehearsals of teams in uniform costumes. On the day of the competition, the center of the square was crowded with people, and the viewing areas on the surrounding buildings were full. The riders all competed without saddles, and the scene was extremely warm and exciting. After the competition, the whole city was in a carnival, and it was very lively.

You can watch the horse racing for free, but you have to squeeze in before the square closes. If you want to be more comfortable, choose a seat in the viewing area or in front of the windows and balconies of the buildings around the square. It is best to buy tickets a few months in advance. The price of a seated ticket is about 450 euros, and a standing ticket is about 350 euros. There are also viewing packages, which generally include 3 days of accommodation, standing tickets for the horse racing festival, a city tour and a dinner, etc., and the price is about 1,000 euros.

San Gimignano

Parcheggio P3, 53037 San Gimignano, Province of Siena, Italy

P1 and P2 are closer to the south of the old city, but have fewer parking spaces. P3 and P4 have more parking spaces. There is an elevator to the pedestrian path. There are paid toilets in the city center.

It is a medieval town surrounded by walls in the Siena Province of Tuscany in north-central Italy. It is 1 km long from north to south and 500 meters wide from east to west. It is built on a hill 334 meters high. It has beautiful scenery and a strong medieval architectural style, especially the tower that can be seen from several kilometers outside the city. It is one of the best-preserved medieval towns in Tuscany and also produces white wine. It was listed as a "World Cultural Heritage" by UNESCO in 1990.

The city is named after the Catholic saint Gimignano who died here in 397 AD. Documents began to appear in the 10th century, named after the local bishop Gimignano who drove out Attila the Hun. In the Middle Ages and Renaissance, the city was a resting place for pilgrims on their way to Rome. The city also benefited from the trade in agricultural products from the nearby fertile hills. In 1199, the city was at the peak of its prosperity and gained independence. The city's prosperity ended in 1348 when the Black Death hit Europe and forced it to succumb to Florence. San Gimignano evolved into a minor town until the 19th century when it began to become a tourist and artistic resort.

There are many churches in San Gimignano, the two main ones being the Collegiata (former cathedral) and

the Sant'Agostino Church, which houses many works by some of the main artists of the Italian Renaissance. The **Duomo Cathedral** (also known as the Collegiata di Santa Maria Assunta) has four Tuscan stone columns supporting the black and white marble striped arches, and is surrounded by beautiful frescoes, most of which are from famous painters of the Siena School, including Domenico Ghirlandaio, Benozzo Gozzoli, Taddeo di Bartolo, etc. The delicate lines and colors add luster to the entire church, which is described by UNESCO as "a work of extraordinary beauty". Tickets can be purchased separately to enter the cathedral, but other museums and bell towers are not recommended.

There are four squares in the center of the town: Piazza del Poble, Piazza del Duomo, Piazza Pecori and Piazza delle Piazza Erbe . **Piazza della Cisterna**

Next to Piazza del Duomo, it is also the city center and festival venue of San Gimignano. There is an abandoned octagonal well in the center of the square, which is also the origin of its name. The square is surrounded by coffee bars, snack bars and shops. When the weather is fine, you can sit here to enjoy the sunshine and the leisurely Italian life. The main streets are Via San Matteo and Via San Giovanni, which run through the city from south to north.

All or most of the towers in other cities such as Bologna and Florence have disappeared due to wars, disasters or urban reconstruction, but San Gimignano has retained 14 towers of different heights, which have become its international symbol. Most of these towers were built between the 12th and 13th centuries. At that time, local noble families competed with each other and showed off their power and wealth by building towers. Whoever built a taller tower represented greater power. There were also laws that required new towers to be built to replace old towers when they were damaged. At its peak, the number of towers even reached 72. However, the height of all towers did not exceed 51 meters. This is because it is said that in the 13th century, a local mayor stipulated that the height of all buildings in the city should not exceed that of his castle.

Torre Grossa Located next to the Cathedral Square, Torre Grossa is the tallest tower in San Gimignano. It was first built in 1300 and is 54 meters high. A small bell tower is also connected to the top of the tower. From the top of the tower, you can overlook San Gimignano and the surrounding countryside. To visit the tower, you need to pass the Town Hall (Palazzo Comunale), where some ancient paintings of the city are preserved.

Gelateria Dondoli

Piazza Della Cisterna, 4, 53037 San Gimignano SI

The store won the first prize in the 2006/07 and 2008/09 World Gelato Championships. In addition, the store has been interviewed by many Italian and international TV stations and news media, making Sergio, the gelato master, famous. His achievements come from his passion for gelato and his constant research. He insists on using fresh ingredients and constantly creating and developing new gelato flavors. The store's saffron and pine nut cream (Crema di Santa Fina), pink grapefruit and sparkling wine (Champelmo) and other gelato flavors have long been registered as proprietary trademarks, and the newly created cheese walnut (Curva Fiesole) or spicy chocolate and cherry (Sangue di Bue) flavors are also his proud works.

Lucca

Parcheggio Cittadella

Via della Cittadella , 55100 Lucca LU, Italy

Lucca is a city in Tuscany and the capital of the Province of Lucca. For more than 300 years, starting from the 5th century, Lucca has been the capital of Tuscany; in the Middle Ages, Lucca was an important fortress city ruled by the Lombards. In the 11th century, it began to prosper because of the silk trade. In the early 19th century, Lucca fell into the hands of the Napoleonic Empire and then fell into the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. By 1861, it became part of Italy. Lucca is the birthplace of Puccini. There is Puccini's former residence, which is now a museum. It seems that there is a piano he used when composing "Tosca". Andrea Bocelli, the most famous blind singer in Italy, is also from Lucca. He was the principal of a music school in Lucca.

The walls of Lucca were built in the 16th century, with a total length of about 4.5 kilometers, and a total of 12 curtain walls, 11 bastions and 4 city gates. The two cathedrals, San Florence Cathedral and San Giovanni Cathedral, are both marble-clad, and their styles are somewhat similar to those of the Cathedral of Pisa. In fact, this type of building is indeed called the Pisa-style building.

Chiesa di San Michele in Foro is the largest church in Lucca. It was built in 795 and restored in the 11th and 19th centuries. The front of the church looks a bit like a wedding cake, with a statue of the angel Michael killing a dragon on top. The statue reflects a dazzling golden light when the sun sets. The four-column arched colonnade on the church facade is very delicate. The reliefs on the adjacent columns are different, and the capitals are also carved with various figures or animals, which is very interesting. A tall statue of the Archangel Michael stands on the top of the church facade. There is a bell tower on the left rear side of the front, which is a typical style of medieval churches in the area near Pisa. Next to the church is the most famous open-air market, which is a flea market for second-hand goods every weekend.

Cattedrale di San Martino , built in the 11th century, is a Romanesque building. The elegant and exquisite front of the church adopts the Lucca-Pisa style that was very popular at the time . The marble facade and the three-story arched colonnade on it are very eye-catching. The exquisite carvings and decorations make the huge church look as cute as a girl in a lace white dress. The design took into account the need to maintain coordination with the existing bell tower. The interior of the church was rebuilt in the 14th and 15th centuries. Matteo Civitali (1436-1502), a local sculptor and architect in Lucca, designed the pulpit and the small temple (Tempietto). The church's artworks are mainly collected in the sacristy and the Cathedral Museum (Museo della The former houses Tintoretto's (1518-1594) The Last Supper, Federico Zuccari's Adoration of the Magi, and the latter houses the Cattedrale . dei Magi) and the marble tomb of Ilaria del Carretto (1379-1405), Marquis of Savona , who housed many treasures from the 15th and 16th centuries.

Opposite Piazza San Martino is Palazzo Bernardi (1556), designed by Bartolomeo Ammannati, whose facade extends out to a high wall surrounding the palace gardens. The next square is Piazza Antelminelli , with a fountain designed by Lorenzo Nottolini .

San Giovanni is located at the edge of the square in front of the cathedral. The current church is a 12th-century body with a 16th-century exterior. It is said that there are five layers of architectural remains from different eras: an ancient Roman villa, an ancient Roman temple, a Paleo-Christian church from the 4th-5th century AD, and the old church of Lucca Cathedral.

Piazza Napoleon , his sister Elisa Bonaparte once ruled Lucca, which was a fiefdom granted to her by Napoleon.

Later, Lucca was ruled by the Bourbon Kingdom until the unification of Italy.

Piazza dell'Anfiteatro was once an oval arena built in ancient Rome, similar to the famous Colosseum. Later, the arena gradually fell into disrepair, and the government built prisons, arsenals, storage rooms and houses around the arena. Later, the arena was demolished and architects replanned the area, forming the oval square that it is today. Today, the houses surrounding the square have become houses, souvenir shops, coffee shops and bars. This has become one of the important places for Lucca people to gather on a daily basis.

The Palazzo Ducale is a palace in Lucca. The area of the Palazzo Ducale is very large, occupying one fifth of the area of Lucca. The building was probably designed by Giotto.

Torre Guinigi is located at via Sant'Andrea 45. It is one of the most representative monuments in Lucca. Its main feature is the several holly oaks on top of it. Without paying attention, you might just think they are **some** particularly tall potted plants planted by someone.

Puccini House

Carte San Lorenzo 9, Via di Poggio

+39(0)583 584028

Opening hours : Closed on Mondays

Giacomo Puccini (Giacomo Antonio Domenico Michele Secondo Maria Puccini), an Italian opera composer , was one of the representatives of the realistic opera genre from the late 19th century to before the European War . This genre pursued realistic themes , vivid emotions , and amazing dramatic effects, which were superior to romantic works. Puccini was born in Lucca, but his career was achieved in Lake Tower near Pisa. He started to be a choir boy at the age of 10, became a church organist at the age of 14, and composed the "Requiem" (Messa) at the age of 21, but he is most famous for the "Glorious Mass" (Messa di Gloria).

Works: There are 12 in total. His most famous work is Manon Lescaut published in 1893. Other famous works include La Bohème, Tosca, Madame Butterfly, and La Femme de la West. Turandot is Puccini's last work. It was still unfinished when he died. The last scene was completed by Franco Alfano based on Puccini's draft.

National Museum of Palazzo Mansi

Located in the center of Lucca, Palazzo Mansi was once the residence of the noble Mansi family. The magnificent rooms inside the palace are full of exquisite murals, the golden furniture is exquisitely carved and luxurious, and some rooms are hung with large and exquisite carpets, which are witnesses of the glorious history of the family. There are not many people visiting the museum, and the corridor covered with vines is covered with dead leaves, which looks particularly deserted, making people feel that things have changed.

Ristorante Da Francesco, it is said that this restaurant is one of the favorite restaurants of the locals
BUCA DI SANT'ANTONIO – RISTORANTE Address: Via Cervia , 55100 Lucca, Italia

Tel: +39 0583 55881 Website : bucadisantantonio.com Average consumption per person : 50-70 Euros

Civita di Bagnoregio , the "Castle in the Sky"

Parcheggio Bagnoregio City

Via Bonaventura Tecchi , 01022 Bagnoregio VT, Italy

The parking lot under the bridge is a ZTL area, so do not drive in to avoid being fined.

Built 2,500 years ago, it is located on the top of a mountain and is connected to the outside world by only a narrow bridge. From a distance, it looks like a castle in the air, so it is called the "Castle in the Sky". The famous animated film "Castle in the Sky" produced by Japanese animation master Hayao Miyazaki was inspired by this castle. In Latin, civita refers to a castle or city surrounded by walls with military functions, such as Troy. The literal meaning of "Civita di Bagnoregio" is the royal baths. It is not difficult to guess that this was once the "Huaqing Pool" for emperors and generals in ancient Rome. According to Italian legend, the water of this bath has health and therapeutic effects and once healed the wound of King Desiderius of the Lombards.

The edge where the town meets the mountain is a little bit of eroded tuff. Tuff is a rock formed by volcanic ash falling on the ground and gradually accumulating. Therefore, the structure is very loose and easily eroded. The scattered powder is carried away by the wind, and it becomes less and less every day. The town becomes more and more abrupt on the mountain. This city is actually a veritable "vanishing city". Of course, erosion has occurred over the years. The original residents gradually moved away, leaving only about 40 people and a dog named Birillo (which means "bowling pin").

Every year on the first Sunday of June and the second Sunday of September, the local Palio (horse racing festival) is held in the circular square, but the race is not for horses, but for donkeys! Don't underestimate donkeys, they play an important role here, and only they can carry heavy loads freely up and down the steep mountain roads. It was not until 10 years ago that a special tricycle was used to transport supplies.

- Tickets are 5 Euros per person. Guests are allowed to take photos and go to the toilet on the viewing platform, and go down the stairs to buy tickets in advance.

Rome

Bus Stops	Checkpoints (1. Anagnina 2. Ponte Mammolo 3. Aurelia 4. Saxa Rubra 5. Laurentina) and city entry fees Euro 0-Euro 3 vehicles are prohibited from entering the city, while Euro 4-Euro 6 vehicles are allowed to enter the city. Euro 2-Euro 3 vehicles equipped with filter powder devices will be charged 15% more for entry into the city Pantheon, Trevi Fountain, Piazza di Spagna Parking: Palace of Justice, Piazza dei tribunali, 00193, Roma		
Latitude and longitude	41 degrees north latitude	Equivalent to China ...	Shenyang
Area (square kilometers):	1285	Population ('000):	2,900
City status	The capital of Italy, it is also the political, economic, cultural and transportation center of Italy, a		

	<p>world-famous historical and cultural city, and the birthplace of the ancient Roman Empire. It is located in the central and western part of the Italian peninsula, on seven small hills in the plain of the lower reaches of the Tiber River. It is the center of the Catholic Church in the world, and the Vatican in the city is the residence of the Catholic Pope and the Holy See. Rome and Florence are both the centers of the Italian Renaissance, and they still retain a considerable amount of Renaissance and Baroque styles today; the historical city of Rome is listed as a World Cultural Heritage</p>
Origin of the name	<p>The city was founded on April 21, 753 BC, and has a history of more than 2,700 years. It was established by a pair of twins, Romulus and Remus, who were raised by a she-wolf. It was originally built on seven scenic hills, so it was called the "City of Seven Hills".</p> <p>Numitor, grandfather of Romulus and Remus, and his brother Amulius were descendants of Aeneas who escaped from Troy. After their father's death, Numitor became king of Alba Longa, while Amulius received the royal treasure, including the gold brought from Troy by Aeneas.</p> <p>Because Amulius had the treasure, he had more power. In the end, he overthrew Numitor and became king himself. But he was afraid that Numitor's daughter Rhea Silvia would give birth to a child and overthrow him one day, so he forced Rhea Silvia to become a Vestal Virgin. Vestal Virgins were priestesses of Vesta who had to be virgins and swore not to have sex with men.</p> <p>One night, the god of war, Mars, came to the Temple of Vesta where Silvia was and raped her. Silvia gave birth to two unusually strong and beautiful twin boys: Romulus and Remus. Amulius was very angry about this and ordered Silvia to be buried alive (a punishment for Vestal Virgins who broke their vows) and abandoned the twins to the countryside. The servants sent to kill Romulus and Remus did not want to kill the brothers, so they placed their cradles on the banks of the Tiber River. The river god of the Tiber took the twins to the Palatine Hill, where a she-wolf raised the brothers under a banyan tree.</p> <p>When the two brothers grew up, they killed Amulius and their grandfather Numitor became king of Alba Longa again. They left Alba Longa and moved to the Palatine Hill to build their own city.</p> <p>When Romulus and Remus arrived at the Palatine Hill, they began to argue about where to build their city. Romulus wanted to build it on the Palatine Hill, while Remus suggested building it on the Collis Aventinus, which was more strategic and easier to defend. They decided to settle the dispute by watching the birds and seeing what the gods would do. They each sat down where they wanted to build their city. According to Plutarch, Remus saw six vultures and Romulus saw 12 (the vulture was considered sacred to their father, Mars).</p> <p>Remus was very angry about Romulus' victory. When Romulus began digging trenches to build his walls on April 21, 753 BC, Remus destroyed some of the work and hindered other works. Finally Remus jumped over the trench, which was a bad sign because it meant that the city's walls could be easily breached. So Romulus killed Remus. In the following battle, Pestulus was also killed. After the battle, Romulus buried Remus and Pestulus, and then he continued to build the city. He named the city Rome after himself and became its first king. To this day, images of the she-wolf and the twin brothers can be seen everywhere in Rome.</p>

Basic historical information	<p>instead adopted a system of separation of powers among the Roman Senate, the Roman Consuls, and the Roman Congress, ending the Roman monarchy and establishing the Roman Republic (509 BC - 27 BC). Populusque Rōmānus: Senate and Roman People</p> <p>In the 1st century BC, Rome developed into a great power that spanned Africa, Europe, Asia and dominated the Mediterranean. Caesar became a lifelong dictator, and in 27 BC, Octavian established the Roman Republic and entered the Roman Empire era (27 BC-476). In the 1st century BC, Rome had become a city with a population of one million, and was the center of the Roman Empire both geographically and politically.</p> <p>The Western Roman Empire officially fell in 476, and Rome belonged to the Eastern Roman Empire from 554. With the rise of early Christianity, Rome became the center of Catholicism. The Papal States were established in 756, and Rome was the capital of the Papal States until 1870, when the Papal States were annexed by the Kingdom of Italy and became the capital of the Kingdom of Italy in 1871. In 1929, Mussolini signed the Lateran Treaty on behalf of the Italian government and the Holy See. The Holy See recognized Rome's status as the capital of Italy, and the Italian government recognized the Holy See's sovereignty over the Vatican.</p>
City logo	Senate and the People of Rome Populusque Romanus. It represents the ideal that everything should be done in the name of the Senate and the people. The letters are carved into a groove on the marble. Originally, the groove was inlaid with gilded bronze letters, which were later taken away by the barbarians.
other	

Rome tour guide 50 euros/half day + 1 euro/person

Basilica di San Giovanni in Laterano - you' ll pass by on the way to the Colosseum

It is the cathedral of the Roman Catholic Diocese, the official seat of the Archbishop of Rome, and the oldest and the first of the four superb papal basilicas in Rome (Basilica of St. John Lateran, Basilica of St. Peter, Basilica of Our Lady and Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls). It is known as the Mother Cathedral of the Catholic Church in the world. It was first built in 324 AD.

The

Colosseum , also known as the Arena, is the largest circular arena in ancient Rome and one of the iconic buildings of the ancient Roman Empire. Formerly known as the Flavio Theater, it was built by the royal family of Flavius (Vespasian and his son). It is also called Coloseo, which means huge and grand in Latin. As the name suggests, the Colosseum is mainly used to hold some athletic performances for the emperor, nobles, and citizens to watch, as well as activities to celebrate the triumph of warriors, including: gladiators fighting with beasts, gladiators fighting with gladiators, horse racing, military parades, boat races, small naval battles, and song and dance performances, so it is also called the arena, the arena, and the Colosseum. In the past, various cities in ancient Rome had many large theaters, stadiums, or arenas, but to date, this is the only four-story arena in ancient Rome that has been basically preserved intact in the world. The massive project of building Clouse was started by Emperor Vespasian Titus Flavius Vespasianus in 72 AD, completed by his son Emperor Titus in 80 AD, and inaugurated in 82 AD, taking 8-10 years.

Ancient Rome was built on seven hills. As the most important building in the city, Coloseo stands in the depression between the three hills of Palatine, Celio and Quirinal, on the southeast of the Via della Signoria, which is also the Via della Signoria Imperiala. In the past, this was the artificial lake of the Imperial Garden of Nero's Golden Palace, and a 36.5-meter-high bronze gilded statue of Emperor Nero stood by the lake. Today, if you stand in the direction of the line between Coloseo and the Arch of Constantine, the high ground you can see in the west is the site of the original Nero's Golden Palace. Therefore, it is said that the name COLOSSEO was not originally used to refer to the Colosseum itself, but to refer to Nero's sculptures.

Nero was the most notorious tyrant in ancient Roman history. It is said that in order to expand the palace, he needed to drive away the "demolition nail households" at the time, so he instigated his men to set fire to the city and watched the flames drink and laugh. So... he died. After Nero's death, the head of the statue was replaced with the head of the sun god Apollo.

Closse is oval in shape. When it was built, its complete appearance was more like an extremely symmetrical oval cake. It covers an area of about 20,000 square meters, with a long axis of 188 meters, a short axis of 156 meters, a circumference of 527 meters, and an outer wall of 48.5 meters high. It is divided into four layers and built with local white marble. It took a total of 100,000 cubic meters of stone and 300 tons of iron nails to connect the stone strips to build it. The outer wall is divided into four layers. The hollow dome windows on the outer wall fully demonstrate the unique arch structure of ancient Roman architecture. There are two columns between each arch of the three layers from bottom to top. The first layer of columns are all Doric, the second layer is Ionic, and the third layer is Corinthian. These three column styles are the main representatives of European architectural column styles in the classical period. Among these three classic column styles, the Doric style is considered the most masculine, while the Corinthian style is the most feminine. Such a structure also reflects the designer's ingenuity.

The Colosseum originated from the theater in ancient Greece, which was built beside the mountain and was semicircular. In ancient Rome, people began to use the arch structure (arch type) to build the audience seats and connected two semicircular theaters to form a circular theater. The bottom floor of the Colosseum has 80 large arches as entrances and exits. From the large arches, the audience can enter and exit the corresponding seats through the 160 small arches (spits) under the arcade. In addition, the foundation, ground, and floor walkways of the Colosseum are all paved with concrete. There are 60 rows of seats in the auditorium, which are divided into 3 layers according to the height and 5 areas according to the level. Looking from the bottom to the top, the superior seats in the first area of the first floor, namely the "choir seats", are for the audience of noble status such as nobles and elders. They usually wear white or red robes. There is a seat surrounded by high railings in the first row of the first floor. This is the box for the emperor in purple robes and the virgins who guard the sacred fire. The second floor is for warriors and citizens, and the third floor is for the poor. There is a mezzanine above, which is reserved for women. The seats under the arcade above the stepped seats are for standing and watching the performance. The arena can accommodate 70,000 to 90,000 spectators at the same time, and so many spectators can enter and exit the arena without error within 10 minutes through the spit. When entering, the audience finds which archway they should enter from according to the number of their seat, then walks up the stairs to find their area, and finally finds their seat. Due to the thoughtful entrance design, there will be no congestion and chaos. This design is still used in large stadiums today.

These holes on the white marble surface are indirectly related to war, because when the Colosseum was built between 72 and 80 AD, concrete was not used. However, in order to stabilize it, iron was made into rivets to fix two pieces of marble together. Later, the Colosseum was idle, and the ancient Roman Empire went to war for years. When there was a lack of weapons, the emperor ordered the people to take out the rivets and make weapons, leaving holes one after another. There are many holes and grooves on the top stone wall of the arena, which are used to insert wooden sticks and ropes to build the Velarium sunshade. Before the competition, the sailors of the imperial fleet were responsible for building the sunshade with giant white or red canvas to protect the audience from the heat and cold. The core of the Closse is the oval field in the center, which is surrounded by a fence pulled up by barbed or ivory stakes. In the center is a rectangular corner arena, and the ground is paved with wood, 76 meters long and 46 meters wide, and covered with sand. Sand in Latin is Arena. So this sanded wooden floor is now called Arena. The ancient Romans would place trees, bushes, bunkers, and hillocks in the battlefield to simulate extremely realistic scenes. Below the Arena is a basement with a passage in the center and stone walls on both sides for support. Between the stone walls are compartments for placement, wooden capstans, rope-driven elevators, and secret compartments. During the animal fight, the animal driver drove the animal to the passage, put it into a wooden cage, and then used an elevator to lift the cage to a certain height, then opened the cage door, and the animal came to the ground along a special pedal. The gladiators entered the stage from the training camp built near the arena through the passage. It is worth mentioning that rowing performances and small naval battle performances were also held here. Today, the ruins of

Closse retain part of the wooden floor in the southeast corner, while the stone wall is exposed in the central floor, making it convenient for tourists to view its underground structure.

In terms of construction techniques, several basic technologies invented and used by the ancient Romans are still widely adopted by the construction industry. These key technologies are columns, arches, and concrete. The use of columns was popular as early as the ancient Egyptian period. Before the invention of the arch structure, a column top beam structure was generally used, that is, a row of tall columns were used as the measure of the roof. This was the earliest matchbox structure. It can be observed in the remains of many ancient Egyptian and ancient Greek temples. The invention of the arch Arco makes full use of the principles of geometry and mechanics to optimize the building structure. Arco can be regarded as a major focus in the history of architecture. It can disperse the weight from the top from the walls on both sides. The continuous arco strengthens the overall structure and saves materials, which promotes the construction of many large buildings. Bridges, canals, and palaces can be built taller and stronger, but the lighting will not be affected. In Segovia, Spain, the ancient Roman aqueduct built with an arch structure is still in use today. Concrete can be used to better build foundations and connect boulders.

Most duelists are slaves, criminals, and professional players. Some fight for money, and some fight to redeem their lives. Many movies and TV shows will tirelessly tell the story of a famous general who was framed and became a criminal, then came to the arena to show his prowess, and finally saw the light of day again. In fact, the contestants who can finally come here to participate in the gladiatorial contests must be blessed by heaven and fate, because to finally stand on the gladiatorial arena in Closse, they must go through countless elimination selections in the group stage, and every fight is full of danger. The last fight in Closse means death or freedom. Before each fight, the gladiators would face the emperor and say farewell: "Ave Caesar morituri te salutant !" (Oh, Emperor, the dying man salutes you!). The rest is the same old story - when one side is knocked down, the winner turns his head to the audience, and when everyone raises their hands, with the thumbs up, it means they are not dead, and with the thumbs down, it means GAME OVER.

Some people say that Closse is a symbol of eternity, because it has stood for thousands of years, which is indeed a miracle. After Closse was built, it suffered from lightning and fire and four major earthquakes. Fortunately, the earthquake did not cause it to collapse. Researchers have discovered that under Closse is an elliptical ring base made of rocks and concrete, with a width of 51.5 meters and a thickness of 12 meters, and under the base, there is a sand layer. This genius design has played a good role in dispersing pressure and buffering shock waves. The most serious damage to Closse was caused by humans. In the long years after the fall of the ancient Roman Empire, it once became a quarry. The sculptures, marble, and even the walls on Closse were demolished and used for other buildings. Today, almost all old buildings in Rome have stones from Closse. In 1740, Pope Benedetto XIV listed Closse as a holy place. In 1800 AD, it was well preserved after several repairs.

with a history of more than 2,000 years, has always been a landmark building in Rome. Saint Beda wrote in his collection of poems: "When there is the Colosseum, there is Rome. When the Colosseum collapses, Rome will perish. When Rome perishes, the world will perish." The ancient Roman Empire was reduced to ashes, but it turned into a spirit that nourishes Europe and modern Western civilization, and the Colosseum still stands, accustomed to watching the autumn moon and spring breeze.

Beast gladiatorial games were very popular in Rome. There are currently more than 200 known Colosseums, and the earliest complete one that still exists is probably the one in Pompeii around 80 BC.

The Arch of Constantine stands beside the Colosseum . The Arch of Constantine is a form of memorial architecture created in the ancient Roman Empire to celebrate victory in war. There were 21 arches in the ancient Roman era, but only three remain in Rome today. The Arch of Constantine was built in 315 to celebrate Emperor Constantine's victory over Massenzio in the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312 and the freedom of belief granted to Christians in 313. On October 28, 312 AD, Constantine I led his army to approach Rome. Maxentius abandoned his usual strategy of defending the city and took the initiative to go out of the city to meet the enemy and crossed the Milvian Bridge on the Tiber River. Christians believed that this was God's

intervention, while historians speculated that this was because it was the anniversary of Maxentius' accession to the throne, and he regarded this as a sign of victory. Facts have proved that his "last-ditch effort" was extremely stupid. Unable to withstand the attack of Constantine I's army, Maxentius had to rush across the Tiber River to return to the city to defend it. Unfortunately, there were too many soldiers and the bridge was too small, so Maxentius eventually drowned in the river. What was more dramatic and significant than this process was that Constantine I had a dream on the eve of the battle, in which he dreamed that God asked him to paint the cross symbolizing Christianity on the soldiers' shields, and his army would be protected by God. After the victory, he also became the first ancient Roman emperor to convert to Christianity, and the status of Christianity was greatly improved from then on.

The Arc de Triomphe is 21 meters high, 25.7 meters wide and 7.4 meters deep. It was built from the end of 312 to 315. Due to the short time, many of its decorations were dismantled from buildings of other emperors in the past. For example, the eight rectangular reliefs on the top of the Arc de Triomphe were dismantled from the Monument of Emperor Aurelius, and the originals are now treasured in the Museum of the Capital of Rome; and the marble statues of Dacian prisoners on the top of each column are likely to come from the Trajan Forum. Only the circular reliefs above the two small arches were made at that time, depicting the fierce scenes of that war. When Napoleon came to Rome, he also hoped to establish great achievements like Constantine the Great, so he built the Arc de Triomphe in Paris based on the Arch of Constantine.

The area surrounded by iron fences on the left is the origin of the ancient Roman Empire, the ancient Roman ruins, called **Palatino Hill**. The information we read today says that the history of the ancient Roman Empire for more than 2,700 years began on April 21, 753 BC, when a man named Romulus led his 3,000 herdsmen to create an eternal empire in ancient Rome on the Palatino Hill on the left. This is also the origin of the ancient Roman Empire.

The Palatine Hill is full of weeds and broken steps. It is said that the word "Palace" in English comes from the name of this hill, which shows how magnificent it was in those days. A large rectangular lowland appeared in front of us, which is the Colosseum of Domitian. According to the data, this lowland was once filled with water for naval battle performances, which was also a form of entertainment in ancient Rome.

Going further, you will see a new white building, which houses the Palatine Museum, which displays some architectural fragments and statues. Going down the hill, there is a road that passes through the Arch of Constantine, called the Sacred Way (Via Sacra). The most conspicuous thing on the road is a single-arch triumphal arch, which is the oldest of the three triumphal arches in Rome: the Arch of Titus.

Vespasian and Titus led their army to Jerusalem and suppressed the Jewish uprising that lasted for four years in 70 AD. Titus led his troops to destroy the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem. This was the second temple that was destroyed and rebuilt again after the Babylonians destroyed the first temple. Since then, only the "Wailing Wall" has remained there. After Titus' death, his brother Domitian built this triumphal arch to commemorate his brother's victory. It also became a pillar of shame for the Jews, so Jews would never pass through this gate. However, a dramatic scene occurred when Israel was restored in 1948. A large number of Jews passed through this gate from west to east in the opposite direction of the ancient Romans' triumphal march in the past, expressing another kind of triumph. Another thing about this gate is very important to the Jews. On the inner wall of the arch is carved the only existing depiction of the artifacts of the Jerusalem Temple: the lampstand and the trumpet. The lampstand pattern is used as the current national emblem of Israel.

Walking past the Arch of Titus and heading west, there is a very grand building with three large arches on the right hand side, which is the Basilica of Maxentius and Constantine. It is also the largest building in the entire Roman Forum. Maxentius began to build it in 308 AD. After his death in the Battle of Milvian

Bridge, the victor Constantine I continued to complete it in 312. The word "Basilica" comes from Greek, which originally means the Hall of the King. It is generally a tall rectangular building with the main entrance on the longer side of the rectangle, such as the Basilica of Our Lady of the Angels and Martyrs, which was transformed from the Baths of Diocletian. Later, Christianity continued this architectural form, but opened the main entrance on the shorter side of the rectangle. Later, the Roman Curia used Basilica as the title of a cathedral with a special status in the terminology, so we will find some cathedrals in Rome called Basilica and some small churches called Chiesa.

Roman Forum

It was the city center of the ancient Roman era, and some ruins of important buildings from the ancient Roman era still remain. From these deliberately preserved ruins, we can clearly see the sedimentation of history and feel the prosperity and prosperity of the past. This open-air museum attracts tourists from all over the world.

The three columns are the remains of the Temple of Vespasian (Tempio di Vespasiano). This temple was built in 79 AD by Titus to commemorate Vespasian and his son Titus, and was completed during the reign of Domitian (around 87 AD). Because the reign of Vespasian, Titus and Titus' brother Domitian was called the Flavian Dynasty, this temple was also regarded as the glory of the Flavian Dynasty.

Going further, there is a very well-preserved ancient Greek temple built by Emperor Antonius **Pius** for his deceased wife Faustina. Interestingly, it is said that Antonius was the only one in the whole of ancient Rome who did not know about his wife's infidelity, and he even deified this romantic woman. I guess this one of the Five Good Emperors of Rome, who ruled the longest, was actually smart, and he hoped to preserve the reputation of his wife and his wife in this way. Antonius's experience was very special. He was a relative of Emperor Hadrian's wife. He lost his father at a young age and was raised by his grandfather. After his grandfather died, he was adopted by his grandfather. As a result, after his grandfather died, he inherited the property of both grandfathers and grandfathers, and became one of the richest people in ancient Rome. After becoming a senator in the Senate, he was appreciated by Hadrian, who promised to make him his heir, on the condition that after his death, the younger Aurelius would be emperor. Hadrian designated two generations of leaders in this way. Antony naturally agreed to the conditions. He was also very good at dealing with people. As soon as he took office, he announced that he would deify Hadrian. As a result, he was recognized by the Senate and given the name Pius, which means protection but actually means filial piety.

Opposite this temple, there are several remaining stone pillars and walls surrounded by stone pillars, showing that it is another temple, which is the Temple of Vesta. Vesta is the hearth goddess of ancient Rome, so we can also call it the Temple of Vesta. The ancient Roman priestesses of the hearth goddess were all from noble families and were required to remain chaste until the age of 40 before returning to secular life. If they lost their chastity during this period, they would be executed; if they succeeded in keeping their chastity, they would receive a large amount of property after returning to secular life. Next to the Temple of Vesta is the House of the Virgins, or the House of Vesta, where the priestesses of the hearth goddess lived.

On the north side of the Temple of Vesta are the remains of the Temple of Caesar, which was built for Caesar by Octavian, Caesar's adopted son. On March 15, 44 BC, a group of senators conspired to assassinate Caesar and asked him to go to the Senate to read a petition. When he walked to this place, he met a prophet who had predicted that he would die on this day. When he saw the prophet, he said proudly, "Isn't today March 15?" The implication was that he was not dead. But the prophet replied coldly, "Yes, but it hasn't passed

yet.” Caesar didn’t care and continued to walk towards the Senate. Just as he was reading the petition, Casca stabbed his neck with a knife under the pretext of helping Caesar take off his coat, and then many senators came forward to kill Caesar together. A few years later, Octavian ended the era of the Three Giants and the Republic at the same time, becoming the first emperor of ancient Rome. He ordered the construction of a temple here to commemorate his adopted father Caesar.

Going back to the Via Sacra and continuing to walk west, you can see another triumphal arch, the Arch of Septimius Severus. The Arch of Septimius Severus is one of the three existing triumphal arches in the Roman Forum. It was built in 203 AD to commemorate the two victories of Emperor Septimius Severus and his two sons Caracalla and Geta over the Parthians (from today’s Iran) in 194 or 195 and 197–199. The house with three large windows next to it is the Senate of ancient Rome. The Colonna di Foca is the central symbol of the Roman Forum. It was built in 608 and is the last monumental building built in the Roman Forum to commemorate Phocas, the monarch of the Eastern Roman Empire who donated the Pantheon to the church .

After passing the Arch of Severus, there are eight granite columns on the left, which are the remains of the Temple of Saturn (Tempio di Saturno), one of the most famous temples in Rome. Saturn was the god of agriculture in ancient Rome. This site is one of the most important temples in ancient Rome. It was built around 500 BC and rebuilt in 42 AD. It was once the location of the national treasury. In ancient Rome, this temple was used to store treasures and other spoils of war that Rome looted from various wars. In ancient Rome, victorious generals held a triumphal ceremony, passing through the sacred way we just walked, all the way to the door of the Senate, and then deposited the spoils of war in this temple. The tall building with a bell tower next to it no longer belongs to the ancient Roman Forum. That is the Senate built in the 12th century and is currently used by the Roman Municipal Government.

Circo Massimo

Located at the junction of the Palatine Hill and the Aventine Hill, this was once a gathering place for ancient Roman nobles. There were also imperial palaces built nearby. The arena became one of the main entertainment venues for emperors and nobles, accommodating 250,000 spectators. The main activities were horse-drawn chariots, and sometimes there were also competitions such as foot races.

Piazza del Campidoglio (Piazza del Campidoglio)

Campidoglio is the most famous of the seven hills in Rome. It was once the center of religious activities in Rome and records the most important historical events in Rome. There are two small hills on Campidoglio Hill. On one hill, there was the Campidoglio Altar built in the ancient Roman period, and on the other hill, there was a Cupid Temple built in the earliest time. The remains of the temple can still be seen today. In addition, one side of this hill is a cliff called Tarpeius in ancient times , and many betrayers were thrown down from this cliff. The col between the two hills was once given to the civilians by Romulus, and now it is the Campidoglio Square, also known as the Municipal Square of Rome. The town hall has always been the center of Roman politics. From the Middle Ages to the present, it has been the seat of the highest power in the city of Rome. It is still the office of the Rome Town Hall and the mayor of Rome.

After an uprising of the Roman people against the papal rule in 1143, a new senate system was born, and 56 senators were elected. This system was obviously the most embryonic bourgeois parliamentary system during the transition from the dark Middle Ages to the capitalist stage. The Senate was located in this palace, so the palace was named the Senate Palace. However, the senate system was never recognized. This was the first time in history that the pope interfered in the political affairs of Rome, forming an opposition between the two sides. Later, both sides made concessions, and it was not until 1204 that the pope allowed Rome to elect one or two senators every year to preside over the political affairs of Rome with the assistance

of conservatives. In 1358, this right of Rome was also stopped, and the political affairs were managed by a senator appointed by the pope, replacing the system that the people needed. This situation continued until Rome became the capital of Italy after unification.

The ancient building of the Senate Palace is a combination of the architecture of the ancient Roman, medieval and Renaissance periods. From the location of the Roman Garden, the Senate Palace (i.e. the city hall building) is a few meters above the ground. The remains of the former Tabularium Palace (i.e. the Imperial Archives) are at the bottom. The corner towers on all four sides are still visible. The original Tabularium Palace constitutes almost half of the entire building. Moreover, the parts of the Tabularium Palace in the ancient Roman era and the parts added in the Middle Ages are very obvious. The Tabularium Palace was built by the then dictator Cornelius Sulla in 78 BC. It was a special institution for the storage of civil archives and household registration archives of residents and civil registration in that era. In recent years, due to a restoration and renovation project, it was discovered that the left wing of this palace was built on the site of the Temple of Veiove built in 192 BC.

The interior (ground floor) of this building, which now serves as the town hall, is the Tabernacle Exhibition Hall, which is open to the public and connected to the other two museums of the Capitoline Museums. It houses many precious cultural relics from the archives of the Roman Republic and Empire, as well as huge stones and columns removed from this ancient building, many of which are engraved with inscriptions.

The upper part of the building was built in the Middle Ages (1299) and maintained its medieval style until the 14th century. However, the front of the Senate Palace was built between 1582 and 1605 by the famous architects Giardini della Porta (1533-1602) and Giardini Rainardi (1510-1655) according to Michelangelo's design. It is in the Renaissance style. In front of the palace is an eight-shaped staircase, which is the work of Michelangelo. Under the two steps is a dome, where a marble statue of the Roman goddess Minerva is placed. This is a product of the Domiziano era and was placed when the fountain was built here from 1588 to 1589. She holds a sphere in her hand, symbolizing that Rome has conquered the world. Unlike other statues, the dress of this goddess statue has color. There are two groups of statues on both sides. The tiger on the right represents the Tigris River, which later became the Tiber River, and the Egyptian sphinx on the left symbolizes the Nile River. The two statues were moved from the Baths of Constantine. The top bell tower of the building was rebuilt by Martino Longhi the Elder between 1578 and 1582 after the medieval bell tower was demolished. It is a brick and stone structure decorated with a gilded ancient cross and a statue of the Roman god Minerva.

There are many halls in the Senate Palace, which are richly decorated and contain many precious cultural relics. The most famous one is the Caesar Hall, named after the huge marble statue of Caesar in 1573. This is where the city government and the city council meet.

This ancient palace is a monument in the history of architecture. It is unique in the world that the seat of the highest authority in a city has such a rich history. On the surface, this building looks extremely old and has no modern atmosphere, but its proud and majestic posture seems to be telling the world about its long history of two thousand years. Italians, like us Chinese, admire history and civilization, because these two ancient civilizations in the East and the West have historical and spiritual wealth that are worthy of pride and inheritance. Modern Europeans and Americans pay great attention to protecting and collecting ancient things (antiques, buildings). If you visit a familiar friend's home or a friend's friend's home, he will not show you a beautiful and high-end car, but how old his house is, what celebrity designed and built it, and what celebrity has lived there; he (she) will show you antiques such as ancient paintings in his collection, or move out Chinese porcelain for you to appreciate or identify. As for the Rome Municipal Building (Senate Palace) mentioned in this section, no Roman government has ever wanted to move out of this

building to a modern building to work, or to transform the old building into a new one. They are proud to work in such an ancient building. When President Clinton visited Italy (1994), he asked to visit Rome City Hall (Senate Palace). The then Mayor of Rome, Rutelli, received him in this building. The two chatted in the mayor's office. It can be imagined that Clinton would fully experience the difference between sitting in this historic palace and sitting in the White House. Ordinary visitors can visit on Sundays with permission, but they must submit an application in advance. When visiting, the certificate is registered. Many halls are open, including the mayor's office.

Campidoglio Square was built in the 13th and 14th centuries. In the Middle Ages, the square in front of the palace was a trading market and a place for executions. The very harmonious buildings on the square were designed by the famous sculptor, architect and painter Michelangelo in 1536 on the commission of Pope Paul III. Michelangelo rebuilt the square and turned a relatively narrow space into a harmonious and magnificent landscape. The purpose of building the square was to welcome the triumph of Emperor Carlo V. Because of his victory against paganism, he was given the right to hold a celebration parade through the Imperial City Garden and Campidoglio according to the ceremony of the ancient Roman emperor. However, the square was not officially completed until a century later. When Carlo V arrived in Rome, only part of the project was completed. There are two Egyptian stone lions under the stone steps leading to the square, and spring water is constantly gushing out of the mouths of the stone lions. On the other side of the stone lions is a long stone staircase, which was built in 1348 by Roman citizens to thank the Virgin Mary after avoiding the plague.

In the center of the square stands the famous bronze statue of Marcus Aurelius, which was cast in the second century AD and is the best preserved bronze statue of equestrian in Rome (the original is preserved in the Campidoglio Museum). Marcus Aurelius, whose full name is Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Augustus, served as the emperor of the Roman Empire from 161 to 180 AD. He was the last emperor of the Five Good Emperors of the Roman Empire and a famous "emperor philosopher". His work "Meditations" written in Greek has been handed down. This is the most famous knight statue in the ancient world, originally placed near the Lateran Palace. People once thought it was a statue of Constantine, and it was for this reason that it survived the religious turmoil.

Beautiful marble steps lead to the square. The steps were designed by Michelangelo and are known as the "Michelangelo Steps". There are three palaces around the square: on the left is the New Building (Pal Nuovo), the world's first public museum, the Capitoline Museum (I Musei Capitolini), which houses many famous works. On the right is the Conservatori Building (Pal Conservatori), and in the middle is the Senate Palace (Palazzo Senatorio). At the top of the steps stand the statues of the Dioscuri twins, which were taken back from the Jewish settlement in the 16th century. In Greek mythology, Dioscuri is the general name for a pair of twins, Castor and Pollux, but they have different fathers. Pollux was born to Zeus and Leda, the wife of the king of Sparta, while Castor was born to Leda and her husband. Although they were half-fathers, the two brothers had a deep relationship. Since Pollux was immortal and Castor was ordinary, after Castor died, Pollux asked his father Zeus to give part of his life to Castor. Zeus agreed, and the two brothers became the Gemini constellation. The square is surrounded by stone railings, with statues of Mario Victory, Constantine the Great and Constantine II standing along the railings. In addition, there are two mileposts brought from the ancient Appian Way. The statue of "Wolf and Baby" also stands here. Not far to the right of the "Great Stone Steps" is a semicircular building that looks like an arena. This is the Marcello Theater.

At the top of the steps is the church of Santa Maria in Aracoeli. The church is simple on the outside, but very beautiful inside, with Cosmatic floors and a striking ceiling painted to celebrate the Battle of Lepanto, which defeated the Turks. Among the many works of art, you can admire the frescoes painted by

Pinturicchio, the pulpit made by Lorenzo, and the wooden statue of the Santo Bambino in the transept (a replica; the original is said to be carved from wood from the Cosimani Gardens and was stolen in 1994). On the grass between the two flights of steps is an inconspicuous bronze statue of Cola di Rienzo (1313–1354), the leader and reformer of the medieval Roman people .

On a column to the right of the Senate Palace (or the Town Hall) stands a bronze statue of a mother wolf raising her cubs: a mother wolf with piercing eyes, looking around, and two cubs half squatting and half standing, sucking at the wolf's breast. This artwork can be seen almost everywhere in Rome, in reliefs on walls, bronze statues in museums, marble sculptures on souvenir stalls, and even the emblem of the famous Roma football team, which also features a mother wolf and wolf cubs.

Why did the Romans love this she-wolf so much? It turns out that a she-wolf raising a baby is the symbol of Rome. The reason why the Romans chose this symbol is because of a beautiful legend about the founding of Rome. This legend is directly related to Troy mentioned in the Trojan Horse. According to legend, in ancient times, Trojan Prince Paris visited Greece and fell in love with Greek Queen Helena, and lured her to Troy. The Greeks immediately launched an expedition to Troy, but failed to capture it after a long siege. Later, they adopted the famous Trojan Horse and finally conquered Troy in one fell swoop and set the city on fire. The Trojan hero Ettore fought to defend his city until the last drop of blood was shed. At this time, another Trojan hero, Aenea, the son of the goddess of love Venus, seemed to see Ettore at night. Ettore said to Enea: "Alas, Enea, son of the god of love, please escape from this sea of fire quickly. The enemy has surrounded the city and Troy will be completely destroyed. Please take the gods who protect the city with you. These gods are your companions of destiny. After you cross mountains and seas and travel a long distance, these gods will help you build a new city." After saying this, Ettore disappeared. After hearing this, Enea took his wife and son and immediately escaped from the sea of fire and went far away. Unfortunately, Enea's wife got lost on the way and could not be found. Under the guidance of the gods who protected the city, Enea landed on the bank of the Tiber River. The King of Latino at that time warmly received them and betrothed his daughter Lavinia to Enea as his wife.

About 200 years later, before the death of King Proca, the descendant of Enea, he designated his eldest son Numitor to inherit the throne, but the second son Amulio was dissatisfied and took the opportunity to usurp the throne of his eldest brother. To ensure that everything was safe, Amulio exiled his eldest brother, killed his nephew, and forced his niece Silvia to be a priestess who could not marry for life. However, the god of war Marte fell in love with Silvia, and the two gave birth to twins Romulus and Remo after having sex. Amulio was furious when he learned about it and immediately ordered Silvia to be executed. Out of compassion, the executioner put the two babies in a basket and abandoned them in the Tiber River. Fortunately, the river was rising at this time, and the basket was blocked by a fig tree. The crying of the two babies attracted a she-wolf on the hillside by the river. The she-wolf was merciful and not only did not eat them, but fed them with her own milk. One day, a shepherd named Faustolo discovered this scene, and took the two babies home and raised them to adulthood. When the two brothers grew up, they were strong, powerful, resolute and brave, and good at hunting. One day, when the two brothers were hunting, they had a dispute with Numitor's hunters. Remo was caught in front of Numitor, and Romulo immediately went to rescue him. Numitor saw that they looked very similar to his daughter, and was wondering when the shepherd Faustolo arrived and told him about his encounter with the two brothers. Numitor suddenly realized and took the two grandsons in. At this time, the two brothers also understood their own life experiences, and worked together to kill Amulio and restore their grandfather's throne. Numitor gave them the bank of the Tiber River where the two brothers were rescued, and allowed them to build a new city and become kings.

However, the two brothers were twins, and it was difficult to tell who was the older and younger, so it

was unclear who should be the first king. So Remus built the city on the Aventine Hill, and Romulus built the city on the Palatine Hill across a valley to the northeast. On April 21, 753 BC, Romulus drew a line outside his new city, stipulating that no one could cross it, and named the new city after himself, Rome. Remus found out that he had been deceived, and he was furious. He deliberately crossed the line. When Romulus found out, he immediately counterattacked, killed Remus, and made himself king. Because of this legend, the Romans still regard the fig tree as a sacred tree, and regard Romulus as the founder of Rome. The date of the city's founding was also determined to be April 21, 753 BC.

Empire Avenue

(On the way to the Imperial Avenue, a small road next to the Colosseum) This road has been worn for more than 1,900 years and has become what it is today. Horse carriages can also pass through it. From here we will pass the oldest Imperial Avenue in ancient Rome, which was built at the same time as the Colosseum. There are thieves on the Imperial Avenue, so everyone should be careful to put their bags in front. The most glorious history of ancient Rome is shown here in the form of marble murals.

On the left is the ancient Rome, and on the right is the Imperial City Court. A road opened up on the ruins is called the Imperial Avenue. Let's first look at the Great Hall on the left, which is called the Massenzio Great Hall. It is also the oldest Great Hall in the world, just like the Great Hall of China. During the National Day military parade, a viewing platform will be built, and the viewing platform will be filled with celebrities from Italy and all over the world. The parade team will go from the white Venetian Square (the Memorial Tomb of the People's Heroes) to the Colosseum. This parade route is different from other countries, because both sides are relics of ancient Rome for two thousand years. Let's look at our left, the Roman City Court. What does the City Court mean? It is the city center. We just saw the Palatine Hill. The ancient Romans opened up a piece of open space behind the Palatine Hill and built the Great Hall and the temple on our left. This is the city center of ancient Rome, which is what we call the City Court. Let's look at the left again, a piece of ruins, more than 2,700 years have passed, and many relics are still preserved. We will visit the Papal States in a while, which is in Rome, and we will naturally learn about the history of Christianity. When talking about Christianity, we have to mention St. Peter and St. Paul. In 64 AD, St. Peter was arrested and imprisoned by the emperor of the time while preaching in Rome. His prison was in the Mamertine Prison (Carcer Tullianum).

Augustus the Great was a title given to him by the elders of ancient Rome. The term "Head of State" in the West actually comes from the name of Augustus the Great. We will see a bronze statue of Caesar in front of us. We just saw two bronze sculptures on the right side of the Imperial Courtyard. There is another bronze sculpture in the front right, which is Emperor Trajan. The one behind is the Trajan Courtyard. Behind the Courtyard we see an arched red brick building with small rooms. That is the Trajan Market, which was a market built by Emperor Trajan more than 1,900 years ago. The small rooms were small shops at that time. Emperor Trajan had certain military talents. The Mediterranean Sea was turned into an inland sea of the ancient Roman Empire by Emperor Trajan. Emperor Trajan also had certain economic acumen and established a market more than 1,900 years ago.

St. Peter was imprisoned in this prison and was executed after being imprisoned for more than a year. This is the oldest prison in ancient Rome. St. Peter and St. Paul were both imprisoned here. St. Paul also completed his last work in his life, called "The Epistles", in the prison opposite us. In front of us on the left is the Caesar Courtyard, which was built by Caesar the Great in 56 BC. There are three pillars in front of us. These three pillars are the ruins of the Temple of Venus, the goddess of love. Venus, the goddess of love, is the mother of Guinea. Guinea escaped from a battle and fled to the present-day Lazio in Rome. After escaping here, a Latin king accepted him and married his daughter to him. Their child was Julie. This

Julie was the ancestor of the family of Caesar the Great. So after Caesar became emperor, he built this temple to commemorate Venus, the mother of the family. At that time, the temple collected rare treasures from all over ancient Rome. Now, more than 2,000 years have passed, and only three pillars are left.

Trajan 's Column

The Column of Trajan, also known as the Triumphal Column of Trajan, is located in the Forum Trajan on the Quirinal Hill in Rome, Italy. It was built by the Roman Emperor Trajan to commemorate Trajan's victory in conquering Dacia (now Romania). It was completed in 113 AD. The column is 30 meters high, and the total height including the base is 38 meters. The column body is made of 17 giant Carrara marbles with a diameter of 4 meters and a weight of 40 tons. The exterior is surrounded by a total of 200 meters of reliefs, describing the victory and misery of the Roman legions on the battlefield. Emperor Trajan appears more than 90 times in the 2,600 reliefs, which also shows the worship and respect of the ancient Romans for this emperor. The extremely beautiful reliefs on the column later became the object of admiration and imitation by artists in the Renaissance; there are 185 spiral stairs in the column leading directly to the top of the column. The small room in the base stores the ashes of Emperor Trajan and his wife, which is now closed to the public. The early crown of the Trajan Column was a giant bird, which was later replaced by a statue of Trajan. In 1587, Pope Sixtus V ordered the statue of St. Peter to be placed on the top of the column. The territory of ancient Rome reached its peak during the reign of Emperor Trajan. The height of the entire column is 40 meters. Walking past the Trajan's Court on our right, it is built on the left side of the Campidoglio Hill (Campidoglio), and on the right side there is a Herna Hill. The column is built right between the two hills. So when the Trajan's Court was built, the hill was flattened. The height of Trajan's Column is the height of the flattened hill.

Behind the Trajan's Column is the 18th-century Church of the Holy Name of Maria (Chiesa dei SS. Nome di Maria), and next to it is the Renaissance Church of Santa Maria in Loreto (Chiesa di S. Maria di Loreto). The two churches complement each other in Trajan's Square.

The semicircular two-story corridor on the square is **the Trajan Market** . It was built between 100 and 110. The Trajan Market is the earliest shopping center in the world. The building is mainly made of bricks and concrete. The first floor is a flower shop, and the second floor is for daily necessities and food. Diamonds from India, amber from the Caucasus, and even silk from China can be bought here. Roman ladies often come to the market to buy things in person. The food and goods purchased every day are carried home by slaves.

Piazza Venezia

It is named after the nearby Palazzo Venezia. It is located at the foot of Capitoline Hill, opposite the Vittoriano II Memorial. The Vittoriano Memorial is built to commemorate the first king of unified Italy, Vittorio Emanuele II. It was designed by Giuseppe Sacconi and the sculptures were carved by sculptors from all over Italy. Construction began in 1911 and was completed in 1935. The memorial is built with pure white marble and features a grand staircase, tall Corinthian columns, fountains, a huge equestrian statue of Emanuele II, and two statues of the goddess Victoria on a chariot. The building is 135 meters wide and 70 meters high. The ground floor of the building is the Museum of Italian Unification. The female sculpture is the goddess of victory of the ancient Roman Empire. The reliefs on both sides commemorate the unknown heroes who died for their country in Italy in 1921. There are two torches below that are always on and guarded by 24-hour guards. These guards are from the Italian navy, army, air force, police and border guards who take turns guarding every hour. There is a wreath in the middle. Every June 2, Italy's National Day, the president will come here to lay flowers, and then there will be a military parade, starting from Piazza Venezia and going along the Imperial Avenue to the Colosseum. And when foreign heads of state visit, they

will also come here to lay flowers. Piazza Venezia is right in front of the Tomb of the People's Heroes and is also the center of Italian political activities. It is the same as Tiananmen Square in Beijing. Local Italians don't like this construction style very much and jokingly call it a big cake or a typewriter.

* European statues of horses with all four hooves on the ground: the owners of the statues are still alive

The horse's three hooves touched the ground: the owner of the statue passed away (died of illness)

The horse's two hooves touched the ground: the statue's owner died on the battlefield

* European buildings with triangular lintels and Corinthian columns are mostly courts or churches.

Palazzo Venezia

It is one of the earliest Renaissance buildings in Rome. It was built in 1455 AD and has a history of more than 500 years. It used to be the embassy of the Duchy of Venice in Rome. The Duchy of Venice used to be an independent small country. With the unification of the fragmented small principalities by the King of Italy in 1870, Venice was no longer an independent principality. The Palazzo Venezia was occupied by Mussolini during World War II as a headquarters. The blue flag on the right side of the only small balcony on the second floor is the flag of the European Union, and the flag on the left is the Italian flag. Don't underestimate this small balcony. It was the famous "Mussolini's balcony" during World War II. A saying that is widely circulated around the world is "Mussolini always makes sense." It came from this small balcony. Mussolini is a super orator, and he can make things that make no sense very reasonable. So when he was giving a speech on the second floor, the saying came into being. Mussolini always makes sense from this small balcony. Mussolini's office is located here, and he gave speeches to the crowd gathered in Piazza Venezia on the balcony.

Bonaparte Palace, opposite to the Palazzo Venezia, is where Napoleon once lived when he occupied Rome. In order to make it easier for his mother to enjoy the sunshine and street view indoors, he built a fake balcony on the second floor - "Napoleon's fucking balcony". It is now a hotel and restaurant.

Bluestone Road in Old Town

This road was also used by horse-drawn carriages more than a thousand years ago. If the road surface was a whole piece of bluestone, the horseshoes would be slippery and would break over time, so the stones were made into bluestone bricks, and the weight was dispersed, so the small bluestone road is very durable. Moreover, such a road surface is particularly easy to repair. If a small bluestone is broken, it can be directly replaced. The third aspect is that the water is drained very quickly when it rains heavily, and the road surface does not accumulate water. What I just said are the advantages. What are the disadvantages? Girls who love beauty don't want to walk on this road, because high heels are particularly easy to get stuck. When the locals take wedding photos, you can see that the brides are in pain.

Trevi

Fountain, also known as the Trevi Fountain, is the largest Baroque fountain in Rome and was completed in 1762. The Trevi Fountain was originally located at the intersection of three roads. Behind it is the Palazzo Poli, which has a large column wall that presents the Corinthian columns of mythology. In the center of the Poseidon Palace is the god of the sea driving the Pegasus chariot, and on the left and right are the goddesses of harvest and health. The two horses driven by the god of the sea, the fierce horse represents the raging waves, and the calm horse represents the calm waves.

This fountain has a more romantic name, called "Maiden Fountain". The relief on the wall of the palace tells the origin of the fountain. Legend has it that a group of soldiers who had just returned from the battlefield and were thirsty asked a beautiful Roman girl for water. The girl took them to the location of the spring. Agrippa found the spring according to her instructions and built a waterway. "Maiden Fountain" got its name from this. There are two reliefs just above the two goddesses. One tells the story of the fountain at the location of the Trevi Fountain more than 2,000 years ago, which was called the Maiden Fountain. The other relief shows a man standing in it, who was the son-in-law and good friend of Augustus, the first emperor of ancient Rome, who led the Romans to build a canal. Let's visit Rome today to learn about ancient Roman culture. There are still 26 kilometers of the waterways built under the leadership of Agrippa. In the heyday of ancient Rome, there were 14 large waterways outside the city of Rome, which brought water into the city of Rome. But when the city of Rome began to decline, foreign enemies invaded. In order to make Rome surrender as soon as possible, they destroyed a lot of waterways outside the city. It's a pity. It wasn't until the Renaissance after the Middle Ages that many popes repaired the aqueducts, so the large and small fountains we see in Rome all come from the rich underground aqueducts in Rome.

Legend has it that if a traveler throws a coin into the Trevi Fountain, they will return to Rome in the future. If they throw two coins, they will encounter a new love story; if they throw three coins, they will at least get married or divorced. How to throw a coin: turn your back to the fountain, hold the coin in your right hand, make three wishes (the first one must be to return to Rome), and then throw the coin over your left chest into the fountain. Every one or two days, the amount of coins accumulated in the pool can reach hundreds of euros. This money is usually salvaged by a local cleaning company, and half of it will be transferred to a Roman Catholic charity called Fraternity.

In the movie Roman Holiday, Princess Anne, played by Hepburn, cut her long hair at a barber shop next to the Trevi Fountain. Now the shop is a small shop selling Wenzhou leather bags. The reporter played by Peck followed him all the time. At that time, he saw several young tourists outside the shop. One of the little girls had a camera hanging around her neck. As a reporter, Peck wanted to take a picture of Anne with short hair, but he didn't bring a camera with him, so he begged the little girl to lend him the camera. That scene happened at the Trevi Fountain. After cutting her long hair, Princess Anne walked to the Spanish Square and sat on the Spanish Steps to eat ice cream.

- The group is divided into three parts, otherwise it is easy to get lost
- On the left side of the fountain is where Princess Anne, played by Audrey Hepburn in the movie Roman Holiday, bought ice cream. Don't tell us the specific house number, as the tour guide may go to different stores. On the right side is the barber shop where Princess Anne had her hair cut, which is now a grocery store.
- When taking photos with street performers who pretend to be ancient Roman characters, you must bargain first.

The Pantheon

is the only building from the Roman Empire that has been completely preserved to this day. It was built in 27-25 BC during the Roman Republic by Agrippa, Octavian's deputy and son-in-law, to commemorate Octavian's victory over Antony and Cleopatra. The temple was burned down in 80 AD and rebuilt by order of the Roman Emperor Hadrian in 125 AD. In 609 AD, the Byzantine Emperor presented the Pantheon to the Pope of Rome, who renamed it "Church of Our Lady and the Martyrs", which is the official name of the Pantheon today. The Pantheon has been a cemetery for great men since the Renaissance, including Victor Emmanuel II, Raphael and Annibale Carracci, and others.

The words on the Pantheon are MAGRIPPALFCOSTERTIVMFECIT, which is Latin. Its Chinese meaning is: "Marcus Agrippa, son of Lucius and consul for three times, built this temple". When it was built between 227 and 257 BC, a huge bronze sculpture of a Roman eagle was placed on the triangular gable of the Pantheon. In order to fix it on the surface of the marble gable, many holes were drilled on it to fix the bronze sculpture. In 1625, Pope Urban VIII melted the bronze ceiling of the porch and cast it into the canopy above the main altar of St. Peter's Basilica and the 80 cannons of the Castel Sant'Angelo. Therefore, the holes drilled at that time are still preserved on the flat roof. There is a colonnade with a width of 34 meters and a depth of 15.5 meters in front of the circular main body. The 16 columns are divided into 8 in the front row, 4 in the middle and back rows, and are made of a whole piece of granite. The column height is 12.5 meters, and the bottom diameter of the column is 1.43 meters. The capital and the base of the column are made of white marble. The dome and colonnade were originally covered with gilded copper tiles.

The Pantheon has a simple and clear structure. The main body is circular and covered with a dome with a diameter of 43.3 meters. It was the largest dome from its construction to 1436. The highest point of the dome is also 43.3 meters. There is a large circular hole with a diameter of 8.9 meters on the top for lighting. It is also the only lighting point in the Pantheon. The light leaks from the top and changes its angle as the sun moves, giving people a sacred and solemn feeling, which is very suitable for the nature of religious buildings.

There are five layers of concave grids inside the dome. The area of the concave grids decreases layer by layer, but the number is the same, which further highlights the hugeness of the dome and gives people a sense of upwardness. The design of the Pantheon has been in the world's leading position in aeronautics and acoustics so far, and it is difficult to be surpassed. When it rains lightly, the door does not need to be closed, but when it rains heavily, the door will be closed, and the hot air generated in the hall will swirl up and surround the rain in the middle, so the rain will not splash on the wall. After the rain flows to the ground, it flows away through the 22 drainage holes on the ground, so there is no water accumulation on the ground.

It is still a miracle that people at that time could use concrete to pour such a huge dome. Nowadays, the tension of concrete cannot bear its own weight and collapses, making it difficult to pour such a large dome. Later, it was learned that the concrete used by the ancient Romans at that time was natural volcanic ash from near Naples, mixed with tuff and other aggregates. When building the dome, the heavier aggregate was used at the base, and then the lighter aggregate was gradually used upwards. At the top, only pumice mixed with porous volcanic rock was used. In addition, the thickness of the dome was gradually reduced from 5.9 meters at the base of the dome to only 1.5 meters at the top.

The Pantheon is the culmination of ancient Roman architectural art and has had a significant impact on the development of Western architectural history. Countless architects during the Renaissance came here to learn from it. This round hall plus colonnade design has become a classic and has been used in many public buildings in later generations.

The Pantheon is now a Catholic church and is closed on Sunday mornings for mass.

There are two pillars opposite the founding father. The memorial tomb behind it is engraved with the name of the founding father's son, Umberto I. This is the memorial tomb of Umberto I and his wife. Umberto I may not be familiar to everyone, but when the Eight-Power Allied Forces entered Beijing during the reign of Empress Dowager Cixi, the Italian army was led by Umberto I. Raphael was only 37 years old when he died, very young. Below the bronze statue is a brief introduction to the master's life. Look at the right side again. The right side is usually the tomb of the spouse, but Raphael's right side is empty without marble

sculptures, but there is a tomb text below. Look carefully, the first word is Maria, which is a female name. She is the fiancée of Master Raphael. Master Raphael was engaged but not married during his lifetime. His fiancée died earlier than the master and was buried somewhere else. When the master died, the Romans prepared to bury him in the Pantheon according to his will, and also wanted to bury his fiancée with him, but Rome was the Papal State at that time, ruled by the Pope, who believed that they were only engaged but not married, and rejected the Romans' request. But it was a fact that he had a fiancée, so the fiancée's life story was engraved on the tomb.

The ground diameter and height of the Pantheon are both 43.3 meters, while the span of the dome designed by Michelangelo in St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City is 42 meters. This size comes from the Pantheon. The dome was designed based on this. The diameter of the dome was shortened by 1 meter to show respect for the Pantheon. Every February 11th, the founding day of ancient Rome, the sun will be at a right angle to the ground. It only happens on this day. It is very strange that no one can explain this phenomenon. So Raphael loved the Pantheon very much during his lifetime. He said it was a building kissed by God. But more than 2,000 years ago, without any modern tools, how did the ancient Romans build such a magnificent building? So the Romans said it was a gift from God.

The Obelisk of Ramses II in the Baroque fountain in front of the Pantheon is 6.34 meters high and has a history of 3,300 years. There are 13 obelisks in Rome (only 5 are left in Egypt). The Egyptians regard obelisks as symbols of the sun god. Each obelisk is cut from a whole block of stone, almost all of which are huge granite, and is engraved with beautiful ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs.

Piazza di Spagna

is named after the Spanish Steps on the square. The Spanish Steps are named after the Spanish Embassy in the Vatican nearby. The Spanish Steps are the longest and widest steps in Europe, with a total of 135 steps. They were built between 1723 and 1725 by France using the legacy of its diplomat (Étienne Gueffier) to fund the Vatican. The Church of the Holy Trinity on the Hill (Trinità dei Monti, funded by the King of the Bourbon Dynasty of France) is located at the top of the Spanish Steps. (It should be called the French Square Steps)

There was an ice cream cart under the steps in "Roman Holiday". The princess bought an ice cream and an old man next to her gave her a bouquet of flowers. Princess Anne took the flowers and walked up the steps. The third step down from the street lamp was where Anne ate ice cream. The reporter who followed her was on the right step, walked up all the way, walked behind her, came out from the side and greeted her, pretending to meet by chance. This classic scene made the Spanish Square famous, and this step became a holy place in the hearts of many movie fans. Many couples buy an ice cream cone and sit on the Spanish Steps, reenacting the romance of Hepburn and Peck in "Roman Holiday", experiencing Anne's leisurely mood, and taking pictures. However, because ice cream contaminates the steps and is difficult to clean, the city of Rome passed a regulation prohibiting eating ice cream on these steps, otherwise a fine will be imposed. The Spanish Steps hold fashion shows twice a year.

There is a Baroque fountain in the square, called La Fontana della Barcaccia). Designed by Pietro Bernini, the father of sculptor Gian Lorenzo Bernini, it was built between 1627 and 1629. Pietro Bernini became the Trevi Fountain in 1623. Vergine. According to a less credible rumor, Pope Five VIII built the Fountain of the Broken Barque because he was impressed by a ship that washed up there during a flood in the Tiber River.

At No. 26, on the right side of Plaza de España, there is a yellow building, the Keats-Shelley Memorial House, which commemorates the British romantic poets John Keats and Percy Bysshe Shelley. It houses souvenirs,

letters, manuscripts and paintings related to Keats and Shelley, as well as Lord Byron, William Wordsworth, Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Oscar Wilde and others.

Caffè Greco, located on Condotti Street in front of Piazza di Spagna, was founded in 1760. It is the oldest and most famous coffee house in Rome and a favorite place for writers such as Keats, Byron, and Shelley.

Facing the steps, there is a pay toilet on the left side of the square.

The **Immaculate Conception Column** is located in front of the Spanish Embassy in the Vatican. dell'Immacolata Catholics believe that Mary, the mother of Jesus, received special grace from God when her soul was infused into her body, which freed her from the stain of original sin. However, the Eastern Orthodox Church and almost all Protestant denominations do not accept this doctrine.

On December 8, 1854, Pope Pius IX declared the "Immaculate Conception of Mary". Every December 8, the Vatican Pope will come here in person to hold a memorial ceremony, give a speech, and take the elevator to personally put a wreath of flowers on the hands of the Virgin Mary and take off the wreath from last year. There are four marble sculptures at the bottom of the column. These four people are neither Catholics nor Christians, they are all Jewish believers. Because the Virgin Mary is a Jewish believer.

Quattro Fontane

It is a group of fountains from the late Renaissance, located at the intersection of Via delle Quattro Fontane and Via del Quirinale in Rome. It was commissioned by Pope Sixtus V and installed between 1588 and 1593. The figures of the four fountains represent the Tiber River (the symbol of Rome), the Arno River (the symbol of Florence), the goddess Diana (the symbol of chastity), and the goddess Juno (the symbol of power). The Arno, Tiber, and Juno fountains are the work of Domenico Fontana, and the Diana fountain was designed by the painter and architect Pietro da Cortona. The lighting at night is very beautiful.

Piazza Navona

It used to be Emperor Domiziano's stadium, but now it is one of the most lively and traditional squares in Rome. Various restaurants and cafes occupy almost all the shops facing the square. It is so pleasant to have a cup of warm coffee or delicious ice cream in the open-air cafe and enjoy the slow time in the afternoon. There are many street painters and jugglers in the square. You may find your favorite works on the inconspicuous painting stalls. Don't forget to take a close look at the houses around, because this is known as the most beautiful Baroque square in Rome!

Many tourists want to imitate Audrey Hepburn in Roman Holiday and eat ice cream on the steps next to the Spanish Square. Unfortunately, it is no longer allowed to eat ice cream in the Spanish Square. Then come here. Look, it started in 1896, which is long enough. Looking at the dazzling array of ice cream, you are drooling, right? You must buy 3 scoops, it is delicious and the price is the most suitable. I won't tell others!

There are three fountains in Piazza Navona, namely the Fountain of Neptune, the Fountain of the Four Rivers and the Fountain of the Moor. The Fountain of the Four Rivers in the center of the square was built in 1651. It is one of the important masterpieces of Bernini, the most beloved artist of God in the 17th century. It was built for Pope Innocent X. The sculptures in the Fountain of the Four Rivers symbolize the four rivers of the Danube, the Ganges, the Nile and the Rio de la Plata, as well as the four corners of the known world of Europe, Asia, Africa and America. The Egyptian obelisk on the top of the fountain symbolizes the victory of Catholicism in the world.

Another famous fountain in the square is the Fountain of Neptune, originally designed by Della Porta and

partially built by Bernini. The construction was delayed until 1878, when Della Porta sculpted the statue of Neptune (Poseidon in Greek mythology) fighting an octopus and finally completed the entire fountain. The Nereidi, a sea nymph accompanied by Cupid, is surrounded by the fountain .

Kitti Palace

The office of the current Prime Minister. We just saw Mussolini's balcony in Piazza Venezia, where Mussolini worked during World War II. But the office in the balcony on the second floor corner of Palazzo Chigi was Mussolini's earliest office. The fountain in the square was designed by Giacomo Della Porta and built in 1575-1577 . Many places in Italy imitate this fountain.

The column at the entrance is also a memorial column, modeled after the Trajan Column, in memory of Emperor Marcus Aurelius. The top of the column is not the emperor himself, but was replaced by a bronze statue of St. Paul by the Pope.

Egyptian obelisk

In front of the Chamber of Deputies in Italy is an Egyptian obelisk. This obelisk was captured by the first emperor of ancient Rome, Augustus the Great, in 27 BC. There is a bronze sphere on the top, which is not only a decoration, but also a sundial for timekeeping. There is a small hole in the middle, through which the sun shines on the ground, casting a shadow to measure time. The height of the entire obelisk is 26 meters, and the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs are engraved on the obelisk. The emperor of ancient Rome believed that bringing the obelisk, which represented power in ancient Egypt, back to Rome after winning the battle in Egypt was equivalent to bringing back power, so the emperor of ancient Rome liked the obelisk very much.

The obelisk originated in ancient Egypt and is the most distinctive symbol of ancient Egyptian civilization besides the pyramids . Obelisks are usually carved from a whole piece of granite and weigh hundreds of tons. Hieroglyphics are engraved on all four sides, indicating the three different purposes of this stone monument: religious (often dedicated to the sun god Apollo), commemorative (often used to commemorate the number of years the pharaoh has been in power), and decorative. At the same time, the obelisk is also a powerful symbol of the authority of the Egyptian Empire. Egyptian pharaohs erected obelisks in the year of amnesty or to show off their victory, and they were usually erected in pairs on both sides of the temple tower. Excavating and erecting obelisks is an arduous project. According to records, it took 7 months to excavate this single piece of stone from the quarry and transport it from Aswan to Thebes. After arriving at the destination, people lifted the obelisk up a slope made of earth and then erected it upright on the base.

There are 29 obelisks in the world that originated from ancient Egypt, of which 9 are preserved in Egypt. Italy has 11 Egyptian obelisks, the most in the world. Most of the obelisks in Italy were transported from Egypt to the Roman Empire during the ancient Roman period. Therefore, if the country is not strong, good things will always be taken away. Among them, Rome has 8 obelisks, which is also the city with the most ancient Egyptian obelisks in the world. During the ancient Roman Empire, 5 more obelisks were built imitating the ancient Egyptian method and transported to Rome for erection. Therefore, Rome now also has 13 obelisks. Most of the obelisks seen today have a history of more than two or three thousand years, and the places where they are placed are also important landmarks.

Other Egyptian obelisks include: 1 in France (Place de la Concorde, Paris), 1 in Israel, 1 in Turkey, 1 in Poland, 4 in the United Kingdom, and 1 in the United States (Central Park, New York).

Temple of Hadrian

by Andrein Pius, Hadrian's adopted son and successor, in 145 AD. There are 11 Corinthian columns with a height of 15 meters. In the 17th century, it was converted into the Pope's Palace.

Hadrian, one of the Five Good Emperors of the Roman Empire, reigned from 117 to 138. He is best known for building Hadrian's Wall, which marked the northern border of the Roman Empire. He also rebuilt the Pantheon in Rome.

Another well-known fact about Hadrian is his homosexual relationship with the Greek youth Antinous. Antinous fell into the water and died at the age of 20 while accompanying him on a cruise on the Nile. Some people also believe that Antinous may have died for political purposes, suicide, or murder. After his death, Emperor Hadrian fell into deep grief and commemorated Antinous in every way he could. Cities were named after him, his portrait was engraved on medals, his statues were erected in many places in the empire, Antinous was declared a god, and many temples were built in Bithynia, Mantinea, Arcadia, and Athens. Today's Antinopolis is the city built by Hadrian at the site where Antinous drowned. The best-selling Japanese manga "Thermae Romana" also included this story in the manga.

Supreme People's Court

The row of white marble sculptures in front of the door are the famous chief justices in ancient Roman history. The court is a whole white building complex, which the Romans did not like very much. Because it was too much of a contrast with the brick-red architectural style of ancient Rome, and the volume was too large and the lines were too rigid, it was strongly opposed by those who supported the Renaissance route of the ancient city of Rome. Just above the middle of the main entrance is a group of sculptures, representing the victory of justice. This complex is indeed too large, especially because it was built by the river. When it was just built, it collapsed significantly. In 1976, it took three years to reinforce the foundation so that the building could continue to be used. The square at the entrance is called Piazza Cavour. Camillo Benso Cavour was one of the three heroes of the Italian Renaissance movement. He died in 1860. This square was named after him.

Castel Sant'Angelo

Castel Sant'Angelo is also a famous scene in "Roman Holiday". Princess Anne was very beautiful after having her hair cut short. The enthusiastic Italian barber invited Princess Anne to attend the dance held at night under Castel Sant'Angelo by the Tiber River. In the evening, Princess Anne and the reporter came to the square under Castel Sant'Angelo to attend the dance as scheduled, and later had a fight with plainclothes. Castel Sant'Angelo is also known as the Mausoleum of Adriano. Adriano (Hadrian, also known as Hadrian) was one of the wise emperors of ancient Rome. He was not only a great emperor, but also a very important architect. He designed this mausoleum for himself and his family in 123 AD. He was buried here one year after his death. Later, Emperor Caracalla and seven emperors after him and important members of the royal family were buried here. In 410, the Visigoths captured Rome and looted it (the Sack of Rome). The ashes of the Roman emperor were discarded by the Visigoths. In 590 AD, a serious plague broke out in Rome. In order to eliminate the plague, Pope Gregory I organized a solemn penitential procession. When the procession arrived at the nearby Mausoleum of Hadrian, the Pope saw the Archangel Michael sheathing his sword. This sight was considered a miracle, foreshadowing the end of the plague. From then on, the Romans called this place Castel Sant'Angelo. In the 14th century, it became a castle with a corridor (called the Borgo Corridor) connecting to St. Peter's Basilica, becoming a place of refuge for the Pope. Castel Sant'Angelo was used as a prison. For example, Bruno was imprisoned here for six years.

The Ponte Sant'Angelo in front of Castel Sant'Angelo has 12 angel statues designed and built by Bernini. Now it is a replica.

The wooden barrel containing the two brothers Romulus and Remus by the Tiber River was not washed away by the water, but was stopped by a fig tree. Since then, this fig tree has been called the sacred tree of Italy.

Real scenes from Roman Holiday:

- Castel Sant'Angelo: After the princess made a scene at the ball, the two kissed each other on the banks of the Tiber River and sealed their love. Castel Sant'Angelo witnessed the princess' happiness.
- Trevi Fountain: After leaving Joe's apartment, the princess walked south to the Trevi Fountain. In the alley east of the Trevi Fountain, the princess stopped in front of a barber shop and finally decided to get a haircut. This became the birthplace of the world-famous "Hepburn hair".
- Colosseum: After the princess and Joe met by chance, she said she wanted to see the famous Colosseum, so she rode with Joe. The Colosseum is an indispensable stop on any trip to Rome.
- Ancient Roman ruins: The princess and Joe visited G.ROCCA, a streetside cafe next to the Pantheon. Today, this cafe has been replaced by a shopping mall and is nowhere to be found, but the stone columns of the porch and the sculpture fountain and obelisk on the square seen in the film are all symbols of the Pantheon.

Church of St. Peter in Chains

The church was built in the fifth century and has been rebuilt many times since then. In particular, Cardinal Della Rovere, who later became Pope Julius II (nephew of Pope Sixtus IV), carried out extensive renovations on the church between 1473 and 1503. The church later became the exclusive church of the Rovere family. The church is a basilica building style. Two rows of Doric columns divide the main hall into a nave and two side halls. The shackles of St. Peter are enshrined under the main altar in front.

There is a legend about this shackle. It is said that Empress Eudoxus, the wife of the fifth-century Western Roman Emperor Valentinian III, gave the shackles of St. Peter when he was imprisoned in Jerusalem as a gift to Pope Leo I. When Leo I compared it with the shackles he had when St. Peter was imprisoned in the Mamertine Prison in Rome, the two shackles miraculously merged into one.

We know that St. Peter was rescued from prison by an angel, a scene depicted in Raphael's frescoes in the Vatican Museum, and we see a similar scene in this church. On the ceiling of the nave is Palotti's 1706 work "The Miracle of St. Peter in Chains".

The most famous sculpture in the church is Michelangelo's "Moses". In 1505, Pope Julius II asked Michelangelo to design a cemetery for him. Michelangelo originally designed 47 statues, but soon Michelangelo was asked to participate in the reconstruction of St. Peter's Basilica and the painting of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, "The Creation of the World". The cemetery project was forced to be shelved. It was not until 1515 that Michelangelo completed the statue of Moses in the cemetery. This statue of Moses has two horns on his head, his eyes are piercing, the Ten Commandments are under his right arm, and his left hand is stroking his long beard. According to the description in the Old Testament, after Moses led the Jews out of Egypt, he took Joshua to Mount Sinai to receive the stone tablet engraved with the Ten Commandments from God. After coming down from the mountain, his head radiated light. In Hebrew, the two words "light" and "horn" are very similar, and it is obviously not as easy to express light on the head as two horns. Sculptors often use this method of substitution to express this meaning. Then we see Moses with two horns on his head. If you think Moses' eyes are still a little angry, you are right, because after he came down the mountain, he found that many Jews at the foot of the mountain had lost their faith in God and worshipped the golden

calf instead, which made Moses extremely disappointed and angry, and he smashed the commandment tablet with his own hands. This shows the complex expression he had when he first came down the mountain and saw the people who had abandoned God.

On the left and right of Moses are Jacob's two wives in the Old Testament: Rachel and Leah, also carved by Michelangelo. You can also see many tombs here, such as the tomb of Cardinal Aldo Brontini, which is decorated with a grim reaper wielding a sickle. On the third altar on the left, there is an ancient mosaic of "Saint Sebastian" from the seventh century.

Piazza del Popolo is transliterated as "Piazza del Popolo". It is named after the "Church of Santa Maria del Popolo" on the square. Since the ancient Roman era, it has been one of the important entrances to Rome. The square is located at the intersection of three main streets running through the city of Rome. The left side of the square is Via del Babuino, which leads to the Spanish Square, and the right side of the square is Via di Ripetta, which leads to the Pantheon. The famous "Via del Corso" is between the two churches on the south side, which leads to Piazza Venezia.

Via Flaminia was built on the foundation of the Via Flaminia, which was built in 220 AD in ancient Rome. The avenue connects Rome and the Adriatic Sea, and a "triumphal arch" can be seen from afar. This gate was first built in the 3rd century AD. During the Roman Empire, people coming from the north had to pass through this avenue to enter Rome, so the gate was named "Porta Flaminia". Later, when the Roman Empire declined, the Goths entered the city and plundered Rome. The inscription "Omne malum ab Aquilone (Evil from the North)" was carved on the inside of the gate. In 1562, Pope Pius IV (reigned 1559-1566) asked Michelangelo to rebuild the gate, and it was renamed "Porta del Popolo". The words "Auspicious Entrance" were carved on the outside of the lintel, and the letters "SPQR" representing the city of Rome were also carved on the right, and the Pope's pastoral emblem was carved just above.

Flaminio Obelisk" in the center, which is 23.2 meters high and weighs about 235 tons. It was built in the 13th century BC during the reign of Ramses II. It has a history of nearly 4,000 years and is the second oldest and one of the tallest obelisks in Rome. In the 10th century BC, Emperor Augustus conquered Egypt and transported the obelisk to Rome. It was then placed in the Circus Maximus as a decoration. In 1589, Pope Sixtus V ordered it to be transported to the Piazza del Popolo to commemorate the conquest of Egypt.

The People's Square has gone through thousands of years of history, and has gone through three periods of Renaissance, Baroque and Neoclassicism. The layout you see today was designed by architect Giuseppe Valadier between 1811 and 1822. It is already a relatively large square in Rome. Although there are not many tourists, it is one of the most popular leisure places for locals. Group activities are often held here, and the Chinese New Year celebrations have been held here for several consecutive years. Although the square looks peaceful today, it was a place for public executions from the Middle Ages until 1826, a bit like Beijing's Caishikou. Corso Street is one of the most important streets in Rome. There are many luxury stores on the street. Together with the two adjacent streets, it brings together many first- and second-tier brands.

The most important church on the square is the "Santa Maria del Popolo" next to the north gate. Its history is much older than the square and the other two churches. Remember the tyrant Nero who burned down the city of Rome? Legend has it that he was beheaded here and buried under the Domitian family tomb on the nearby Pinico Hill. His ghost turned into a crow and perched on a cursed walnut tree, wailing day and night, which frightened the people nearby. In order to appease the people, the Pope decided to cut down the tree in 1099 and build a church on the original site for the people. The church and the square got their names from this.

Although it looks ordinary, it houses a large number of art treasures. It is one of the few churches in Rome that can fully remind people of art from all periods. The church has been rebuilt many times in the past thousand years. In the 13th century, it was renamed "St. Augustine Church". Since the time of Sixtus IV, new popes must stop here to worship when they come to Rome to take office. In 1513, Raphael was commissioned by banker Agostino Chigi to build the Chigi Chapel in the church. The Chigi family was a famous Roman banking family. They were wealthy and spent money lavishly, comparable to the Medici family in Florence, so they could afford to hire Renaissance masters. From 1655 to 1660, Pope Alexander VII, who was also from the Chigi family, asked Bernini to renovate the main facade, which became what we see today. Since then, the church has become one of the favorite cemeteries of the rich in Rome. The bronze dome on the ground of the Chigi Chapel is not a well, but the entrance to the tomb of the Chigi family. Dr. Langdon in the suspense novel "Angels and Demons" went down from here to discover the first murdered cardinal. The dome is engraved with the famous mosaic "Kneeling Skeleton", in which the skull holds the coat of arms of Alexander VII, and the line of words below means "Death from Heaven".

The Baths of Caracalla (Terme di Caracalla) is an ancient Roman public bath located in Rome. It was built between 212 and 216 AD during the reign of Caracalla. Its ruins are now a tourist attraction. The baths cover an area of 13 hectares. The main building is 228 meters long, 116 meters wide and 38.5 meters high. It can accommodate 2,000 people bathing at the same time.

The Baths of Caracalla were not only a group of baths, but also a place of recreation and entertainment. It also included a public library, which, like other Roman libraries, was divided into two separate and equal parts, one containing Greek books and the other Latin books. There was also a shopping mall outside the baths. The entire building was heated by the thermal pit method, a system of burning coal or wood underground to heat water, which was still used until the 19th century.

The ancient Romans loved bathing very much, and it can even be said that many people in the entire nation had mysophobia. Wherever they went, they would bring baths with them, and the remains of Roman baths can be found in every corner of the Roman world. Therefore, some people call them "Romans who bathe in the bathhouse". Roman baths are roughly divided into three categories: hot spring baths, private baths, and public baths. For most ordinary Romans, they could only patronize public baths. During the imperial period, the Romans regarded the construction of public baths as a major event with the same significance as the construction of stadiums and libraries. According to calculations, in the 4th century AD, there were more than 1,000 public baths in Rome, of which there were 11 super-large ones, such as the Baths of Caracalla, which could accommodate 1,000 people at a time.

There are two most important large public baths in Rome: the Baths of Caracalla and the Baths of Diocletian, both named after emperors. Both baths are huge, the Baths of Diocletian can accommodate 3,000 people at the same time, and the Baths of Caracalla can accommodate nearly 2,000 people at the same time. Since part of the Baths of Diocletian has been converted into a Catholic church and monastery, and part of it has been converted into a museum, if you want to see a more complete bath, you can only go to the Baths of Caracalla.

The Baths of Caracalla are extremely luxurious. Located in the southern part of the city center of Rome, they were built in 212 AD and completed in 216 AD. They cover a total area of 412×383 meters, which is equivalent to the size of a small town. Even a modern standard swimming pool would be hard to match their size. The ancient Romans were never careless about architecture, especially large-scale municipal projects, and they spared no expense. The windows on all four sides are large and bright to ensure that sunlight can

shine in at any time during the day. The floors and walls of the entire bathhouse are paved with precious colored marble from different regions of the Roman Empire. The walls of these marbles are also decorated with exquisite patterns, colors and paintings. There is a statue above every turn in the bathhouse.

Most Roman public baths are divided into steam baths, hot water baths, warm air baths, tepidariums, cold air baths, and cold water baths. Swimming pools are usually located in the warm to cold water areas. You can visit along the route that people walked in ancient times. From the front hall, turn right to a square hall, which is the dressing room; then there are two large colonnades, which are gymnasiums, where people exercise before going into the baths; and then go forward to the steam baths called "Turkish baths" (L in the floor plan), the spectacular hot water baths (C in the floor plan) and the tepidarium. The hot water bath is the largest of all the baths, 55.8 meters long, 24.1 meters wide, and the vault height is 38.1 meters (Diocletian's is 61.0 meters long, 24.4 meters wide, and 27.5 meters high); the warm water bath is two small rectangular rooms with two baths; then there is the huge central hall, which is the cold water bath (plan F), adjacent to the open-air swimming pool (plan N), with a beautiful facade and cylindrical dragons on the walls, which were used to place sculptures of gods in the past.

The baths were used for about 300 years until the Goths invaded and destroyed the aqueduct in 537. According to historical records, the floors and baths here are all made of colored marble and glass mosaics, which can be imagined in the glorious period. The typical Roman bath is time-consuming and complicated, starting with a Turkish steam bath. The steam bath is conducted in a high-temperature steam room full of hot and humid air. They first enter the warm water bath room to fully open the pores and remove the dirt on the body; then enter the large social center of the "cold water room" to cool the skin and shrink the pores; finally jump into the open-air swimming pool for the final cleansing. The rich will enjoy a wiping massage with scented wool cloth.

Public bathhouses are usually open in the morning, but there are not many customers and the ticket price is low. The afternoon is the prime time, and most people will stay until dinner time. Necessary food supplies are indispensable, so public bathhouses are equipped with restaurants, bars and other services. The waiters in restaurants and bars attract people's attention with various jingles or knocks, and with vendors selling drinks, sausages, and bread, it is very lively! It is better to say that it is a recreation center than a bathhouse!

Among the various functions of Roman public baths, the most interesting one is the beauty service they provided. Many Romans were not friendly to their armpit hair and always wanted to pluck it out. Due to the underdeveloped technology at that time, every time the beauticians pulled out a hair, they would cause a scream of pain. To the surprise of the beauticians, these screams attracted many customers. So they suddenly got an idea and simply turned it into a trick to attract business. Whenever there were no customers, they would scream non-stop to let people know their business identity or give people the illusion of being "prosperous" with many customers [1].

The builder of the Baths of Caracalla was also a notorious and bloodthirsty tyrant, Caracalla (188-217 AD), the eldest son of Emperor Severus of the Roman Empire. His real name was Antoninus, and Caracalla was his nickname. In order to win the hearts of the people, Caracalla issued the "Emperor's Edict" in 211 AD, which expanded the number of all citizens in the Roman Empire. All people in the empire could obtain Roman citizenship, whether they were the Senate or freed slaves and gladiators, etc. could enjoy general citizenship; he privately built the famous "Baths of Caracalla" for the Roman citizens to enjoy without the government's budget. During the Caracalla period, mixed bathing between men and women appeared, which inevitably caused some deviant behavior, and it was repeatedly banned. Especially in the late empire,

Christianity, which advocated asceticism, rose in Rome, and they could not tolerate the decadent style in the baths. Finally, in 320, the Laodice Synod ordered that women were prohibited from going to public baths, and the Synod of St. John Chrysostom finally banned all baths at the end of the fourth century. In 537 AD, the Baths of Caracalla stopped being used due to the destruction of the water supply pipes and were gradually abandoned.

The entire building is not only the essence of ancient Roman architecture, but also a treasure in the history of human civilization. In the early 20th century, the design of the baths still inspired some modern buildings, including the original station building of Pennsylvania Station in New York, USA and the Bangladesh National Assembly Building.

Café Roma

Antico Caffè Greco

Among the many ancient coffee houses in Rome, the most famous one is Antico Caffè Greco . This coffee house is located in Via dei Condotti is the second oldest coffee house in Italy, second only to Florian Coffee House in Venice. Antico Caffè Greco was built in 1760. It is named Antico Caffè Greco because its first owner, Nicola della Maddalena, was Greek. Since the 19th century, artists and writers from all over the world have liked to gather here. In the 1960s and 1970s, celebrities from the upper class and cultural circles also frequented here. When you sip espresso in Antico Caffè Greco, imagine that one or two hundred years ago, celebrities such as Stendhal, Goethe, Liszt, Keats, Ibsen, Andersen, Mendelssohn and others were standing next to you. The coffee house also displays more than 300 precious collections, allowing you to enjoy the mellow coffee while feeling the charming artistic atmosphere.

Caffè Museo Atelier Canova Tadolini

On Via del Babuino , there is a Caffè Museo Atelier Canova Tadolini . This café was once the studio of the famous Italian sculptor Antonio Canova (1757–1822, a neoclassical sculptor), who later left the studio to his favorite student Adamo Tadolini . Today, this studio is not only a café, but also a landmark museum that displays many exquisite sculptures.

Antico Caffè Pace

Move to Piazza Navona, where you can find the Antico Caffè della Pace on Via della Pace . The 19th-century Art Nouveau style, antique wooden furniture, and walls covered with dense ivy. Today, intellectuals and celebrities from all over the world still frequent this fashionable cafe.

Caffè Sant'Eustachio

Not far from Piazza Navona and the Pantheon, in front of the Italian Senate, is Caffè Sant'Eustachio. Built in the 1930s, the cafe is made of wood and retains the old furniture and floors of the time. The "deer" is the logo of the cafe, a symbol of the martyr Saint Eustacia.

Vatican City

Vatican City State della Città del Vaticano is an inland city-state (a country within a country) located on a high ground in the northwest corner of Rome, the capital of Italy. It is the seat of the Holy See, the highest authority of the Roman Catholic Church, and the seat of the Pope. With an area of 0.44 square kilometers (2/3 the size of the Forbidden City), it is also the smallest country in the world with a population of 920. The word Vatican comes from Latin, meaning "the land of the prophet". Its predecessor was the Papal States. Since 1929, it has been determined as a sovereign state by the Lateran Treaty, accepting the direct rule of the Holy See and implementing a political system of unity of church and state. The Vatican has not enacted any laws on official languages, but Italian is the most commonly used language. Before 2002, the Vatican often used Italian lira and Vatican lira as its common currency. After Italy joined the euro zone, the Vatican signed a special agreement with the European Union to issue a small number of coins belonging to the Vatican for circulation and collection.

The Vatican Church has an astonishing amount of wealth, with a net worth of more than \$2 billion. Many buildings in Italy are owned by the church. All highways in the country are built with funds from the Vatican, and the Italian government is responsible for maintenance. The toll income is shared equally with the Vatican. In many countries and regions, there are still religious taxes.

Peter, one of the twelve apostles of Jesus, was originally a fisherman on the Sea of Galilee. He was a brother of Andrew, the first disciple of Jesus. With the introduction of Andrew, Peter became one of the first disciples of Jesus. After the death of Jesus, Peter became the leader among the apostles. The Bible records that Jesus predicted before his arrest that Peter would refuse to admit that he knew him three times before the cock crowed. As a result, when Jesus was interrogated, he refused to admit his relationship with Jesus three times because of fear. For this, Peter always regretted it. So later when he was martyred in Rome, he asked the executioner to hang him upside down on the cross because he felt that he was not worthy of Jesus. After Jesus was resurrected, in response to his three times of refusing to recognize him, he also asked him three times, "Do you love me?" He asked Peter to feed his believers and predicted that he would be executed in the future.

The Pope's clothing is quite special compared to other clergy, and the special thing is that it is mainly white. In Christian culture, white is a symbol of jubilation, reverence, and solemnity. The Pope wears white clothing, which symbolizes his high religious status. The Pope's daily clothes and formal robes are basically the same in style and cut compared to those of cardinals and bishops. The only difference is the color. Whether it is a daily gown or a formal robe with a shawl, they are all white.

The Pope's formal attire is also mainly white, but the cape is red, just like the cardinals. The Pope is first and foremost the Bishop of Rome, so he kept the color red in his formal attire. The innermost part is a white foot-length gown, with a white knee-length blouse (usually hollowed out) in the middle, and a red cape on the outside. He usually also wears a red gold-embroidered ornament and a cross hanging from a golden rope. When participating in the sacraments (religious activities), the vestments worn by the Pope are similar to those of the cardinals, but slightly more gorgeous.

In the past, the Pope had a special crown, the famous Tiare, which appeared in Raphael's famous painting "The Sistine Madonna" and symbolized the Pope's authority. The Tiare is composed of a bishop's mitre and three royal crowns, with two hanging ribbons at the back. The Tiare is not usually worn, but is placed on the altar. The Pope only wears it during the coronation ceremony, when he delivers a "city and

world” speech to the world, when he makes a solemn declaration of the Holy See, and when he enters or leaves the palace. However, starting with John Paul I, the Pope no longer uses the Triregnum, and like other cardinals, he only uses the bishop’s mitre. The contemporary Pope has even abolished the Triregnum painted on the pastoral coat of arms and replaced it with a bishop’s mitre.

The Fisherman’s Ring (Latin: *Anulus piscatoris* , Italian: *Pescatorio*) is an official part of the royal seal worn by the Pope. The Pope is considered by the Catholic Church to be the successor of Saint Peter, who was a fisherman by trade. It features a relief of Peter fishing in a boat, a symbol that comes from the tradition of the Apostle as “Fishers of men” (Mark 1:17). The Fisherman’s Ring is a signet ring that was used to seal official documents signed by the Pope until 1842.

Each pope has a new ring made of gold. In addition to the new design, the current pope’s Latin name is engraved on it. During the papal coronation or inauguration, the Dean of the College of Cardinals places the ring on the new pope’s right ring finger. When a pope dies, the ring is ritually crushed by the Camerlengo of the Holy Roman Church (the treasurer of the Roman Curia) in the presence of the other cardinals to prevent it from being used to seal forged old documents during the interregnum or the period when the papacy is vacant.

The papal cross (Latin: *ferula*) is the symbol of the Roman Pontiff. As a physical cross, it is held before the Pope during processions or used by the Pope as his pastoral staff (or crosier).

Pope election

In theory, any baptized Catholic male (except pagans or schismatics) can be elected pope by the College of Cardinals. Since the Catholic Church insists that women cannot be ordained, and the pope is by definition the bishop of Rome, it is impossible for a woman to qualify for the office of pope.

The death of the pope is confirmed by the Cardinal Archbishop (Camerlengo of the Holy Roman Church, Chamberlain in Italian), who traditionally performs this task by tapping the pope’s head lightly with a small silver hammer and calling his baptismal name (not the pope’s name) three times. The use of silver hammers was abolished in the 20th century; in *Universi Dominici Under Gregis* , the Cardinal Archbishop must pronounce the Pope’s baptismal name three times only in the presence of the Master of Papal Liturgical Celebrations, the Cleric Prelates, the Secretary and Chancellor of the Apostolic Camera. The Archbishop keeps the Pope’s ring of the Fish Man and destroys it in front of the College of Cardinals along with the papal seal. This tradition was originally intended to prevent document forgery, but today it is just a symbol of the end of a pope’s pontificate.

During the vacancy, some power passes to the College of Cardinals, which is convened by the Dean of the College of Cardinals. All cardinals are obliged to attend the General Congregation of Cardinals, except those who cannot attend for health reasons or who are over 80 years old (but those cardinals may choose to attend if they wish). The Particular Congregation, which deals with the day-to-day affairs of the Church, includes the Cardinal Camerlengo, and three Cardinal Assistants: one Cardinal Bishop, one Cardinal Priest, and one Cardinal Deacon—chosen by lot. Every three days, new Cardinal Assistants are chosen by lot. The Cardinal Camerlengo and the Assistants have the duty—among other things—to keep their elections secret.

The conclave is usually held 15 days after the death of a pope, but the conclave may extend this period up to 20 days to allow for the arrival of other cardinals in Vatican City. The electors must be locked away in the *cum clavi* (Latin for “with the keys”) and are not allowed to leave until a new pope is chosen. Today the conclave is held in the Sistine Chapel in the Apostolic Palace. Cardinal electors may not correspond or talk with anyone outside the conclave by mail, radio, telephone or other means, and eavesdropping is

an offence punishable by excommunication. Before the election, the Swiss Guard uses the latest electronic equipment to detect any hidden "bugs" or listening devices in the Sistine Chapel.

The pope is chosen from among 182 cardinals (archbishops), who are elected by the College of Cardinals, who are under 80 years old. The election of the pope is always done by secret ballot. The candidate who receives a two-thirds majority is elected. If there is still no result after seven rounds of voting, a final round is held between the two candidates who received the most votes in the previous votes, and the candidate who receives a simple majority is elected. The ballots are checked and then burned together. The color of the smoke signals the result of the election to the people gathered in St. Peter's Square. Black smoke means that the vote was inconclusive, while white smoke means that a new pope has been elected. Initially, wet straw was burned to produce black smoke; since 1963, coloring chemicals have been used, and since 2005, bells have been rung after a successful election to make the white smoke stronger, especially when it is not very white. The College of Cardinals often elects someone who is very different from the previous pope. The newly elected pope is often in stark contrast to his predecessor, a tendency that Italians describe as "After a fat pope, a lean pope."

Normally, the pope is crowned with the Triple Tiara during the Papal Coronation ceremony. Popes John Paul I, John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis did not want to have a complicated coronation ceremony for themselves, so they chose the Papal Inauguration ceremony instead.

Legend has it that there was a female pope in history. She was a talented woman named Joan, who disguised herself as a man under the instruction of her lover. Due to her ability, she was promoted step by step in the church and was eventually elected as the pope. But one day when she was out on patrol, she suddenly had abdominal pain on the road and gave birth to a child in public. The secret was finally revealed, and the poor woman was stoned to death on the spot. During the next 600 years, the new pope had to undergo a gender test before taking office to confirm that he was not a woman; and, in all subsequent parades, the successor pope deliberately bypassed the path where Joan gave birth to a child, and chose the longer route instead. In the history of Catholicism, there were Pope John 19 and Pope John 21, but there was no pope named John XX. Legend has it that Pope Joan was John XX, who was later expelled from the list of popes, so there was no John XX on the list of popes.

In the past 50 years, the Catholic Church has been involved in sex scandals around the world. In 1950, a Catholic priest working at a school for the deaf in Wisconsin, USA, molested 200 children. In the 1970s and 1980s, two priests at a Jesuit boarding school in Berlin, Germany, sexually abused more than 300 students. In 2002, a Catholic priest sexually abused a child in Hong Kong.

Reasons why China and the Vatican do not establish diplomatic relations:

A key issue is the appointment of bishops. The Vatican considers it to be the Vatican's "holy calling" because according to the Catholic Church's regulations, Catholic bishops around the world must be appointed by the Vatican. This has been a tradition for thousands of years. However, this so-called "holy calling" is inconsistent with China's religious policy. Chinese religions are not supported or controlled by foreign forces. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Chinese Catholic Church has independently elected bishops.

Another problem is that on October 1, 2000, despite strong opposition from the Chinese government and the Chinese Catholic Church, the Vatican held a "canonization" ceremony to canonize some foreign missionaries and their followers who had committed ugly crimes in China as "saints." A considerable number of them were foreign missionaries, most of whom died during the Opium War and the Boxer Rebellion. Some of them violated Chinese laws at the time and illegally sneaked into the interior to preach, acting as accomplices of

imperialism and colonialism in aggression against China, committing unforgivable crimes and receiving due punishment. In the war of aggression against China by the Eight-Power Allied Forces, countless Chinese people were killed and injured, their wives and children were separated, and their families were destroyed. This was a catastrophe in human history. Some of these Chinese Catholics also died in an untimely manner. They were martyrs of the imperialist war of aggression and victims of colonial church forces, not "martyrs who sacrificed for their faith."

Swiss Guard

The Swiss Guard was established in 1506 to protect the Holy See of the Catholic Church and the Pope himself. The members were originally mercenaries hired to protect the monarch, but gradually changed to a mercenary organization of the Vatican City State. On May 6, 1527, during the Sack of Rome, the Swiss Guard fought a fierce battle to cover the Pope's evacuation, and 147 of the 189 soldiers were killed. May 6 is therefore regarded as an important memorial day for the Swiss Guard. The Swiss Guard has been evaluated as absolutely loyal, and it is still the protective force and ceremonial symbol of the Vatican to this day. The selection requirements of the Swiss Guard must be a male Swiss citizen, unmarried, Catholic, must have completed the basic training of the Swiss Army, and can obtain a good conduct certificate, between the ages of 19 and 30, at least 5 feet 8.5 inches tall (174 cm), and at least a high school diploma.

In 1998, one of the biggest scandals in the Swiss Guard's history: Swiss Guard Commander Alois Eastmann and his wife were murdered by Swiss Guard member Cédric Tonné. Tornay, and Cedric committed suicide.

St. Peter's Basilica

It is the central church of Roman Christianity, a pilgrimage site for European Catholics and the Vatican Pope's Holy See. It is located in the Vatican. It was built between 1506 and 1626 and is one of the important symbols of the Catholic Church. As the most outstanding Renaissance building and the largest church in the world, it covers an area of 23,000 square meters. The main building is 45.4 meters high and about 211 meters long. It is as wide as two football fields and as long as six football fields. It can accommodate more than 60,000 people. The central dome is 42 meters in diameter and about 138 meters high. It is the largest dome church in the world. You can overlook the whole city of Rome from the top of the dome in the center of the church; on the circular platform inside the dome, you can overlook the interior of the church and appreciate the large mosaics on the inner wall of the dome. Among them, the more famous ones are Michelangelo's "The Pieta", the ceiling mural of "Genesis", and Raphael's "The School of Athens". St. Peter's Basilica must be dressed neatly and pass security checks before entering the church.

The church was originally built by Constantine the Great on the site of St. Peter's tomb and was called the Old St. Peter's Basilica. It was completed in 326 AD. In the 16th century, Pope Julio II decided to rebuild St. Peter's Basilica and broke ground in 1506. During the 120-year reconstruction process, the best Italian architects Bramante, Michelangelo, Della Porta and Carlo Martel successively presided over the design and construction. It was not until November 18, 1626 that it was officially declared completed and called the New St. Peter's Basilica. Important religious ceremonies have been held here since 1870. It is in the Romanesque and Baroque architectural styles.

The open-air square in front of St. Peter's Basilica is the world-famous St. Peter's Square, which was built in 1667. The designer and constructor was a Naples man, who gave eternal life to the 284 Tuscan columns arranged in four rows on the square. The wonderful statues of saints above the columns have been telling the name of the talented architectural genius of the time for four hundred years: Bernini, the father of

Baroque art. The square is 340 meters long and 240 meters wide, surrounded by two semicircular galleries. Each gallery is supported by 284 tall round stone columns, and there are 142 statues of famous saints in church history on the top. The statues are vivid and varied. Two hundred and eighty-four columns are arranged outward, forming four gradually shrinking arcs around a center... This is a trick in architecture that can create an illusion, and is usually used to enhance the majestic momentum of the square. The appearance of the colonnade symbolizes the mother church stretching out her arms to protect mankind.

In the middle of the square stands a 41-meter-high (total height of the base and the stone tablet) Egyptian obelisk, erected in 1856. The obelisk was brought to Rome from the market square of Alexandria, Egypt, by the Roman Emperor Caligula, and was originally erected in the center of the Colosseum. It weighs 350 tons and is carved from a single piece of stone. A hollow iron cross is fixed at the top of the pyramid. It is said that the cross relics of Jesus during his crucifixion are hidden inside. Two fountains appear completely symmetrically on both sides of the obelisk. The fountains accurately mark the geometric focus of the elliptical square designed by Bernini.

The chairs in the square are not for tourists. Every Wednesday morning is the day when the Pope in the Vatican receives Catholics. According to the latest statistics, there are 1.2 billion Catholics in the world, and they visit in batches. The church will not be open to the public on Wednesday morning for the Pope to receive believers.

On the right side of the square is the Apostolic Palace, the top floor of which is the residence of the Pope. Every Sunday at noon, the Pope appears at the window of his study (the second window from the right) to lead the people in prayer, recite the Angelus, and give blessings. After the former Pope John Paul II was seriously injured in an assassination attempt in 1981, he placed a statue of the Virgin Mary in the angular window on the second floor of the Apostolic Palace facing the square to express his gratitude for the Virgin Mary's protection.

On the left side of the door of St. Peter's Basilica stands a tall statue of St. Peter. He looks calm and smiling. In his right hand, he holds two golden keys to heaven given by Jesus, and in his left hand, he holds a scroll of holy edict given by Jesus. Peter was the first of Jesus' 12 disciples. Jesus gave him the golden keys after he went to heaven. Peter became the leader of Christianity. He came to Rome to preach. Later, the Roman emperor set fire to the city of Rome in order to put the blame on Christianity, and then blamed Christianity and executed Peter. St. Peter's Basilica was built to commemorate Peter. On the right side of the door of the church stands another tall and exquisite statue of the missionary Paul. He holds a sword in his right hand, symbolizing that he was beheaded and martyred in Rome. He holds a scripture in his left hand, representing that he preached the doctrine everywhere.

The cathedral has a magnificent appearance, with a front width of 115 meters and a height of 45 meters. It is symmetrical on both sides with the center line as the axis. There are 8 round columns standing symmetrically in the middle, 4 square columns on both sides, 5 doors between the columns, and 3 balconies on the second floor. The middle balcony is the blessing balcony. The Sistine Chapel announced the election of the new queen on this balcony, and the newly elected pope also met the world for the first time here and blessed Rome and the world. A statue of Jesus stands in the middle of the flat roof of the church, and on the left hand side are the statues of St. John who baptized Jesus and his 11 disciples lined up. There are many exquisite decorations on the tall dome.

The large bells on both sides were designed and added by Valadier between 1786 and 1790. The original location was designed by Bernini as two huge bell towers, but because he was too greedy, he designed the bell towers as three-story tall buildings. The excessive size caused cracks in the lower part of the building and even

endangered the main body of the church. Urban VIII, who favored him at the time, had passed away, and Innocent X ordered the bell towers to be demolished, and Bernini fell out of favor.

There are five doors to enter the church, from right to left they are the Holy Door, the Sacrament Door, the Middle Door, the Door of Good and Evil, and the Door of Death. The Holy Door can only be opened in the Holy Year. The so-called "Holy Year" was first promulgated by Pope Boniface VIII in 1300, announcing the beginning of a new era of the Holy Year and stipulating that it should be celebrated every 100 years. One hundred years is obviously too long, and most people will not be able to see it in their lifetime. At the suggestion of the Swedish Saint Bridget, Pope Clement VI shortened it to 50 years. To be honest, 50 years is not short either. Urban VI shortened it to 33 years on the grounds that Jesus lived on earth for 33 years. In 1470, Paul II issued the bull "Ineffable Providence of God", shortening it again to 25 years, and agreed that 1475 would be the Holy Year, hoping to experience it once in his lifetime. Unfortunately, he did not live to 1475, and his successor Sixtus IV took advantage of this and kept this practice. However, after entering the 20th century, Holy Years became more frequent, perhaps because the Pope believed that this could better promote Catholicism, or perhaps because the Pope could not wait to preside over a Holy Year in person. After 1925 became a Holy Year according to convention, 1933 was also designated as a Holy Year, on the grounds of commemorating the death of Jesus. After the Holy Year of 1950, 1966 was designated as a Holy Year again, which was equivalent to combining the two cycles of 25 years and 33 years. Don't think that this is enough. John Paul II, who took office in 1978, did not catch up with the Holy Year of 1975, but he unexpectedly declared 1983 as the Holy Year of Atonement. In 2015, Pope Francis announced on the second anniversary of his election that 2016 would become a special Holy Year: the Holy Year of Mercy.

The 16 relief panels on the Holy Door depict 16 scenes, from top left to bottom right: 1. Angels guarding the gate of heaven; 2. Adam and Eve being expelled from the Garden of Eden; 3. Mary praying silently; 4. The Annunciation; 5. Jesus being baptized; 6. Returning from the wrong path; 7. The prodigal son returning; 8. Jesus healing the sick; 9. The saint washing Jesus' feet with tears; 10. Jesus teaching his disciples to forgive others; 11. Jesus looking back at Peter who denied him three times; 12. Jesus being crucified; 13. Thomas questioning Jesus' resurrection; 14. The coming of the Holy Spirit; 15. Jesus appearing to Saul; 16. The Pope opening the Holy Door.

The leftmost one is the Death Gate, which is used for funerals and was completed by another Italian sculptor Mazu in 1964. Above the left gate is the death of the Virgin Mary, who ascended to heaven immediately after her death; above the right gate is the crucifixion of Jesus, who saved mankind with his death. In the middle of the left and right bronze doors are grapevines and wheat ears, respectively, which represent that grapes and wheat grow and are transformed into wine and bread in the Eucharist after growth and processing, which is also a symbol of Jesus' blood and body.

1. There are two keys in the Vatican flag on the Internet, one gold key and one silver key.
2. The height of the obelisk standing in St. Peter's Square is written as 26 meters by some people on the Internet, and 41 meters by others. The accurate data is that the entire stone monument erected on the base is 29 meters high, and the total height including the base added later is 41 meters.
3. There are a total of 142 statues on the top of the corridor. Almost all data on the Internet says there are 140 statues, which does not include the two sculptures at the beginning on both sides.

<http://www.radiovaticana.va/cinesegeb/santuari/07spietro.html>

When you enter St. Peter's Basilica, you first pass through a corridor. The white marble pillars with light patterns are carved with exquisite patterns. There are many statues of people on the arch of the long corridor

from left to right. The entire yellow-brown top is covered with three-dimensional patterns and designs. After passing through another door, you will enter the main hall of the church. The grandeur of the hall amazes all visitors. The hall is 186 meters long. The tall stone pillars and walls, the arched roof, are full of colorful patterns, lifelike statues, exquisite and detailed reliefs, and the floor paved with colored marble is bright and shining. At both ends of the front corridor, there stands a tall stone statue on horseback. The one on the right is Constantine the Great, sculpted by Bernini in 1670. The one on the left is Charlemagne, sculpted by sculptor A. Cornacchini in 1725. The two emperors played an important role in supporting and protecting the church in its early development.

The Holy Door (Porta Santa) is located at the far right end of the porch of St. Peter's Basilica (facing St. Peter's Basilica). The passage behind this bronze door is completely blocked by a brick wall. This door symbolizes that people can only obtain salvation through Christ. At the beginning of each (regular or special) Holy Year, it is opened by the Pope with a special ceremony. The Pope first kneels and then opens the door with an iron gate. Knock three times on the brick wall that seals the Holy Door and recite: "God, grant your Church this moment of grace. You are willing to open this door at this moment, so that your faithful can come in and present their prayers to you, so that they can move forward in accordance with the Gospel life of your Son..." Pilgrims can enter the basilica through this Holy Door and receive indulgences. (At the end of the Holy Year, this door will be closed by the Pope in another ceremony.) The Holy Door is open only to Catholic believers, not ordinary tourists. If we want to try it, we can try it alone or in groups of three or two. If we are stopped, we must go through the normal entrance.

The interior of the church is gorgeously decorated. The famous large arched roof in the center of the church that we see now is the masterpiece of Michelangelo, with a double structure, dark outside and bright inside. There have been a hundred years of twists and turns for this large dome. It was first designed by Bramante in 1506. After his death in 1514, Raphael took over. Six years later, Raphael also died. The church borrowed Gothic design for the top of the church, emphasizing the contrast between darkness and light, and used rose windows. Therefore, out of consideration for the light contrast effect at the entrance of the church, the dome was cancelled. Later, Michelangelo took over this work at the age of 71 and restored the dome in the name of "love for God, the Virgin Mary, and St. Peter." It's a pity that he didn't see the completion of the dome before his death.

The interior of the entire hall is in the shape of a cross. The intersection of the cross is the center of the church. Under the center is the tomb of St. Peter, and above the ground is the altar of the Pope. Above the altar is a magnificent canopy. Above the canopy is the dome on the top of the church, which has a diameter of 42 meters and is 120 meters above the ground. 42 meters is slightly smaller than the 43-meter diameter of the Pantheon. Michelangelo paid tribute to the Pantheon in this way. The dome and the top of the entire hall are covered with beautiful patterns and reliefs. A beam of sunlight shines into the hall from the dome, adding a mysterious color to the solemn and dark church. The dome seems to be the door to heaven. The circumference of the dome is 71 meters, which is the highest point in the city of Rome. As a Catholic country, Italy also follows the leadership of the Pope in Vatican City, so the height of buildings in Rome must not exceed the height of St. Peter's Basilica to show respect for the Pope. When you enter the interior of St. Peter's Basilica, you can't really appreciate its magnificent scale at first glance. If you use your intuitive vision to measure its scale, it is easy to form an illusion due to the clever symmetrical layout of the various parts of the church. It is necessary to use some actual data to explain its essence: the length of the church, including the porch, is 230 meters, and the height of the vault is 38 meters. There is a Holy Spirit dove on the stained glass window at the end of the main hall, with a wingspan of 1.5 meters.

There are many huge statues and reliefs in the hall. The most eye-catching masterpieces of sculpture art are mainly three:

One is the sculpture Michelangelo created when he was 24 years old: Pietà (Mourning Christ/Pieta). The grief of the Virgin Mary holding her dead son and her obedience to God's will are vividly portrayed in the work. The pain of the Virgin Mary shown here is very different from Michelangelo's later works. This is also the only work he signed. The ribbon on Mary's chest is engraved with MICHEL ANGELUS FLORENT FACIBAT, which means the hand of Michelangelo from Florence. It is said that when the work was completed, the entire Roman art world could not believe that this unparalleled masterpiece was created by him. Michelangelo was indignant and sneaked into the lobby with a chisel that night. He engraved this line of words in Latin on the strap of the Virgin Mary's coat, but Michelangelo regretted it afterwards and never signed any work in the future. The Pietà became the only work signed by Michelangelo. The sweet and kind face of the Virgin Mary looks very young. It is said that Michelangelo lost his mother at the age of 6, so he wanted to commemorate his beloved young mother on the face of the Virgin Mary. In 1972, it was damaged by a fanatical believer from Hungary with a hammer. It took three years to repair it. So now it is covered with a glass cover.

The second is the bronze canopy carved by Bernini. It is supported by four spiral copper columns and is 29 meters high including the cross. It is said that the copper used by Bernini to make the canopy came from the bronze ornaments on the pediment of the Pantheon, so there are many holes in the pediment of the Pantheon. There are always 99 eternal lamps on the semicircular railings in front of the canopy, and below are the papal altar and the tomb of St. Peter. Only the Pope can hold mass on this altar, facing the rising sun, in front of pilgrims. The four copper columns are said to contain the four holy relics of St. Peter, a piece of cloth with the image of Christ printed on it, called "veronica", the real wood of Christ's cross, the crown of thorns that Jesus held, and the spear that pierced Jesus' side - the spear of St. Longinus.

The third is the throne of St. Peter, also designed by Bernini, a gilded bronze throne. Above the throne is a wooden chair with ivory ornaments and a radiant glory niche. On the back of the chair are two angels holding the key to heaven and the papal triple crown. Legend has it that this wooden chair is the real throne of St. Peter, and it was later verified that it was presented by the Carolingian King Tyrrhen II.

In addition to these three masterpieces, there is a bronze statue of St. Peter in the center right, which was created by the Florentine sculptor Cambio in the 13th century. Believers from all over the world touch and kiss the toes of the statue to pay tribute to St. Peter, and over time, the right toe has been almost worn out.

There are four statues about five meters high in the niches surrounding the Eucharist. The first one is St. Longino, a Roman soldier holding a spear. It was he who stabbed Jesus to death with his own hands, and his expression showed great remorse. When Jesus was resurrected, he witnessed the miracle and became a faithful follower of Jesus.

The second is to commemorate the mother of Constantine the Great - Saint Helena (S. Elena), holding a cross and an iron nail. The story is that Helena made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the early 4th century AD, and went to great lengths to find the cross on which Jesus was crucified, and finally brought the cross back to the Pope of Rome.

The third statue is Saint Veronica. According to legend, when Jesus was carrying the cross to Calvary, Veronica used this linen to wipe the blood and sweat off Jesus' face. Legend has it that the holy face is still imprinted on her linen, and the linen is still properly preserved.

St. Andrew, who was crucified. He was the younger brother of St. Peter. In order to show respect for his

brother's martyrdom, he chose the martyrdom method of crucifixion, while St. Peter was crucified upside down on the cross.

Tombstone of Queen Christina of Sweden. In 1632, her father died in battle. She inherited the throne at the age of 6 and became the Queen of Sweden. She officially took power at the age of 18 and helped end the Thirty Years' War during her reign. She abdicated in 1654 and publicly converted to Catholicism. Queen Christina believed in the Lutheran Church of Sweden (Lutheranism was the state religion of Sweden at that time) since she was a child, but later secretly converted to Roman Catholicism. In order to convert to Catholicism, Christina gave up the throne and love. This astonishing move shocked the whole of Europe. Queen Christina was extremely talented. She was an excellent equestrian and had learned fencing and shooting. In addition, she was proficient in Greek, Latin and French. Queen Christina remained unmarried for life and was buried in St. Peter's Basilica after her death. The crown on the relief symbolizes the royal power she gave up.

The tomb of Countess Matilda – Bernini's work. Matilda successfully helped Pope Gregory VII fight against Henry IV of the Holy Roman Empire, which led to the famous Canossa Incident. In order to stabilize his domestic rule, Henry IV, who was excommunicated for resisting the Pope, crossed the Alps and began his ascetic journey, and finally arrived at the Canossa Castle where Matilda suggested the Pope to come. Outside the castle, Henry waited for three days, and finally he knelt in front of Gregory VII and begged for his forgiveness. In the end, he was pardoned.

- Please pay attention to your attire during the visit: avoid shorts and slippers, girls should not be too revealing, and should not show their shoulders. Take off your hat, knives and water bottles are not allowed, do not make loud noises, and be courteous when taking photos.

Vatican Museums Vaticani

The Vatican Museum is one of the greatest museums in the world, with 12 collection halls, 5 art galleries, and more than 1,400 exhibition rooms of various sizes. The Vatican Museum is the earliest museum in the world and one of the greatest museums. The museum brings together ancient relics from Greece and Rome as well as the artistic essence of the Renaissance. Most of them are the artistic essence left over from the Renaissance, and most of them are priceless treasures. In addition to the collections inside, the architectural style of the museum itself is also worthy of praise.

The origin of the Vatican Museum can be traced back to a marble statue purchased 500 years ago. The statue, called Laocoön and his Sons, was discovered in a vineyard near the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore on January 14, 1506. When Julius II and Michelangelo went to see it, it was Michelangelo who persuaded Julius II to buy the statue. One month after the discovery of the statue, Julius II publicly displayed it in the Vatican, thus establishing the prototype of the museum.

16th century, the museum was expanded together with St. Peter's Basilica, with a total area of 5.5 hectares. In 1771, Pope Clement XIV announced that the Vatican Museums would be open to the public. In the following two hundred years, under the auspices of successive popes, dozens of new venues were built in the museum, and the collection of cultural relics also increased significantly. In 2000, to celebrate the millennium, the Vatican Museum built a new entrance. In October 2006, for the 500th anniversary of the founding of the Vatican Museums, the museum decided to open the excavation site of the cemetery on the Vatican Hill to the public permanently.

Important collections in the museum include the ancient Roman sculpture "Augustus of Prima Porta", Leonardo

da Vinci's portrait "St. Jerome in the Wilderness", Caravaggio's oil painting "The Entombment of Christ" and other masterpieces. In addition, "Laocoon and Sons" has also been preserved in the Vatican Museum. The Octagonal Courtyard (Cortile Ottagono) has two treasures of the museum: Laocoon (Laocoon and Sons) and Apollo on the Belvedere (Apollo Belvedere).

Laocoön was a priest of Troy. According to legend, he disregarded God's will and told the Trojans to be careful of the Greeks' wooden horse, which angered Apollo. This statue depicts the posture of two sea snakes sent by Apollo when they entangled and killed Laocoön and his two sons. The reason why it is the treasure of the town is that it influenced the entire Renaissance. It inspired more art forms and works such as sculpture, painting, poetry, film, novels and art criticism. The moment depicted in this sculpture is not the moment of death at the climax of this tragedy, so it leaves room for imagination. You can see that Laocoön is holding the snake's head with his left hand, as if he is trying to free himself and his children from the snake's entanglement.

Careful people must have noticed the color difference on Laocoon's arms. That's because when the statue was discovered, Laocoon and his two sons were missing arms. It also triggered heated discussions among artists at the time. Here is an interesting story: At that time, other artists advocated that Laocoon's arms should be stretched out in the air, which would better show his heroism; only Michelangelo believed that his arms should be bent backwards to express his pain and tension. At that time, under the auspices of the Pope and the judgment of Raphael, the plan of stretching the arms in the air was approved and installed on the sculpture. It was not until 1957 that someone discovered Laocoon's right arm, which confirmed the saying "the truth is on the side of the minority". Laocoon's arm was reinstalled, and the arms of the two sons that had been installed before were also removed.

There is also a saying that "Laocoon" inspired Michelangelo to pursue the ancient Greek aesthetic of strength and beauty, which influenced his works and style. From the picture above, Michelangelo's "Schiavo ribelle" (Revolting Slave) for the tomb of Julius II and "Laocoon" are indeed somewhat similar.

Another treasure of the museum, "Apollo on the Belvedere", is a masterpiece of the sculptor Leocares in the 4th century BC. The original work was cast in bronze and was 224 cm high. As the original work was lost, this work is a marble replica from the Roman period. It was named after it was found on a Belvedere in Rome. At that time, Apollo was a symbol of male beauty and one of the most popular creative themes for artists. "Apollo on the Belvedere" is one of the famous works.

The most famous treasure in the Sala delle Muse is the Torso del Belvedere. The Torso is an ancient Greek statue. The life of the statue permeates every part of the body. Even if only the broken arms and body are left, it can still give people a unique vitality and beauty. This Torso del Belvedere has influenced the lifelong creative style of many artists, including Michelangelo. It is similar to Rodin's The Thinker. Many of Michelangelo's works were influenced by this Torso. Look carefully at the four figures around it. Judging from the muscle lines, especially the one in the upper right corner, The Last Judgment, The image of Jesus in the Universale is different from the lean and even weak image in the Bible that we often see in churches. Instead, it is a warrior, closer to the image of Apollo, the god of light, full of powerful beauty. There is another rumor about this body. It is said that the Pope wanted Michelangelo to complete the body, but Michelangelo refused because he thought the lines and texture of the body itself were perfect.

Raffaello Rooms :

The four Raffaello Rooms are a group of rooms in the Vatican Palace, the public part of the Pope's residence. They are famous for the frescoes The School of Athens, created by Raphael and his studio. Together with

Michelangelo's ceiling paintings in the Sistine Chapel, they form the great cycle of frescoes that marked the Renaissance in Rome. They are located on the third floor, overlooking the south side of the Cortile del Belvedere.

The ceiling mural "The School of Athens" is world-famous. Plato and Aristotle are in the center of the painting, one pointing to the sky, and the other pointing to the world in front of him, to express their different philosophical views: Plato's idealism and Aristotle's materialism. With the two of them as the center, some famous scholars are painted on both sides, with vivid images and not messy at all. The painting uses an arched dome as the background, and with a high level of perspective, it enhances the spatial three-dimensionality and depth of the picture. The whole painting is magnificent and grand. The characters in the painting are lifelike and vivid.

Another classic painting, "Disputation of the Holy Sacrament", is divided into two levels: heaven and earth. In heaven, God is at the top, with angels on both sides. Jesus is below God, with the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist on both sides, and apostles and saints sitting behind him. In the circle below Jesus is a dove symbolizing the Holy Spirit. On earth, saints are depicted arguing about the sacrament of the Mass.

Sistine Chapel (Cappella Sistina)

The Catholic chapel located in the Vatican Apostolic Palace was built in 1473 by Pope Sixtus IV as a papal temple. The name of the church "Sistine" comes from the name of the pope at that time, "Sistus". The church is 40.25 meters long, 13.41 meters wide and 20.73 meters high. On August 15, 1483, Sixtus IV held the first mass of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary here and decided that the Virgin Mary would be enshrined here. In addition, it is now the place where the election of the pope is held. At that time, the walls on both sides were painted by the god of charm-Botticelli, Michelangelo's teacher-Ghirlandaio, Raphael's teacher-Pergino, etc. Later, according to the order of Julius II, Michelangelo painted the ceiling and the remaining murals.

There are twelve murals on both sides of the rectangular chapel. The six on the left describe the life of Moses, the savior of Israel; the six on the right describe the life of Jesus; the "Genesis" on the ceiling depicts the process of God creating the world; and the "Last Judgment" is located on the front wall, full of despair and gloom. Located on the front wall of the church is Michelangelo's work "The Last Judgment". The painting depicts the scene when Christ gathers all nations before him to distinguish between good and evil when the end of the world comes. Michelangelo was over 60 when he started to create this painting, and it took him 6 years to complete it.

Before Michelangelo received the commission to paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, he had hardly ever painted. He even disliked the title of painter, thinking it was a blasphemy to his identity as a sculptor. This also made him always feel resentful about the "Pope's forced commission to create a mural". So he spent 4 and a half years, despite the Pope's frequent salary arrears, to paint the most well-known ceiling painting in the Sistine Chapel, "The Creation of the World". The entire painting covers an area of 14x38.5 square meters, consists of 9 central pictures, and has a total of 343 characters.

The stories on the ceiling painting are all from the beginning of the Bible, from the creation of the world to Noah's Ark, including "God Divides Light and Darkness", "Creating the Sun, Moon, Plants and Trees", "God Divides Land and Water", "Creating Adam", "Creating Eve", "Original Sin - Expulsion from the Garden of Eden", "Noah's Sacrifice", "The Great Flood", and "Noah's Drunkenness". The most eye-catching and well-known part of the ceiling painting is "The Creation of Adam".

Chiaramonti Museum takes its name from its founder, Pope Pius VII. The new museum is located on the first

floor of the Apostolic Palace, connecting the Belvedere Palace and the Borgia Residence. This wing, located to the south of the Pinecone Courtyard, features larger sculptures, including a colossus of the Nile god.

Cortile della Pinecone Pigna

It is an open-air courtyard inside the Vatican Museums, which retains the style of 16th-century European viewing courtyards. It was once part of the Cortile del Belvedere, designed by Donato Bramante to connect Innocent VIII's palace with the Sistine Chapel. After Bramante's death, the architect Pirro Ligorio completed the work and added walls and niches. The construction of the Vatican Library divided the Belvedere into two areas.

The Pinecone Courtyard is a rectangular courtyard with a giant bronze pine cone tree about 4 meters high at the north end of the courtyard. It was once a fountain. The pine cone sculpture was originally next to the Pantheon in Rome. In the Middle Ages, it was placed in the vestibule of the ancient St. Peter's Basilica (the old St. Peter's Church) until it was moved here in 1608. There are two bronze peacocks on both sides of the tree. These are replicas from the second century AD. They were originally used to decorate the tomb of Emperor Hadrian (now the Castel Sant'Angelo). The originals are kept in the New Wing Museum.

A famous sculpture, Sphere within a Sphere, is displayed in the Pine Cone Courtyard. It was created by Italian sculptor Arnaldo Pomodoro in 1990. The sculpture uses a large ball inside a small ball, which rotates continuously, implying the incompleteness of the earth. Including the Vatican Museum, there are a total of 8 "Broken Earths" on display in museums or universities around the world, including one at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

The Bramante Staircase near the museum exit is a must-see attraction when visiting the museum.

The iconic double helix staircase was designed by Giuseppe Momo in 1932, inspired by the staircase designed by Donato Bramante, Italy's most prominent architect during the Renaissance, Raphael's friend and Michelangelo's rival.

There is a glass ceiling above the staircase, illuminating the bronze handrails decorated with the Pope's coat of arms. Due to the small height difference of the steps, the entire staircase slopes down slowly. The two spirals extend one upward and the other downward, so people going up and down will not meet, but visually it seems that there is only one staircase.

Cinque Terre

La Spezia parking: Via Pietro Paleocapa , 19122 La Spezia SP

Cinque Terre refers to five fishing villages in Liguria, north of Pisa. Cinque means five. Located in the coastal area of La Spezia Province in Liguria, Italy, it is the collective name of five villages and towns, including Monterosso al Mare, Vernazza , Corniglia , Manarola and Riomaggiore . It was listed as a World Cultural Heritage by UNESCO in 1997 and was designated as a national park in 1999. It is famous for its clear blue Mediterranean waters and beautiful fishing village scenery.

you buy the pass at Cinque Terre Point , you will be given a map of the Cinque Terre and a train schedule.

The Cinque Terre card costs 16 euros per day (2016), including all train tickets and plank road tickets between Levanto and La Spezia (i.e. the entire Cinque Terre) for the day. It also includes a 5 euro ticket for the national park, and the rest is for taking the village bus and the train between villages, which can be taken as many times as you want.

Monterosso

Beach: Beach available

Monterosso al Mare is the most northwestern of the five fishing villages and the last town you reach when leaving La Spezia. Monterosso is surrounded by hills planted with grapes and olive trees. The town is famous for its wonderful beaches, steep cliffs and crystal clear waters. The town is divided into two parts: the old town that retains its medieval style and the new part that stretches along the famous Fegina beach. The two parts are divided by the Aurora Tower, which sits on the top of San Cristoforo. The main attraction of the old town is the ruins of the ancient castle. The typical towers and the narrow streets "Carruggi" from the medieval era are also the characteristics of the old town. If you care, then find out whether the seaside is sandy or stone when choosing a beach.

Points of interest: Church of San Giovanni Battista, Chapel, Capuchin Church, Castle, Walls and Towers, Giant or Neptune, Large Sandy Beach.

Vernazza

Beach: There are small beaches (stones, big stones)

The history of the village dates back to Roman times. But until 1000 BC, the locals preferred to live on the mainland, on the top of the hill above Reggio, for reasons of safety. In the Middle Ages, Vernazza was an important seaport, ruled by three powerful families, the da Pasano, the Ponzo and the Fieschi, until 1276, when it became part of the Republic of Genoa. The town-like structure of the village attests to its importance in the history of Liguria. The towers, common in the area, rise up the steep cliffs along the river valley, hiding the village centre from the sight of sailors. But there are also elegant buildings: verandas, palaces and decorated facades.

Points of interest in Vernazza: Basilica of Santa Margherita, Temple of the Reformed Franciscans, Portico, Belfort Tower and Andrea Doria Castle.

Corniglia

Beach: There are small beaches (stones, big stones).

Corniglia is the highest and smallest town in the heart of the Cinque Terre. This town built in the ancient Roman era is located on a cliff about 100 meters above sea level. It is the only town in the Cinque Terre that is completely isolated from the sea. There are only two options to enter Corniglia: one is to climb the 382 steps to Lardarina (Lardarina), and the other is more convenient to take the bus. The name of this town comes from the white wine maker Corneliu , a Roman immigrant .

Corniglia's attractions include the Church of St. Peter, the Chapel of St. Caterina the Flagellant, the ruins of the Genoese fortress wall, the beautiful beach with clear water called Spiaggione and the small nudist beach Guvano .

Manarola

Beach: There is a beach, but it is not in the city (stones, big rocks)

Manarola has a long history. The town was founded by residents of the ancient Roman city of Frastra. Frastra still exists today. The name Manarola comes from the Latin word " Manium arula means a small altar to the Roman household god Mani. The town of Manarola has many towers for defense. The town is located on a sharp

black rock promontory along the small river Gropo, which was sealed long ago. The town's central square is located on the higher ground of Manarola. Here you can see the bell tower, the chapel and the parish church built in Gothic style in 1338. Between the houses stands a white cement pyramid – a symbol of sailors. Manarola is the quietest town in the Cinque Terre. Attractions here include the Church and Chapel of St. Lawrence, the ruins of the fortress, the Gropo, the Via della Love and the world's largest Nativity scene.

Every country in the world has its own unique Christmas traditions. For example, during Christmas, Italians not only decorate traditional Christmas trees, but also place so-called Christmas crèches in their homes, on the road, in shops, and even everywhere. The amazing thing is that in Manarola there is the world's largest Christmas crèche! It opens every December 8th. The crèche was designed and built by Mario Andreoli. Mario Andreoli used to work in the railway department and is now a retired person. Since 1976, he has devoted himself to designing and building the crèche. After 30 years of hard work, he built the entire hillside. At Christmas in 2007, the colorful lights of the crèche finally lit up and were included in the Guinness Book of Records. The construction of the crèche used 8,000 meters of cables, 17,000 light bulbs, and 300 life-size statues made of recycled materials. Since 2008, the crèche has been used as an environmentally friendly object, using a solar photovoltaic power station built specifically for this project. It is worth pointing out that in recent years, the crèche has consumed 13,440 kilowatts of electricity.

Riomaggiore

Beach: There are small beaches (stones, big stones).

Riomaggiore is the first town you reach after leaving La Spezia. It is located in the valley of the now dried up Rivas Major stream. From the train station we turn right into a long tunnel that takes us to the heart of the city. The entrance to the Via della Signoria is on the left side of the train station, but it will be closed until 2018.

According to legend, Riomaggiore was founded in the eighth century when a group of Greek fugitives sought refuge here from Emperor Leon III Izauriko . The houses here are designed in the form of towers, usually three or four stories high, with walls painted in traditional local pigments. You can enter and exit from the main entrance or from the back door on the top floor.

The famous places of interest in Riomaggiore include: the Church of St. John the Baptist, the chapel, the castle, and the Way of Love.

The cuisine of the Cinque Terre is very simple, the idea being to preserve the original flavours and aromas of the food as much as possible. The main attraction here is of course seafood, such as bream, anchovies, flathead, octopus, cuttlefish and squid. They are equally delicious when fried, deep-fried or grilled. Most dishes are heavily seasoned, and the ingredients for the seasonings are all locally grown plants. Marjoram, oregano and thyme are commonly added to the dishes, and local pure natural olive oil is often added. There are very few meat dishes in the Cinque Terre. Local farmers mainly raise rabbits and poultry. We recommend that you try the high-quality and delicious local white wines, and after the meal enjoy a glass of Sciacetrà, the sweet wine that is envied by the whole world.

There are many restaurants in the square facing the sea in Vernazza, some of which are located next to the high Belfort Tower.

Il Pescato, a famous grilled fish restaurant Cucinato

Via Colombo, 199, 19017 Riomaggiore SP

Sicily

The largest island in the Mediterranean Sea and the center of the Mediterranean Sea . This "Pearl" is located outside the Italian mainland and is not as famous as Rome, Venice, and Milan .

But it became famous because of the mafia and many movies . No one follows the crowd... There are many ancient Greek ruins, beaches, cliffs, volcanoes , and all the European customs are concentrated in this 25,000 square kilometers of land .

D1: Catania (stay)

D2: Catania - Syracuse - Noto - Modica - Caltagirone (stay)

D3: Caltagirone – Piazza Armerina – Agrigento (stay)

D4: Agrigento – Trapani – Palermo (stay)

D5: Palermo - Cefalu - Taormina (stay)

D6: Taormina – Mount Etna – Catania (stay)

D7: Return to the warm home



Sicily is not very big, the recommended number of days to visit is 7 days. If you have enough time, it is also very good to spend 8 to 10 days to visit slowly. Although it has long been famous, there are not many Chinese tourists.

Agrigento

Agrigento means "the abode of the gods". It was once the most important town in ancient Greece and the most glorious place in Sicily. The city is all on the hillside, and the buildings are built on the hillside. If you want to walk around, you need some physical strength. The Turkish Steps has Agrigento's unique white cliffs and beaches. It is in a perfect step shape, and

the combination of blue and white always has a magical effect of making the world purer! You can climb up the cliff along the gentle slope, stand on the edge of the cliff facing the sea, or lie on this white "big bed" to bask in the sun, and when you get up, your back will also be white.

You can also sit on the rocks with your family and friends to read books, watch the sea, and watch the sunset, just like the protagonist in "The Beautiful Legend of Sicily", or you can lie on the stone steps and write a love letter to your lover.

The Valley of the Temples is not actually a valley, but a plateau, full of retro and mysterious atmosphere. The five temples that guard this place set the tone for the Valley of the Temples, from high to low: the Temple of Hera, the Temple of Concordia, the Temple of Ares, the Temple of Zeus and the Temple of the Twins. It should be noted that there are only 20 to 30 ancient Greek ruins left in the world today, and even fewer preserved buildings.

A quick tour of the temple takes 4-5 hours, and it's actually bigger than you think. Even though it looks a bit dilapidated at first glance, you can still tell how magnificent it was in the past from the rocks and statues.

Syracuse

Before the movie "Sicily's Beautiful Story" became popular, the spokesperson for Syracuse has always been "Archimedes, who can lift the whole earth if you give me a fulcrum". This is the most beautiful city in Cicero's eyes, and it has been rated as a world cultural heritage because of the ancient monuments all over the city. "Sicily's Beautiful Story" was born here. Following the movie, we came to the cathedral and walked through the square where Malena had walked through countless honors and disgraces. You seem to be in the movie, watching Malena tossing her hair like everyone else, and the footsteps are moving. If someone rides a bicycle and rings the bell at this time, everyone might smile at each other tacitly. Today, the Cathedral Square is the most lively place in Syracuse, and the bustling appearance is no different from that in the movie.

Palermo

Whether you are a super godfather or not, you will want to visit Palermo, the capital of Sicily. It is said that Palermo is the lair of the mafia. However, you can't see it now, so you'd better just enjoy the scenery. Palermo is a city that you have to measure with your feet. For thousands of years, it has been fought over by people from Europe, West Asia and North Africa, and finally left behind a series of "mixed-blood" buildings that have experienced the precipitation of time. In addition to Roman and Gothic churches, there are also almost the only Norman buildings left in Sicily.

Palermo Cathedral has always been the top attraction for tourists. The three architectural styles of Central Asia, Byzantium and Islam are seamlessly connected, and the appearance is also very attractive: Gothic pointed windows and arches, Baroque high domes and exquisite Renaissance carvings...

If the Italians' love for opera is expressed by the size of their theatres, Sicilians would always be ranked first. Teatro Massimo is not only the largest opera house in Italy, but also the third largest in Europe after the Paris Opera and the Vienna State Opera.

Monreale .

Monreale means "Royal Hill" or "King's Hill" in Sicilian. It is located on the hillside of Mount Caputo, 10 kilometers south of Palermo, overlooking the fertile valley called "La Conca d'oro". It is considered a "satellite town" of Palermo. The town has a population of only more than 30,000 people. The fertile land of Sicily is rich in citrus, olives, etc., and is also known as the "Golden Basin". The town does not have any stunning scenery, but there is a cathedral in the center of the town, which condenses the essence of the Kingdom of Sicily.

Logically, the cathedral should be built in Palermo, so why was it built in a nearby town? Everything starts with the history of

Sicily. Sicily's complex geographical location determines its complex history. Over thousands of years, it has been ruled by Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Prussians, Normans, Spaniards, and Italians. Rulers of different races from all directions have left rich cultural relics on the island, as well as people of mixed Asian, African, and European descent. In 831 AD, the Arabs occupied Sicily, made Palermo their capital, and converted the then Palermo Cathedral into a mosque. At that time, Catholics could only flee to Monreale. Fortunately, the Arabs did not force the believers to change their religious beliefs, but the status of the believers was very low. In 1072, the Normans came and drove away the Arabs, and the valley where Monreale was located became a hunting ground for the royal family. In 1174, the Norman King William II (1155-1189) ordered the construction of a church in Monreale, which was completed in just eight years. Pope Lucius III was so impressed by the beautiful church that he made it the cathedral of the Sicilian diocese.

The Cathedral of Monreale is the largest existing Norman building in the world and the pinnacle of Norman art. So, what exactly is Romanesque architecture? First, we need to understand what "Normans" are. The Normans were Vikings (pirates) living in northern France (near Normandy). In 1066, Duke William I of the Normans invaded England, established the Norman dynasty, and brought with him the architectural style of the time. In 1091, Roger I conquered Sicily. The Normans showed enough respect and tolerance for foreigners and were good at using the wisdom of the Greeks and Arabs. As a result, they inherited the greatness of the ancient Roman style in their architecture, and transplanted Arab domes, geometric patterns and pointed arch window decorations on simple buildings.

In fact, Norman style is not complicated at all. Does "Romanesque" look familiar to you? Because it is the British version of the ancient Roman style! It has the characteristics of Western Roman and Byzantine architecture, with solid quality, thick walls, semicircular arches, solid piers, arched domes, huge towers and decorative arches, which looks majestic and solemn. There is no definite conclusion about the origin of Norman architecture from the 6th to the 10th century AD, but from the 12th century, it gradually transitioned to the Gothic style we are familiar with.

Norman architecture is spread all over Europe, and was influenced by different cultures in different places, thus developing into different architectural styles. The one rooted in Sicily is called "Arab-Norman architecture" or "Norman-Sicilian architecture". Monreale Cathedral is the best example of this architectural style. It is another expression of Byzantine culture and art in Italy. Its architectural style is as intricate as the history of Sicily, integrating Byzantine mosaic art, Arab architectural style and Norman style, and even has a little bit of Renaissance shadow.

In 2015, UNESCO listed it and a series of buildings in cities such as Palermo and Cefalu as World Cultural Heritage, named: Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalu and Monreale

The exterior of the cathedral is a simple and solemn Norman-style building, which is inconspicuous compared to the exquisite Gothic churches in Italy. In fact, the interior is full of wonders. Going around the back of the cathedral, you can see that the outer wall of the dome in the deepest part is decorated with carvings and mosaics, which combines three different styles: French Norman, Byzantine and Arabic.

Stepping into the church, the gorgeous golden light dazzles the eyes. The church is 102 meters long and 40 meters wide. The interior is like a box filled with jewels and gold, gorgeous yet solemn. The murals are all inlaid with shining gold. They were built by countless skilled craftsmen from Greece, Byzantium, Sicily and Arabia. The total area is about 6,000 square meters, and 1,200 kilograms of gold were used. It is also the church with the largest area of gold mosaic murals in the world, and is also known as the "Golden Temple". The whole church looks like a fairyland, solemn and majestic.

In the middle of the dome at the deepest part of the nave, a huge head of Jesus Christ is pieced together bit by bit with mosaics, and decorated with gold foil and gems, which is magnificent and majestic. The mosaic murals on both sides of the

nave tell stories from the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, from the Creation to the Ascension of Christ, as well as the deeds of the Norman kings, a total of 42 chapters. The overall design and decoration are a perfect blend of Byzantine mosaic art, Arab architectural style and Norman style. Such buildings are difficult to find not only in Italy, but also in the whole world. Another amazing thing about the church is that the image of the Almighty Christ was created when the mosaics were laid. His cold eyes seem to be able to explore every corner of the church, so that worshippers feel that Christ is also staring at them no matter where they stand. At the same time, the church is also the mausoleum of the Kingdom of Sicily. William I and William II are buried in a small chapel on one side.

Not only the golden interior of the church, but also the monastery behind the Monreale Cathedral also reflects the exquisiteness of the architectural art of this period. The cloister of the monastery has a total of 228 columns, and the mosaic patterns and capital carvings are decorated without any repetition. The entrance to the monastery is very inconspicuous, a small door in the corner of the church, and a ticket of 6 euros is required to enter. After passing a narrow and winding staircase that can only accommodate one person, climbing 180 steps and looking up, the entire monastery and the lush valley in the distance are in full view. The 228 columns are in pairs, and the mosaics and carvings on the capitals of each pair are different, mainly describing religious stories, legends of Arab warriors and the deeds of Norman kings. This is the typical Roman style of the Middle Ages, not as vivid as the ancient Greek before, and not as majestic as the Renaissance behind it. But this roughness carries a hint of mystery, and the clumsy characters seem to want to convey their enthusiasm. The square courtyard and tower are the style of typical Arab courtyards. There is also an Arabian-style fountain in the southwest corner of the monastery, where King William II often washed his hands and face as a ritual before offering sacrifices.

Noto

300 years ago, Noto was completely destroyed in an earthquake, but was reborn with the help of everyone. When rebuilding, the residents of the town chose the Baroque style. Almost all the Baroque-style buildings are gathered in the streets of Noto. How small is the town? On the main street, you can walk from the beginning to the end in just 10 minutes. The atmospheric Baroque buildings are scattered in the town, but the streets are not wide, which makes it quiet and classical. Old street + coffee, an afternoon of daze is arranged like this

The Vindicari Nature Reserve is only 12 kilometers from Noto. It is densely planted, with clear bays and narrow beaches. You can see different birds in different seasons. The best season to visit is autumn. If the weather is right, you may see flocks of legendary pink flamingos, red-billed gulls and storks.

Mount Etna

The name of Mount Etna comes from the ancient Greek word Atine , which means "I burn"! This is absolutely true to its name. Because it is one of the most active volcanoes in the world, it has erupted more than 500 times. How many people can see an active volcano once in their lifetime! So don't miss it if you come here, this "pillar of the sky" is not that dangerous. There are not only lava and hot spring waterfalls on the mountain, but also volcanic piles and the rarest smoke rings can be observed on the top of the mountain.

Now the people of Catania are no longer surprised by volcanic eruptions. Eating, sleeping and watching the volcano eruption is part of the locals' daily routine. Perhaps they have become accustomed to the eruptions after hearing them for so long.

Cefalu

If Sicily is a niche destination in Italy, then Cefalu is a niche destination in Sicily. Without the hustle and bustle of big cities, the narrow streets, medieval bluestone roads and macaron-colored buildings make the people of the small town content to be self-sufficient.

Crescent Beach is a popular spot in this unpopular town. When summer comes, everyone rushes to the beach to grab a spot

where they can lie down and sunbathe comfortably. It's not just for an afternoon, you can stay there for the whole day.

Taormina

Taormina is a paradise that European writers and writers cannot leave. Looking up, you can see the volcano, looking down, you can see the blue water, and beside you, there are churches, small shops, and streets. It can be said that Taormina is a visual feast in Sicily. There are craft shops, antique shops, pottery shops, food shops, clothing shops... The dazzling array of things is just for you to take your time to browse and choose carefully!

Eating in Sicily

Arancine is a type of Italian risotto that is rolled into a ball and fried . Traditionally, arancine is topped with tomato sauce or ham and cheese.

Modica Chocolate Cioccolato Modica

Modica is the only place in the world where the ancient chocolate making process is completely preserved and continuously produced on a large scale. This kind of chocolate is different from the delicate and smooth chocolate we usually eat, but it has a strong aroma that ordinary chocolate can hardly match, and it needs to be savored slowly.

Grilled Cannelletti al forno

A mix of Sicilian sheep's cheese, mozzarella cheese and unique cannelloni, this simple staple is actually a must-have on the table and it always appears on time every weekend.

Sicilian Cannoli

The number one Sicilian dessert!!! Crispy egg rolls filled with cheese and chocolate, the most traditional way of making this classic Italian delicacy!

Brioche with Gelato

Sicilian gelato is the finest and freshest gelato in the world! Sicilians often sandwich gelato between bread, and you can mix and match the flavors you like.

Cheesecake la frutta di martorana

Candies made in the shape of fruits are lifelike and sweet

stay

Romano Palace Luxury Hotel ★★★★★ Romano Palace Luxury Hotel

Hotel Villa Athena

NH Collection Taormina ★★★★★ NH Collection Taormina

san marino

This is a small country with a population of just over 30,000 people, standing on a cliff on the Apennine Peninsula, with an area of only 60.75 square kilometers, ranking fifth from the bottom in the world. But at the same time, it is also the oldest republic in Europe, with a long and worthy history - this is San Marino, a country within a country completely surrounded by Italy.

Legend has it that in the 3rd century AD, a stonemason named Marino was a devout Christian, but he was persecuted by the feudal lords and left his hometown. Later, he settled on a hill, preaching and accepting people who were fleeing persecution. Gradually, they built military defenses and castles on the hill and declared the establishment of a republic. Later, in order to commemorate him, people named the country the Republic of San Marino. In 1263, the Republic's Regulations were formulated, making San Marino the oldest republic in Europe.

Travel enthusiasts who travel around Europe and arrive in Italy usually take a day or two to visit San Marino by car. This small country, which can be walked in half a day, attracts countless people with its beautiful scenery and unique cultural characteristics.

Here, there are not only characteristic buildings that have been deposited in the storms of history, but also the world-famous "Stamp Kingdom". Coming to San Marino from the noisy and romantic Italy, you will suddenly fall into the tranquility that has not changed for thousands of years. Walking on the ancient and unique streets of San Marino's old town, you will personally feel the extraordinary charm of this place.

San Marino has no train station or airport. If you want to go there, you must first arrive in Rimini, Italy, and then take a bus. Since San Marino is located on a hill, the journey there is basically a winding mountain road. If the weather is good, you can see the beautiful European scenery on the way. To visit San Marino, one day is enough unless you want to get to know the country in depth.

The entire Republic of San Marino is actually composed of three fortresses on the top of a high mountain and a town built on the mountain. These three fortresses are called the Three Towers of San Marino. The castles are connected by walls and were important city defense buildings and military bases in ancient times. As the symbol of the Republic of San Marino, the Three Towers of San Marino are depicted on the national flag and the national emblem. The best way to take in the beautiful scenery of this mountain city is to climb up and take a bird's eye view.

Built in the 11th century, the Guaita Fortress is the most famous of the three towers in San Marino and the oldest tower in San Marino. You can get a panoramic view of the entire San Marino from the observation deck on the top of the Guaita Fortress.

Not far away, on another hilltop, stands the Fortress of Cesta. This fortress, also towering on the cliff, was built in the 13th century. Inside the Fortress of Cesta, there is a weapons history museum, which displays more than 1,500 weapons from the Middle Ages to the modern times, including various knives, swords and guns. Looking around from the Fortress of Cesta, you can also see the beautiful scenery of San Marino. If the weather is fine that day, you can also see the Adriatic Sea beach in Italy. The angle of looking from the Fortress of Cesta to the Fortress of Guaita is the iconic scenery on the postcards of San Marino.

Compared with the two fortresses, there is a much smaller tower standing on the top of the mountain. This is the last of the three towers of San Marino - Montale Fortress. Montale Fortress was built in the 14th century and was once used as a prison. The only entrance is a gate about 7 meters above the ground, which was a very common architectural form in prison buildings at that time. However, for some reasons, it has not been open to the public yet.

If you are short on time, you only need to go to the Guaita Fortress in the Three Towers of San Marino. This castle has the longest history and the most beautiful scenery. It is a good choice to arrange to watch the sunrise at the beginning of the journey or the sunset at the end of the day.

Under the guidance of the local police in San Marino, you can take the elevator into the ancient city of San Marino and then climb up step by step. The central square of San Marino is also relatively small. It is home to San Marino's landmark building, the Municipal Palace. In front of the palace is a neoclassical Statue of Liberty, symbolizing the ancient republic's yearning and longing for freedom.

The ancient streets of San Marino are sometimes steep and sometimes gentle, but there are always large platforms or small squares, either observation decks or beautiful open-air cafes. The Republic of San Marino has been listed as a World Cultural Heritage by UNESCO. The combination of modern art and ancient culture in the ancient city walls has a unique style.

After seeing the infinite scenery of San Marino and experiencing the accumulation and charm of history, there is one thing you can't miss, which is to collect a set of stamps or coins here. Although San Marino is small, it is the first country in the world to carry out postal services and is a veritable "stamp kingdom". Every year, many tourists come to buy stamp albums, first day covers, etc. San Marino began to issue stamps in 1877. In 1923, San Marino issued the world's earliest express stamps. In 1970, San Marino issued the world's first set of Disney cartoon stamps. The reputation of "Stamp Kingdom" has long been known all over the world. The entire Republic of San Marino has a population of about 30,000, but the number of tourists has reached more than 3 million. Stamps, stamp albums, and San Marino coins are important sources of GDP for the Republic of San Marino. The design and printing standards of San Marino's stamps are very high, and landscapes, animals, historical relics, etc. are all integrated into them. Postal services have accompanied this ancient country for more than 130 years, and today they still play an irreplaceable role in the development of the Republic of San Marino.

It is very convenient to enter San Marino from Italy. Although it is a cross-border country, no documents are required. However, this mini country has a unique tourist visa. After arriving in San Marino, tourists can go directly to the tourist service center to apply for a tourist visa for 5 euros. The entire visa is a stamp with a national flag pattern. After sticking it on the passport and stamping it with the entry stamp, you can get the most local souvenir of this trip.

malta

Full Name:	Republic of Malta	capital:	Valletta
Area (square kilometers):	316	Population ('000):	493
Location	Malta is an island country located in the center of the Mediterranean Sea, consisting of several islands including Malta, Gozo, and Comino. It is known as the "Heart of the Mediterranean" and the "Backyard of Europe". It is one of the most densely populated countries in the world, with about 1,250 people per square kilometer.		
National flag, national anthem, national			

flower	
history	<p>The origin of the word "Malta" is unknown. The common etymology theory is that it comes from the Greek word meaning "honey", or because Malta produces a kind of honey with a unique taste, it is nicknamed "honey land". Greece had a great influence on the island of Malta in 700 BC, and the Greek-speaking Eastern Roman Empire also ruled Malta from 395 AD to 870 AD. Another theory is that "Malta" comes from the Phoenician word "Maleth", which means "safe haven".</p> <p>From the 10th to the 8th century BC, the Phoenicians settled here. Later, Malta was occupied by the Greeks and then by Carthage in the 4th century BC. It was ruled by the ancient Romans in 218 BC. During the Carthaginian and Roman Republic eras, it prospered due to the Mediterranean trade. From the 9th century, Malta was successively ruled by the Byzantine Empire, the Arab Empire and the Normans.</p> <p>In 1523, the Knights of St. John moved here from Rhodes in the Aegean Sea and were recognized by the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. The Knights were later renamed the Order of Malta. In the Great Siege of Malta in 1565, the Knights defeated the Ottoman Empire army. This battle was the most significant event in Malta's history and successfully prevented the Ottoman Empire from expanding into Western Europe.</p> <p>In 1798, Napoleon led the French army to expel the Knights, and the Order of Malta became a special political entity headquartered in Rome. In 1800, Britain occupied Malta, and in 1814 it officially became a colony of the British Empire. During World War II, the Italian Air Force bombed and besieged it many times, and an invasion plan was drawn up, codenamed Operation Hercules, but the islanders' tenacious resistance prevented the Kingdom of Italy from occupying Malta.</p> <p>It declared independence on September 21, 1964, and established the Republic of Malta in 1974. It is now a member of the Commonwealth, the European Union, and the Schengen Area.</p>
Political system	
economy	The country is poor in natural resources and its economy relies on processing and manufacturing (mainly electronics and textiles), tourism and international trade.
Nationality, language, religion	The official languages are Maltese and English. Italian is also widely spoken.
Culture, famous people	
other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of registered cars exceeded 329,000. - a car with right-hand drive, especially in tourist destinations like Médina and Marsaxlokk . - to Gozo Island and pay a fee when you return to the city. - Recommended accommodations include Gol den Bay (beach), Sli ema or St. Julian (convenient for shopping and dining, close to Valletta) - The food is famous for rabbit meat and goat cheese. Italian style seafood is more popular.

Valletta

It is the capital of the Republic of Malta, an island country in the Mediterranean. During the Great Siege of Malta in 1565, the Knights Hospitallers who ruled Malta repelled the invasion of the Ottoman Empire. In order to prevent the

enemy from attacking again, the Knights Hospitallers decided to build a strong fortress city. On March 28, 1566, the then Grand Master of the Knights Hospitallers laid the foundation stone for the city of Valletta and named it Valletta. Valletta thus developed into a prosperous urban area, and most of the local quaint buildings originated from the period of the Knights Hospitallers' rule.

Valletta is most famous for its streets that go straight up to the sky. There must be two rows of cars parked on both sides of the street. The picture must be full of colorful wooden terraces. The most famous is Old Mint Street. Photo location: 35°53'53.3"N 14°30'33.1"E

Grandmaster's Palace

The Grand Master's Palace was built in 1571. After the Great Siege of Malta, it was once the palace of the Grand Master of the Order of Malta. Although Malta has changed hands several times, it has always been the center of power. During the British occupation, it was the Governor's Palace. It is now the seat of the President of Malta and the seat of the Parliament. The palace is divided into two courtyards, one entrance faces Regina Square, and the National Library is to the east. The armory in the palace houses the most exquisite weapons in Europe from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. In addition, the palace is decorated with various famous tapestries and murals. Parts of the palace are open to tourists free of charge except during government activities.

The Palace of the Grand Master is located in the center of Valletta. Built in 1574, the two-story exterior walls of the palace maintain the style of the 16th century. The wooden bay windows were added later, and Baroque decorations were added in the 18th century. There are two gardens, the Neptune Garden and the Prince Alfred Garden of the United Kingdom, as well as an armory (Palace Armoury). At the end of the 18th century, Napoleon lived in it for several days when he drove away the Knights.

St John's Co-Cathedral is one of the cathedrals of the Catholic Church in Malta and one of the landmark buildings of the capital Valletta. It was built between 1573 and 1578. The facade of St John's Co-Cathedral is very simple, and its interior is in sharp contrast with the facade. It is in a gorgeous Baroque style, mainly by the Calabrian artist and knight Mattia Preti. There are 8 chapels in the cathedral, dedicated to the patron saints of the 8 parts of the Knights Templar.

There is a Cathedral Museum in the church, which displays two important works by the Italian painter Caravaggio. The most famous artwork is Caravaggio's "The Beheading of Saint John", or "The Beheading of Saint John the Baptist". It is said that this is the largest oil painting of the master and the only oil painting signed by the painter himself.

There are two gardens in Valletta, Upper Barrakka Gardens and Lower Barrakka Gardens. These two gardens are the essence of Valletta. Upper Barrakka overlooks the Three Sisters and the endless blue of Grand Harbour ; Lower Barrakka offers a view of the coastline of Valletta. The architectural forms of the two gardens are somewhat similar, both with long arches against the Mediterranean Sea, which are very suitable for taking pictures.

Lower Barrakka Gardens From Lower Barrakka Gardens, you can see the easternmost lighthouse of Malta. You can also see the ferry terminal to Sicily, Italy. You can also see the Three Sisters across the street. The view from Upper Barrakka Gardens is better than the lower one. There are salutes every day at noon and 4 pm .

Caffe Cordina is a coffee shop with a great history and reputation. It was known as the "Knight's Treasure House" under the rule of the Knights. The interior decoration is luxurious and classical, as if returning to the Belle Époque in Europe. The ceiling is painted with paintings related to the Knights of Malta, which were painted by the former owner of this coffee shop, the Maltese painter Giuseppe Cali.

The Three Sisters

Vittoriosa , Cospicua and Senglea formed the famous three towns of medieval Malta.

as Birgu , is an ancient city in eastern Malta, located on a small peninsula south of Valletta and close to the Grand Harbour. It is the most famous of the three sister cities and the earliest habitat of the "Knights of St. John" in Malta. In 1565, a fort was built to resist the siege of the Turks, and the current name was changed after the victory. There is a warrior castle in the city dating back to 870 AD, as well as many ancient inns from the 16th century.

Cospicua is the largest of the three cities. It was originally called Bormla , and was given its current name by the Knights of St. John, meaning "brave", because of the "heroic" behavior of the local people during the great siege of 1565. Today, the coastline of the city is lined with old shipyards, and the landmarks of the city are the Margherita sea defense line that survived World War II and the church (Immaculate Conception Parish Church) with rich treasures .

Senglea is located on a narrow headland, facing the Grand Dock of Valletta. Its original name was L-Isla, which means peninsula in Maltese. During World War II, 75% of the buildings here were destroyed. Today, the most famous place in the city is the Gardjola Gardens, which is across the water from Valletta. There is a fort-shaped sentry post in the garden, which means that it is guarding the safety of the port. On this protruding sentry post, you can find the famous "Eye of Horus".

Marsaxlokk Fishing Village

Parking: Xatt is- Sajjieda , Marsaxlokk, Malta or both sides of Power House street towards the fishing village

It is a traditional fishing village in the southeast of Malta. It is a tourist destination famous for its scenery, fishermen and history. The seafood market on Sundays is very famous, and there are tourist markets on other days of the week. The fishing boats anchored in the harbor are colorful, with highly saturated red, yellow, blue and green. There is a pair of eyes painted on the bow - the eyes of Osiris (the god of the underworld in Egyptian mythology). It is said that this can protect the safety of fishing boats at sea. This legend can be traced back to the Phoenician era. There are a series of restaurants on the waterfront where you can enjoy a leisurely, delicious and inexpensive lunch. If you happen to be here on Sunday, you can catch the bustling fish market, mingle with the locals to choose freshly caught octopus, prawns and various fresh fish, and experience the most authentic folk customs.

The most famous local restaurant, Tartarun Restaurant , requires advance reservation.

Mdina

Par king : Mdina gate Front parking lot

Rabat, Malta or It- Tomba below the city walls

It is the ancient capital of Malta, and its history can be traced back to 1500 AD. Mdina means "castle" in Arabic, and the surrounding area Rabat means "suburb". The buildings in the city were originally in medieval style. After the great earthquake in 1693, the repaired and rebuilt buildings had a distinct Baroque style.

There are many churches, monasteries and small palaces of nobles in Mdina. The most famous one is St. Paul 's Cathedral (Mdina Cathedral), which is the main church of the Roman Catholic Church. According to legend, this church was built on the spot where the Apostle St. Paul met with the then administrator Publius after the shipwreck. When night falls, the hustle and bustle of the city gradually fades away, and the ancient city becomes quiet and calm, exuding a mysterious and ancient attraction. At this time, if you stroll in the ancient city and enjoy your own time, you may understand why it is called the "Silent City".

The Hagar Qim and Mnajdra Temples are located on the southern coast of Malta. Built between 3600 and 3000 BC, these mysterious megalithic temples are the oldest surviving structures in the world, older than the pyramids of Egypt, the Great Wall of China and Stonehenge in England. The Hagar Qim Temples are perched on a cliff overlooking the sea. Built of large stones, the temple is one of the most complex remains of the Stone Age. Huge stone tables flank the doorway leading to the temple, but their purpose remains a mystery.

Popeye Village . When the live-action Popeye movie was launched in 1980, the crew racked their brains to find a secluded paradise, and finally decided to use this quiet bay village in Malta as the location.

Gozo has a long history. According to archaeologists, the island was inhabited 5,000 years ago. The ruins of the Ggantija megalithic temple on the island **were built around** 3600 BC. After more than 5,000 years of wind and rain, the megaliths still stand today, and the arches and huge windows of the past can still be vaguely seen. **Victoria is the capital** of Gozo. It was formerly known as Rabat. It was renamed Victoria when Queen Victoria of the United Kingdom was crowned. The most famous thing in the city is the Citadel on the top of the mountain. This is a castle from the late Middle Ages. It occupies the commanding heights of Victoria City, so its outline can be seen from anywhere in the city.

THE PIERRE'S RESTAURANT , Marina Wharf Marsalforn , malta , Malta

famous **Azure Window** once stood on the edge of Dviraw Bay. It collapsed in 2017 , leaving only half of the "window frame". Travelers can still go there to reminisce about the lost scenery.

Comino covers an area of less than 4 square kilometers . It is a mini island with only 4 permanent residents. It has a beautiful coastline and is a paradise for snorkeling, deep diving and sailing enthusiasts. Facing such a clear blue sea, you can't help but want to embrace it, not to mention that there are countless reefs, corals, shipwrecks and historical sites waiting for you to explore. The color saturation of **the Blue Lagoon here** is extremely high, and you will never get tired of it, even making you doubt that it is just a colorful oil painting in front of you. Climb along the trail to St Mary's Tower on the top of the mountain - this is the highest point of the entire Comino Island, where you can overlook the Mediterranean and take in the beautiful scenery.

Blue Grotto

The Blue Grotto is located in the southwest of the main island. It is a group of naturally formed underwater caves. The water under the cave is blue, crystal clear and beautiful, and it is also a good place for diving enthusiasts. Generally speaking, the best time to visit the Blue Grotto is from morning to 1 pm. There are three ways to visit the Blue Grotto. One is to spend 8 euros and take a boat from the pier to enter the cave to see the stalactites and blue water; the other is to look down at the exterior of the Blue Grotto from above.

Dining room:

Bouquet Garni ranked first on tripadvisor

Triq Gorg Borg Olivier, Il- Mellieħa , Malta

+356 2152 2234

Ta' Marija Restaurant has cabaret performances

Constitution Street Mosta MT MST, 9058, Constitution St, Mosta , Malta

Ta' Kris, 80 Fawwara Ln , Sliema , Malta rabbit

Historical Stories

Italy is located in southern Europe, mainly consisting of the boot-shaped Apennine Peninsula and two large

islands in the Mediterranean Sea, Sicily and Sardinia. Italy borders France, Switzerland, Austria and Slovenia in the northern Alps. In 194, the Italian Republic was established, and the green, white and red tricolor flag was officially designated as the national flag of the Republic. The country's capital is in Rome, while Milan is the world's fashion capital; Turin is the industrial capital of Italy.

Italy is a highly developed democratic republic and the cradle of European nations and cultures. Its service industry, tourism industry and foreign trade are particularly prominent. It is also one of the founding members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union. Italy has a long tradition in art, science and technology, and has 47 world heritage sites, ranking first in the world. Rome, the capital of Italy, is an ancient European civilization city with a glorious history. It is the center of Catholicism, the seat of the Vatican, and the former capital of the Roman Empire. Because it is built on seven hills and has a long history, it is called the "City of Seven Hills" and the "Eternal City". Rome is located on the banks of the Tiber River in the middle of the Apennine Peninsula, with a total area of 1,507.6 square kilometers, of which the urban area covers 208 square kilometers. The city of Rome now consists of 55 residential areas with a population of more than 2.64 million, and its metropolitan area has a population of 5.4 million. Rome is the largest city in Italy. Milan, a modern international metropolis, is the capital of Lombardy in northern Italy, the capital of Milan Province, the former capital of the Western Roman Empire, and is located on the northern bank of the Po River Plain. It has a population of 1.83 million and a metropolitan area population of 7.55 million. It covers 9 provinces and 272 cities. It is the largest metropolis in Italy and one of the largest metropolitan areas in Europe and the world, and is ranked among the top cities in the world. It is the economic engine and economic capital of Italy. Turin is the third largest city in Italy, one of the major industrial centers, and the capital of Piedmont. It is located in the upper valley of the Po River, 243 meters above sea level. The population is about 1.035 million. It is warm in winter and hot in summer, with an annual precipitation of about 1,000 mm. There is more precipitation in winter and spring, and there are many valley winds. Turin's industry developed rapidly after World War II, and it is especially famous for its automobile manufacturing industry. It is now one of the largest industrial centers in Italy, with many large modern enterprises. It is one of the centers for electric steelmaking and electronic processing in Europe. Based on the cheap hydropower in the Alps, the focus is on developing technology-intensive industries, including engines, machine tools, electronics, electrical appliances, chemicals, bearings, aircraft, precision instruments, meters, and the arms industry.

The discovery of a series of important archaeological sites fully proves that Italians can be traced back to prehistoric times. Since the Paleolithic Age, there are traces of human habitation in this territory of Italy. Among the numerous Paleolithic sites, the most eye-catching are the Poggiolo Monte in Forlì (Emilia Romagna), the pine forest of Inselenia - in this archaeological site, traces of human use of fire were found (this discovery was mentioned in the American magazine SCIENCE), and the Adora Cave in Palermo, where a large number of Stone Age carvings of people and animals were found on the walls of the cave. In the Neolithic Age, humans gradually evolved from hunters to farmers or shepherds, and the typical example of this period was the Camuni (in the Camonica Valley).

In 476, the Western Roman Empire was overthrown by the Germanic Odoacer, and in 493, Odoacer was overthrown by the Ostrogothic King Theodoric. Soon, the Lombards entered Italy, established a kingdom in northern Italy, and established three principalities in southern Italy. The Roman Curia was threatened. In 751, the Lombards occupied Ravenna and deposed the governor of the Eastern Roman Empire, completely ending the power of Byzantium on the Italian peninsula. Faced with the threat of the Lombards, the Pope asked the Frankish king for help. In 756, the Frankish King Pepin III invaded Italy and regained power for the Pope who was threatened

by the Lombards. After that, the Papal States was established. But after the decline of the Frankish Empire, Italy once again faced foreign invasions. Arabs, Saracens, Germans, etc. have invaded Italy. The 11th century ended the darkest period of the Italian Middle Ages. Trade gradually developed, especially the emergence of four city-states on the coast, Amalfi, Pisa, Genoa, and Venice. In 1155, the Byzantine Emperor Manuel I sent troops to land in Apulia in an attempt to invade southern Italy, but was met with resistance. In 1158, the Byzantine army withdrew from Italy.

The Italian Renaissance heralded the Early Renaissance, an era of significant cultural change and achievement from the late 14th century to about 1600. Although its origins date back to the early 14th century, many aspects of Italian culture were largely medieval, and the Renaissance did not fully emerge until the end of the century. The word Renaissance (Italian: *rinascimento*) literally means "rebirth," and the era is best known for the renewed interest in the culture of classical antiquity after what Renaissance humanists called the Dark Ages. These changes, while significant, were concentrated among the elite, and life for the vast majority of the people was little changed from the Middle Ages. The Italian Renaissance began in northern Italy, centered in Florence. It then spread south, particularly affecting Rome, which was largely rebuilt by the Renaissance popes. The Italian Renaissance reached its peak in the late 15th century, when foreign invasions plunged the region into chaos. However, Renaissance ideas and ideals spread to other parts of Europe, starting with the Northern Renaissance and the English Renaissance. The Italian Renaissance is best known for its cultural achievements, including the literary works of Petrarch, Castiglione, and Machiavelli, the artists Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci, and great buildings such as the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence and St. Peter's in Rome.

After the Italian War, Italy fell under the control of the Spanish Habsburg dynasty. In the following nearly three hundred years, Italy was always in a state of being contested by the great powers. Until 1796, Napoleon invaded Italy and established the Kingdom of Italy, which was the first unified country in Italy's modern history (although it was actually controlled by France). But after Napoleon's defeat and the convening of the Congress of Vienna in 1815, Italy fell into division again.

Since the Congress of Vienna put Italy into a state of division again, Italians have been working hard for the unification of the country. On May 5, 1860, Garibaldi and 1,000 red shirts set out from Genoa to Sicily and overthrew the rule of the Bourbon. Garibaldi then entered Palermo victoriously. In 1861, the Kingdom of Italy was established. It was not until 1870 that Rome was incorporated into Italy, and Italy was declared completely unified.

After Italy became independent, its economic situation lagged behind other Western European countries, and its political situation was relatively unstable. The huge economic gap between northern and southern Italy forced Italians in the south to move to the north or to the New World. Italy originally signed the Triple Alliance with the German Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. But in World War I, Italy joined the Allied Powers. But Italy did not fully obtain the land promised by Britain and France after the war. Due to the failure at the negotiation table and the huge impact of the war on Italy's economy and society, the domestic situation continued to be uneasy. The Fascist Party took advantage of this period to rise to power. In World War II, Italy stood on the side of the Axis Powers. After the defeat in World War II, the monarchy was abolished and replaced by the establishment of the Italian Republic.

Pope election

The rules for electing a new pope have evolved over the past two millennia. The electors are locked away

in the cum clavi (Latin for "with the keys") and are not allowed to leave until the new pope is chosen. Today the conclave is held in the Sistine Chapel in the Apostolic Palace. The pope is chosen from among 182 cardinals (archbishops), and the age limit for the electors who sit in the College of Cardinals is 80 years old or younger. The papal election is held by secret ballot. The candidate who receives a two-thirds majority is elected. If there is still a result after seven rounds of voting, the final round is held between the two candidates who received the most votes in the previous ballots, and the candidate who receives a simple majority is elected. The ballots are examined and then burned together. The color of the smoke signals the result of the election to the people gathered in St. Peter's Square. Black smoke means the vote was inconclusive, while white smoke means the new pope has been elected. Initially, wet straw was burned to produce black smoke; from 1963 onwards, coloring chemicals were used, and from 2005 onwards, bells were rung after successful elections to enhance the white smoke, especially when it was not very white.

Cardinal electors are not allowed to communicate or converse with anyone outside of the conclave by mail, radio, telephone or other means. Eavesdropping is an offence punishable by excommunication. Before the election, the Swiss Guard will use the latest electronic equipment to detect any hidden "bugs" or listening devices in the Sistine Chapel.

Legend has it that there was a female pope in history. She was a talented woman named Joan, who disguised herself as a man under the instruction of her lover. Due to her ability, she was promoted step by step in the church and was eventually elected as the pope. But one day when she was out on patrol, she suddenly had abdominal pain on the road and gave birth to a child in public. The secret was finally revealed, and the poor woman was stoned to death on the spot. During the next 600 years, the new pope had to undergo a gender test before taking office to confirm that he was not a woman; and, in all subsequent parades, the successor pope deliberately bypassed the path where Joan gave birth to a child, and chose the longer route instead. In the history of Catholicism, there were Pope John 19 and Pope John 21, but there was no pope named John XX. Legend has it that Pope Joan was John XX, who was later expelled from the list of popes, so there was no John XX on the list of popes.

In the past 50 years, the Catholic Church has been involved in sex scandals around the world. In 1950, a Catholic priest working at a school for the deaf in Wisconsin, USA, molested 200 children. In the 1970s and 1980s, two priests at a Jesuit boarding school in Berlin, Germany, sexually abused more than 300 students. In 2002, a Catholic priest sexually abused a child in Hong Kong.

Reasons why China and the Vatican do not establish diplomatic relations:

A key issue is the appointment of bishops. The Vatican considers it to be the Vatican's "holy calling" because according to the Catholic Church's regulations, Catholic bishops around the world must be appointed by the Vatican. This has been a tradition for thousands of years. However, this so-called "holy calling" is inconsistent with China's religious policy. Chinese religions are not supported or controlled by foreign forces. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Chinese Catholic Church has independently elected bishops.

Another problem is that on October 1, 2000, despite strong opposition from the Chinese government and the Chinese Catholic Church, the Vatican held a "canonization" ceremony to canonize some foreign missionaries and their followers who had committed ugly crimes in China as "saints." A considerable number of them were foreign missionaries, most of whom died during the Opium War and the Boxer Rebellion. Some of them violated Chinese laws at the time and illegally sneaked into the interior to preach, acting as accomplices of

imperialism and colonialism in aggression against China, committing unforgivable crimes and receiving due punishment. In the war of aggression against China by the Eight-Power Allied Forces, countless Chinese people were killed and injured, their wives and children were separated, and their families were destroyed. This was a catastrophe in human history. Some of these Chinese Catholics also died in an untimely manner. They were martyrs of the imperialist war of aggression and victims of colonial church forces, not "martyrs who sacrificed for their faith."

Giotto, the "Father of European Painting" (c. 1266/1276-1337)

Giotto di Bondone broke the medieval painting tradition and paved the way for modern realistic painting. As a pioneer of Italian Renaissance painting, he was also an outstanding sculptor and architect. In June 1334, Giotto was responsible for building the bell tower of the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore and designed many exquisite reliefs. This is the world-famous **Giotto Bell Tower**. This square building has five floors and is 85 meters high, full of Gothic art style. 370 steps lead directly to the top of the building. The outer wall is inlaid with red, white and green marble. You can see the whole city of Florence when you climb to the top of the building. In terms of bright colors and tall and beautiful architectural style, Giotto perfectly achieved harmony and unity between this Gothic building and the Romanesque decoration of the surrounding buildings. The lower two floors of the bell tower are full of exquisite relief creations, including "Bread Land", "Textile", "Vineyard" and "Sculptor" and other works reflecting ordinary life materials, as well as works derived from Christian sacred stories. The upper three-story windows are extremely exquisite, decorated with fine patterns, and are representative works of Gothic art.

This exquisite building is the epitome of Giotto's artistic essence, showing the highest artistic level and architectural attainments. It has been renowned for hundreds of years and has become a milestone in Giotto's artistic life. It is still the most outstanding building in Florence, which is home to various art masterpieces. Giotto ushered in a new era of art. Because medieval art has always been centered on theology, it was just a means for the church to promote doctrine, and the creative elements derived from life were completely abandoned. Therefore, medieval art did not have any personal feelings, and asceticism, mysticism and obscurantism ran through it. All works were of the same model. It was the appearance of Giotto that completely changed this situation. Art historians believe that "since the appearance of Giotto, the stained glass paintings on the walls of buildings have been replaced by creative murals", which fully expresses the affirmation of all his innovative attempts.

When he was young, Giotto made a living by herding sheep. In his spare time, he liked to paint on stones. One day, the famous painter Cimabue passed by and saw a lamb standing alone on a rock in the distance. When he got closer, he found that it was painted on it. The painter was amazed by such a realistic and vivid painting. Although the lines were crude, he still discovered the talent hidden in it. So he found the shepherd boy and took him as his apprentice. From then on, the 9-year-old Giotto became a thousand-mile horse discovered by Cimabue. Once he got started, he could not stop and embarked on the road of painting art. Under the care of Cimabue, Giotto quickly mastered the painting skills. Legend has it that once Cimabue found a fly on a portrait he painted, but he couldn't get rid of it. Later he realized that it was painted by Giotto.

The Decameron

In 1348, the horrific Black Death spread across Europe. Ten young people from Florence, three men and seven women, fled the city and took refuge in the suburbs. In order to pass the boring and long time, they decided to tell a story every day. In ten days, a total of one hundred wonderful stories were born - this was Boccaccio's brilliant work "The Decameron" which took him five years to write.

In this work, the author connects these 100 independent stories in the form of storytelling, forming a novel whole that is refreshing. The stories in "The Decameron" are either from historical events or folk legends, and can also be found in them, such as "One Thousand and One Nights" and "The Travels of Marco Polo". In the story, on the one hand, Boccaccio used a

sharp pen to expose the ugliness he had witnessed one by one. In his view, the church's various behaviors that suppressed human nature were unforgivable sins, and the hypocritical church rules were the source of these sins. The priests and priests looked righteous on the outside, full of benevolence and morality, but their hearts were dirty and corrupt, full of thieves and prostitutes. In order to achieve their own extravagant and extravagant goals, they turned black and white, called a deer a horse, plundered people's wealth, seduced women, and even blackmailed and suppressed dissidents. Their actions were simply unbearable to watch, and became the root of the darkness of the entire society. On the other hand, he used a lot of words to praise earthly love and the pursuit of happiness. He believed that "among all natural forces, the power of love is the least constrained and unobstructed." A happy life is everyone's instinctive pursuit, and sweet love is a right given to humans by God. These positive factors can make fools regain their wisdom, cleanse the souls of dark people, and promote the noble character and perfect sentiments of human beings, unlike the hypocritical propaganda of the church that only abstinence can free from sin and only asceticism is the way to heaven.

The overall language style of this work is pungent and sharp, focusing on reality. It successfully creates a series of distinctive literary characters that come to life on paper, showing the world the various aspects of life in medieval Europe. Among them are evil and unscrupulous princes and nobles, monks and priests, as well as kind, simple, honest civilians and peddlers. Among the various people with distinctive personalities, people are impressed by the author's meticulous observation and vivid portrayal of life and society. Boccaccio's "The Decameron" became the pioneering work of modern novels.

The huge dome of Florence Cathedral

At the end of the 13th century, the city of Florence decided to build an unprecedented huge church, hoping to have a huge dome to express its respect for the Virgin Mary and Christ. To this end, several architects participated in the design and construction, and their ultimate goal was "the most magnificent and magnificent building that human skills can achieve." However, the plan was too grand, so grand that when the construction reached the 50-meter-high wall and faced the final dome with a width of more than 40 meters on the opposite side, everyone was at a loss.

Under the technical conditions at the time, not only was the building itself a huge project, but even building the surrounding scaffolding over 50 meters high became a thorny problem. At the critical moment when no artist could do it, Brunelleschi appeared. After thinking about and completing the draft of the dome, he spent several years traveling around Rome, measuring the ruins of temples and palaces, and even recording the details of gables, arches, and column bases. Through these magnificent ancient buildings, he has mastered the construction rules of large classical buildings and successfully integrated the beauty of classics into the conception of the cathedral. After a long time, he returned to Florence and finally completed the formulation of a detailed construction plan for the church dome. In 1420, Florence issued a public tender for the design of the church dome. Brunelleschi finally stood out among many famous architects with his design.

However, many architects believed that Brunelleschi's design was too crazy. They collectively opposed it and spread rumors that if he did what he said, it would take more than 100 years to complete the construction. Brunelleschi realized that his plan might face conspiracy from competitors. Therefore, in order to avoid his competitors from snatching his design sheet, he did not draw a sketch or keep any calculations. He carried out the construction completely based on his inner thoughts and spatial imagination. The whole project became his inner secret. For a period of time, he was imprisoned. However, faced with a huge project, his opponents did not know how to start, and finally had to continue to ask him to complete it.

Brunelleschi used an octagonal vault and double-layered structure to solve the load-bearing problem brought by the huge dome. He absorbed the essence of technology from classical and Gothic architecture, but also applied it in an absolutely ingenious and novel way. In addition, he also carefully considered the details of the dome, such as light and drainage, and solved them perfectly one by one. Faced with the scaffolding problem, he did not use the traditional construction method, but directly built a simple working platform using the completed building parts at high altitude. In order to speed up the

construction and facilitate the transportation of building materials to high altitude, he invented a set of mechanical vertical transportation devices, which greatly advanced the construction period. Finally, when this huge building with a height of 91 meters and a maximum diameter of 45.52 meters stood before people, no one denied that it was a masterpiece of architectural genius. Some people stood in front of the cathedral and were very excited. They admitted that they saw a composer's beautiful work in the spatial rhythm of the dome, saw dancing notes at the end of the light, and found the beauty of musical variation at the connection of the building. A new architectural form was born. This crystallization, which stood out from classical art and was very different from Gothic architecture, was a unique achievement of the Renaissance.

This dome became a symbol of Florence and the entire Renaissance spirit, and is also the first representative work of architectural art in the history of the Renaissance.

The Pazzi Chapel in Florence was built by Brunelleschi for the Pazzi, a powerful family in Florence. Brunelleschi combined columns, pilasters and arches in his own unique way to achieve a light and elegant effect that was unprecedented. There is no Gothic architecture.

Another great discovery in art seems to have been made by Brunelleschi: perspective. Although the Greeks knew foreshortening and Hellenistic painters were masters of creating the illusion of depth, even they did not know the mathematical laws by which objects appear to decrease in size as they recede from us. No classical artist before him had been able to paint the famous boulevard that recedes into the depths of the picture plane and disappears into the ground. It was Brunelleschi who gave artists the mathematical solution to this problem; it aroused great excitement among his fellow painters. One of the first works painted according to those mathematical rules was Masaccio's fresco in a church in Florence, showing the Holy Trinity, with the Virgin and St. John at the foot of the cross and donors kneeling outside.

Masaccio (1401-1428), meaning clumsy Thomas, died at the age of 28, but he had revolutionized painting. That revolution was not simply in the technical device of perspective, though that device must have been quite astonishing when it first appeared. We can imagine how the Florentines must have been shocked by the sight of this fresco unveiled as if a hole had been punched through the wall, through which they could peek into a new burial chapel in the style of Brunelleschi. But they were probably more shocked by the simplicity and grandeur of the figures framed by the new building. If the Florentines were expecting something of the International Style, which was in fashion in Florence as elsewhere in Europe, they were disappointed. Instead of delicate elegance, they saw grand and solemn figures; instead of light, flowing curves, solid, angular shapes; instead of delicate details like flowers and gems, there was a bleak tomb with a skeleton inside. But though Masaccio's art is less pleasing to the eye than the commonplace paintings, it is more real and more moving. We can see that Masaccio admired Giotto's amazing grandeur, yet he did not imitate him. The simple gesture of the Madonna pointing to her crucified son is so expressive and moving, for it is the only movement in the whole solemn picture. The figures actually look like statues. It is this effect, and nothing else, that Masaccio emphasizes by placing the figures in the perspective frame. We feel that we can almost touch them, and this brings them and their meanings closer to us. For the masters of the Renaissance, new methods and discoveries in art were never ends in themselves; they were always used to bring the meaning of the subject closer to our hearts.

"Heaven's Gate"

In 1401, Florence planned to decorate a bronze door on the north side of the Baptistery of San Giovanni and issued an open tender. The works of Brunelleschi and the famous sculptor Ghiberti were finally selected. They made two completely different creative ideas on the common competition title "The Sacrifice of Isaac", a story from the Bible. Ghiberti created it according to the traditional Gothic style, focusing on form and ignoring the idea of picture presentation, but Brunelleschi's work was completely innovative. First, the protagonist Isaac was designed as a classical nude shape, and then he focused on creating a tense atmosphere in the whole picture and depicting the imaginative space of the story plot. The main body of the picture is

placed on Abraham's hand holding up the sharp knife and Isaac's rebellious expression. The former conveys the determination to execute Christ's command, and the latter reflects Isaac's resistance to survival as an ordinary person. In addition, the depiction of natural scenery and foil characters forms a sharp contrast with the traditional practice of simply narrating a biblical story, reflecting the humanistic concern for people and life. This work has become an unsurpassed classic with its vivid characters and tense plot shaping, and is still treasured in the Florence Art Museum.

Although Brunelleschi's work was more vivid, the work of Ghiberti, who was only 25 years old, was finally chosen for the relief decoration of the bronze door of the Florence Baptistery. Brunelleschi's "The Sacrifice of Isaac" has a complex and powerful composition, and attempts to create a certain degree of depth of field on the relief. However, due to the limitations of the craftsmanship, the decorative frieze in the foreground of the relief is flat and does not produce an ideal sense of space. Ghiberti did not adopt the compact composition style of his opponent, but used diagonal lines that were easier to achieve across the relief, thus creating a clear space and depth of field, and finally won the favor of the judges. In artistic creation, there is often a gap between theory and practice, and this gap needs to be filled with a more advanced technical level.

It took Ghiberti more than 20 years to complete the door. The whole door is divided into 28 panels, 20 of which tell about the life of Christ, 4 describe the apostles, and the remaining 4 tell about the doctors of the church. In 1425, Ghiberti was hired to make a corresponding door for the east side of the baptistery - the "Gate of Heaven". He used 10 panels to present the scenes of the Old Testament, from God creating mankind to the Queen of Sheba visiting Solomon. The scenes are beautiful. He used nearly perfect mosaics and exquisite and lovely animal and plant decorations on the edges of the panels to form 20 pictures.

The scenery in the background of the characters' actions in these paintings is almost completely in line with the principles of perspective, and the exquisite depiction is also ingenious, comparable to the best paintings of the time. Michelangelo believed that "the Door of Paradise is good enough to decorate the entrance to heaven"; Vasari declared that "every detail of this sculpture is perfect, whether it is the best masterpiece in the world, whether it is ancient or modern". Ghiberti was also selected as a member of the leadership group because of this immortal "Door of Paradise". "Door of Paradise" still stands today, and Ghiberti has also been recorded in history with "Door of Paradise".

The Birth of Venus

Sandro Botticelli (1446-1510). Among his most famous paintings is the classical myth "The Birth of Venus". The classical poets were not forgotten throughout the Middle Ages, but it was not until the Renaissance, when Italians were so enthusiastic about trying to restore the former glory of Rome, that classical mythology became popular among the educated common people. To those people, the much-praised myths of the Greeks and Romans represented more than just happy and interesting fairy tales; they were so convinced of the superior wisdom of the ancients that they believed that those classical legends must contain some deep and mysterious truth. The patron who commissioned Botticelli to paint for his country villa was a member of the wealthy Medici family. Either the patron himself or one of his learned friends would have explained to the painter what he knew about the ancient depictions of Venus emerging from the sea. To these scholars, the story of Venus' birth was a symbol of the mystery through which the divine revelation of beauty came to earth. One can easily imagine the painter approaching his work with great reverence, rendering the myth in a manner befitting it. The action depicted is immediately apparent. Venus emerges from the sea on a shell, which is pushed to the shore by the flying winds amid the falling of roses. As Venus is about to step ashore, a goddess of the seasons or nymph bears a purple cloak to greet her. Botticelli succeeds where Pollaiuolo failed; his painting does form a perfectly harmonious pattern. Yet Pollaiuolo might have said that Botticelli achieved this effect at the expense of some of the achievements that he had taken so much trouble to preserve. Botticelli's figures seem less three-dimensional and less accurately drawn than those of Pollaiuolo or Masaccio. The graceful movements and rhythmic lines of his compositions recall the Gothic tradition of Ghiberti and Fra Angelico, with their lithe figures and delicately flowing garments. Botticelli's Venus is so beautiful that we overlook the absurd length of her neck,

the sloping shoulders, and the peculiar way her left arm is attached to her torso. Or, more accurately, we should say that Botticelli altered the natural image to achieve a graceful outline, enhancing the beauty and harmony of his design, because this intensifies her appeal and makes us feel that this is an infinitely delicate and graceful figure, a gift from heaven sent to our seaside.

Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519)

Leonardo da Vinci was born in a village in Tuscany. He was apprenticed in a first-rate Florentine workshop owned by the painter and sculptor Andrea del Verrocchio (1435-1488). Verrocchio's fame was great, and young Leonardo would undoubtedly learn a great deal in a workshop that produced masterpieces. He would see the secrets of casting and other metalwork, he would learn to carefully prepare paintings and statues from studies of nude and clothed models. He would learn to draw studies of plants and exotic animals to include in his paintings, and he would receive a thorough grounding in perspective optics and the use of color.

Once, **Verrocchio** was commissioned by the Church of San Salbino to paint the altarpiece of The Baptism of Christ. However, time was tight, the foreground figures of the entire painting had been completed, and the background was still empty. This was a large work of 1.77 meters long and 1.51 meters wide, but there was only one week left, and Verrocchio unfortunately suffered from typhoid fever. At this critical moment, Leonardo da Vinci was ordered to return to Florence and rushed to the painting site overnight. After a day of hard work, he completed the background. But an accident happened. The image of the angel in the painting was based on Leonardo da Vinci, which made his senior brother jealous and secretly destroyed part of his face. Leonardo da Vinci was very upset, but he had no other choice. He looked in the mirror and completed the angel again. Unexpectedly, this repair actually added a bit of aura to the whole painting, and the best part was the angel he repaired. From then on, Leonardo da Vinci's name spread.

Leonardo was also an extraordinary genius. We know something of the breadth and fertility of Leonardo's intellect, for his pupils and admirers have carefully preserved for us thousands of pages of sketches and notebooks, filled with text and drawings, containing extracts from books he had read and plans for books he intended to write. The more one reads these pages, the more one cannot understand how one man could have distinguished himself in so many different fields of inquiry, and in almost every case made a significant contribution. One reason for this may be that Leonardo was a Florentine artist, not a trained scholar. He believed that the artist's vocation was to explore the wonders of the visible world as his predecessors had done, only more fully, more thoroughly, and with greater concentration and precision. He was not interested in the bookish knowledge of scholars, and, like Shakespeare, he probably "knew little Latin, and still less Greek." While the learned men of the university relied on the authority of the prestigious ancient authors, Leonardo the painter never blindly followed what he had heard but not seen. Whenever he encountered a problem, he did not rely on authority, but solved it through experiments. There was nothing in nature that did not arouse his curiosity, nothing that did not inspire his creativity. He dissected more than thirty corpses to explore the mysteries of the human body (Figure 190). He was one of the pioneers in exploring the mysteries of the development of children in the womb; he studied the laws of water waves and currents; he spent years observing and analyzing the flight of insects and birds, which would help him design a flying machine, and he was sure that one day flying would become a reality. The shapes of rocks and clouds, the influence of the atmosphere on the colors of distant objects, the laws governing the growth of trees and plants, the harmony of sounds, all of these were the objects of his tireless exploration, which would also lay the foundation for his art.

Leonardo was considered a strange and mysterious figure by his contemporaries. Monarchs and generals wanted this amazing genius to work as a military engineer, to build fortifications and canals, to create new weapons and devices. In peacetime, he would also invent unique mechanical toys and design novel effects for stage performances and grand occasions to entertain them. He was praised as a great artist and regarded as a great musician, but despite this, few people could get a glimpse of

the importance of his ideas and the breadth of his knowledge. The reason was that Leonardo never published his works, and almost no one even knew that he had any. He was left-handed and used to write from right to left, so his notes could only be read in a mirror. It is very likely that he was afraid to reveal his discoveries and that his views would be regarded as heresy. So we find five words in his articles: "The sun does not move", which shows that Leonardo had discovered Copernicus's theory long ago, and Galileo was later arrested and imprisoned for adhering to this theory. However, it is also possible that he conducted research and experiments simply because he had infinite curiosity, and once he solved a problem personally, he would lose interest in that problem because there were many other mysteries to explore.

Perhaps most importantly, Leonardo himself had no interest in being seen as a scientist. For him, all that exploration of nature was still primarily a means of seeking the knowledge of the visual world that he needed in art. He believed that giving art a scientific basis would transform his beloved art of painting from a trivial craft into a noble and respectable profession. Such concern for the social status of artists may seem difficult to understand to us, but we have seen how important it was to people of that period. It was precisely because of the ambitions of some people like Leonardo that painting was proven to be a free discipline, and that manual labor was no more important in painting than writing in poetry. It may be that this view often influenced Leonardo's relationship with patrons. Leonardo often failed to complete the work commissioned to him. He often started a painting and did not finish it, no matter how urgent the patron's request. Moreover, he apparently insisted that the only person who had to decide when his work was finished was himself, and he would not hand it over unless he was satisfied with it. No wonder Leonardo's works were so rarely completed, and no wonder his contemporaries deplored his behavior. This brilliant genius seemed to waste his time, traveling from Florence to Milan, from Milan to Florence, working for the notorious adventurer Cesare Borgia, to Rome, and finally to the court of King Francis of France, where he died in 1519, admired rather than understood.

In 1490, he completed the Equestrian Statue of Francesco Sforza. This giant clay sculpture model was hailed as the "Eighth Wonder of the World". This work was an equestrian statue of the father of Duke Lodovico Fossa. If it had been completed, it would have become the largest giant statue in the world. However, it was not completed in the end because there was not enough copper metal, the raw material for the sculpture.

From 1495 to 1497, Leonardo da Vinci created the world-famous "Last Supper" mural in the refectory of the Monastery of El Greco in Milan. This work, which marks the maturity of Renaissance art, has reached the ultimate perfection in theme conception and character portrayal. On the huge painting with a length of 9.1 meters and a width of 4.2 meters, the story of Judas betraying Jesus in the Bible is laid out with a strict composition. Judas in the painting breaks the convention and sits next to Jesus, making the concept of "Jesus being betrayed by his closest person" unprecedentedly prominent. The characters in the painting are all familiar to Leonardo da Vinci in real life. It is said that Judas is the result of Leonardo da Vinci's secret observation of street rogues for a year. This creative method derived from life also makes his works full of humanistic atmosphere. In addition, the novel layout of the characters in a row, the background material, the treatment of light and shadow, and the use of perspective effects have all reached a superb artistic realm, which has won Leonardo da Vinci great honor. Many people praised: "This is the best of many great works." Unfortunately, the few works completed by Leonardo in his mature period have not been protected, and they are in very bad condition when they are passed down to us. Therefore, when we look at the existing famous Leonardo mural "The Last Supper", we have to try hard to imagine what this painting might have looked like when it appeared in front of the monks who created it. In the monastery of Santa Maria delle Misericordia in Milan, This fresco occupies one wall of the rectangular hall used by the monks of the Grazie as their dining room. One must imagine what it must have looked like when the fresco appeared, when the table of Christ and his apostles appeared side by side with the monks' long table. Never before had the religious story appeared so close and so realistic. It was as if another hall had been added to their hall, and there the Last Supper appeared in a tangible and real form. How bright the light fell on the table, how it enhanced the three-dimensionality

and solidity of the figures. The monk must have been struck first by its realism, how realistic all the details were, the dishes on the tablecloth, the folds of the clothes. Then, as now, ordinary people often judged works of art according to their realism. But this can only be a first impression. After fully appreciating this extraordinary sense of reality, the monk's attention turned to the method used by Leonardo in painting the biblical story. There is nothing in this work that is similar to previous works on the same theme. In the traditional pages we see the apostles sitting quietly in a row at the table—only Judas is isolated from the others—while Christ calmly distributes the Eucharist. This new painting is very different from those paintings: there is drama in it, there is excitement. The composition seems to have an easy and natural balance and harmony, which is the nature of Gothic painting. Leonardo found that he could achieve the requirements of pleasing outlines without sacrificing the correctness of drawing and the accuracy of observation. If one does not consider the beauty of the composition, one suddenly feels that one is facing a corner of the real world, as real and as striking as we see in any work of Masaccio or Donatello. Even if one sees this achievement, it is difficult to say that the real greatness of the work has been touched. For apart from the technical problems of composition and drawing, we cannot help but admire Leonardo's keen eye for the behavior and reactions of people and his powerful imagination to bring the scene to life before our eyes. An eyewitness tells us that he often went to see Leonardo paint the Last Supper. The painter often climbed up the scaffolding and spent the whole day with his arms folded, critically examining the parts he had painted before he painted the next stroke. What he left us is the result of this deep thought, and even in its badly damaged state, "The Last Supper" is still one of the great miracles of human genius.

In October 1503, Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo painted the murals "Battle of Anghiari" and "Battle of Caiaie" for the Council Hall of the Five Hundred in the Palazzo Fucchio respectively. The war scene depicted by Leonardo da Vinci was the most intense and fierce battle between the two armies. The main purpose of his creation was to expose the darkness of war, because he opposed unjust wars from the bottom of his heart; while Michelangelo tried his best to express the tense atmosphere at the beginning of the war and was full of praise for just wars. This incident became a good story in the art world, and the two murals were also called "the model of war paintings in the world" by the world.

From 1503 to 1506, Leonardo da Vinci created the immortal classic "Mona Lisa", which announced the arrival of the heyday of the Renaissance and also marked his highest achievement in the field of painting. In order to fully explore the beautiful smile of the protagonist in the painting, Leonardo da Vinci asked musicians to play elegant music for her, singers to sing songs for her, clowns to perform funny performances, and even planted her favorite flowers and plants around her, built a charming fountain, and finally integrated his most sincere emotions, showing the confidence and happiness of a new era woman from the heart in a very general and infectious way, as if all life in the world under the sun was interpreted in that smile. "Mona Lisa" is one of Leonardo da Vinci's favorite paintings. In the last few years of his life, he moved to France to serve the king at the time and brought the painting with him. After the master's death, his belongings were taken over by the King of France. Putting aside what we know or are confident that we know about "Mona Lisa", it is still helpful to look at it like the first viewers. The first thing that strikes our attention is how lifelike the Mona Lisa seems to be. She seems to be looking at us and to have a mind of her own. She seems to be constantly changing before us, like a real person, and she looks a little different every time we come to her. Even in the reproduction we can feel this strange effect; if we stand before the original in the Louvre in Paris it is almost mysterious. Sometimes she seems to be mocking us, and at other times we seem to see a kind of sadness in her smile. All this sounds a little mysterious, and it is, for the effect of a great work of art is often like this. Leonardo undoubtedly knew how he could achieve this effect, and by what means. This great naturalist knew more about the way people see with their eyes than any man before him. He saw clearly that the conquest of nature presented the artist with a problem no less complex than how to combine a correct sketch with a harmonious composition. The painter must leave the spectator to guess. The impression of dullness and rigidity can be avoided if the outlines are not so definite, if the shapes are somewhat blurred, as if they disappear into the shadows. This is the famous

technique discovered by Leonardo, which the Italians called *sfumato* (fading away) - this blurred outline and soft colors make one shape blend into another, always leaving something to our imagination.

If we look back at the Mona Lisa, we can get some insight into its mysterious effect. We can see that Leonardo used his "fading" method very carefully. Anyone who has ever tried to draw or paint a face knows that what we call facial expression comes mainly from two places: the corners of the mouth and the corners of the eyes. In this painting, Leonardo deliberately blurred them in these places, making them gradually blend into soft shadows. This is why we are never quite sure in what mood Mona Lisa is looking at us, and her expression always seems to be elusive. Of course, this effect is not only caused by the blurring, but there is a lot behind it. Leonardo did something very bold, and only a painter of his superb talent would dare to take such a risk. If we look closely at the painting, we can see that the two sides are not proportional. This is most obvious in the dreamy landscape in the background; the horizon on the left seems much lower than the horizon on the right. So when we look at the left side of the picture, the woman looks taller or more upright than when we look at the right side of the picture. And her face seems to change with this change of position, for even the two sides of the face are not quite in proportion. Yet if he had not got the measure right, if he had not counteracted his daring transgression of nature with the almost magical rendering of living flesh, Leonardo would have likely created a trick rather than a great work of art with these complex devices. Let us see how he shapes the hand, or how he shapes the sleeve with its minute wrinkles! In his patient observation of nature, Leonardo has worked as hard as any of his predecessors. But he is more than a devoted servant of nature. In the distant past, people used to look at portraits with awe, because they believed that the artist, while preserving the likeness, could somehow preserve the soul of the person he portrayed. Now the great scientist Leonardo has made some of the dreams and fears of those first image-makers come true, casting spells and bringing colors to life with his magical brush.

The famous work "Mona Lisa" was stolen from the Louvre in France in 1911. One day in 1911, a man in the Louvre's work uniform sneaked in after closing time and stole the painting. When he escaped, he encountered a locked door, so he had to wait until the next morning for the doorman to open the door. The doorman thought he was a staff member who was mistakenly locked in the museum, so the thief escaped easily. The theft shocked the world, but the police search operation was fruitless. They investigated hundreds of people, including the person who was finally confirmed to be the thief, but progress was slow. Year after year, one day, a businessman in Florence, Italy received a message that someone wanted to return the "Mona Lisa" to the local art museum. At first he thought it was just a joke, but he still contacted the person in charge of the art museum and invited him to meet the person who claimed to own the painting at the hotel where the famous painting was stored. They found that it was genuine, so they called the police. The thief's name was Vincenzo Perugia, an Italian glass installer living in Paris. Ironically, he was hired by the Louvre to install glass shields for many of the world's most famous paintings. Perugia firmly believed that his act of returning the stolen paintings to Italy was the act of a national hero.

Leonardo da Vinci also made amazing contributions in the field of natural science. The level of scientific knowledge he mastered had long surpassed his own time. He even foresaw the direction of modern science 400 years later and made major discoveries and countless inventions in advance. His knowledge of medicine, anatomy, and physiology allowed him to think about heart transplant surgery at the time, and his talents in mathematics, mechanics, optics, physics, and chemistry even allowed him to conceive the prototypes of modern cars and helicopters. As for botany, zoology, biology, astronomy and other fields, he had achievements that benefited future generations. What's even more incredible is that he once conceived the design of the first robot in human history.

On May 2, 1519, Leonardo da Vinci passed away, leaving behind more than 7,000 pages of encyclopedic

manuscripts, which are still being explored and studied by scientists.

Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475–1564)

Michelangelo was 23 years younger than Leonardo and lived another 45 years after him. In his youth, Michelangelo was trained like any other craftsman, and at the age of 13, he entered the busy workshop of Domenico Ghirlandajo (1449-1494) as an apprentice for three years. In the workshop, young Michelangelo must have learned all the technical skills of his profession, the solid skills of fresco painting and a comprehensive foundation in sketching. Instead of following Ghirlandajo's easy way, he went out to study the works of the masters of the past, the works of Giotto, Masaccio, Donatello, and the Greek and Roman sculptors he could see in the Medici collection. He tried to thoroughly study the mysteries of the ancient sculptors who knew how to represent the beautiful human body in motion, with all its muscles and tendons. He was also dissatisfied with the so-called indirect learning of the laws of anatomy from the sculptures of the Classical period. He studied the anatomy of the human body himself, dissected cadavers, and sketched from models until it seemed to him that the human figure no longer had any mystery.

completed the David statue between 1501 and 1504, when he was only 29 years old. This great statue was erected in front of the gate of the town hall, becoming the patron saint of Florence's political ideals, and the whole city of Florence was in an uproar. By the time he was 30, he was generally recognized as one of the most outstanding masters of the time, and could be on par with the genius Leonardo in his industry.

In 1508, Michelangelo accepted an errand from the Pope in Rome. There was a chapel in the Vatican called the Sistine Chapel, named after Pope Sixtus IV . The walls of the chapel had already been decorated by the most famous painters of the previous generation, including Botticelli, Ghirlandaio, and others. The vault of the chapel was still blank, and the Pope proposed that Michelangelo be asked to paint it. Michelangelo tried his best to shirk the commission, saying that he was not really a painter but a sculptor. Since the Pope insisted on the original proposal, he began to work out a humble plan to paint the twelve apostles in the niches and hired assistants from Florence to help him paint. However, he suddenly locked himself in the chapel, not allowing anyone to approach, and began to complete the project alone, which has been a feat that has "astonished the world" since its appearance.

Michelangelo worked alone on the scaffolding of the Pope's Chapel in Rome for four years. The ceiling, which is more than 20 meters high, is 40 meters long and 14 meters wide. In the creation of such a special large-scale painting, Michelangelo independently completed the design of the scaffolding and the composition of the content, and formed and perfected the overall conception through a little exploration and thinking. After four years, Michelangelo finally completed the shocking "Genesis" mural. With the Bible's "Genesis" as the main line, it includes nine main subjects: "God Divides Light and Darkness", "God Divides Water and Land", "Creation of the Sun and the Moon", "Creation of Adam", "Creation of Eve", "Expulsion from the Garden of Eden", "Noah's Sacrifice", "Flood" and "Noah's Drunkenness", in addition to 12 prophets and many human bodies, a total of 343 characters with different images, of which more than 100 characters are twice as large as real people. This physical exertion is quite huge. Michelangelo had to lie on his back and look up to paint. He had in fact become so accustomed to the constrained posture that at one time he had to read even the letters he received, holding them above his head. But the physical feat of filling such a vast space with one man alone pales in comparison with its intellectual and artistic achievements. The ever-new inventions, the ingenious precision of every detail, and especially the magnificent visions which Michelangelo has revealed to posterity, give us a new understanding of the extraordinary talents of genius.

One has often seen illustrations of details of this magnificent work, and never enough of them. But when we enter the chapel, the general impression is very different from the overall effect of the photographs we may have seen. The chapel is like a very high assembly hall with a gentle vault. On the high walls we see a row of paintings of the stories of Moses and Christ, painted

in the traditional way by Michelangelo's predecessors. But when we look up, it is as if we are looking into the interior of another world, a world with images that are larger than human size. On the barrel vaults that rise between the five windows on each side of the chapel, Michelangelo placed huge portraits of the prophets, and in the center of the ceiling he painted the stories of Genesis and Noah. In the frames between these pictures he filled the borders with an overwhelming number of human figures, some like sculptures, some like young men of incomparable beauty, holding pendants and medallions with more stories. And these are just the central decorations. In addition, above and below the barrel vault, he painted an endless long line of ever-changing men and women, the ancestors of Christ listed in the Bible.

When we see so many figures in photographic reproductions, we might suspect that the ceiling might seem crowded and out of balance. But one of the most surprising things about the Sistine Chapel is how simple, harmonious, and clearly arranged it appears when we enter the chapel as a magnificent piece of decoration. In the 1980s, the ceiling was cleaned of layers of candle ash and grime, and the strong, bright colors were restored, which were the only way to make it visible in the narrow chapel with few windows. It is difficult for people who appreciate these paintings today under the strong electric light to consider this.

We know how carefully Michelangelo studied every detail, how carefully he prepared each figure in sketches. Fig. 199 is a page from his sketchbook, where he sketched the various forms of a model of a prophetess. We see an interaction of muscles that has not been observed and depicted since the Greek masters. But if the famous "nudes" show that he was a master of art, the paintings on biblical themes in the center of the ceiling prove even more. There we see God calling up plants, celestial bodies, animals and humans with powerful gestures. It may not be an exaggeration to say that the image of God the Father in the minds of generations of people - not only artists but also ordinary people who may never have heard of Michelangelo's name - was directly or indirectly influenced by the great scene of this act of creation depicted by Michelangelo. Of these paintings, the most famous and moving is probably one of the large paintings, the "Creation of Adam" (Fig. 200). Artists before Michelangelo had painted this scene, of Adam lying on the ground, awakened by the touch of God's hand; but none of them could have represented the greatness of the mystery of creation so simply and so vividly as Michelangelo did. There is nothing in this picture to distract attention from the main subject. Adam lies on the ground, with all the energy and beauty worthy of the first man; from the other side, the Father, supported and carried by angels, approaches, wrapped in a large, majestic cloak, which blows like a sail and also expresses the ease and speed with which he flies through the air. When he stretches out his hand, even before Adam's fingers touch it, we almost see the first man, as if awakening from a deep sleep, gazing into the fatherly face of his Creator. One of the greatest miracles of art is how Michelangelo has found the means to make the touch of the divine hand the center and focus of the picture, how he has made us realize the idea of omnipotence through the ease and power of the gesture of creation.

In 1512, having just completed his great work on the Sistine ceiling, Michelangelo rushed to his marble block and continued work on the tomb of Julius II. He had already planned to decorate the tomb with a group of statues of prisoners such as he had seen on the ancient monuments in Rome - but it is likely that he intended to give the figures a symbolic meaning. One of these is the Dying Slave.

While in Adam Michelangelo depicted the moment when life enters a vigorous, young and beautiful figure, in The Dying Slave he chose the moment when life is fading and the body is gradually being dominated by the qualities of inanimate matter. There is an indescribable beauty in this dying moment of final relaxation and release from the struggle of life, in that gesture of powerlessness and resignation. When we stand before this statue in the Louvre in Paris, it is difficult to imagine this work as a cold, lifeless stone statue. It seems to move before us, and yet it remains still; this is probably the effect Michelangelo was looking for. Among the mysteries of his art, one of the mysteries that has always been admired is that no matter how he twists and turns the bodies of his characters in violent movements, their outlines always remain stable, simple and calm. The reason is that from the beginning Michelangelo always tried to conceive his figures as concealed in the block of marble he

was carving; the task he set himself was simply to remove the rock covering the figure, so that the simple shape of the stone would always be reflected in the outline of the statue and constrain the outline to a clear design, no matter how the figure moved.

In September 1534, Michelangelo began to settle in Rome. In the same year, he was appointed by Pope Paul III to paint the altarpiece of the Sistine Chapel, The Last Judgment. After six years of hard work, another artistic monument stood proudly. This painting is full of human hope for the future from beginning to end. Although it is based on the story of the end of the world in the Bible, through more than 200 huge figures in the picture and four parts with prominent themes, it has achieved a perfect combination with the ceiling fresco "Genesis", and through the wonderful composition, it has fully expressed the majesty and fortitude of the savior appearing in the clouds and lightning. In the thrilling scene, it expresses the frenzy and fear that Italy was filled with because of the loss of independence at that time. All the characters in the picture are derived from real life, and most of the characters are naked. This act of praising human strength and beauty shocked the entire Christian world, but because the painting is so beautiful, they had to add fig leaves to the characters without destroying the work.

Michelangelo has always been a tragic hero, which can be seen from his vicissitudes of life. He was not well received by the Pope throughout his life, but his ability was very outstanding, which led to the Pope's reuse of him but also wanted to destroy him. I think this is closely related to Michelangelo's own arrogant character. And Michelangelo also respected and hated the Pope. He wanted to leave the Pope, but he really couldn't do without the Pope, the financial sponsor. At that time, Pope Julius II summoned Michelangelo to build a mausoleum for him, and Michelangelo was in debt. However, halfway through the project, the Pope listened to the slander of Michelangelo's opponents, asked him to stop the project and refused to pay the money, refused to see Michelangelo, but used force to keep him from leaving.

You all know the story that followed. At the request of the Pope, the sculptor Michelangelo took on a painting job that he had never studied in depth, and began to paint the dome of the Sistine Chapel. As a result, the magnificent and stunning "Genesis" (Volta della Cappella Sistina) was born. "Genesis" is a series of nine consecutive religious murals by Michelangelo, based on the beginning of the Bible, about the story of the creation of the world and the flood ark. It took more than four years in total, and more than 300 characters were painted. "Genesis" consists of three parts: "God Creates the World", "The Fall of Man", and "Undue Sacrifice". The whole picture is magnificent and powerful, which makes people feel deeply shocked. In that era without elevators and precision instruments, Michelangelo could only squat on a temporary high-altitude platform, leaning back, close to the dome, and painting bit by bit for four years. The half-dried paint dripped into Michelangelo's eyes, leaving him nearly blind after he finished the painting.

Michelangelo, as we are familiar with him, is a sculptor. However, after seeing this ceiling painting, no one would have thought that it was painted by a person who had no painting experience and only had a superficial understanding of painting when he was young. Before him, most of the ceiling paintings of churches were moons and stars, and when asking him to paint, the Pope only asked for 12 figures. Therefore, after he finished painting this ceiling painting, it shocked the whole of Italy. There is even a saying that after seeing the half dome unveiled by Michelangelo, Raphael was speechless, and then his painting style gradually changed from elegant and delicate to the majestic shadow of Michelangelo.

The Creation of Adam is recognized as the most touching scene in the entire ceiling painting. Michelangelo did not directly paint God shaping Adam, but painted the moment when the divine spark was about to touch Adam: God flew from the sky, stretched out his finger to Adam, and passed the soul to Adam as if he was about to turn on the power. This dramatic moment wonderfully juxtaposed man and God, triggering people's

infinite awe.

He signed the design of the mausoleum with the descendants of Julius II, and signed the design of the facade of the Basilica of San Lorenzo at the request of Leo X, but the design was cancelled due to lack of funds. However, the Medici family was kind enough to find a new job for Michelangelo, which was to design the family mausoleum for the Medici family. The project was finally completed, and the famous "Day", "Night", "Morning" and "Evening" were placed there.

Fast forward to 1534, when Michelangelo was 59 years old. That year, Pope Clement VII, during the restoration and reconstruction of Rome, decided to continue decorating the Sistine Chapel and decided that Michelangelo would paint The Last Judgment. It should be mentioned here that Michelangelo had previously participated in the defense of the Florentine Republic against the Medici family and built defenses. Later, the battle was lost as expected, and Michelangelo was almost killed. So the Pope took the opportunity to pardon him, on the condition that he painted The Last Judgment. So the next year Michelangelo had to come to Rome, but Clement VII died! Michelangelo must have been very happy and decided to continue with the tomb of Julius II.

However, the Pope would not let him go so easily. The newly appointed Paul III urgently recruited Michelangelo to serve him. So Michelangelo had to put aside the tomb of Julius II again and return to the Sistine Chapel after 24 years, starting The Last Judgment . Universale). The term "Last Judgment" should be familiar to everyone. It means that at the end of the world, God will come again, destroy all evil, and judge everyone (including the dead who will be resurrected to be judged). The good will ascend to heaven to enjoy eternal life and glory, and the evil will go to hell to receive eternal punishment; from then on, a brand new and beautiful world will start again. Although it is a theme designated by the Pope, Michelangelo's creation is not completely consistent with the content recorded in the Bible. When he created this work, he was deeply influenced by the hymn "The Last Judgment Day" and Dante's "Divine Comedy". Therefore, the picture not only has Christ, the Virgin Mary, saints, angels, the Book of Life, the resurrected, the blessed ascended to heaven and the cursed to hell, but also pagan figures such as Chiron, the ferryman in Greek legend, and King Minos, the judge of hell. The picture can be roughly divided into four levels. The top level is the angels of heaven, the center of the picture is Jesus Christ, the lower level is the people who are judged, and the bottom level is hell.

It is worth mentioning that Michelangelo's Jesus. As mentioned before, this Jesus is full of power and beauty. He seems to be sitting or standing, with his right hand slightly raised and his left hand pressed down, as if he is turning the mechanism of "punishing evil and promoting good" in the entire universe, and at the last moment of judgment, he still casts his eyes on the people who are about to be destroyed. The figures on both sides of him are also without exception with their muscles tense.

Of course, painting a muscular man as a weak and graceful man was not enough to vent Michelangelo's hatred for the church. Therefore, Michelangelo made an amazing innovation: he unprecedentedly painted all the characters, whether good or evil, naked, even Christ and the Virgin Mary. Do you think it is completely different from what you see now? That's because the paintings you see now are the result of the Pope's order to the painters to paint clothes. These painters later got a good name like "underwear tailors".

However, the Pope did not dare to attack Michelangelo for some reason. That was because, at that time, a ceremonial officer named Senus saw Michelangelo's painting of naked bodies and said to the Pope: "In such a solemn place, showing so many obscene naked bodies is disrespectful to God. Such paintings are only suitable for decorating baths and hotels." Michelangelo was very unhappy to hear this, but he did not say anything at the time. Only a week later, Senus went to see it again and found that he was painted like this: Senus

went to complain to the Pope again. But this time, the Pope did not stand on his side, but just joked: "If Michelangelo put you in prison, I can still try to save you; but if he puts you in hell, there is nothing I can do; there is no salvation in hell."

Later Popes Clement VIII and Paul IV both wanted to destroy the painting, but we are fortunate that this magnificent masterpiece was preserved in the end, allowing us in later generations to have the opportunity to appreciate a work that a gray-haired old man spent five years writing with all his enthusiasm, dissatisfaction, the most ardent love for the world, and his deepest thoughts.

Many painters playfully paint themselves into their large paintings as a form of signature. Michelangelo is no exception. However, Michelangelo is not an ordinary painter. In "The Last Judgment", Michelangelo painted himself as a piece of human skin cut off during martyrdom in the hands of the apostle Saint Bartholomew. Perhaps the artist compares himself to a martyred saint, suffering in the world to fulfill the mission of art; and after shedding the human skin, he will eventually return to the world of God. In any case, the Sistine Chapel will really make you feel an indescribable shock. Therefore, I strongly recommend you to go and see it and experience the insignificance and greatness of this kind of person.

Michelangelo was a prolific writer, with scores of beautiful sonnets, as well as architectural masterpieces such as the Medici Crypt, the library of the Church of San Lorenzo, and even the world's grandest dome of St. Peter's, which he was still overseeing at the age of 89. But he refused to accept payment for his last great work, which he labored over in old age, completing the work of his former rival Bramante, the dome of St. Peter's. Working on the most important church in Christendom, the old master saw it as a service to the greater glory of God and should not be tainted by earthly interests. Rising above the city of Rome, the dome seems to be supported by a ring of paired columns, towering into the sky, and its neat and majestic appearance is a fitting monument to the great spirit of this extraordinary artist, whom his contemporaries called "God."

Raphael Santi (1483–1520)

Raphael was born in Urbino, Italy. His father was a court painter. He began to receive formal painting education at the age of 10 and became a disciple of Perugino, a famous teacher of the Umbrian School of Painting at the age of 14. During this period, Raphael created major works such as "The Dream of the Knight", "St. George Slaying the Dragon", "The Three Graces", "The Wedding of the Virgin Mary", etc. Among them, "The Wedding of the Virgin Mary" was created when he was 20 years old. This painting is 1.7 meters long and 1.18 meters wide. The composition is precise and the perspective technique is skillfully used. The background layout of the picture is also atmospheric and charming. The characterization is full of life but not without elegance. It completely inherited the style and skills of his teacher Perugino, and even surpassed him in details.

While Michelangelo and Leonardo were competing for supremacy in Florence in 1504, a young painter from Urbino, a small town in the Umbria region, arrived in Florence. He was Raphael Santi (1483–1520), who had shown great promise while working in the workshop of Pietro Perugino (1446–1523), the leader of the "Umbrian" school. When he arrived in Florence, he faced an exciting challenge. Leonardo was 31 years older than him, and Michelangelo was 8 years older, and they were establishing new artistic standards that had never been imagined by their predecessors. Other young artists might have become discouraged by the reputation of these two giants. But Raphael was determined to learn. Raphael's gentle personality brought him close to some influential patrons. Moreover, he was very capable and would continue to work until he could match the two older masters.

Raphael's greatest works seem so effortless that people often don't think they are the result of hard work and perseverance. In many people's minds, he is just a painter who can paint lovely Madonnas; Raphael's Madonna images often show the simplicity, kindness, and amiability of the common people, full of worldly care and human feelings, as if the young woman next door is enjoying the happiness and joy of the world in the pastoral scenery, without any gloom and depression in traditional religious paintings, and the image of the Son of God is often taken from real children. People are so familiar with those portraits that it is difficult to appreciate them as paintings. This is because the image of the Madonna imagined by Raphael has been accepted by later generations, just as people have accepted the image of the Father conceived by Michelangelo. We can see cheap copies of such paintings in our humble rooms, and we are easy to conclude that paintings with such universal appeal must be somewhat "shallow". In fact, its apparent simplicity is the crystallization of profound thoughts, careful planning, and great artistic wisdom. Like Raphael's "Madonna of the Grand Duke" (Madonna del Granduca is in fact a "classical" work, for it has been held up by successive generations as a standard of perfection, as have the works of Phidias and of Pollaxiteles. It needs no explanation; in that sense it is indeed "plain." But if we compare it with the countless earlier works that have represented the same subject, we see that they were seeking precisely the same simplicity that Raphael had already achieved. We can see that Raphael owed a debt to the calm beauty of Perugino's forms; but what a difference there is between the rather empty regularity of the master's work and the life of the pupil! The way the Madonna's face is modeled and shrouded in shadow, the way the free-flowing cloak wraps around the substantial body, the steady, gentle way the Madonna holds the Christ Child, all contribute to a perfect gesture. We feel that even the slightest change would destroy the harmony of the whole group. Yet there is nothing forced or artificial in the composition. It seems as if it had always been that way, as if it had always been since the beginning of time.

After a few years in Florence, Raphael went to Rome. He arrived there about 1508, just as Michelangelo was beginning to paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. Julius II soon found work for the young, amiable artist. He asked Raphael to decorate the walls of some of the rooms in the Vatican. On the walls and ceilings of those rooms, known as the Stanze (Rooms), he painted a series of frescoes that showed his mastery of perfect design and even composition. In order to fully appreciate the beauty of those works, one must spend some time in those rooms and feel the response of action to action, form to form, in the harmonious and varied arrangement of the whole. If they are removed from their environment and reduced in size, they appear lifeless; for when we are faced with a fresco, the individual figures standing before us, life-size, easily merge with the group. On the contrary, when they are extracted from their specific environment and printed as "parts" in illustrations, the figures lose one of their main functions, that of being part of the beautiful rhythm of the whole picture.

The School of Athens made Raphael famous throughout the ages and established his status as an artistic master. This mural is unique in that it brings together academic and artistic celebrities from ancient Greece, ancient Rome, and contemporary Italy. More than 50 philosophers, artists, and scientists from different times and spaces appear in a hall to discuss the origin of philosophy. Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, Pythagoras, and even Raphael himself are among them. Everyone's movements and expressions are vivid, and a grand debate is unfolding. This painting is called a landmark masterpiece of the Renaissance. It reveals the author's reverence for the humanistic spirit and classical Greek culture, praises human civilization and wisdom, and has become a classic work of realism on par with Leonardo da Vinci's The Last Supper and Michelangelo's The Last Judgment.

Another masterpiece of Raphael, "The Sistine Madonna", was also created during this period. This

2.65-meter-long and 1.96-meter-wide work has a very classic composition, with a pyramid-shaped overall layout. At the same time, the various characters in the picture are connected within an elliptical range, achieving a balance between the quiet and peaceful atmosphere and the rhythm of the picture. The Virgin Mary descended into the world with the baby in her arms, the crowd was enthusiastic, and the Pope looked up devoutly in a kneeling position. The expressions and postures of the characters were lifelike. The groundbreaking composition created a sense of the Virgin Mary's slow descent, combining the great image of the Virgin Mary with the image of a kind and gentle mother, satisfying people's spiritual needs for the "real Virgin Mary". "The Sistine Madonna" is known as a rare treasure comparable to "Mona Lisa", which has won Raphael high praise.

This is less evident in a smaller fresco (Fig. 204) that Raphael painted for the villa of the wealthy banker Agostino Chigi (now the Villa Farnesina) . Raphael chose as the subject of this fresco a stanza from a poem by the Florentine poet Angelo Poliziano , which had also inspired Botticelli to paint *The Birth of Venus*. The lines describe how the clumsy giant Polyphemus sings a love song to the beautiful sea nymph Galatea, who rides over the waves in a chariot drawn by two dolphins, surrounded by a group of merry sea gods and nymphs, who laugh at the coarseness of Polyphemus's love song. Raphael's fresco shows Galatea and her merry companions; the giant is painted elsewhere in the hall. No matter how long one looks at this lovely, joyous picture, one will find new beauties in the rich, intricate composition. Every figure seems to correspond to another, every movement to another counter-movement. We have seen this method before in Pollaiuolo's painting (see p. 263, fig. 171). But how rigid his method seems compared with Raphael's! Look first at the little boys, who hold the bows and arrows of Cupid and aim them at the heart of the nymph: not only do the children on the right and left follow each other's movements, but even the children swimming by the chariot follow the children flying at the top of the picture. So do the group of sea gods, who seem to be "spinning" around the nymph. At the edges of the picture, two sea gods are blowing conch shells, and a pair of sea gods are flirting with each other in front and behind. But what is particularly admirable is that all these different movements are somehow reflected and adopted in the image of Galatea herself. Her chariot is pulled from left to right, her scarf is blown back, but she turns and smiles at the strange love song. From the arrow of Cupid to the reins she holds, all the straight lines in the painting converge on her beautiful face, which is in the center of the picture. By these artistic means, Raphael has painted a kind of constant movement throughout the whole picture without destroying the tranquility and balance of the picture. It is precisely because of Raphael's supreme skill in arranging figures and perfect composition that later artists have always admired him. Just as Michelangelo was considered to have reached the pinnacle of mastery of the human body, Raphael was considered to have achieved the goal that the older generation had striven for: to show the free movement of figures in a perfect and harmonious composition.

There is another quality of Raphael's work that was admired by his contemporaries and later generations, namely, the pure beauty of his figures. When he had finished painting "Galatea," a courtier asked him where in the world he had found such a beautiful model. He replied that he did not imitate any particular model, but followed "some idea" that he had in mind. Thus, to a certain extent, Raphael, like his teacher Perugino, had abandoned the ambition of many 15th-century artists to portray nature faithfully. He deliberately used an imaginary standard type of beauty. While idealizing, he was able to achieve the ultimate in vividness and reality. There is nothing schematic or calculated in the loveliness of Galatea. She is a person who lives in a brighter world of love and beauty – the classical world in the minds of 16th-century Italian admirers.

It is for this achievement that Raphael has been famous through the centuries. Those who associate his name

only with beautiful Madonnas and idealized figures from the classical world may even be surprised to see a portrait that Raphael painted of his great patron, Pope Leo X of the Medici family, and two accompanying cardinals. There is nothing idealistic about the slightly bloated head of the short-sighted pope who has just examined an ancient manuscript. Velvets and brocades in various rich tones increase the atmosphere of pomp and power, but one can imagine that these people are not at ease. These were eventful times, and we remember that at the time when this portrait was painted, Luther had already attacked the pope for raising funds for the construction of the new St. Peter's Basilica. As it happened, after the death of Bramante, it was Raphael himself who was sent by Leo X to take charge of the construction of that project, and he thus became an architect again, designing churches, villas and palaces, and studying the architectural remains of ancient Rome. However, unlike his powerful rival Michelangelo, he got along well with people and ran a prosperous workshop. More than 50 disciples helped him complete the orders. He drew the sketches himself, and then the disciples filled in the specific colors. Finally, he checked and filled in some defects or loopholes, and polished them. This way of cooperation formed a new school, the "Raphael School", and had a great influence. Because of his sociable nature, scholars and dignitaries of the Roman Curia interacted with him. There was even talk of him becoming a cardinal at that time. At that time, on his 37th birthday in April 1520, he died, almost as young as Mozart. His short life was full of various artistic achievements, and the range of categories was shocking. Cardinal Bembo, one of the most famous scholars at the time, wrote the following epitaph for his tomb in the Pantheon in Rome: This is the tomb of Raphael, who was afraid to be conquered by Mother Nature when he was alive, and who was afraid to die with him when he died. What he left to the world are his more than 300 classic works, which not only gave rise to Baroque art, but also had an endless influence on the later French classical school and post-classicism.

Bernini

Rome was not built in a day. In that era when many stars shone and many masters emerged, no one wanted to leave a mark on this city. But in today's Rome, no one can leave as many marks on this city as Bernini. This Baroque art master has been blessed by the gods of wisdom and luck since birth. He is not only talented, but also very hardworking and famous at a young age. In his more than 70 years of artistic career, he has created countless masterpieces. As long as you walk in Rome, you can see various works of Bernini, especially those marble sculptures known for "dramatic moments". People say: "He did not make a great contribution to the city of Rome, but rebuilt Rome."

Bernini was born in Naples, southern Italy. His father, a Mannerist sculptor, named him Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini. At the age of 8, he came to Rome with his father and learned marble sculpture from his father. At the age of 17, he was able to create a good bust for the bishop on his own. At the age of 23, he gained a lot of fame with his first sculpture, "The Rape of Persephone". From this work, Bernini's vivid sculpture style has been filled in his subsequent sculptures. His early sculptures all focus on the beauty of dynamics, such as skin that can be blown away, clothes fluttering in the wind, and figures in intense motion. If Michelangelo's style is strong and full of the tough beauty of muscle lines, then Bernini's style is elegant and feminine. Marble seems to have lost its weight in his hands and is no longer a hard and resolute stone.

Today, the Borghese Museum in Rome, which is famous for its collection of many masterpieces of Baroque and Renaissance, houses four group sculptures from Bernini's early years, including "The Rape of Persephone", "David" and "Escape from Troy". But the first destination of almost everyone who comes here is his other masterpiece "Apollo and Daphne". This work was a standout work in a proposition sculpture project funded by Cardinal Scipione Borghese, a powerful Roman noble at the time. The 26-year-old Bernini shocked the whole of Rome with this work, and was praised by the cardinal as the reincarnation of Michelangelo.

"Apollo and Daphne" tells a famous legend. Cupid, in revenge, shot a golden arrow at Apollo, the sun god, to make him fall in love with the next woman he saw. At the same time, he shot a lead arrow at Daphne, the daughter of the river god, to make her hate the next man she saw. After the two met, Apollo, who was moved, kept chasing Daphne who wanted to escape. Daphne, who fled to the river, had to ask her father for help. After hearing his daughter's cry, her father turned her into a laurel tree at the moment when Apollo was about to catch her. Bernini's work was like giving life to stone. At the moment when Daphne turned into a laurel tree, the ten fingers that were open were growing branches and leaves, the bark was climbing along the girl's delicate skin, and the toes were growing roots. After the completion of this work, Bernini won the praise of the whole of Rome, and even some senior religious figures were moved by it, including Pope Urban VIII who later appreciated Bernini very much.

Urban VIII became Pope soon after, and Bernini also rose to prominence and took on the most glorious construction project at the time, the bronze canopy of St. Peter's Basilica. St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican is the center of Catholicism in the world. St. Peter is the leader of the twelve disciples of Jesus and the first pope, and has a supreme and lofty status in Catholicism. Previously, above St. Peter's tomb was a huge dome designed by Michelangelo. Urban VIII wanted to add a bronze canopy above St. Peter's tomb to further demonstrate the power of the Catholic world. However, this project was very difficult for Bernini, who was a sculptor. The bronze canopy was about 30 meters high and weighed 6 tons. It must be involved with professional architects to ensure that it was foolproof. In this case, Bernini had to turn to Borromini, an equally famous architect at the time. Bernini and Borromini had a clear division of labor. Bernini was responsible for the overall design of the bronze canopy, and Borromini cooperated in the structural engineering and decoration of the four columns.

After the completion of St. Peter's Basilica, the Pope commissioned Bernini to enrich the interior of the church and design a St. Peter's Square outside the church. Bernini designed a huge oval pattern, and the place connected to the church was a trapezoidal vestibule. He used this form to compare the church to a mother, with two arms embracing each other. In order to meet the need for a venue that can be freely entered and exited, independent Doric columns were designed, and there were 140 statues of prophets on the colonnade. The square guides visitors to the church and makes up for the disadvantage of the St. Peter's Basilica being too wide on the front.

In fact, Bernini had already had a desire to expand after completing the bronze canopy. The subsequent projects made his life fall to the bottom. The Pope wanted him to design another pair of bell towers for the Pantheon of St. Peter's Basilica. At this time, the conceited Bernini had a selfish desire to surpass Michelangelo. The height of the bell tower he designed was far higher than the dome designed by Michelangelo. However, the pair of bell towers designed by him, who was not an architect, had problems in the design drawings. The foundation was too soft and the tower was too heavy. Even if it was built, it would collapse sooner or later. Sure enough, not long after the bell tower was built, there were cracks in the wall. At this time, Urban VIII, who appreciated Bernini, also died. The new Pope Innocent X was a mortal enemy of the old pope, and he started to clean up the door. It happened that the bell tower incident happened again, so the new pope ordered that the pair of bell towers be demolished immediately, and Bernini's reputation was ruined.

After the bell tower incident, Bernini was driven off the altar and had almost no orders to do. After learning from his lack of architectural ability, Bernini focused on sculpture, which he was best at. Finally, two years later, his work "The Ecstasy of Saint Teresa" left during the renovation of Santa Maria Victory in

Rome brought him back into everyone's sight. This controversial work also made this remote chapel the focus of Rome. Bernini's statue depicts the moment when Saint Teresa was stabbed by the angel's golden spear. Bernini's talent is fully demonstrated in this work. Looking from the bottom up, Saint Teresa's slightly curled toes, the wave-like folds on her clothes, the limp limbs, the slightly open mouth, the slightly closed eyes and the expectant facial expression all show Saint Teresa's desire for God. The controversial part is that some people think that "the sculpture depicts the girl's complex inner feelings, turning the mysterious morbidity into a state of female obsession with love and desire in a hazy consciousness. Her coma and mental disorder are typical manifestations of a girl's puberty. Bernini uses hard stone to express the essence of a woman's soul under the disguise of a mysterious religious cloak." Others regard it as a product of Bernini's vulgar thoughts and believe that this sculpture should not appear in serious religious occasions.

In addition to the nearly perfect depiction of the character's expression, movements, and clothing, Bernini also took great pains to place the sculpture in the right environment. He opened a skylight on the top of the sculpture so that natural light could shine on the statue, and there were countless golden rays of light in the background, bathing the entire sculpture in light. He even carved sculptures similar to theater boxes on the walls on both sides of the sculpture, making the viewer feel as if they were really in the theater, watching an outstanding performance. The perfect and wonderful performance and controversial topics made Bernini a darling of Rome again. "The Ecstasy of Saint Theresa" became a new peak in Bernini's life, and also became one of the most important works in the history of Baroque art.

After completing The Ecstasy of Saint Teresa, Bernini, 53, reached his peak again. This year, he began to build the Fountain of the Four Rivers. The Fountain of the Four Rivers is located in the center of the city, Piazza della Signoria, the most beautiful square in Rome. In the middle of the fountain is a giant Egyptian obelisk 16.5 meters high, symbolizing the absolute leadership of Catholicism in the world. The four human statues surrounding the obelisk represent the four great rivers conquered by mankind: the Danube, the Ganges, the Nile, and the Rio de la Prada. These four rivers also represent the four continents of human civilization, Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. The huge obelisk is magnificent, the characters are portrayed delicately and vividly, the movements are full of tension, and the overall structure is wonderful. There are countless fountains in Rome, and the Fountain of the Four Rivers is undoubtedly the most beautiful one, enough for Bernini to be recorded in history forever. This incomparably wonderful fountain completely conquered Rome.

In 1680, Bernini died at the age of 82 and was buried in the Basilica Santa Maria Maggiore, one of the four archbishop's churches in Rome. For the next four hundred years, Bernini's aura has been permeating the air of Rome. In the aftermath of the Renaissance, Bernini brought Baroque art to an extreme, which is probably a gift from the times to this talented artist.

Garibaldi

Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807-1882) was an Italian general, patriot and politician. He played an important role in Italian history. He devoted himself to the Italian unification movement and personally led many military campaigns, and was called the sword of Italian unification. He, along with Cavour and Giuseppe Mazzini, was called the Three Heroes of the Italian Founding by Liang Qichao. In addition, he, Vittorio Emanuele II, Cavour and Mazzini were jointly regarded as the fathers of Italy. In Garibaldi's widely circulated story, he is associated with the red shirt. This is because his volunteers used the red shirt as their uniform.

Giuseppe Garibaldi was born in Nice on July 4, 1807, and grew up to become a captain of a merchant fleet. In November 1833, Garibaldi met Mazzini in Geneva, joined the Carbonari revolutionary society, and then fled to South America due to rebellion. While participating in the local "Tattered Shirt War", he met Anita, married in 1841, and had four children. During this period, Giuseppe officially established his signature clothing: red shirt, South American cloak, Mexican hat. These are common clothes worn by local shepherds. In South America, he successively participated in the independence revolution movements in Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay.

Garibaldi returned to Italy during the turmoil of the revolution of 1848, and during the course of the First Italian War of Independence, he led his legions to two minor victories at Luino and Morazzone. During Mazzini's uprising, Garibaldi was in charge of the defense of Rome. After the defeat, Garibaldi withdrew from Rome with 4,000 men. After an epic march, Garibaldi sought temporary asylum in San Marino, with only 250 men following him. During the retreat, Anita, who was pregnant with their fifth child, died of malaria. Garibaldi then went into exile for a second time in South America, embarking on trading voyages that reached Guangzhou and Xiamen in China in 1852.

Garibaldi returned to Italy again in 1854. In 1859, the Second Italian War of Independence (also known as the Austro-Sauro War) broke out. Garibaldi organized a volunteer army to help the Piedmontese monarchy achieve the liberation of Italy. In early April 1860, Messina and Palermo in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies revolted. Garibaldi assembled about a thousand volunteers - called "The Mille" (I Mille, the Thousand Expedition, also known as the Red Shirts), landed at Marsala, the westernmost tip of Sicily, won the Battle of Calatafimi, and then occupied the capital Palermo. In October, Garibaldi met with Vittorio Emanuele II at Teano and marched to Naples together, and then retired.

In June 1862, Garibaldi sailed from Genoa and landed in Palermo, where he called for volunteers to join the attack on the Papal States, which was opposed by the Italian government. During the confrontation, Garibaldi was injured and imprisoned, but was later released and exiled to London. In 1866, the Austro-Prussian War broke out, and Italy allied with Prussia in an effort to seize the Venetian region (the Third Italian War of Independence). Garibaldi once again assembled his "Alpine Hunters" of about 40,000 people and defeated the Austrians at Bezzecca (thus achieving the only victory for the Italians in this war). Garibaldi died on June 2, 1882.

Garibaldi served as a global revolutionary model of nationalism and liberalism in the mid-19th century. But after the liberation of southern Italy from the rule of the Neapolitan monarchy, Garibaldi chose to sacrifice his liberal republican beliefs for the unification of Italy. A British historian said: "Garibaldi is the only completely admirable figure in modern history." Five ships of the Italian Navy are named after him.

Garibaldi became a foreigner that attracted the attention of Chinese intellectuals in the late Qing Dynasty and early Republic of China. After the failure of the Reform Movement of 1898, Liang Qichao wrote "The Biography of Three Heroes in the Founding of Italy", which tells the stories of Garibaldi, Mazzini and Cavour. Liang Qichao believed that both Italy and China were once powerful ancient civilizations, but had declined at that time. Liang Qichao hoped that China would also have such three heroes to change the country. When recalling the past, Mao Zedong also said that before believing in Marxism, "I admired Washington, Napoleon, and Garibaldi and read their biographies."

Italian Unification Movement

The political and social process of unifying the various states of the Italian peninsula into Italy began with the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and the end of Napoleon's regime, and ended with the Franco-Prussian War in 1871. The Sardinian Parliament officially proclaimed the Kingdom of Italy in Turin on March 17, 1861. The last of the lost territories did not join the Kingdom of Italy until after World War I.

Two important figures in the unification movement were Giuseppe Mazzini and Giuseppe Garibaldi, advocates of Italian unification. Among the more conservative supporters of constitutional monarchy, Cavour and Vittorio Emanuele II, who later became the first King of Italy, were also important figures.

Mazzini, a Genoese, became a member of the Carbonari in 1830. He founded the Italian Youth Party with the goal of unifying Italy. In 1820, the Carbonari rebelled in the army of the Kingdom of Sicily and conquered the peninsula part of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Soon the revolution failed. Many supporters of the revolution, including Michele Armani, were forced into exile abroad for decades.

In January 1848, a revolution broke out in Sicily. Uprisings against the Austrians broke out in Milan and Venice in what is known as the First Italian War of Independence. The revolution failed in 1850.

In 1858, Prime Minister Cavour of the Kingdom of Sardinia allied with Italy to fight against Austria. Although Napoleon III withdrew from the war, in 1860 the Kingdom of Sardinia controlled a large area of central and northern Italy. At that time, there were only four regimes left in Italy, namely the Austrian Empire that ruled Venice, the newly expanded Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia, the Papal States and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. In 1860, Garibaldi launched an expedition of 1,000 people, completely occupied Sicily, and then marched towards the Italian peninsula, entering Naples in September. The Sardinian army marched south through the Papal States and joined Garibaldi. In March 1861, Victor Emmanuel II became the King of Italy, and Rome was declared the capital of Italy, although it was still not incorporated into Italian rule. In 1865, the Italian government moved the capital from Turin to Florence.

In the Austro-Prussian War of 1866, the Kingdom of Italy recaptured Venice from the Austrian Empire. The Austro-Prussian War is known as the "Third War of Independence", after the First (1848) and Second (1859) Wars of Independence.

In July 1870, the Franco-Prussian War broke out. Napoleon III recalled the Roman garrison and could no longer protect the Papal States. In October, Rome and Lazio were incorporated into the Kingdom of Italy. In July 1871, the Italian government officially moved its capital from Florence to Rome.

Italian Minced Meat Operation

In January 1943, the British and American Allied Forces decided to capture Sicily as a springboard to enter Europe. Sicily is the largest island in the Mediterranean Sea, located at a strategic point, and its strategic location is very important. Germany and Italy have stationed heavy troops on the island, and a strong attack on Sicily would definitely cost a lot. It would be best to have a way to fool Hitler, so the "Mincemeat Operation" that was amazing in World War II was brewing.

The British intelligence agency came up with a good idea. They found a corpse that died of pneumonia.

People who died of pneumonia have water in their lungs. If an autopsy was done, it would look like someone who had drowned. Then, after disguising the corpse, they carried a secret letter with them. It was a private letter from General Peard, then Deputy Chief of the British General Staff, to General Alexander in North Africa. It mentioned that the Allied forces would land in Sardinia. The corpse was sent to the coast of Spain by submarine. It was soon discovered by Spanish fishermen, who reported it to the Spanish authorities.

When the Spaniards saw that it was "Major Martin", they found out his identity and informed the British consul. Of course, because Spain had close relations with Nazi Germany – which was also the reason why the British dumped the body here, the Spaniards also informed the German spies in Spain when they informed the British. The German spies took the lead and secretly photographed all the documents on "Major Martin" before the British consul claimed the body. The photocopies of the documents were quickly sent to Berlin, Germany for identification. After receiving the report, the Berlin authorities instructed the spies to provide more detailed details while conducting the identification.

Five days later, London received a report from the British Embassy in Spain, saying that the British vice-consul at the port of Bilbao claimed the body of Marine Major Martin, who had drifted at sea. The body had been buried, and the document bag was not mentioned at all. At the same time, the British Navy Notary Office listed the name of "Major Martin" in the register of fallen soldiers. The Times on May 28 published a list of names of fallen soldiers, including "Major Martin", and also issued an obituary. After many negotiations by the British Embassy in Spain, the body of "Major Martin" was buried according to formal military honors. His fiancée also sent a wreath and attached a grief-stricken mourning postcard. The British consul also erected a simple white marble tombstone for "Major Martin".

How thoughtful was the British intelligence agency for "Major Martin"? In his wallet were photos of his fiancée, wedding rings, movie ticket stubs, and everything seemed real. But the Germans were very smart and meticulous. Such a big piece of intelligence dropped from the sky was like \$1 million dropping on my head. I had to think about whether I could take it. So I really wanted to believe it was true, but I was also worried about being fooled.

What to do? The German spy lurking in the UK was highly dedicated and used a trick in the spy business, called "death spy". This spy went directly to the "fiancée" of "Major Martin". Of course, this fiancée was arranged by the British in advance and was a powerful actress. This spy claimed to be a comrade-in-arms of "Major Martin" and came to express condolences to the major's "fiancée". If this "Major Martin" was fake, then this spy would have exposed his identity. There was no "Major Martin" at all. If you said you were a comrade-in-arms of "Major Martin", it would be like walking into a trap. This spy was very sacrificial and bet his life to verify whether "Major Martin" was real or fake. The "fiancée" of "Major Martin" performed very successfully, saying thank you for coming to condole and acting very sad. The German spy believed it to be true and said that "Major Martin" was indeed a person and everything said in the secret document was true. In this way, the German intelligence department completely believed the content of the secret document. As a result, the German intelligence department submitted a report to Hitler: the reliability of the document was beyond doubt. Hitler was very happy and transferred the Sicily garrison to Sardinia and Peloponnese.

In July 1943, 5,400 soldiers of the Allied Airborne Division and 160,000 American and British landing troops boarded 3,200 warships and transport ships and landed in the southwest and southeast of Sicily under the cover of 1,000 aircraft. On August 17, the entire island was occupied, and the Allied forces had since opened the door to landing in Europe.

Timeline of Italian History

Homo erectus appeared in Italy about 200,000 years ago

Neanderthals appeared in the Middle Paleolithic period about 60,000 years ago

Human activity began in Sicily in the late Paleolithic period about 30,000 years ago

Cro-Magnon people migrated to Italy around 10,000 BC

Mesolithic period, about 5000 BC

3500–2500 BC Neolithic Age, agriculture emerges

2000–1800 BC Bronze Age

1800–1000 BC Bronze Age

Terra Mare and Apennine cultures emerge

1400 BC Mycenae established a colony in Sicily

1000–800 BC: transition from the Bronze Age to the Iron Age

800 BC Greeks invade Sicily and southern Italy

Villanova culture emerges

April 21, 753 BC Romulus founded Rome

753–509 BC Roman Monarchy

The heyday of Etruscan civilization in the 7th to 6th century BC

650 BC Etruscan expansion in the south

The Pythagorean school was born in the 6th century BC

509 BC: Roman Republic established

Etruscan civilization expands to the north around 500 BC

494 BC: Roman Plebeian Council established

In 474 BC, the Etruscan navy was severely damaged by the Greeks at the Battle of Cuma.

471 BC: Roman tribunes and plebeian assemblies formally recognized

The Twelve Tables were established in Rome between 452 and 450 BC

The position of censor was established in Rome in 443 BC

The Temple of Apollo was built in 433 BC

420 BC: Southern Etruscan cities captured by the Sabelli

400 BC Celts begin to occupy Etruscan territory

396 BC: Rome captures Veii

390 BC: Gauls sack Rome

The Licinian Code was promulgated in Rome in 367 BC

348 BC: Roman conquest of Latium

343–290 BC Rome defeats the Samnites

Debt slavery was abolished in Rome in 326 BC

289–275 BC Rome defeated the Etruscans

272 BC Rome rules the south and begins colonization

265 BC: Rome conquers Volsini, ending the Etruscan era

264–241 BC: First Punic War, Rome occupies Sicily

225 BC Gallic invasion of Italy, Battle of Telemundo

In 232 BC, Rome began a century of prosperity.

220–118 BC Rome defeated the Curian mountain peoples

Second Punic War 218–202 BC

218-207 BC Hannibal defeated Rome
215-204 BC First Macedonian War, Rome defeated
207 BC: Roman victory over Hannibal's brother at the Metauro River
Hannibal was defeated at the Battle of Zama in 202 BC
200-197 BC Second Macedonian War, Macedonia was defeated
197-133 BC Rome occupied Spain
Cato became censor in 184 BC
172-168 BC Third Macedonian War, Macedonian War
160 BC Rome conquers the southern part of the Po River Basin
149-146 BC: Third Punic War, Rome conquers Carthage
146 BC Rome conquers the last city-state of ancient Greece
First Sicilian slave revolt 136-132 BC
133 BC, 123 BC - 122 BC The reforms of the Gracchi brothers failed
Dalmatian War 118 - 117 BC
112-105 BC Jugurthine War: Rome defeats Jugurtha
In 105 BC, at the Battle of Arausio, about 80,000 Roman soldiers were killed.
Second Sicilian slave revolt 104-102 BC
104-100 BC Marian Reforms
101 BC Marius defeats the Germanic invasion
88-84 BC First Mithraic War, Roman War against Pontus
Sulla's dictatorship from 82 to 79 BC
Spartacus Uprising 73-71 BC
Pompey's campaign against pirates in 67 BC
67-64 BC Second Mithridatic War, Pompey conquers Asia Minor
Pompey conquers Syria in 64 BC
Ceticus suppresses Catiline's rebellion
In 60 BC, Pompey, Caesar, and Cthulhu formed the First Triumvirate
Cthulhu died in battle in 53 BC
Caesar conquers Gaul in 52 BC
Pompey appointed sole consul
Pompey was killed in 48 BC
The love affair between Caesar and Cleopatra VII in 47 BC
In 45 BC, Caesar became dictator for life
Caesar was assassinated on March 15, 44 BC
In 43 BC, Antony, Lepidus, and Octavian formed the Second Triumvirate
Antony's love affair with Cleopatra VII in 41 BC
37 BC: Rome conquers the Thesaurus
Octavian deprived Lepidus of his military power in 36 BC
Octavian defeated Antony at the Battle of Acta in 31 BC
Octavian destroyed the Ptolemaic dynasty in 30 BC
Pax Romana (30 BC - 180 AD)
In 27 BC, Octavian accepted the title of Augustus and the Roman Republic became the Roman Empire.
27-68 BC Julio-Claudian Dynasty
19 BC Rome conquers northwestern Spain
Jesus founded Christianity in the 1st century AD
Rome annexed Mauritania in 42 AD

43 AD Rome conquers Britain
46 AD: Rome conquers Thrace
54-68 Reign of the Tyrant Nero
The Great Fire of Rome in 64 AD
Flavian Dynasty 69-117
The Colosseum was completed in 79 AD
Vesuvius erupts, Pompeii is buried
Dacian Wars 86 - 92
The Golden Age
105 AD Trajan conquers Dacia
114 AD Rome annexed Armenia
Antonine Dynasty 117-193
165 Mesopotamia Province established
166 The Lombards invade Pannonia, marking the beginning of the barbarian invasions
Severan Dynasty 193-235
Crisis of the Third Century 192-284
244 AD Roman Emperor Gordian was killed in the Persian War
Rebellion of the Gallic Empire 259-273
259 Emperor Laetian captured by the Sassanid Persians
272 AD: Goths conquer Dacia
In 284, Diocletian ascended the throne and changed the title of the head of state to monarch, ending the Crisis of the Third Century
Diocletian's economic, military, and political reforms from 284 to 305
British Rebellion 287 - 296
In 293, Diocletian established the Tetrarchy
Christianity was legalized in 313
323 Constantine becomes sole ruler of Rome
In 330, Constantine moved his capital to Byzantium.
360 AD Roman Emperor Julian was killed in Persia
In 375, the Huns entered the Ostrogoths and the great migration of the Germanic peoples began
Armenia was divided between Rome and Sassanid Persia in 384 AD
392 Christianity becomes the state religion of Rome
In 395 AD, the Roman Empire split into the Western Roman Empire and the Eastern Roman Empire.
Visigoths invade Greece
409: Suebi Kingdom established
410 Alaric the Visigoth conquers Rome
419: The Visigoths established the Visigothic Kingdom
420 The Franks enter Gaul
In 439, Gaiseric founded the Vandal Kingdom in North Africa
In 450, Attila the Scourge of God attacked the Western Roman Empire
Aetius was murdered in 451, and the Roman armed forces fell into chaos
Battle of Catalonia Plains, Attila's retreat
In 452, Attila attacked Rome
Attila died in 453 and the Hun Empire collapsed
Maximus's Rebellion in 455
The Vandals sack Rome

455-476 Four Barbarian Tribes Seize Power in the Western Roman Empire

457: The Kingdom of Burgundy is established

468: Vandal defeat of Eastern Rome

In 476, Odoacer deposed the last emperor Augustulus and the Western Roman Empire fell.

Europe enters feudal society

490 The Ostrogothic Kingdom was established

In 493, Theodoric deposed Odoacer and the Ostrogothic Kingdom ruled Italy.

In 552, the Byzantine Empire destroyed the Ostrogothic Kingdom.

568 The Lombard Kingdom was established and invaded Italy

In the 7th century, Lombardy and Byzantium confronted each other and maintained a relatively peaceful situation

The Edict of Rotari was issued in 643

700 The Lombards completely lost their original writing

754 Pepin the Short invades Lombardy

In 756, Pepin donated land and the Papal States were established.

774: Charlemagne the Frank conquers the Lombard Kingdom

The era of great land reclamation and development from the 9th to the 12th century

Venice began to rise in the early 9th century

In 800, the Pope crowned Charles and the Carolingian Empire was established.

827 Arab invasion of Sicily

Benevento Civil War 839 - 849

In 843, the Treaty of Verdun was signed, and the Carolingian Empire was divided, and the Kingdom of Italy was established.

876 Byzantine reconquest of the south

Civil war against King Berengar, 888 - 905

First Hungarian invasion in 899

Cities began to emerge in the 10th century

In 902, the Arabs officially occupied Sicily

924 Hungarians sack Pavia

934 Arabs sack Genoa

962: Holy Roman Empire established

In the early 11th century, the Normans began to settle in southern Italy.

Scholastic philosophy prevailed from the 11th to the 14th century

1024: The Royal Palace of Pavia was looted, and the Kingdom of Italy was destroyed

1034 Duke of Naples granted Aversa to the Normans

1053 Normans defeat Pope Leo IX at Civita

1054: The Christian Church splits

1059 Pope recognizes Norman rule in the south

1061-1091 Norman conquest of Sicily

1071 Normans conquer Bari, ending Byzantine rule in Italy

The Penitential Incident at Canossa in 1077

At the end of the 11th century, Venice, Genoa, and Pisa became the economic hegemony along the Mediterranean coast.

1084 Henry IV and the Normans sack Rome and depose Pope Gregory VII

1096-1099 First Crusade

The Concordat of 1122 strengthened the power of the Pope

1130 Norman Roger II establishes the Kingdom of Sicily
Frederick Barbarossa invaded Italy six times from 1153 to 1186
Frederick Barbarossa burns Milan in 1162
Urban communes emerged in the 1180s
Second Crusade 1147-1149
1159 The Lombard League of Cities was founded
1176: The Lombard League defeats Barbarossa at Legnano
In 1183, the Treaty of Constance came into effect, and the legal status of each city was established.
The Third Crusade 1189-1192
1190-1225 The rise of the common people's commune
1194 Holy Roman Emperor Henry VI conquers Sicily
The Guelph-Zeppelin War in the 13th Century
Thomas Aquinas combined Aristotle's philosophy with Christianity
The Fourth Crusade, 1202-1204
The Fifth Crusade, 1217-1221
1226 The Second Lombard League is established
1228-1229 Sixth Crusade
1234 Frederick II defeats the Lombard League
1260 Battle of Montaperti, Siena defeats Florence
Charles of Anjou invades Italy
1265 Charles of Anjou conquers Naples and Sicily
Charles defeats Frederick at Benevento in 1266
1268: End of the Hohenstaufen dynasty
1282 Aragon conquers Sicily
1284 Battle of Meloria, Genoa defeats Pisa
Marco Polo returns to Venice in 1298
The decline of the common people's commune in the early 14th century
Florence becomes the center of Europe's woolen industry and bank exchange
Venice becomes world trade center
Renaissance from 14th to 17th century
In 1303, Pope Boniface arrested
The Pope was imprisoned in Avignon from 1305 to 1377, marking the decline of the Pope's power.
1305 Giotto painted "Lamentation over Christ"
Giotto's "The Kiss of Judas"
Giotto painted frescoes in the Sgroveni Chapel from 1305 to 1308
1307-1321 Dante composed The Divine Comedy
1324 Aragon conquers Sardinia
In 1341, Petrarch, the "Father of Humanism", was awarded the title of "Poet Laureate"
1348-1349 Black Death outbreak
1348-1353 Boccaccio wrote The Decameron
The Great Schism of the Catholic Church 1378-1415
1378 Florentine wool combers revolt
1397 Medici Bank established in Florence
1400 Brunetti wrote On the Family
1406 Florence annexed Pisa
1414-1418 Council of Constance, ending the Great Schism of the Catholic Church

1434 Medici family comes to power in Florence
1442 Aragon conquers Naples from Anjou
The Venetian School of Painting emerged in the mid-15th century
The first printing house was established in Italy in 1465
In 1474 Ficino completed Plato's Theology
1478-1480 Florence, Venice, Milan, the Pope, Siena, Naples at war
1483-1486 Leonardo da Vinci created the first painting "Madonna of the Rocks"
1492 Columbus discovered the New World
1494 Charles VIII of France invades Italy, the Italian Wars begin
Leonardo da Vinci created The Last Supper in 1498
1499 Louis XII invades Italy
Michelangelo's "Lamentation over Christ"
Milan fell to the French in the early 16th century
1501-1504 Michelangelo created the sculpture "David"
Leonardo da Vinci created the Mona Lisa from 1503 to 1507
Pope Julius II was in power from 1503 to 1513 and strongly supported the development of art.
In 1505, Raphael created "Madonna of the Meadow" and "Madonna of Ansidei"
In 1506 Bramante began designing St. Peter's Basilica
1508 - 1509 League of Cambrai
Michelangelo created the Sistine Chapel ceiling frescoes from 1508 to 1512
Leonardo da Vinci created his second painting of the Virgin of the Rocks in 1508
Raphael painted The School of Athens in 1509
Venice defeated at the Battle of Anadiello
Giorgione painted The Sleeping Venus in 1510
Raphael created the Madonna of Foligno in 1511-1512
1512 Medici family returns to power
Battle of Ravenna, French victory
1513 Machiavelli wrote The Prince
Raphael created the Sistine Madonna in 1513-1514
1513-1516 Michelangelo created "Moses"
Titian created "Assumption of the Virgin" from 1516 to 1518
1517 The Reformation begins
Charles V drives French troops out of Milan in 1521
1525 Battle of Pavia, France defeated
Charles V's troops sack Rome in 1527
1530 Spain began to rule Italy
1537-1541 Michelangelo created The Last Judgment
1540: Society of Jesus founded
1541-1542 Congress of Regensburg was defeated
1542 The Inquisition was established
In 1545, Tartaglia discovered a method for solving cubic equations
1545-1563 Council of Trent, the Counter-Reformation officially began
In 1554, Bandeta published his "Collection of Novels"
In 1556, Tartaglia completed On Number and Measurement.
The List of Prohibited Books was published in 1558
1559 Treaty of Catto-Combreccia, ending the Italian Wars

Italy's economic prosperity in the late 16th century
Galileo conducted his famous falling body experiment at the Leaning Tower of Pisa in 1589
1593 Galileo invented the thermometer
Italy's economic decline in the 17th century
Baroque period
In 1600, Bruno was burned at the stake.
1609 Galileo invented the telescope
1610 Galileo wrote The Starry Messenger
Galileo discovered four satellites of Jupiter
The Monferrato War and the Valtellina War (1612 - 1617)
Thirty Years' War (1618 - 1648)
1622 Campanella wrote The City of the Sun
Second Monferrato War (1627 - 1631)
The Austrians sacked Mantua in 1630
In 1631, the Papal States annexed the State of Urbino
Galileo's trial in Rome in 1633
Castro Wars of 1641 - 1644
1647-1648 Naples and Palermo uprisings
French fleet bombards Genoa in 1648
1649: The Papal States annexed the State of Castro
Venice loses Crete in 1669
1674 Messina Rebellion
The Enlightenment was introduced to Italy in the 18th century
War of the Spanish Succession 1700 - 1713
1713 Treaty of Utrecht, end of Spanish rule, partition of Italy
Venice at war with Türkiye from 1714 to 1718
1734 Spain regains Sicily and Naples
1737: End of the Medici family
1748-1749 Piedmont regains Nice and Savoy
1755 Genoa sold Corsica to France
Lombard Reform 1760-1790
1770 Reforms of Leopold II in Tuscany
1773 Pope Clement XIV disbands the Society of Jesus
1796-1797 Napoleon invades Italy
Shannon Republic was established in 1797
Genoa establishes the Republic of Liguria
The Treaty of Campo Formio is signed
France establishes the Parthenopaeus in Naples
In 1799, the Austro-Russian coalition forces drove France out of Italy except Genoa.
1800 Volta invents the battery
Napoleon invades Italy again
1801-1802 Italian Republic established
1805 The Kingdom of Italy was established, with Napoleon as king
1806 France conquers the Kingdom of Naples
1808: France captures Rome
Congress of Vienna in 1815, restoration of the old order in Italy

1820-1821 Uprisings in Sicily, Piedmont, and Naples
1831-1832 Uprisings in Modena, Parma, and the Papal States
In 1831, Mazzini founded the Young Italy Party
1833: The Mazzinists are suppressed by Carlo Alberto
In 1837, Mazzini started his activities in London.
1848-1849 First Italian War of Independence
European Revolution
In 1848, the Kingdom of Sardinia established a constitutional monarchy.
Palermo Uprising of January 1848
In February 1848, the Roman Republic was established under the leadership of Mazzini.
April 1848 The Roman Republic fell
Cavour served as Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Sardinia from 1852 to 1861
In 1855, the Kingdom of Sardinia was involved in the Crimean War
1859 Austrian troops driven out of Lombardy
Second War of Independence, 1859 - 1860
Garibaldi's "Thousand" expedition in 1860
Nice and Savoy ceded to France
Southern Italy was incorporated into the Kingdom of Sardinia
1861: Kingdom of Italy established
1861-1876 Right wing in power in parliament
1865 The capital of Italy was moved from Turin to Florence
The Third War of Independence, 1866-1870
Garibaldi's failed attack on Rome in 1867
September 20, 1870: Italy was unified and the Pope's secular power was abolished
1871 The Guarantee Act is passed
1876-1887 Left-wing Despots came to power
Compulsory primary education was implemented in 1877
Italy attended the Berlin Conference in 1878 as a major power for the first time
Electoral Reform of 1882
Italy, Germany, and Austria-Hungary form the Triple Alliance
1885 Italian occupation of Massawa
1887 Abyssinians defeat Italian colonists
Eritrea became an Italian colony in 1890
1891 The first foreign trade union in Italy was established
In 1892, Turati founded the Workers' Party
1895 Mazzini's wireless communication
Italian Socialist Party founded
In the Battle of Adwa in 1896, Abyssinia annihilated the Italian army
The Milan riots in 1898 paralyzed public order in many places
1900 Assassination of Umberto I
Giolitti served as Prime Minister from 1901 to 1915
1902-1907: Strikes are rampant
1911-1912 Italian conquest of Libya
1912 All male citizens were given the right to vote
Mussolini becomes editor of Avanti
1914-1918 World War I

Italy joined the Allied Powers in April 1915
May 23, 1915 Italy declares war on Austria
1917 Battle of Caporetto, Italian defeat
1918 Battle of the Piave River and the Battle of Vittorio Veneto, Italian victories
D'Annunzio captures Fiume in 1919
Mussolini founded the Fascist Organization
Parliament adopts proportional representation
1920: League of Nations established
The Treaty of Versailles was signed, and Italy's interests were damaged
The Blackshirts Appear
Rapallo Conference
1921 Italian Communist Party founded
Mussolini founded the Fascist party
1922 Fascist Blackshirts march into Rome, Mussolini becomes Prime Minister
1923 Fascist rule begins
Corfu incident
Matteotti was murdered in 1924
1929 Vatican City established
The capitalist economic crisis breaks out
1936 Italy occupied Abyssinia
Italy and Germany form the Axis Powers
1936-1939 Italian intervention in the Spanish Civil War
The Anti-Comintern Pact was signed in 1937, forming the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo axis.
Mussolini persecutes Jews in 1938
1939 Italian occupation of Albania
Italy and Germany sign the Pact of Steel
1939-1945 World War II
On June 10, 1940, Italy declared war on Britain and France and began to invade Kenya, Sudan, and British Mali.
October 1940 - March 1941 Italy invades Greece
The Battle of El Alamein in 1942, a turning point in the North African battlefield
May 13, 1943 German and Italian troops in North Africa surrender
July 25, 1943 General Badoglio established a new government and Mussolini was imprisoned
August 17, 1943 British and American Allied Forces occupied Sicily
September 11, 1943 Germany rescues Mussolini
On September 23, 1943, Hitler established the Italian Social Republic after occupying large tracts of Italian territory.
Rome liberated by the Allies in June 1944
Allied invasion of northern Italy in April 1945
Mussolini was shot on April 28, 1945
The Mafia grew in power after 1945
1946 Italian Republic established
The new constitution came into effect on January 1, 1948
Women get the vote
Italy joined NATO in 1949
1952 European Steel Community established

Trieste returns to Italy in 1954

1958 European Atomic Energy Community and European Economic Community established

1959–1963 Economic Miracle

1967 European Community established

In 1969, strikes and demonstrations began to sweep across the country, and the country was in chaos.

Divorce was legalized in 1970

Renato Curcio founded the "Red Brigades" criminal organization

1974–1978 Italian Communist Party led European communism

1975 "Rights of Layoffs" was promoted

1977 Non-Parliamentary Youth Activities

General Della Chiesa crushed the terrorist group in the early 1980s

1980 Bologna train station bombing

In 1983, Clarke came to power and the economy began to improve.

In 1987, Italy's GDP surpassed that of the United Kingdom

1994 Forza Italia was founded

Italy has the lowest birth rate

2001 European Union established

In 2002, the euro was adopted in Italy and the lira was stopped from circulation.

The fight against the Mafia began in 2007, but crime in the South continues unabated

2008 Global Financial Tsunami

2011 Italian debt crisis

World Heritage Sites in Italy

As of 2015, Italy has a total of 51 World Heritage Sites, including 46 cultural heritage sites and 4 natural heritage sites, of which 1 is shared with the Vatican, 2 are shared with Switzerland, and 1 is shared by 6 countries. The total number of heritage sites ranks first in the world.

paintings of Valcamonica Rupestre della Val Camonica) (1979, World Heritage)

Convent , where Leonardo da Vinci' s The Last Supper is painted

Domenicano di Santa Maria delle Grazie and il ' Cenacolo ' di Leonardo da Vinci) (1980, World Cultural Heritage)

3. The historic center of Rome, the Vatican buildings with extraterritoriality in the city and St. Paul's Cathedral outside the city (Roma) (1980, expanded in 1990)

4. Historic Centre of Florence (Firenze) (1982, World Cultural Heritage)

5. Pisa Cathedral Square (Pisa) (1987, World Cultural Heritage)

6. Venice and its Lagoon (Venezia) (1987, World Cultural Heritage)

7. Historic Centre of San Gimignano (1990, World Cultural Heritage)

8. Matera (1993, World Heritage Site)

9. Vicenza and the Palladian Villas of Veneto (Vicenza) (1994, expanded in 1996, World Cultural Heritage)
- Crespi of Adda D'Adda) (1995, World Heritage)
11. The Renaissance city of Ferrara and its Po Delta (Ferrara) (1995, expanded in 1999, World Cultural Heritage)
12. Historic Centre of Naples (Napoli) (1995, World Cultural Heritage)
13. Historic Centre of Siena (1995, World Cultural Heritage)
14. Castel del Monte (1996, World Cultural Heritage)
15. Early Christian Monuments in Ravenna (1996, World Cultural Heritage)
- Pienza Historic Center (1996, World Cultural Heritage)
17. The Trulli of Alberobello (1996, World Heritage)
18. The 18th-century Royal Palace and its gardens in Caserta, the Aqueduct of Vanvitelli and the Reggia di Caserta (1997, World Heritage Site)
19. Agrigento Archaeological Area (Agrigento) (1997, World Cultural Heritage)
20. Pompeii, Herculaneum and Torre Annunzia Archaeological Area (Pompei) (1997, World Cultural Heritage)
21. Padua Botanical Garden (Orto Botanico di Padova) (1997, World Cultural Heritage)
22. Modena' s Cathedral, Civic Tower and Piazza Grande (Modena) (1997, World Cultural Heritage)
23. Amalfi Coast (1997, World Cultural Heritage)
24. Portovenere, Five Villages and Coastal Islands (Cinque Terre) (1997, World Heritage)
25. Savoia Palace (1997 , World Cultural Heritage)
- Nuraghi of Barumini Barumini) (1997, World Cultural Heritage)
27. Villa Romana del Casale (1997, World Heritage)
28. Aquileia Archaeological Area and Cathedral (Aquileia) (1998, World Cultural Heritage)
29. Cilento and Vallo di Diano National Park, including the archaeological sites of Paestum and Velia, and the Cilento Monastery of Padula (1998, World Heritage)
30. Historic Centre of Urbino (1998, World Cultural Heritage)

31. Hadrian' s Villa, Tivoli (1999, World Heritage)
32. Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi and other Franciscan relics (Assisi) (2000, World Cultural Heritage)
33. Verona (2000, World Cultural Heritage)
34. Aeolian Islands Eolie) (2000, World Natural Heritage)
35. Villa d' Este, Tivoli (2001, World Heritage)
36. Late Baroque Towns in the Noto Valley (Val di Noto) (2002, World Heritage)
37. Sacred Mountains of Piedmont and Lombardy Lombardia) (2003, World Cultural Heritage)
38. Monte San Giorgio, Lugano (2003, shared with Switzerland, World Natural Heritage)
39. Etruscan Necropolis of Cervetri and Tarquinia Etruscan Cerveteri e Tarquinia (2004, World Heritage)
40. Val d'Orcia (2004, World Heritage Site)
41. Siracusa and the Pantalica Tomb (Siracusa) (2005, World Cultural Heritage)
42. Genoa: New Street and Rolli Palace System (Genova) (2006, World Cultural Heritage)
43. Mantova and Sabbioneta (2008 , World Heritage)
- Railway in the Bernina Cultural Landscape retica nel paesaggio dell'Albula and del Bernina) (2008, shared with Switzerland, World Heritage)
45. Dolomites (2009, World Natural Heritage)
46. Lombardy in Italy – the Land of Power, 568–774 AD (I Longobardi in Italia. Luoghi di potere) (2011, World Cultural Heritage)
47. Prehistoric lakeside pile dwellings around the Alps (Siti palafitticoli preistorici delle Alpi) (2011, World Heritage)
48. Medici Villas and Gardens in Tuscany Medicee) (2013, World Cultural Heritage)
49. Mount Etna (2013, World Natural Heritage)
- ' s vineyard landscape: Langhe Roero and Monferrato Vitivinicoli del Piemonte: Langhe-Roero e Monferrato) (2014, World Cultural Heritage)
51. Arab –Norman architectural complex and the Cathedrals of Cefalù and Monreale in Palermo, Sicily (2015,

World Heritage)

This heritage protects a total of 9 buildings and churches in Palermo, Cefalu and Monreale .