



Culture
is Bologna

Discover

The paths of Guercino








Born in Cento in 1591 and known as Il Guercino, Giovanni Francesco Barbieri is one of the most representative artists of his time. After spending his early years in Emilia, he sojourned in Rome from 1621 until 1623, while working for the Bolognese Pope Gregory XV. He lived in Bologna from 1642 onwards. His great renown was evidenced by a visit from Queen Christina of Sweden in 1655: the sovereign asked the painter if she could touch his hand, that which “had accomplished such wonders”. The works of Guercino in the area provide the basis for fascinating itineraries among churches, streets and museums.



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)

Civic Art Gallery
Il Guercino

● Cento

● Pieve di Cento

Collegiate Church of Santa Maria Maggiore

● San Pietro in Casale

Church of Saints
Peter and Paul

● S. Giovanni in Persiceto

Collegiate Church of
San Giovanni Battista

Church of San Girolamo
della Certosa

● ● Bologna

● Budrio

Civic Art Gallery
"Domenico Inzaghi"

Bologna National Art Gallery
Municipal Art Collections – D'Accursio Palace
International museum and library of music
Civic Medieval Museum
Civic Museum of Industrial Art and Davia Bargellini Gallery
Palazzo Pepoli. Museum of the History of Bologna
Picture Gallery of Palazzo Magnani
Church of San Giovanni in Monte
Palazzo Talon Sampieri



Guercino in the studio

Bologna National Art Gallery

The Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna has dedicated the main gallery room of the 17th and 18th century section to Guercino, with 13 works in the new collection. Pivotal achievements of the master's production are the *Vestizione di San Guglielmo* (1620), an altarpiece of solemn monumentality, and the *imposing San Bruno in adorazione della Madonna in gloria* (1647), a mature work resulting from a presumably close collaboration with his brother Paolo Antonio Barbieri, a still life painter.



Guercino's "rediscovered" music

7 November 2023 - 18 February 2024

International museum and library of music, Bologna

On display are the manuscript papers, part of Father Martini's book collection, containing the nine compositions of the *Music in Cento*, with paintings by Guercino copied in 1760 from the now lost frescoes of Casa Pannini in Cento. Guided tours will be available for this temporary exhibition in November and December 2023.



Guercino and his pupils. From "character heads" to portraits

8 October - 26 November 2023

Municipal Art Collections, Bologna

During his career, Guercino executed paintings with both religious and secular themes. They often included figures with strongly characterised faces, based on the study of particular faces from life: the "character heads". The exhibition features examples of the master's works that document this practice and underlines the differences with the portrait genre, as exemplified by the works of his talented pupils Cesare and Benedetto Gennari.

Cover:

Guercino
Saint William of Aquitaine
Receiving the Cowl, 1620
Bologna National Art Gallery
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Bologna National Art Gallery

Ph. Bologna National Art Gallery:
Guercino
Our Lady of the Sparrow, 1615-1616
Bologna National Art Gallery
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Ph. Picture Gallery of Palazzo Magnani:
Guercino
Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane, 1613
Quadreria of Palazzo Magnani
UniCredit Art Collection
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Cento, “the beloved”

Cento, Civic Gallery

Guercino nurtured an intense bond with Cento even during the years he spent away from the town. The churches, palaces and local area of Cento are dotted with the works of the painter and his school. The Civic Art Gallery allows the spectator to interpret Barbieri's painting career starting from his models and to retrace his artistic path through some absolute masterpieces, such as the *Madonna with Blessing Child* and the beautiful *The Resurrected Christ Appears to the Virgin*.



Guercino at the Museum of the History of Bologna

Palazzo Pepoli. Museum of the History of Bologna, Bologna

Palazzo Pepoli is home to the Museum of the History of Bologna, an institution dedicated to the city's culture and transformations over the centuries. The extensive museum collection, from the Etruscans to the present day, could certainly not lack a room dedicated to the *Felsina Pittrice*, a historic tome illustrating the prolific era of the Accademia del Naturale (Natural Academy). This school was indeed



Guercino at the Civic Museums of Ancient Art and the Certosa (Church)

Civic Medieval Museum, Civic Museum of Industrial Art and Davia Bargellini Gallery, Church of San Girolamo della Certosa

The historical and contextual landscape of Guercino's time are permanently reflected in a series of works by his contemporaries: the two sculptures, *Bust of Pope Gregory XV Ludovisi* by Gian Lorenzo Bernini and *Saint Michael Overcoming Satan* by Alessandro Algardi, both on display at the Medieval Civic Museum; the “first modern biography” of the Cento master and the painting *The Blessed Virgin of Sorrows*, both by Jacopo Alessandro Calvi, on display at the Civic Museum of Industrial Art and the Davia Bargellini Gallery respectively; Guercino's own work *The Vision of San Bruno*, initially housed in the Church of San Girolamo della Certosa and thereafter the National Art Gallery. The painting was a must-see on the itinerary of travellers in the era of the Grand Tour.

where Giovanni Francesco Barbieri, known as Il Guercino, obtained his education. His *Madonna with Rose and Child*, a sort of “portable fresco”, can be admired in this museum. In October and November 2023, the Museum will also organise guided outdoor tours to other Guercino sites in Bologna: including Palazzo Talon Sampieri, which houses the fresco *Hercules and Antaeus*.



From beginnings to stardom

Picture Gallery of Palazzo Magnani, Bologna

The *Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane* reveals how the work of Ludovico Carracci and Scarsellino had a fundamental influence on the artist. Barbieri's years in Cento were also the time of the great *Trinity*, whose figures are drawn to be viewed from below, while the *Lucretia* was executed for the governor of Cento in 1644, when the painter was already famous and living far from his home town.



The far-flung Guercino

S. Giovanni in Persiceto, Budrio, S. Pietro in Casale

Guercino painted the impassioned debate between the Child Jesus and Saint Anthony of Padua between 1649 and 1651 for the Capuchins of Saint Matthew in Persiceto. After the closure of the convent, the altarpiece was moved to the Collegiate Church. Not far from Bologna, the Inzaghi Art Gallery in Budrio contains some of Barbieri's drawings. Inside the Church of Saints Peter and Paul in San Pietro in Casale is a splendid *Madonna and Child with Saints Peter and Paul* by Matteo Loves, a pupil of the master.



Annunciation of the Pieve

Collegiate Church of S. Maria Maggiore, Pieve di Cento

Carlo Cesare Malvasia, Guercino's biographer, recounts that in 1646 the "altarpiece with the Annontziata" was painted for "Li Signori Mastellari della Pieve". Guercino made the work highly original in iconographic terms, by depicting the moment just before the Annunciation, with God the Father instructing the angel at the upper part of the canvas while the Madonna silently meditates. The Graziano Campanini Art Gallery includes the master's fresco cycle dedicated to Rinaldo and Armida.



In the churches of Bologna

Church of San Giovanni in Monte, Bologna

In 1642 shortly after moving to Bologna, Guercino created an intense work, *St. Francis Contemplating a Crucifix*, for the Church of San Giovanni in Monte. This work was followed by prestigious altarpieces in Santa Maria di Galliera, in San Paolo, in the convent of the Discalced Carmelites and in San Domenico, on their respective altars. Barbieri died on 22 December 1666 and was buried, dressed in a Capuchin habit, next to his brother Paolo Antonio in the Church of San Salvatore.

Are there any guided tours in the places where Guercino's works are exhibited?

Yes, the staff of Bologna Welcome and the various museum and cultural organisations will be happy to guide you through the itineraries that can be tailored to your or your group's needs. For more information please visit bolognawelcome.com or email booking@bolognawelcome.it

Where can I find more information about Guercino?

For interesting facts, information and anecdotes about the life of the artist and the history of his masterpieces, we recommend that you visit bolognawelcome.com. Also, if in the city you can visit the Bologna Welcome tourist information point where you can find even more information.

What are the opening hours of the places listed in this leaflet?

All address, opening hours and contact information can be found at bolognawelcome.com. Bologna Welcome is in touch with the museums and cultural sites referred to in this publication and on the website. However, please also check the official sites of the places you intend to visit to make sure you can plan your visit as you wish.

How do I get to Cento, Pieve di Cento, San Giovanni in Persiceto, Budrio and San Pietro in Casale from Bologna?

There are several available options to ensure that you have an affordable, problem-free journey to these towns. Public transport services including trains and buses are provided by Tper and Trenitalia-Tper. Plan your itinerary on the official tper.it website for bus travel and trenitaliatper.it for train travel. Alternatively, you may wish to consider the car-sharing service provided by Enjoy Eni, partner of Bologna Welcome. To find out all the benefits and to organise your trip, visit bolognawelcome.it

Find out more about bwelcome.it/guercino-en



Texts edited by Bologna National Art Gallery, Municipal Art Collections, Civic Museums of Bologna, Genus Bononiae and Arte Grand Tour

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