



Giubileo 2025  
**is Bologna**

**Discover**

# **City Pilgrimage**

**Art and faith across  
the churches of Bologna**








This itinerary, devised by the Archdiocese of Bologna to celebrate the Jubilee 2025, is intended for those who wish to experience a city full of art and faith while enjoying its beauty and significance. The City Pilgrimage offers an innovative cultural and spiritual experience among walks, stops and interaction between fellow travellers. It guides visitors and pilgrims through some of Bologna's most beautiful churches, enlightening their historical, artistic and religious aspects and culminating in St. Peter's Cathedral, thus marking the beginning of a new journey towards a future of hope.



### How to get there

Bologna is easily accessible by most modes of transport.

### Bologna

-  Bologna G. Marconi Airport
-  Bologna Centrale Station
-  Motorways (A1-A13-A14)

- 1 Basilica of Saints Bartolomeo and Gaetano
- 2 Church of Saints Vitale and Agricola in Arena
- 3 Complex of S. Stefano
- 4 Sanctuary of S. Maria della Vita
- 5 Basilica of S. Petronio
- 6 St. Peter's Cathedral
- 7 Sanctuary of the Blessed Virgin of S. Luca

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## Basilica of Saints Bartolomeo and Gaetano

*A new city born  
out of faith*

4, Strada Maggiore

An early church dedicated to the apostle Bartholomew already existed in the 8th century along the Via Emilia, the heart of the urban agglomeration known as the 'Lombard addition', where the city was starting to expand by combining Germanic and Latin cultures. The present-day basilica, built in the 17th century by the Clerici Regolari Teatini, is a masterpiece of Bolognese Baroque, entirely frescoed in homage to the spirituality and life of St Gaetano. With its slender dome soaring between the Two Towers, it is part of the iconic landscape of Bologna.





## Church of Saints Vitale and Agricola in Arena

*Servant and master made brothers by faith*

50, Via S. Vitale

Erected along the road to Ravenna, this church celebrates the first Bolognese martyrs Vitale and Agricola, slave and master made brothers by faith and executed for their adherence to Christianity. The altarpiece on the high altar, by Luigi Busi, is a superb representation of their martyrdom, yet it is certainly in the silence of the early medieval crypt that the most profound evocation can be perceived: according to tradition, it was here, on the site of the ancient Roman arena, that the two saints bore their testimony of faith.



## Complex of S. Stefano

*Jerusalem in Bologna*

24, Via Santo Stefano

This complex, dedicated to the first Christian martyr, was founded on the remains of a Roman temple by Bishop Petronius following a trip to Jerusalem, with a view to creating a Bolognese 'Holy City'. The original 5th-century nucleus was thus enriched with new buildings, becoming a historical and spiritual beacon. Over the centuries, it has served as the arrival and departure point for pilgrims seeking the pivotal experience of the Christian faith: the reunion with Christ crucified, dead and risen.



## Sanctuary of S. Maria della Vita

*“Out of the depths I cry to you, my Lord”*

8/10, Via Clavature

The complex of Santa Maria della Vita stems from the ‘Battuti’ movement founded by Blessed Rainero Fasani in 1260 and bears witness to the history of the oldest lay confraternity in Bologna, dedicated to charity and penance by means of a hospital for the sick and pilgrims (hence the Hospitals of Bologna). Both the extraordinary 15th-century masterpiece *Lamentation over the Dead Christ* by Nicolò dell'Arca and the *Transit of the Virgin* by Alfonso Lombardi, in the upper oratory, convey the dramatic nature of grief and call for merciful action.



## Basilica of S. Petronio

*Home of all  
Bolognese people*

Piazza Maggiore

Faith and politics buttressed the construction of the basilica, initiated in 1390 by the city government to uphold ideals of freedom and communal autonomy. Despite an unfinished façade, the basilica is still one of Europe's largest churches and the last great example of Gothic architecture in Italy. The front is decorated with relief masterpieces by Jacopo della Quercia, while the interior boasts a range of artistic works from the 15th to the 20th centuries. On the floor, Cassini's sundial beats time to the city by signalling the local noon, the *Angelus* hour.



## St. Peter's Cathedral

*God is my Father, the Church is my Mother*

7, Via dell'Indipendenza

St. Peter's Cathedral boasts a thousand-year history. Seat of the Bishop since the beginning of the Christian presence in Bologna and city's main liturgical centre, it stands as a guarantee of the Church's faith, embodied in the Creed and received in Baptism. Attested to since the 10th century, its origins date back to Roman times. Totally renovated in 1605, it is now embellished with paintings by the most renowned Emilian artists of the time. The double bell tower, with a unique structure incorporating a cylindrical 10th-century steeple, is home to the city's most important bell peal.



## Sanctuary of the Blessed Virgin of S. Luca

*"Exibit salvatio de monte"*

36, Via di San Luca

The basilica is the 'praying heart' of the Diocese of Bologna. The first church was built on the Colle della Guardia as early as 1194 to enshrine the icon of the Virgin Hodegetria, her right hand pointing to the Child to indicate the way to salvation. The love of the Bolognese for this image - attributed to the Evangelist Luke - has grown over time and is now more vibrant than ever. This is testified to by today's magnificent Sanctuary (1760) and the constant stream of pilgrims who climb up the famous portico: *salvation shall come from the hill.*

### **Who is the City Pilgrimage addressed to?**

It is aimed at tourists discovering our city and the extraordinary heritage of its territory, at pilgrims stopping by, at those citizens wishing to linger in the uniqueness of their roots, or at believers about to take their first steps along the paths of faith.

### **Why were these seven churches chosen for the City Pilgrimage?**

They are counted among the most important churches in the city, a treasure trove of art and history, all close to each other and conveniently located in the city centre along a single itinerary of beauty and spirituality. A special exception is the Sanctuary of the B.V. of San Luca, representing the ideal fulfilment of this pilgrimage: the encounter with Our Lady of St. Luke in the impressive Sanctuary on the Colle della Guardia.

### **Where can I find more information on the City Pilgrimage?**

For further curiosities, information and anecdotes we suggest checking out [www.bolognawelcome.com](http://www.bolognawelcome.com). Also, if you are in the city, consider stopping at Bologna Welcome in Piazza Maggiore for a more comprehensive tourist support.

### **What are the opening times of the churches mentioned here?**

Opening times may vary according to liturgical services. Information on addresses, opening times and useful contacts are available on [bolognawelcome.com](http://bolognawelcome.com) or at the information point in Piazza Maggiore.

### **Are any guided tours of these churches available?**

You can visit the churches of the City Pilgrimage through fixed-date guided tours or on-demand experiences tailored to your needs or those of your group. In addition, you can purchase the multimedia audio guide allowing the independent visit of all the churches mentioned in this brochure. For more information, please visit [bolognawelcome.com](http://bolognawelcome.com) or write to [booking@bolognawelcome.it](mailto:booking@bolognawelcome.it)

**Find out more about**  
[bwelcome.it/pellegrinaggio-en](http://bwelcome.it/pellegrinaggio-en)



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