

## 9. The Synagogue

Via de' Gombruti 9, Bologna



Towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the Jewish community slowly began to come back to Bologna, from where it had been expelled in 1593. In 1868 the community rented a room in a building in via de' Gombruti, 7. Between 1874 and 1877 a new bigger house of worship was opened in the same building. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the synagogue was definitely expanded. The new synagogue (1928), designed by A. Muggia, with its majestic liberty-style façade was a mirror of the importance of the Jewish community living in Bologna at the time. The 1943 air raids destroyed the building; the present synagogue is a modern reconstruction with the same architectural structure. On the façade looking onto via Mario Finzi a plaque was put up in memory of the 84 Jewish citizens deported to German extermination camps.

## 10. Jewish Gravestones

Medieval Museum - via Manzoni 4, Bologna

The first Jewish cemetery in Bologna, located in the modern-day via Orfeo, was closed in 1569 after the expulsion of the Jews from the town. The cemetery was ceded to San Pietro nuns, then completely destroyed. The four gravestones at the Medieval Museum come from this ancient site. (info: [www.museibologna.it](http://www.museibologna.it))

The present Jewish graveyard, established in 1869, is located at the Certosa monumental cemetery of Bologna. Here's the tomb sculpted in 1911 in Liberty style by Silverio Montaguti for the Zamorani family, the "oriental" chapels of the Padovani (1872), Zabban (1924) and Del Vecchio (1929) families, the great enclosure with chapel built in the '30s for the engineer Attilio Muggia's family and then the Finzi small shrine, valuable example of modernist architecture designed in 1938 by Enrico De Angeli.

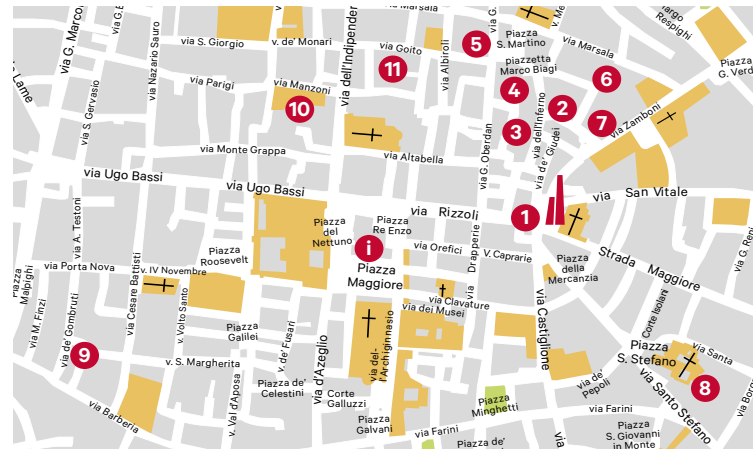
(info: [www.storiaememoriadibologna.it/certosa](http://www.storiaememoriadibologna.it/certosa))

## 11. Bocchi Palace

Via Goito 16, Bologna



This building owned by Achille Bocchi (1488 - 1562), a humanist writer, was opened in 1546 and designed by Jacopo Barozzi da Vignola. It soon became the seat of his Hermetena Academy. This name - the combination of Hermes and Athena - alludes to the sum of all human knowledge, rational and hermetic. The interior houses 16<sup>th</sup> century frescoes by Prospero Fontana. The scarp base of the palace features the massive rustication which decorates the front door and the four windows on the ground floor as well. Two inscriptions run along the rusticated base of the front: one is the only example of inscription in Hebrew on a monument existing in Italy and Europe and reproduces a verse from psalm 120 of the Psalter in Jewish characters: "Deliver me from the liars, God! They smile so sweetly but lie through their teeth." The other one is in Latin and it is taken from the Epistle 1 by Horace: "Rex eris, aiunt, si recte facies" ("do well, thou shalt be crowned").



## The former Jewish ghetto

The layout of Bologna's 16th century ghetto can still be precisely traced amid the narrow streets in the medieval heart of the city: here, a maze of alleys, covered bridges and small windows tells the story of a whole community. Enlivened with artisan workshops, the ghetto is one of the most charming areas in town.



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## 1. Via de' Giudei

The ghetto is an ideal place for a relaxing stroll through its peaceful and hidden alleys, starting from via de' Giudei, which was the entrance for people coming from piazza di Porta Ravegnana. The wide square overlooked by the two impressive towers and by San Bartolomeo's church, which forced the Jews to listen to the Sunday Mass, is soon replaced by via dell'Inferno with its narrow spaces. Merchants, bankers and fabric sellers used to meet in these bustling streets in order to practise the only professions they were allowed to. The name "via de' Giudei" comes from the fact that Jewish families lived here even before the ghetto was established. In the '30s racial laws and antisemitism turned via de' Giudei into the unlikely name of via delle Due Torri.

## 2. Via dell'Inferno

Via dell'Inferno was the main artery where many twisted streets ended: via de' Giudei, vicolo di S. Giobbe, vicolo Mandria, via del Carro and via Valdonica. This wide area was enclosed by two gates, the first one at the entrance of via de' Giudei and the second one in the present via Oberdan (once called via Cavaliera) where an arch looks onto vicolo Mandria. Street names refer to ancient churches (St. Giobbe, St. Simone) or easy concepts (the Jews' street, the Canonica street). Via dell'Inferno (Hell street) can derive from the presence in this long and narrow road of blacksmiths' shops before the establishment of the ghetto: working with fire, they evoked the flames of Hell. The building at the number 16 housed the ghetto Synagogue, used until 1569, the year of the expulsion of the Jews from Bologna. A stone plaque on the outside wall remembers the events of the Jewish community of Bologna in the XV and XVI centuries and during the racial persecution of 1938-45.



## 3. Uguzzoni Tower

Vicolo Mandria 1, Bologna

In vicolo Mandria, the Uguzzoni Tower stands out in a corner where time seems to have stopped. The 32 metre tall tower has a wide base

covered with selenite blocks and a 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century turret on the top. The ancient door with its selenite lintel has a pointed arch made of bricks. The unusual way windows are arranged (one round arch window on the left and another one in the middle) make us think that this was a tower-house.

## 4. Piazzetta Marco Biagi

On 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2002, this square was dedicated to Professor Marco Biagi, a Labour Law Scholar and government economic adviser killed by members of the New Red Brigades while going back home on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2002.

## 5. Piazza San Martino

The square of the ghetto can be divided into three different areas: two of them overlook via Valdonica and via Marsala respectively, and the third one is the yard of San Martino's church. The statue of the Madonna del Carmine by Andrea Ferreri (1705) rests on a thin stone column. The church dates back to 1217-1227 and the Aposa river flowing in front of it was covered in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, thus allowing an extension of the building to take place and, at the same time, removing the footbridge through which people had access to the church. Inside precious paintings by Francesco Francia, Amico Aspertini, Paolo Uccello, Lodovico Carracci, Lorenzo Costa, Girolamo da Carpi, Alessandro Tiarini and Girolamo da Sermoneta.



## 6. Jewish Museum

Via Valdonica 1/5, Bologna

Opened on May 9<sup>th</sup>, 1999, the Jewish Museum of Bologna (MEB, Museo Ebraico di Bologna) was established with the aim of preserving, studying and promoting the rich cultural Jewish heritage of Bologna as well as other places in Emilia Romagna. Different media (video, graphics and CD-ROMs) help visitors analyze the thousand-year-old history of the Jewish population, which is also narrated by testimonies coming from synagogues, cemeteries, former ghettos (furnishings, religious artifacts, sacred books). In the "permanent exhibit" section

of the museum a visitor can learn about the history of the Jewish identity. This history is illustrated over almost 4000 years. The temporary activities section also houses a bookshop specializing in Hebrew texts. With nearly 800 titles, it offers a complete overview of Jewish culture. The third section hosts a library with more than 2000 volumes, a document archive and internet access for visitors. [www.museoebraicobo.it](http://www.museoebraicobo.it)

## 7. Manzoli - Malvasia Palace

Via Zamboni 14, Bologna



The only original entrance to the former ghetto which still exists today is the vault connecting San Donato church (18<sup>th</sup> century) to the ancient Manzoli-Malvasia palace built over the remains of a 13<sup>th</sup> century house, of which only a few door arches remain. The palace was restored in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and then in 1760 with the façade designed by Francesco Tadolini. As the legend goes, the gargoyle above the vault was used by the owners of the palace to spout wine for guests when a member of their family was appointed gonfaloniere.

## More Jewish Sites

## 8. Casa Sforzo

Piazza Santo Stefano 15, Bologna

This building was the home, the private oratory and the bank of the Sforzo Jewish family coming from Barcelona that moved to Bologna in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The members of this family stood out for their high cultural level: among them noteworthy is Ovadyah Servadio, an eminent rabbi and scholar, philosopher, physicist and exegete of biblical texts of the late Middle Ages. He practised medicine and established a school of Talmudic studies, which he ran until his death (1550).