

originally had a loggia twice as long as the current one) and of the opposite Boncompagni houses, a typical example of residential architecture of Bologna from the 13th century, adapted to the culture of the end of the 19th century.



8. The commercial portico of Via dell'Indipendenza

With the opening of Via dell'Indipendenza (1888), a new type of portico is introduced, mainly for commercial purposes. The new buildings that were designed for this road that connects Piazza Maggiore to the new railway station and for via Rizzoli and Ugo Bassi define modern spaces, and are different from the structures of more traditional porches, considered dangerous or unhealthy. Porches get higher and wider and their design is influenced by Neo-Renaissance or Neo-Gothic models, with floral decorations, as is the case with the portico of the Majani palace by Augusto Sezanne, at no. 4.

9. The porticoes of Via Santa Cristina, a residential working class area

In some areas of the city that expanded during the 14th century there are still long porticoes, well preserved and built according to monastic allotment plans. They are also to be found in the following streets: Mirasole, Tovaglie and Solferino, San Leonardo, Centotrecento and Santa Caterina. In particular Via Santa Caterina is characterized by a portico architecture that is extremely simple, with no arches and with architraves, a functional solution for the production and artisan activities that were carried out there.



10. The portico of San Luca

Outside Porta Saragozza, the portico of San Luca stretches along via Saragozza and via San Luca and was built between the 17th and the 18th century as a covered devotional route to the sanctuary of the Holy Virgin of San Luca, starting from the initial loggia (the so-called "Bonaccorsi arch") that is placed on the borderline of the walled-up town. The portico, which is 3,796 metres long and is divided into 15 pilgrimage stations, was built in the second half of the 17th century (from 1674) and designed by Gian Giacomo Monti. It consists of two different parts: a flat part (1.520 m) and a hilly one (2.776 m), that was completed only in the early 18th century under the supervision of Giovanni Antonio Conti). The two parts are connected by the Meloncello arch, built by Carlo Francesco Dotti in 1732.

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Printed by Maggioli spa - July 2018

The portico of San Luca

The porticoes of Bologna

The porticoes, nominated as Unesco "world heritage site", make the city of Bologna unique in the world. Lights and shadows, deep architectural perspectives, different columns and capitals create fascinating and extraordinary urban images.



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1. The porticoes of Piazza Maggiore and the seat of the old University

This magnificent square, which started being built in the 13th century, is characterized by porched buildings on three sides. The gothic arches on cross-shaped pillars of Palatium Bladi on the western side were brought back to light by restoration works in 1885–1887. The impressive portico of the Bentivoglio family's Palazzo del Podestà on the northern side was built at the end of the 15th century (from 1485) on the previous Palatium Vetus. The portico of the Banchi, designed by Jacopo Barozzi (*Il Vignola*) and built from 1565, stands out on the eastern side. Here, in the loggia, the early 15th century groin vaults can still be clearly seen. The whole sequence of porticoes which starts from Piazza Maggiore, on the side of Basilica di San Petronio, and ends in Piazza Galvani is also known as Pavaglione (a dialect word for the pavilion of the silk cocoon market). The portico of the Banchi is followed by that of the Hospital of Death, an old residential care centre from the late Middle Ages which is now the seat of Museo Civico; next to this is the portico of Archiginnasio, the seat of the university during the Counter-reformation years. This elegant portico, with its 30 arches that extend for 139 metres, was built by Antonio Terribilia in 1563 and was the partial remake of the previous 15th century loggia of the Schools of San Petronio; its 15th century vaults are still visible.



Porticoes of Piazza Santo Stefano

2. The porticoes of Piazza Santo Stefano

An enchanting sequence of porticoes from the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance runs along the two sides of Via Santo Stefano, in the square that dates back to the Middle Ages and is dominated by the religious complex of the same name. On the western side the portico of Palazzo Bolognini Amorini (no. 9–11) is followed at no. 13 by Casa Bianchi, easily recognizable

by the high portico on sandstone columns with a ribbed shaft. Then there is a long sequence of buildings which nowadays are known as “Case Tacconi”, with the striking triumphal arch-shaped facade of the late 15th century, at number 15, built according to models from Ferrara, followed by the front part of the houses that once belonged to the Beccadelli family, with peculiar spiral-shaped brick columns. On the eastern side of the square the beautiful Renaissance portico of palazzo Isolani, at no. 18, was built in the second half of the 15th century by Pagno di Lapo Portigiani, from Florence.

3. The portico of the Baraccano Conservatory

One of the most peculiar Renaissance porticoes in Bologna is that of the Conservatory of Putte del Baraccano: a wide loggia, built during the reign of the Bentivoglio family, consists of majestic stone columns whose shaft is decorated with an elegant moulded disc.

4. The porticoes of Strada Maggiore

On Strada Maggiore, which runs along the route of the Via Emilia inside the city walls, there are some of the most characteristic examples of monumental porticoes of the whole town.

The interesting wide portico that stretches along the northern side of Basilica di Santa Maria dei Servi was built from the second half of the 14th century and maybe designed by Antonio di Vincenzo. It has large groin vaults placed on thin marble columns, with a characteristic ring-shaped connection in the central part of the shaft. On the southern side of the street, at no. 19, the high wooden portico (higher than 9 metres) of Casa Isolani, restored in 1877, is one of the best preserved examples of a portico from the late Middle Ages. Another peculiar portico is that in front of the entrance of the baroque Church of San Bartolomeo, near the two towers. It is located in a loggia of the unfinished Palazzo Guastavillani (16th century). Its magnificent pillars have refined (but now severely damaged) Renaissance sandstone decorations.



Santa Maria dei Servi

5. The “Carrobbio” area of Porta Ravegnana

Only a few porched buildings, massively restored or largely rebuilt, of the medieval *Foro dei Mercanti* near Porta Ravegnana is left. The irregular space is dominated by Loggia della Mercanzia (1384), a masterpiece of late Gothic architecture, with a majestic portico with large groin vaults supported by cluster columns. On the wider part of the street the wooden porticoes of the Seracchioli houses, a stylistic reinvention of the past century (1928), give a Neo-Gothic style to the whole area.



San Giacomo Maggiore. Photo: Adriana Verolla

6. The portico of San Giacomo Maggiore and Via Zamboni

The porched buildings in via Zamboni used to be noble residences or religious structures and today they house university departments and other public institutions. Past the small San Donato square the neoclassical Palazzo Malvasia has elegant porches dating back to different ages. Then there are the late Renaissance porches of Palazzo Magnani, planned by Domenico Tibaldi, and the Tuscanic arches of the portico of Palazzo Malvezzi. On the opposite side of the street, past the majestic 16th century portico of Palazzo Malvezzi de Medici, the spans of the Renaissance portico of the church of San Giacomo Maggiore extend one after another. The refined portico of San Giacomo was meant to be a ceremonial path, leading to the Domus Magna of Giovanni II Bentivoglio (which was where the Teatro Comunale now is and was destroyed in 1507); it was built between 1477 and 1479 by expert stone specialists, such as Tommaso di Filippo da Varignana.

7. The wooden porticoes of Via Marsala

The stretch of via Marsala between via Oberdan and via Piella is characterized by the wooden porticoes of Casa Grassi (which