

INSPIRED  CITIZEN
with Anthony Berklich



WHERE TO GO IN EMILIA-ROMAGNA | A VISIT TO FERRARA

A town surrounded by the Po River delta and ancient walls built in the 15th and 16th centuries with the beautiful Castello Estense lying at its center, [Ferrara](#) is a city where the old is very much integrated with the new. Arriving to Ferrara you're instantly struck by the beauty of the brown stone, terra-cotta and brick buildings which were built as far back as the 11th century, as well as the legends of the famed Este family who ruled here for centuries.

The Este family's fingerprint is everywhere to be seen and heard around the [UNESCO-protected](#) Ferrara. The city's current town hall served as their original residence and their castle, erected in 1385, is still surrounded by a moat filled with water (don't fall in)! Other palaces, known as the Quattrocento – or built in the 15th century, were constructed by the family and their architects, and still dot the city's landscape today. The Este family later moved to nearby Modena and Ferrara was then left to be ruled by the church.

As a visitor to Ferrara it's highly recommended to hire a guide if you're a history buff. Here you can learn about the Este Family, the important Jewish community which once thrived here, the unique architecture and culture. For those who love food, Ferrara is a small epicenter of culinary tradition where local specialties like cappellacci di zucca (a nutmeg flavored ravioli stuffed with butternut squash) can be enjoyed. I recommend spending a couple of hours with a guide and then wandering around by yourself to soak-in the quaint streets, gelato stands and street performances, which happen often here. If you're an art lover, the Giovanni Boldini Museum offers a look into the work and life of one of Ferrara's greatest painters.

If you're seeking a luxury stay in Ferrara, I recommend a few nights at the beautiful and elegant [Villa Horti della Fasanara](#), which is at the center of town and surrounded by a stunning park. All 6 rooms are well done and offer a boutique and attentive experience.

Ferrara is a destination in itself, a place where you can spend many days and never tire of its charm. Some liken the city to Florence without the crowds – which can be maddening in the summer season. I was there in August and the city felt peaceful. I could easily steal a quiet corner to my own without much effort. Personally, I can't wait to return to Ferrara – and urge you to visit as well.