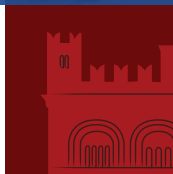




# PIACENZA & its PROVINCE

Museums & Land  
Guidebook

Museums | Churches | Palaces  
Monuments | Theatres  
Castles | Landscapes | Taste





Museums & Land  
Guidebook

**PIACENZA**  
**& its PROVINCE**

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*piacenzamusei.it*

## Why this Guidebook?

2015 will remain an important year for Piacenza Musei, because of two important contexts: the 20th anniversary of our association and the extraordinary event of EXPO Milan 2015.

This *Guidebook* is another important and useful instrument created by Piacenza Musei to help you discover – and learn more about – Piacenza, called La Primogenita, its art, museums, architecture, landscapes and its province.

The newest edition of the pocket *Guide* of Piacenza Musei, hold the history, culture, traditions, aromas, flavours and images of the city of Piacenza and its province conducting the reader through the paved city streets, accompanying him on the roads surrounded by green landscapes along our four valleys and offering him a taste of that vibrant, colourful essence, which identifies us and our territory.

This *Guidebook* illustrates and explains an extraordinarily rich heritage, which deserves to be celebrated and appreciated nationally and internationally.

It is the culmination of the painstaking research, organization and management needed to put it all together.

With this publication we reach another goal – a new addition to the way, which brought the Association Piacenza Musei to the creation of important products, like *Panorama Musei* (the official magazine with information about artistic and cultural activities in town and around the province, distributed in Italy) and *Portale Piacenza Musei* (online instrument with Piacenza and province's treasures). Of course, we also organize many initiatives and cultural events so people can learn to love our history, our traditions, and our amazing artistic, architectural and panoramic jewels. I believe this is the right way to follow.

I would like to thank all of those people who collaborated to create this valuable publication: the scientific commission, the directors, coordinators and managers of the museums and artistic venues, as well as all those people who work in the museums, history and art sectors and supported and guided the writing, editing and drafting of this publication, as well as the professional associations, consortia and private companies who helped us financially.



*piacenzamusei.it*

Luigi Rizzi  
President of  
**Associazione Piacenza Musei**

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---

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## Special thanks to

---

Comune di Piacenza, Provincia di Piacenza and to  
all the managers and representative people of  
cultural area of municipalities, museums, churches,  
castles of the city and its province



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Consorzio Tutela Vini D.O.C.  
Colli Piacentini



# Index

The Guide presents tools, which will help you to consult the contents:

- **general index:** with the inner division and different colored sections.
- **table of contents in every single section:** it divides the city chapter into smaller sections (museums, churches, palaces, monuments, theatres) and the Province into four main valleys (Tidone Valley, Trebbia Valley, Nure Valley and Arda Valley), with the goal to improve the orientation and to specify the subdivision in every thematic area.
- **city map:** you can easily localize attractions and useful services through graphic symbols (museums, churches, monuments, palaces, theaters in Piacenza). The map also offers the possibility to orient yourself and move fastly through the city, thanks to the nearest parking area, main road, train station and bus station symbols.
- **province map:** highlights with graphic symbols the main municipalities and the cultural sites in the land (museums, churches, castles, natural parks and main roads).

**Note that galleries are subject to closure, and all galleries may not be open during the time of your visit. Please call before visiting.**



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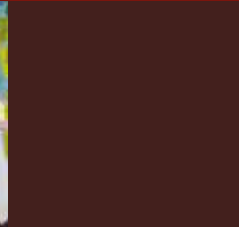
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Piacenza is a city in Emilia Romagna and is at 61 m (200 ft) of elevation above sea level and have a population of about 100.000 inhabitants. Piacenza is on the right side of Po river and is located in the east area of its province; it's an important highway hub and it is called "Emilia northern door" and it's under the Milan's cultural and economic influence.









# CITY

Museums | Churches  
Monuments | Palaces  
Theatres



# CITY MAP

## Old Town Centre

-  museums
-  palaces
-  churches
-  monuments
-  theatres
-  car parks
-  Local Police: +39.0523492100
-  Police: 113
-  Carabinieri: 112
-  Emergency: 118
-  Hospital: +39.0523301111



### ANTICA OSTERIA DEL TEATRO

Via Verdi 16, Piacenza  
Tel. +39.052323777  
menu@anticaosteriadelteatro.it  
www.anticaosteriadelteatro.it



### BEST WESTERN PARK HOTEL

Strada Val Nure 7, Piacenza  
Tel. +39.0523712600  
info@parkhotelpiacenza.it  
www.parkhotelpiacenza.it





# Where to eat CITY



## RESTAURANTS

### ANTICA OSTERIA DEL TEATRO Chef Filippo Chiappini Dattilo

A kitchen that is very close to the Piacentine land and to its products. In a 15th century palace it offers over 1,200 wine labels with special Italian and Piacentine wines.

Via Verdi 16, Piacenza | +39.0523323777  
[www.anticaosteriadelteatro.it](http://www.anticaosteriadelteatro.it)  
[menu@anticaosteriadelteatro.it](mailto:menu@anticaosteriadelteatro.it)  
Closed Sundays and Mondays



### IL BARINO

A historic bar that offers breakfasts, lunches, buffet aperitifs and before-dinner parties. Typical Piacentine and Mediterranean dishes; à la carte menu or cafeteria.

Piazza Cavalli 1, Piacenza  
Tel. +39.3809097399  
[www.facebook.com/barino.piacenza](http://www.facebook.com/barino.piacenza)  
[cune973@yahoo.it](mailto:cune973@yahoo.it)  
Closed Thursdays



### LA VERANDA

Traditional, local, refined dishes with a wide selection of Italian food à la carte. Italian and Piacentine wines. Aperitifs and buffets.

C/o Best Western Park Hotel Piacenza,  
Strada Valnure 7, Piacenza  
Tel. +39.0523756664  
[laveranda2004@libero.it](mailto:laveranda2004@libero.it)  
Open every day for lunch and dinner



## TYPICAL TRATTORIA

### LA PIREINA

Typically home-cooked Piacentine dishes are offered with care and passion since 1907. The wine list offers the best labels from the territory. Specialities: meat and home-made pasta.

Via Borghetto 137, Piacenza  
Tel. +39.0523338578  
[lapireina@libero.it](mailto:lapireina@libero.it)  
Closed Sunday evening and Mondays



### ANTICA TRATTORIA DELL'ANGELO

This family-run eating house offers high-quality Piacentine dishes served in a simple, genuine atmosphere. Traditional first dishes. Variety of meats second dishes. Home-made desserts.

Via Tibini 14, Piacenza  
Tel. +39.0523326739  
[www.anticatrattoriadellangelo.com](http://www.anticatrattoriadellangelo.com)  
Open every day for lunch and dinner



### LA MUNTÀ

Characteristic restaurant of Old Piacenza. Speciality: grilled meat. You can taste typical local or original dishes with a glass of wine or great beer.

Via Mazzini 72, Piacenza  
Tel. +39.0523498929  
[www.ristorantebirreriamunta.it](http://www.ristorantebirreriamunta.it)  
[lamunta.pc@libero.it](mailto:lamunta.pc@libero.it)  
Open every day



# WHERE TO STAY

CITY



## BEST WESTERN PARK HOTEL

Characteristic rooms, personalized features and excellent location make this 4-star hotel your place away from home in the heart of Northern Italy. 99 spacious, comfortable rooms, fitted for business travellers, but designed for relax. The fitness centre, opened all year for our clients, is the ideal solution for you after a long, hard work day. The Galleana Park, only a few metres from the hotel, is a great place for a short run or a walk in the fresh air. There is also a restaurant "La Veranda" and a conference hall, which can receive 250 people.

Strada Val Nure 7, Piacenza  
Tel. +39.0523712600  
info@parkhotelpiacenza.it  
www.parkhotelpiacenza.it

PARK HOTEL  
PIACENZA



## STADIO HOTEL

This hotel offers every comfort and is the perfect place for a pleasurable, relaxing business trip. Soundproof rooms, comfortable beds, large bathrooms, a sumptuous breakfast and select business amenities.

Strada Val Nure 20, Piacenza  
Tel. +39.0523360020  
info@stadiohotel.it  
www.stadiohotel.it



Tantera Catering  
Tantera Catering



*Gala dinners*



*Business events*



*Refreshments, buffets & aperitifs*

We are available for different events  
in every location within the range of 200 km (124.3 m)

*Info:*

Sig. Domenico Tantera • Tel. +39.3356097878 | +39.0523756664  
info@tanteracatering.it • [www.tanteracatering.it](http://www.tanteracatering.it)

# HISTORY & URBAN DEVELOPMENT

## PIACENZA

The Romans founded *Placentia* in 218 BC as an outpost of their Celtic territories. After the construction of a main road (Via Emilia) near the city in 187 BC, Piacenza became a strategic and commercial center because of its proximity with Lombardy, Piedmont and Liguria. Thanks to the extraordinary infrastructures created by Roman settlers, Piacenza grew more and more important, becoming the heart of the Roman road system. Julius Caesar married Calpurnia, Lucio Capurnio Pisone's daughter, who came from a wealthy and noble lineage and was the patron of the Piacentine population. The Roman plan of the city is still visible nowadays in the intricate network of streets, parallel and perpendicular to the Po River. In the Middle Ages the commercial activities of the city increased extraordinarily, thanks to its excellent geographical position and to its vicinity to the Po River, making of Piacenza one of the most remarkable commercial, economic and political centers in northern Italy, as well as in Europe. After the end of the Vescovi-Conti domination in 1126, Piacenza became a free municipality, and in 1183, hosted all the northern municipalities of Italy in the *Capitolo di Sant'Antonino*, after their victory against Frederick Redbeard, in preparation for the *Peace of Constance*. The 12th and 13th centuries were characterized by a great progress in commerce and by an evolution in the field of urban development. Religious fervor drove the Piacentines to build magnificent churches: *Sant'Antonino*, *San Savino*, *Duomo* (The cathedral), *San Francesco*, *San Giovanni*, *Santa Brigida*, *Sant'Eufemia* and many more. During the following centuries, different lords ruled the city,



■ Cathedral  
Façade



■ Palazzo Farnese  
External view

such as Alberto Scoto (who built *Palazzo Gotico* – The City Hall), the Viscontis and the Sforzas. Both Piacenza and Parma were submitted by the Church in 1521 and by the Farnese family in 1545. Pope Paul 3rd Farnese created the Duchy of Parma and Piacenza for his son Pierluigi, with Piacenza as its capital, but after a conspiracy, Duke Pierluigi was killed and Parma became the new capital. His successor, Ottavio, and his wife Margaret of Austria, commissioned Jacopo Barozzi - called *Vignola* - the imposing project of *Palazzo Farnese* in 1561. After Margaret's death, building works were interrupted and resumed many times until 1602. In this period the construction of a great number of breathtaking palaces, churches and monasteries was promoted; most of these buildings are still well preserved and are of a great interest for the cultural tourism. The reign of the Farnese family lasted until 1731, when the Spanish family of Bourbon succeeded them. After the Napoleonic period, Napoleon's widow, Marie Louise of Austria, daughter of the Austrian Emperor Francis 2nd, ruled the Duchy. She presided over the Duchy until her death in 1847, when Charles 3rd, a Bourbon, succeeded her. It was during his power that Piacenza declared, by popular proclamation, its annexation to the Reign of Piedmont, with the title of *Primogenita* (the First-Born) on May 10th, 1848.



■ Cathedral  
Bell tower



■ Piazza Cavalli • Palazzo Gotico's view with one of two masterpieces of Francesco Mocho (equestrian statues)



■ **San Francesco (church)**

Façade,  
Romagnosi  
monument

The Duchy then returned under Bourbon domination until 1859, when it was definitively annexed to Piedmont. After 1861, the hills and the plains surrounding the city were mainly devoted to agriculture but it was only after the creation of the *Cattedra Ambulante di Agricoltura* in 1897, along with the establishment of the first cooperative companies, that a great agribusiness development took place. Progress was rapid thanks to the introduction of the first agricultural machines and to the invention of chemical fertilizers. Large-scale cultivations of sugar beets and tomatoes led to the construction of factories. Breeding was developed along with dairy factories, and soon appeared the first factories to produce cold cuts. Nowadays, even though agriculture and manufacturing are still the main commercial and economical source of income, the fields of mechanics and robotics are growing more and more important for the city.

The Piacentine population has always taken care of its historic and artistic heritage, and even if the city is not used to promote itself in Italy or abroad, it steps forward as a small jewel to be discovered for its centuries-old architecture and art.

Two examples of the great artistic achievements are the Farnese equestrian statues in Piazza Cavalli, masterpieces realized by Francesco Mochi.



■ **City walls**

Public stroll with city walls (of the first half of 16th century)

# BANCA DI PIACENZA

## Always, when you need it



Banca di Piacenza is a co-operative bank established in 1936. In line with the principles and values of the co-operative banking model, Banca di Piacenza based in the heart of the prosperous Po River Valley in Northern Italy has always played a key role in funding the local real economy, lending to small and medium size enterprises, stimulating growth and boosting employment at local level.

Driven by passion for excellence, Banca di Piacenza is fully committed to satisfy its clients' requests and to provide good-quality services.

We love what we do: our priorities are our clients' priorities; our customers' interests are at the heart of all we do.

Our shareholders/clients know that Banca di Piacenza is not only a bank, but a real partner you can count on. Always



**BANCA DI PIACENZA**  
banca locale, popolare, indipendente



# City MUSEUMS

This section presents the museums of Piacenza with their treasures. Starting from Palazzo Farnese, you could pass through centuries full of Piacentine history and discover famous national places.



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# MUSEI CIVICI DI PALAZZO FARNESE

| Palazzo Farnese Civic Museums |

## HISTORY

Palazzo Farnese is located on a small hill near the Northern border of the city and is clearly separate from the rest of the old town. Even today, its massive structure instills a sense of severe majesty to those who come from Lombardy through the Po River. The importance of the building was already well evident in the panoramic view of Piacenza painted by Malosso in 1603, which is currently kept in the art gallery of the palace. It depicts Christ and the Virgin Mary, interceding before God on behalf of the city. The palace rises in an area where there had previously been a castle, erected by Galeazzo 2nd Visconti in 1372-73. Margaret of Austria, daughter of Charles the 5th and wife of Ottavio Farnese, the second Duke of Parma and Piacenza, wanted the city to have an impressive residence, able to convey the Duke's power over the town. Margaret had always been strongly attached to the city, to such an extent that she stated in her will her desire to be buried in the Church of S. Sisto, not far from the palace, where Raffaello's *Sistine Madonna* was preserved at the time. The construction of the palace started in 1558, following a project initially drawn up by Francesco Paciotto from Urbino and then assigned to Jacopo Barozzi, known as Vignola, who, in those years, was working in Parma for the Cardinal Alessandro Farnese. Vignola modified Paciotto's design and showed his new project to the Duke and the Duchess in 1561, obtaining their approval. The construction of the palace, sponsored by the Municipality of Piacenza, went on until 1602. Approximately, only half of the structure designed by *Vignola* was accomplished. If it had been completed,



■ Palazzo Farnese  
(1558-1602)

External view

it would have represented the only Italian aristocratic mansion similar to the contemporary French and Spanish models.

The great modernity of Vignola's architectural project lies in the tremendous grandeur of the palace itself. Palazzo Farnese represented the power of the Farnese family during the 17th century, since it was the residence of the Duke and the place where his court gathered on official occasions and during important celebrations. For this reason, both private and larger official rooms were finely decorated and the Farnese family ordered a cycle of paintings



■ Palazzo Farnese  
Apse in the  
courtyard



■ Palazzo Farnese  
The iron gate  
(1675 c.)



■ Palazzo Farnese  
Interior  
courtyard view



#### Palazzo Farnese

Alcove with paintings of Sebastiano Ricci: *Storie di Paolo III* (1688)



#### Wood model,

designed by Enrico Bergonzoni (2004)



#### Palazzo Farnese

The great staircase

inserted in stucco frames, aimed at revealing the history of two of the most important representatives of the family: Duke Alexander, who later became Pope Paul 3rd, and Alessandro Farnese, the third Duke and warlord of the Catholic army in Flanders. In the 18th century (1731), the last members of the Farnese lineage died and, soon after that, the Bourbons took over all their estate. This was the beginning of a long period of decay, in which the palace was stripped of most its paintings and furniture by Charles de Bourbon (1734-36), who, meanwhile, had become King of Naples. In 1803 Palazzo Farnese was plundered by Napoleon's troops and after 1822, under Austrian rule, it was converted into barracks. Finally, in 1945, it was occupied by homeless people. The restoration of the building was, therefore, very difficult and expensive, but was sustained by the establishment of the Ente per il Restauro e L'Utilizzazione di Palazzo Farnese (Board for the Restoration and the Employment of Palazzo Farnese) in 1965. This board, together with Comune di Piacenza (City Council) and the Ministero per i Beni culturali (Italian Cultural Assets Board) sponsored the restoration project, which is now almost full-finished.

The most important paintings of the Art Gallery are exhibited on the first floor of Palazzo Farnese, in the so-called *Appartamento Dorato* (*Golden Apartment*), which was once the duchess' apartment. In the Art Gallery are displayed paintings from Piacentine churches, but also from private and public collections. The variety of these works prove the importance of the city in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, when Piacenza was able to attract famous artists from different creative environments, thereby showing a great ability in taking advantage of its position as a melting pot of different cultural experiences. For this reason, along the exhibition, visitors can find masterpieces by painters from Genoa - Domenico Fiasella, alias *il Sarzana*, and Giovanni Battista Merano - Lombardy - Camillo Boccaccino, Giovanni Battista Trotti, known as *Malosso*, Carlo Francesco and Giuseppe Nuvolone - and Emilia - Girolamo Bedoli Mazzola, Giovanni Lanfranco, Pier Francesco Ferrante, Alessandro Tiarini -. There are also some pieces painted by illustrious artists from Northern Europe, such as Justus Susterman, G. Cristoforo Storer, Pieter Bout and Robert De Longe.

The Art Gallery  
**PINACO-TECA**



#### Domenico Fiasella

St. Bernardo from Chiaravalle nursed by the Virgin (1643)



#### Alessandro Tiarini

St. Carlo Borromeo baptize a child in a lazzaretto (1635-45)



■ **Gaspare Landi**  
Count Giacomo  
Rota's portrait  
(1790-92)

In *Sala del Trono (the Throne Room)* are shown important works belonging to the Farnese family, by Brescianino and Tempesta, among which there are two masterpieces with biblical scenes by Brescianino.

Three rooms are then dedicated to Ilario Spolverini, with paintings celebrating *I Fasti di Elisabetta Farnese (Elisabetta Farnese Splendors)*, as well as some battle paintings. Two other rooms of the Art Gallery constitute the final part of the exhibition, in which is shown the artistic passage from the 18th to the 19th century. During that period Gaspare Landi was a key figure in Italian and Piacentine artistic context, because of his ability to spread the Neoclassical style and then to overtake it, using the portrait. This form of art became his ideal way of expression for a psychological analysis that embraced the historical moment, the society structure as well as the anxiety of a new era. Two works, one by his favorite pupil, C. M. Viganoni, and one by his missed pupil, L. Toncini, end the itinerary. The Art gallery has recently been enriched thanks to some works of art coming from the splendid Rizzi Vaccari collection: these pieces, mostly tempera on wood dating between the 14th and the 16th century, attest to



■ **Sandro Botticelli**  
Virgin Mary adoring the Christ Child  
with St. Giovannino (1475-80)



■ **Giuseppe Nuvolone**  
Virgin Mary with the child  
between St. Girolamo and  
St. Benedetto (1665)

the thriving activity of Tuscan workshops during that period.

### Botticelli's Tondo

The *Tondo* was given a place by itself in a separated room. It is a painting on wood by the Florentine painter Sandro Filipepi, called Botticelli (1446-1510) and depicts *Madonna adorante il Bambino con San Giovannino (Virgin Mary adoring the Christ Child with St. Giovannino)*. It is a precious masterpiece both for its aesthetic-formal characteristics and for the subject. The Tondo, dated by the scholars around 1477, once belonged to the private collection of Federico 2nd Landi from Bardi, and only after many trials and tribulations it was bought in 1860 by the mayor of Piacenza, Fausto Perletti. This piece is a unique example of the refined graphic style of the famous Tuscan painter. The splendid frame, decorated with garlands, is the original one and was attributed to Giuliano da Sangallo by some scholars and, to Giuliano da Maiano by others. The painting depicts the Virgin Mary in the act of adoring Christ child, who is making a curious gesture, actually indicating his circumcision. Botticelli was able to give the artwork a great spontaneity in Christ's gesture, at the same time underlying a significant Jewish custom. The same ability to connect naturalism to a profound religiousness is evident in the figure of the Virgin, looking at her grace and at the purity of her facial features. The woman is inclining her head to one side and she is looking at Jesus with a love expression that appears as mystic and human at the same time. St. Giovannino is portrayed on the left, dressed in traditional sheep's wool, and holding a reed cross in his hands. At the bottom of the work then, there is an inscription taken from the Magnificat that the evangelist Luke attributes to the Virgin Mary, *quia respexit humilitate ancile sue*.

■ **Camillo Bocaccino**  
Organ shutter, Prophets  
Isaiah and Davide (1530)



■ **Giovanni Battista Merano** • The wise  
men's devotion  
(1685-90)



■ **Giovanni Lanfranco**  
St. Luca (1611)





The Farnese  
Splendors  
**FASTI  
FARNE-  
SIANI**



■ **Sebastiano Ricci**  
Paolo 3rd appointing  
his son Pierluigi as  
Duke of Piacenza  
and Parma, part.  
(1687)



■ **Sebastiano Ricci**  
Paolo 3rd is inspired  
by the Faith to call  
the Council of  
Trento, part. (1687)



■ **Sebastiano Ricci**  
Paolo 3rd approve  
the project of the  
Piacenza's Castle  
(1687-1688)

Paolo Frisoni probably carried out the impressive stucco decorations of Palazzo Farnese, even if the intervention of other skilled artists who were working in other palaces and churches in the city cannot be excluded. The stucco plans and designs are attributed to Andrea Sighizzi (Bologna, 1613 - over 1684), set designer of the court for Ranuccio 2nd. It is likely that the two brothers Ferdinando and Francesco Galli Bibiena, who decorated the upper floor rooms in 1682, contributed to the decoration of the ground floor together with Sighizzi. Duke Ranuccio 2nd wanted the stucco frames to contain a cycle of paintings celebrating his lineage: *Fasti Farnesiani*. These paintings, following the self-celebrating trend of the major Italian Renaissance dynasties, aimed at underlying and confirming the prestige and power of the Farnese family in the eyes of other sovereigns and of their own subject population. *The Fasti Farnesiani*, ordered by Ranuccio 2nd, celebrate the achievements of Paolo 3rd and Alessandro Farnese; the former was the founder of the Farnese dynasty and an important protagonist of the 16th century European history, while the latter was an internationally relevant figure, a military Captain and the Governor of Flanders on behalf of Spain against the Protestants. *Storie di Paolo III (The stories of Paolo 3rd)*, whose real name was Alessandro Farnese (Canino, Viterbo, 1468 - Rome, 1649) are located in the recess, which is divided into two rooms - the bedroom and the office - and were painted by Sebastiano Ricci (Belluno, 1659 - Venice, 1734), a Venetian painter. Among these works, the most remarkable are the painting of *Paolo 3rd appointing his son Pierluigi as Duke of Piacenza and Parma*, for its pictorial quality, and the portrait in which *Paolo 3rd is inspired by the Faith to call the Council of Trento*, for its original iconography. As to the accomplishments of Alessandro Farnese (Rome 1545 - Arras 1592) in Flanders, particularly interesting is the painting in which *Alessandro Farnese is depicted while receiving the Papal Tuck* by Giovanni Evangelista Draghi (Genoa, 1654 - Piacenza, 1712). Together with



Ricci and Draghi, Domenico Piola (Genoa, 1627-1703) and Marcantonio Franceschini (Bologna, 1648-1745) contributed to the cycle. In the 1680's, Palazzo Farnese was a large workshop in which many different artists were working together; it is therefore extremely interesting to notice the reciprocal stylistic and iconographic influence among them. Ilario Spolverini (Parma 1657-1734), a court artist, continued the Fasti; he maintained the theme of the previous Fasti and created a new genre: the representation of ceremonies. He lived in Piacenza from 1714 to 1727 and here he painted large works of art, very likely in Palazzo Farnese. In particular, he was the author of the *Elisabetta Farnese Splendors* - who became Queen of Spain in 1714 -, which include the large painting *Congedo di Elisabetta dalla Corte* (1721-23) - where *Elisabetta is depicted while taking leave from the Piacentine court* - and the colossal painting portraying the *entrance of Cardinal Gozzadini in Parma*, which are both now displayed in the art gallery.

■ Left: **Giovanni E. Draghi**  
Alessandro Farnese is depicted while receiving the Papal Tuck, part. (1685-87)  
Right: view of a room with Farnese Splendors



■ **Ilario Spolverini**  
Entrance of Cardinal Gozzadini in Parma, with Cardinal Acquaviva and the Duke Francesco Farnese, part. (1717-21)

The Carriage  
Museum  
**MUSEO  
DELLE  
CARROZZE**

The cellars of Palazzo Farnese house a highly prized exhibition of carriages that were collected by Count Dionigi Barattieri throughout the first three decades of the 20th century. In 1948 Barattieri's heir, Silvestro Brondelli di Brondello, donated the whole collection to the City of Piacenza and during the following years it was expanded thanks to donations from private enthusiastic and organizations. The carriage museum contains only well-preserved models, whose repairs were done exclusively with original parts. *The Barattieri Collection* includes two 18th century *Berline di Gala (Gala Sedans)* and four 19th-century *Berline di Viaggio (Travelling Sedans)*. Sedans were the most common carriages throughout the 18th century; this kind of carriage had originally four wheels and the coach was secured by means of leather belts. It had four doors and the upholstery could be either silk or velvet. In the 17th century, they were mainly used by royals and by some members of the wealthiest aristocracy, while in the 18th century (when the shape of the coach changed from square to rounded) their use spread among noblemen, both for long trips and short excursions in the countryside. The *Berline di Gran Gala (Grand Gala Sedans)* - temporarily on loan from the Italian Presidency of the Republic - were built in 1879 by the Milanese carriage maker Cesare Sala for the King of Italy. The coaches are richly decorated and they bear the Savoy coat of arms on the doors and on the bronze handles. The



■ **Loyer Gala Sedan**  
(1750)



■ **Sedan**  
(half 19th century)



■ **The Carriage Museum**  
Interior view. Left: sulky. Right: carriage



elegant wallpaper, made of light-colored satin, covers the seats and the walls. In the 19th century, the most common type of carriage was the Landau, not only among aristocracy, but also among the high middle class. Two examples of this kind of carriage are displayed in the museum: a Ferretti-Roma (1880-90) and a Cesare Sala-Milano (1890). The main characteristic of the Landau is that it is convertible. The coach has an easily reclinable wooden frame and the roof is covered with leather. The exhibit includes many other models of carriages (several Stagecoaches, a rare example of a Hansom Cab, a refined Calèche-Barouche, a Spyder, and others), sedan chairs, hearses, a firefighter's cart, a Sicilian cart and some baby strollers dating back to the 18th/19th centuries. The strollers were designed exactly as little carriages, and therefore followed the same stylistic evolution. The same phenomenon applies to children's toy carriages, which are real, miniaturized carriages. A hall is then dedicated to six important carriages (Sociables, Phaeton, Break, Bruske) on loan from the Leonardo da Vinci Museum of Science and Technology of Milan.

■ **Gala Sedan**  
Scotti Family from  
Sarmato (1750)



■ **Stage** (half of  
19th century)



■ Frescoes room

## THE MEDIEVAL SECTION



■ **St. Catherine's master** • St. Catherine encourages the Christians (last decades of the 14th century)



■ **Bartolomeo and Jacopino from Reggio** • Coronation of the Virgin and the Trinity (1355-60)

The Civic Museums have a large medieval section with a collection of frescoes pulled out from the Church of San Lorenzo. The majority of these late 14th century frescoes represent the *Storie di Santa Caterina d'Alessandria* (*St. Catherine's Deeds*), whose images are pretty much intact. They were originally located in a chapel dedicated to the Saint and were painted by a Lombard artist who worked in the last decades of the 14th century, conventionally called the *Maestro di Santa Caterina* (*St. Catherine's master*), as it was not possible to connect his work with some already known artist. He may have had his training at the Visconti court, during the same years of Giovannino de' Grassi. He lived, therefore, in the cultural context of late-medieval noble courts and it seems quite likely that he could have been used to other artistic techniques besides frescoes, such as miniature. More specifically, the Piacentine cycle should be considered in relation to an important illuminated manuscript, Gian Galeazzo Visconti's *Libro d'Ore*. This text is now kept in Florence National Library and shows some interesting common elements in terms of chronology and style with the Piacentine paintings, especially considering that it was written around 1388. In this area, there are also other frescoes, originally located in the presbytery of San Lorenzo, the most interesting of which depicts *Incoronazione della Vergine e la Trinità* (*The Coronation of the Virgin and the Trinity*). Critics have made a series of hypotheses about this

work in order to define its cultural origins; in particular, the critic Boskovitz has recently underlined the stylistic affinity of this painting with the 1355 triptych belonging to the Thyssen-Bornemisza collection in Madrid. Starting from this intuition, further investigation has shown a united corpus of works of art that includes the *Incoronazione della Vergine e la Trinità* (*Coronation of the Virgin and the Trinity*) fresco in Palazzo Farnese, the *trittico Thyssen* (*Thyssen triptych*) and other mid-14th century pieces of art. Extremely noteworthy are also the sculptures in this section of the exhibitions. They attest to a crucial moment in the Romanesque style of sculpture between Willigelmo and Benedetto Antelami, a moment that critics nowadays call *Scuola di Piacenza* (*the Piacentine School*). The term appeared for the first time in an important essay by Krautheimer-Hess in 1928 to indicate a series of Piacentine and non-Piacentine works of art that were characterized by the fusion of stylistic elements typical of the workers of Willigelmo and Niccolò, who worked together on the minor portals of Piacenza Cathedral. Of great interest are, therefore, the *Two Prophets* (12th century), whose style harks back to the *Scuola di Piacenza*, the *Majestas Domini* (12th century), also attributed to this artistic movement and the *Madonna col Bambino - Madonna with the Child* - (early 13th century), which has probably been painted by one of Antelami's followers.



■ **Sculptor of Antelami School**  
Madonna with the Child (13th century)



■ **Majestas Domini**  
Part. (12th century)

The first hall on the raised floor is devoted to a collection of ancient weapons that includes about 400 pieces, put together, in the mid-19th century, by the Piacentine Count Antonio Parma. The Piacentine collection includes both defense and offence weapons, which are either original or 19th century reconstructions. The defense weapons include complete suits of armor or parts of armor in perfect condition, helmets and horse armor, mostly dated around the 16th century. Among the helmets, one interesting

## THE WEAPONS SECTION



■ **Three-ribbed Morione** used by the Farnese Guards (1545 c.)

piece is a 1545 *Morione a tre fili* (*Three-ribbed Morione*) used by the Farnese Guards. There are also some remarkable pieces by Pompeo della Cesa, one of the most famous and skilled 16th century gunsmiths. He worked in Milan during the last 25 years of the 16th century, producing pieces of the highest quality for distinguished personality of the time. One of his works is also a nearly complete, perfectly preserved suit of armor dated back to 1580-85. The section dedicated to offence weapons includes some precious lances (halberds, pike weapons, etc.), blade weapons (mostly swords) and original firearms dating back to the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. The collection of lances includes a remarkable *Falcione* bearing the coat of arms of Alessandro Farnese, dating back to 1586-1590 and a 16th century Swiss halberd that bears three tulips closed in a shield on the metal section. Among the blade weapons, we must mention two early 17th century *Schiavone* swords from Veneto. These swords were used by the dalmatian *schiaivone* mercenaries who served the Republic of Venice. There are also some very interesting oriental pieces, such as two magnificent *Kris* from Malaysia and two daggers (*Jambiya*), probably from Persia.



■ **Old weapons room** • Left: Pompeo della Cesa, full suits of armor (16th century). Right: room view

Risorgimento Museum, created thanks to an agreement between the City of Piacenza and the Istituto per la Storia del Risorgimento italiano (Italian Institute for the History of the Risorgimento Piacenza branch), offers the visitors the chance to learn about one of the most meaningful moments in the history of the city through documents of the time. A varied assortment of documents (newspapers, paintings, lithographs, coins, pamphlets, uniforms, weapons, portraits) offers a complete, detailed profile of this historical movement in Piacenza and of the ideals behind it. The exposition recreates the mood of the times and shows the visitors the way in which common people lived during these historical moments. The itinerary starts at the end of Napoleon's Empire in the territories and continues until the arrival of Maria Louisa Von Hapsburg, who ruled the Duchy from 1816. Following the chronological order of the events, the 1831 and 1848 revolutions are then displayed; 1848 was also the year in which Piacenza voted for its annexation to the kingdom of Piedmont, thus earning the title of *Primogenita* (the First-born). This decision became official by means of a Decree of the Duchy Consignment to the King of Sardinia on June 1st, 1848 (The original copy of which is shown in the exhibition). The section devoted to 1848 events is particularly rich: Garibaldi's visit to Piacenza took place on July 3rd of the same year. The great enthusiasm created by Garibaldi's speech underlines how, at the time, the ideal of national identity was a working-class concept and how much involved the population was in creating Italian history. After 1848, the intellectual, diplomatic and military aristocracy that led the Risorgimento was flanked by the populace. However, this enthusiasm was soon deadened because of the return of the Austrian troops in Piacenza, after the Salasco armistice on August 9th. Another important moment in the history of the Piacentine Risorgimento was the period from 1859 to 1861. In 1859, the Austrians, defeated by the Franco-Piedmont troops, abandoned Piacenza, and the Duchy was

Risorgimento Museum  
**MUSEO DEL RISORGIMENTO**



■ **Authentic Garibaldi's letter** (31st march 1862)



■ **Risorgimento Museum** • Room



### Risorgimento Museum

View of an interior room

annexed to Piedmont. An outstanding figure at the time was Giuseppe Manfredi, who became, on behalf of the people, governor of the provinces of Parma. He was the most noteworthy politician during the decade before the Unity of Italy. Two other important European figures at the time were Melchiorre Gioia and Macedonio Melloni; they both lived before Manfredi and were active in the period of political silence. Leaflets, brochures and photographs are then devoted to other two leading figures during the period of national unification: Giuseppe Garibaldi and Giuseppe Mazzini. Many Piacentines followed them in 1860, among the expedition of the Mille (Thousand Army). Several documents and antiques, such as weapons and uniforms, narrate the stories of Piacentine men who became members of Garibaldi's troops and of their participation in the Third War of Independence against Austria (1866). Other publications and magazines retrace the events in Piacentine history from 1860 to 1870. Since 1996, thanks to a donation by Giuseppe Borghini's heirs, the Risorgimento Museum has been enriched with more than 200 prints about this historical period.

Three sections of the archaeological museum are now open: *La nascita del Museo di Piacenza tra antiquaria e archeologia* (containing the discoveries that gave birth to the first collections of the institution, originally donated by archaeology enthusiasts); *La prima pietra* (dedicated to the most ancient prehistoric periods -100.000 years ago/ mid-4th millennium BC-) and *Dal fuoco il metallo* (describing the life of metal-using communities -c. 3400-900 BC-). The permanent exhibition *Abitavano fuori porta. Gente della Piacenza romana*, focuses on some aspects of daily life in Piacenza, 2,000 years ago.

### The Birth of Piacenza Museum, between Antiquity and Archaeology

#### La nascita del Museo di Piacenza tra antiquaria e archeologia

This section shows the archaeological vocation that is at the core of this Piacentine institution. The earliest archaeological specimens and coin collections belonged to Giuseppe Poggi (1761-1842) but, soon after, others followed, such as the collection of local history objects by Bernardo Pallastrelli (1807-1877). The small specimens belonging to the municipality (most of which are of unknown provenience) are arranged in chronological/typological order along the exhibition. Among the oldest evidences there are hatchets made of green stone and metal, found in the Apennines and flown into the Pallastrelli collection. Some of the ceramic pieces (Etruscan vases and pottery from southern Italy) represent the typical products of the Mediterranean basin between the 5th and the 2nd centuries BC.

The Roman finds are catalogued in different classes: bronze objects (mostly from the Poggi collection), glass objects, ceramic bowls for conserving, cooking and eating, and bone objects.

A separate showcase is devoted to the presentation of those objects belonging to the transition between Romanesque

Archaeological Museum

## MUSEO ARCHEOLOGICO



Antique bronze of Ulixe or Vulcano (1st century AD)



Small glass amphora (4th century AD)



■ **Haruspices liver** discovered in Settima di Gossolengo (late 2nd / early 1st centuries BC)

period and middle Ages. The itinerary ends with Augustan Age coins, an indication of the vast coin collection belonging to the museum.

The most famous and prestigious find in the entire municipal collections is the *Fegato di Piacenza (Liver of Piacenza)*, found in 1877 in Ciavernasco di Settima and dated late 2nd / early 1st centuries BC. This is a rare, direct proof of Etruscan religious rituals: it is a bronze model of an ovine liver, and is connected to divination ritual made by haruspices, who analyzed the organ of the sacrificed victim.

The extraordinary importance of this object lies in the names of gods incised on the flat side of the liver, in such a way as to reflect the organization of the sky according to the Etruscans.



■ **Ceramic crockery and human shape** (maybe orator) inside a vase, both from Casa Gazza (Travo), a Neolithic site

### The first stone La prima pietra

A plastic model of the territory illustrates the population distribution from the time Man first appeared until the Roman Age, when the colony of *Placentia* was founded in 218 BC. The window-cases display exhibits belonging to the lower, middle and upper Paleolithic, found, mainly, near Piacentine hills; particularly interesting are the jasper artifacts found on Monte Lama, from the middle Paleolithic to the Copper Age. Many specimens found at the Mesolithic sites

(Le Mose, Passo Zovallo, and Monte Ragola) document the transition from a hunter-gatherer society to the agrarian society of the first settlements. The group of pottery discovered in Casa Gazza di Travo, along with the grave goods found in Le Mose is among the most meaningful examples of Neolithic finds in Northern Italy.



■ **Horn objects**  
Rovere di Caorso  
(middle Bronze Age)

### From fire, metal Dal fuoco il metallo

This section opens with the greatest technological advancements and social transformations that characterized the Age of metals: two splendid, ancient, Bronze Age knives, which were found on the bank of the Po River near Castel San Giovanni are thus particularly interesting. The middle Bronze Age area shows artifacts from the only pile dwelling found in our province, in Chiaravalle della Colomba (17th century BC).

A big area is dedicated to the exhibition of the *terramare culture*, whose development led to a great increase in the population number during the following centuries (16th/13th centuries BC). *Terramare* were typical villages built on pile dwellings in a dry context and the museum displays findings from those discovered in the 19th century by Luigi Scotti in the Piacentine settlements of Rovere di Caorso, Colombare di Bersano, Castelnuovo Fogliani and Montata dell'Orto. Other thematic areas concerning handcrafted activities and spiritual object are exhibited in the following showcases.

Extremely significant, for their value as status symbols, are five bronze swords, which had been thrown into the Po River as votive offering. Further discoveries, dating back to the same period, but culturally different, come from the Apennine area, where an interesting group of vessels dating back to the late Bronze Age were found in Groppo di Vaccarezza. People kept frequenting that area until the late Roman Imperial Age.



■ **Horned handles**  
from Terramare of Piacenza (middle Bronze Age)



■ **Axe extremity**  
Rovere di Caorso  
(middle to recent Bronze Age)



■ **Swords of Bronze Age**, found on Po riverbed



■ Above: **ceramic "incense burner"** (1st century AD) from via Venturini  
Below: **bowl in sealed soil** (Age of Tiberio) from via Venturini

They lived out of town. People from Roman Piacenza

### Abitavano fuori porta. Gente della Piacenza romana

This presentation proposes a sampling of grave goods ranging from the Augustan Age to the first decades of the 2nd century AD. They come from five of the thirteen graves that were excavated in via Venturini in 2007. The objects include: ceramic crockery, glass unguentariums, thuribles, oil-lamps, spindles and hairpins made of bone and an iron strigil. The small necropolis, which was situated close to the city walls, received male and female individuals who were probably related to each other or were from the same social group, with the exception of children. Nonetheless, the most common funerary rite during Roman Age and until the 2nd century AD was cremation.

## THE GLASS AND CERAMIC SECTION



■ Glass and ceramic (17th–18th centuries)

On the raised floor, visitors may admire a collection of pottery and ceramics, from both private collections and excavations. The most valuable part of the collection, including pieces dating back to the 16th–18th centuries, is made up of pottery belonging to the collections of Carlo Anguissola and Pietro Agnelli. Particularly fine among the ceramic objects are a pitted, 17th century, perforated altar lamp, an example of the production of white ceramics from Faenza, and an 18th century oval soup bowl with scroll work, polychrome flower decorations and a large pear-shaped knob. There are also some refined examples of colorful (pink, green, blue) Oriental porcelain, most of which date back to the 18th century. In the next few years, a splendid collection of 16th to 19th centuries ceramics from the Besner-Decca collection will be set up. The glass collection belongs to the same time range (16th–18th centuries), and comes as well from Pietro Agnelli's collection. Among the pieces displayed, there is an outstanding, 17th century, translucent blue goblet with a glass rim mounted on a spiral-shaped stem, and



■ Left: **Plate called del Benvegnù** (14th century)  
Right: **Inscriptions** • It remembers the construction of a chapel from carpenters and bricklayers corporations (15th century)

a sphere-shaped, *girasol* opaline glass bottle dating back to the end of the 17th century.

In this section are shown some historically remarkable epigraphs, mostly from the collection of Mr. Bissi, who was the canon of the Cathedral (on loan by the Episcopal curia). The most remarkable piece, for the relationship between a written text and an image, is a bas-relief with an inscription, known as the *Benvegnù*. The bas-relief, which comes from the castle of Montechiaro, bears a long vernacular inscription on a scroll in the upper part, and was clearly influenced by the dialect: *Segnori vu sie tuti gi benvegnu e zascaun chi che vera sera ben vegnu e ben recevu (My lords you are all welcome. Whoever will come will be welcome and well received)*. The lower part of the slab represents the lord and lady of the castle welcoming visitors on the right, while five other people are on the left. Evidently, both the inscription and the image aim to exalt the castle owners' hospitality. The inscription is also a very rare example of a vernacular text used to explain a bas-relief image, especially considering the period in which it was realized (early 14th century). Also worth mentioning, is the 15th-century inscription commemorating the construction and donation of a chapel by the guilds of carpenters and masons, which comes from the church of S. Maria

## THE SCULPTURE AND EPIGRAPH SECTION





■ **Tondi from cloister of Saint Sepolcro's Church (1460-1480)**  
Left: S. Simone; right: S. Filippo

del Carmine and dated back to the 15th century. In the Renaissance sculptures section are shown five *Tondos*, each one representing an Apostle. They come from the *Chiostrino delle Terrecotte (Terracotta cloister)* in the Chiesa del Santo Sepolcro and probably date back to the third quarter of the 15th century. The terracotta cloister imitates pre-Renaissance Tuscan and Lombard models (l'Ospedale degli Innocenti in Florence and the Ospedale Maggiore in Milan). As to wooden sculptures, the refectory door of Monastery of S. Agostino, dating back to 1570, is a remarkable piece. It fascinates the spectators thanks to a rigorous architectural design made lighter by a rich, whimsical decoration. The wooden statue of S. Augustine has been attributed to an unknown 18th-century sculptor, and it probably comes from the church or monastery of S. Agostino. The technical skills used to render the flowing cloth by layering different types of drapery, are remarkable. The face of the Saint also confirms the artist's abilities; here the sculptor makes an adroit use of the light to symbolize Divine inspiration and to give a strong dramatic intensity to the expression of the Saint.



■ **S. Agostino**  
(18th century)

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**Web:** www.palazzofarnese.piacenza.it

**Visits:**

- **tuesdays, wednesdays, thursdays**  
9:00am-1:00pm
- **fridays, saturdays**  
9:00am-1:00pm/3:00-6:00pm
- **sundays** 9:30am-1:00pm/3:00-6:00pm
- closed Mondays

Free guided tours (90 min.)

- **fridays** 10:00am/3:30pm
  - **saturdays, sundays**  
9:30am/11:00am/3:00pm/4:30pm
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Full rate for adults and free entry for children.

Free admission to

- disabled people and persons accompanying disabled people
- children under 6 years old
- journalists with Press ID Card
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Free entry every first sunday of the months.

Only 1 ticket to visit 3 different museums

Musei Civici di Palazzo Farnese, Galleria Ricci Oddi, Musei del Collegio Alberoni can be visited with a unique ticket at lowest price. This ticket is valid for three months and could be bought directly at the ticket office. Full rate: € 13,00 - reduced rate: € 10,00

School Lab

from October to May only for school



■ Palazzo Farnese by night



■ Tourists





# GALLERIA D'ARTE MODERNA RICCI ODDI

| Ricci Oddi Gallery of Modern Art |

## HISTORY

■ The Princess Maria José of Savoy at the inaugural ceremony of the Gallery (October 1931)



■ Ricci Oddi Gallery  
Left: internal room  
Right: entrance view with Giorgio Groppi sculpture (Yo pienso, y es así - 1981)



The Ricci Oddi Art Gallery began as a private collection belonging to the Piacentine art collector Giuseppe Ricci Oddi (1868-1937), who, in 1924, decided to donate his collection to the museum. The inaugural ceremony of the Ricci Oddi Art Gallery took place on October 11th 1931 and the princes of Piedmont, Umberto and Maria José of Savoy, attended to the ceremony. Upon his death in 1937, Giuseppe Ricci Oddi bequeathed money, stocks and family jewels to the Museum for its management and the continuous enhancement of its collection. Purchases continued, mostly from the Venetian Biennale, as well as donations, sometimes by the artists themselves: one example is Filippo De Pisis who offered the museum his wonderful *Vaso di fiori con pipa* (*A Flower Pot and a Pipe*) in 1937, which he had just painted. During the war, the most important works were preserved in the Castle of Torrechiara (Parma), while in 1945 a contemporary art exhibit was held in the empty spaces of the gallery.



■ Ricci Oddi Gallery • Left: Entrance; project (1924-1931) of Giulio Ulisse Arata. Right: interior view

In 1947, the Gallery was reopened to the public with new works of art.

When Giuseppe Ricci Oddi decided to give his whole collection to his hometown, he also tried to find a proper location for such an exhibition. He evaluated several buildings in the city, but could not find a suitable place. For this reason, he finally asked and obtained an empty area on which he could build a new museum from the City Council. The architect Arata was appointed to design the new project, which was constructed in the area previously belonged to the San Siro Monastery. He tried to comply with the requests of the donor, who wanted the museum to be conceived as a *small temple* which should have been accessible by means of a *short marble staircase with a spacious lobby inside, from the centre of which a wide entrance would lead to a long gallery with several symmetrical rooms on its right and left*. He wanted to use the pre-existing structures, and for this reason, the structures of the monastery were kept and integrated into the new building, but the two constructions are still identifiable because of the different kind of wall covering (plaster and brick). The façade is worth mentioning because of the fluid elegance of the stone base and entrance, which contrast the pristine brick. Inside, the geometrical order of the rooms blends with the complexity of the structure, showing the influence of Modernist artists such as Horta and Berlage, as well as the Bramante-like design of the central parts. Innovative was also the choice of illuminating the museum from the high.

## THE BUILDING

■ Ricci Oddi Gallery  
Aerial view



## THE 19TH CENTURY



■ **Francesco Hayez**  
Portrait of a Man  
(1834)



■ **Silvestro Lega**  
Haystacks in the sun, part. (1890c.)



■ **Tranquillo Cremona**  
Bitter stem glass  
(1865)

The exhibit includes a 1834 painting (hall 8) by Francesco Hayez, considered a leader of the Italian Romantic movement: *Ritratto di uomo* (*Portrait of a Man*), a polished, analytical painting, whose human figure facing outwards stands out against a neutral background and the pale color of the man's high collar. The two paintings by Giovanni Carnovali belong to the same period: one is a landscape, the other a portrait and they are both characterized by a loose, evocative stroke of the brush. Another romantic work is *La partenza del coscritto* (*The departure of the conscript*) (1862), by Gerolamo Induno, inspired by the Risorgimento, but characterized by a sober, melancholic tone. Interesting are also some paintings from the *Macchiaioli* movement (hall 2), painted by Giovanni Fattori, Silvestro Lega, Telemaco Signorini, Raffaello Sernesi and Giuseppe Abbati. The works by Tranquillo Cremona, Daniele Ranzoni and Luigi Conconi belong to the Lombard *Scapigliatura* movement (hall 10), but there are also some interesting Naturalistic pieces by Lombard artists. In hall 8 are shown the works of the Divisionism movement with the paintings by Gaetano Previati and Giovanni Segantini. Segantini, in particular, expressed with his highly dramatic 1881 painting, *La Culla Vuota* (*The Empty Crib*), his attention to social themes. Among Ricci Oddi's favorite painters, the production of Antonio Fontanesi stands out in hall 5, where is clearly visible how the artist realizes a transfiguration of the reality into an inner vision that is intimate, powerful and essential. The collector also wanted to document the origins of Fontanesi's work and his artistic environment: he therefore takes into account the Piedmont artistic tradition, the works of Fontanesi's pupils and the painting of Auguste Ravier, who was one of the closest friends of the painter. One section is dedicated to Southern Italy art (halls 17-18) and to Antonio Mancini (hall 15). This section goes from Romanticism to Realism, and exhibits works by Domenico Morelli, the Palizzi brothers and the superb Francesco Paolo Michetti. There are many pieces by Piacentine artists (halls 12 - 22): Stefano Bruzzi and Francesco Ghittoni



■ **Federico Zandomeneghi**  
Place d'Anvers in Paris (1880)



■ **Stefano Bruzzi**  
Hard step, part.  
(1870)

are the two main representatives of 19th century Realism. Ricci Oddi also bought a painting by the Venetian artist Federico Zandomeneghi, the 1880 *Place d'Anvers a Parigi*, which had been displayed in the 6th Exhibition of Impressionist Paintings, in 1881. There are paintings by important Italian artists who worked in Paris as Giovanni Boldini and Giuseppe de Nittis.

■ **Francesco Ghittoni**  
Young worker who rests (1879)



Giuseppe Ricci Oddi was not particularly interested in avant-garde art, considering it a kind of degeneration, which is the reason why in his gallery there are no pieces realized by artists who took part in the main movements that shook the century. There is only one Futurist

## THE 20TH CENTURY



■ **Amedeo Bocchi**  
The morning breakfast (1919)



■ **Felice Casorati**  
Women on the ship  
(1933-34)

painting, *Ritratto della Madre (Portrait of the Mother)* by Boccioni (1910 DC). On the contrary, early 20th century Symbolist artists (hall 19), such as Giulio Aristide Sartorio, Plinio Nomellini and Mario De Maria, who were all influenced by the still-dominant poetic style of D'Annunzio, are well represented in the Gallery. Indeed, the collector was not unresponsive to new forms of innovations, and gave particular attention to painters like Angelo Morbelli and Giuseppe Pellizza da Volpedo, buying from this artist's heirs the painting called *Tramonto (Sunset)* (1900-1902).

Ricci Oddi's friend Medardo Rosso sold him a wax masterpiece, *Ecce puer*, dating back to 1906, and presented him with the 1897 plaster figurine *Madame Noblet*.

The gallery also displays pieces by Giacomo Grosso (hall 3), a skilled portraitist from Turin's early 20th century upper middle class, with his beautiful, richly colored paintings, and Amedeo Bocchi (hall 1), with his artfully vivid oscillations. Some post-war artists are also present, particularly those from the group known as Italian 20th century artists (halls 14 and 16) that included: Felice Carena, Carlo Carrà, Piero Marussig, Arturo Tosi, Massimo Campigli, Felice Casorati and Filippo De Pisis. Noteworthy are also the sculptures by Francesco Messina, and the *Ritratto di Giulia Alberta Planet (Portrait of Giulia Alberta Planet)* by Adolfo Wildt,



■ **Umberto Boccioni**  
Portrait of the  
Mother (1910 c.)

which is balanced between geometrical abstraction and soft outlines. The 1950s are represented in the collection by the pieces of Giorgio de Chirico, Bruno Cassinari and Achille Funi.

The exposition is still organized nowadays in such a way as to respect the original plan of the founder, Giuseppe Ricci Oddi: the pieces are therefore divided according to their region of origin, except for the specific monographic halls dedicated to Fontanesi, Mancini, Bruzzi, to the foreign artists and to the Italian 20th century. One hall is then devoted to Piacentine artists: Pollinari, Ghittoni, Ricchetti, Cassinari and Bot. Recently the permanent collection has been increased by an important deposit: forty paintings of the *Macchiaioli* and *post-Macchiaioli* school with masterpieces by Signorini, Lega, Boldini, De Nittis, Zandomenighi, Cabianca and many others exponent of this artistic movement.

In the spirit of Ricci Oddi, the Gallery offers every year a rich schedule of activities and proposes itself as a cultural centre with a well-constructed, high quality, coherent cultural program centered on the museum and on its collections; for this reason the program includes not only historic-artistic conferences but also temporary

## THE GALLERY TODAY



■ **Felice Carena**  
The quiet (1921)



■ **Carl Olof Larsson**  
My daughter with  
strawberries (1904)

shows, music, literature and philosophy events. At the same time, the Gallery, being sensitive and alert to the new social interpretations, identifies the museum not only as a container for art and a place of study, but also as a perfect context for free time activities as promotional initiatives to popularize and enjoy art, with the aim of getting larger groups of people (especially young people, adults and families) to learn about and appreciate art. The educational activities programs are a point of reference for all the schools of the city and of the province. The themes faced during these events involve art, history and literature and the activities proposed try to create a more conscious approach towards the Italian cultural heritage. The Gallery also accepts students from High schools and Universities as interns and collaborates with Piacentine High schools in the creation of specific art history projects.

**ADDRESS:** Via San Siro 13, Piacenza

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**Visits:**

- from tuesday to sunday:

9:30am-12:30pm/3:00-6:00pm

- saturdays: 9:30am-12:30pm/4:00-10:00pm

- closed Mondays

Guided tours by appointment



■ Ricci Oddi Gallery

Left: school activities. Right: tourists in the Gallery



# COLLEGIO ALBERONI

| Alberoni College |

The Piacentine Giulio Alberoni (1664-1752) represented the typical member of the cultured, eclectic, refined society that typified Europe during the 18th century. Not only he had a high religious position (he was named Cardinal in 1717), and was a polished, literate man and a dedicated art collector, but he also was a keen politician and, at the same time, a competent businessman representing the Duke of Parma and Piacenza.

He achieved the peak of his political success in 1716 when the king of Spain appointed him Prime Minister, thanks to the marriage he combined between Phillip 5th of Spain and Elisabetta Farnese, a niece of the Duke of Parma and Piacenza. In 1717 Philip 5th tried to restore Spanish domination in Italy, and in particular in Sardinia and Sicily, but the Cardinal's plan to succeed in such a project failed and the religious fell out of political grace. To avoid arrest and persecution he left Spain and retreated to Rome where he was publicly rehabilitated in 1735. He went then to Ravenna and Romagna as a papal legate and to Bologna in 1740, finally returning to Piacenza in 1751, where he founded a College for high-educated clergymen that even now carries his name. Since his first stay in Rome in 1705, Alberoni became interested in antique, modern and contemporary art. He bought many antique paintings (about 240), especially by Flemish painters and by great Italian artists of the Renaissance and Baroque periods (Antonello da Messina, Raffaello, Correggio, Andrea del Sarto, Carracci,

## CARDINAL GIULIO ALBERONI

■ Above: **Alberoni College**, interior garden  
Below: **Giovanni Maria delle Piane, called Mulinareto (1660-1745)**  
Cardinal Giulio Alberoni portrait





■ Left: **Alberoni College**, façade. Right: **Gian Paolo Panini (1691-1765)**  
The Expulsion of the Profanators from the Temple

Caravaggio, Reni, Luca Giordano, Salvator Rosa) and was also interested in valuable, antique furniture. Important in this sense is Alberoni's friendship with Gian Paolo Panini (1691-1756), a fellow citizen, to whom he asked to paint the frescoes in the Gallery of his Roman Palace and the large painting *Cacciata dei profanatori dal Tempio* (*The Expulsion of the Profanators from the Temple*), conserved in the Art Gallery of the College. Alberoni asked then, to the Roman painter Placido Costanzi (1690-1759), to paint a fresco describing the persecution he had suffered in Spain on the walls of Villa Sant'Agnese, of which we only have an oil sketch. Alberoni was also portrayed many times by the Genoa-born artist Giovanni delle Piane, alias *Molinaretto*, one of the most appreciated artists of Francesco Farnese's court.



■ **Alberoni College** • Sala Panini view

Alberoni bequeathed to the Collegio his precious paintings, which he had previously registered in the inventory of his Roman home. The document was dated 1735 and was written by the Cardinal himself.

His taste in paintings was varied. He bought historical paintings by the great masters of the time, such as Panini, Domenico Maria Viani (1668-1711) and Sebastiano Conca (1676-1764) but also appreciated *genre art* paintings: still-life, nautical scenes and panoramas, with high quality pieces by specialists as the Venetian Michelangelo Cerquozzi (1602-1660), the northern-Europeans Gaspard Dughet (1615-1675), David de Coninck (1643-1701), Eberhart Keilhau (1624-1687) and the Piacentine Antonio Gianlisi (1677-1727). Particularly interesting is the presence of some of the 17th century most important works of art and artists: *San Pietro che Piange* (*St. Peter Crying*), painted by Guido Reni (1575-1642); some works of Luca Giordano (1632-1705), Giovanni Battista Gaulli, alias Baciccia (1639-1709) with his *Portrait of Clement 9th* and Angelo Caroselli (1585-1652) with his *Allegoria della Giovinezza e Vecchiaia* (*Allegory of Youth and Old Age*), which the Cardinal thought was by Caravaggio.

Devotional motives explain why the Cardinal bought many paintings by artists known as *Pre-Raphaelites* (active before the 16th century), whose works were not considered as remarkable under the aesthetic profile, at the time. Today, in the Cardinal's private apartments, is displayed a series of these paintings, among which the superlative *Ecce Homo* (1473) by Antonello da Messina (1430-1479), stands out. Alberoni's contemporaries had defined it as a primitive attempt of Pre-Raphaelite art, being influenced by the tastes and trends of their time. In truth, it is a prized masterpiece by this Sicilian artist, because of the close-up on the intensely emotional, afflicted expression on Christ's face. The observer is moved by this expression of humanity and, at the

## THE ART GALLERY



■ **Guido Reni**  
St. Peter Crying



■ **G. Battista Gaulli, called Baciccia**  
Clemente 9th  
Portrait, part.



■ **Antonello da Messina** • Ecce Homo (1473)



■ **Jan Provost (1462-1529)**  
Madonna of the fountain

same time, of suffering and resignation. This piece is a mainstay of the artist, as shown by the comparisons between this and other works of his, such as the *Ecce Homo* in Palazzo Spinola, Genoa, the *Cristo Benedicente* (*Christ Blessing*) conserved in London National Gallery and the *Cristo alla Colonna* (*Christ at the Column*) in Louvre Museum. Significant masterpieces are also the two exquisite panels by the Flemish artist Jan Provost (1462-1529) portraying *La Madonna col Bambino* (*Madonna with the Baby*) and the famous *Vaso di fiori* (*Vase of Flowers*) in a niche, which were originally supposed to be a small, but valuable, portable double-face altarpiece.



■ Left: **Angelo Caroselli (1585-1652)**  
The youth and the old age (Allegory of the vanity or of the touch)  
Right: **The Art Gallery** • Internal room view



## TAPESTRIES SECTION

Besides paintings, Cardinal Giulio Alberoni was also attracted by the so-called minor arts, believing that every object was not only ornamental, but, belonging to a certain epoch, could express the spirit of the time in which it was created. He was particularly fond of tapestries and furniture, with a sharp artistic taste both for the ornamental value and for the contents of the different pieces. Therefore, all of his belongings, including the antique furniture and the precious collections of jewels, ornaments and religious garb acquire a great



■ **Tapestries room** • Internal view

artistic value. This superb collection of tapestries is exactly as it was put together by the Cardinal. It is made up of 18 pieces of tapestries, divided into three series: 8 items belongs to the series Aeneas and Dido, by the tapestry maker Michel Wauters from Antwerp, based on sketches by Giovan Francesco Romanelli; 8 items to the series of *Alexander the Great*, by an unknown Flemish artist who worked in Brussels in the second half of the 17th century and was inspired by Jacob Jordaens' sketches (1630-35); the last one, the *Priam* series, is the most precious of the whole collection, and it is composed of two sensational tapestries, woven in Brussels at the beginning of the 16th century (1515-1520) that represent the Wedding of Priam and Hecuba; precisely, *The Royal Court* and *The Wedding Reception*.

All the tapestries are exhibited in the enormous hall of the Gallery, which is still nowadays used as an important venue for cultural and social events.



■ **The Royal Court and The Wedding Reception** • Brussels production (first quarter of the 16th century), part.



■ **Series of Alexander the Great**  
Alexander kills a lion (17th century), part.



■ Left: **Armillary sphere** (beginning of the 19th century)  
Right: **Astronomic Observatory**



## SCIENCE SECTION

### The Physics laboratory

The Museum area devoted to physics equipment is considerable. Among the most interesting instruments are the electrostatic devices, including one already registered in the 1755 inventory. The creation of a real physics laboratory dates back to the beginning of 18th century, with the first *Alberonian* teachers, Francesco Grassi (1715-1773), a philosopher, physician and theologian, and his assistant Gian Domenico Cravosio (1725-1776), who became a professor of Physics at Parma University in 1867. Several of the laboratory devices were created in Piacenza in Ulisse Fioruzzi's workshops (1808-1882); Fioruzzi was the owner of one of the most important foundries in town near the Galleana area. Among the devices he created, particular noteworthy are a Cecchi electrostatic machine, a Ramsden electrostatic machine, a galvanometer, a heliostat, and other sophisticated instruments. Some of them were even built inside the College. For example a model of a *Volta battery*, contemporary to the original one by the Lombard scientist (1800) as well as a rudimentary instrument for studying electromagnetism. Remarkable are also the Astronomic Observatory instruments (inside the Collegio are still active a

■ **Electrostatic machine**  
(19th century)



Meteorological Observatory, a Seismic Observatory and an ancient Astronomic Observatory) with sophisticated devices for studying the Earth's magnetic inclination and declination.

### Museum of Natural Science

The main part of this collection derives from the scientific material donated in 1810 by friar Zaccaria, a minor friar from Santa Maria di Campagna in Piacenza, who bequeathed his rich collection (including a considerably large scientific library) to the College. The systematic expansion of the museum started in 1871 thanks to the introduction in the school program of a natural history course taught by Prof. Alberto Barberis, based on the Museum collections. In 1881 all the material, rearranged and displayed in one room, increased considerably thanks to the addition of the collections belonging to the Piacentine nobleman Alberto Bracciforti (1838-1906), which included sea, land and fresh water shells, various minerals, and a large amount of fossils.

### The Geology Section

This collection dates back to the beginning of the 20th century when the Museum management started an important section dedicated to petrology and mineralogy in the Museum of Natural History of the College. They received the Bracciforti collection, the core of the exposition, which was then increased by



■ **Museum of Natural Science**  
Room view and stuffed cayman from Venezuela (half of the 19th century)

■ **Mineralogy and Malacology section**  
General view and particular of a mineral





■ Shells group  
(Pliocene)

donations – the most recent and important being the one from Scalabrini monks. A reorganization of the section was carried out in 2004, allowing the integration of two important collections that nonetheless maintain their own characteristics. The exhibition contains 1,188 pieces, of which 437 minerals and 551 rocks but only about a third of them is displayed.

### Paleontology section

The hill area between the thermal center of Tabiano (Parma) and Gropparello (Piacenza) is the typical area of the Mediterranean Pliocene. Leonardo da Vinci wrote: *...and above the Italian plains where today birds fly in flocks, fish used to move in shoal ... you can see in the mountains of Parma and Piacenza the multitude of shells and inlaid corals, still stuck to the rocks...* The most valuable part of the Alberoni collection is the Pliocene section, not only for its quantity (2,573 pieces), but also for the representativeness of the period in relation to the number of families (109) and species (422) present.

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**Visits:** sundays only

- from the last week of september to the last of june: 3:30-6:00pm

- at 4:00pm there is a guided tour in the Gallery and Alberoni College (to see the Ecce Homo of Antonello da Messina, the most ancient paintings, the library and the scientific section)

- groups (20 people or more):  
by appointment during the week

Alberoni Gallery Ticket:

full rate 4,5€

reduced rate: 3,5€ (schools, 7-18 years old)

Alberoni Gallery+College ticket:

full rate 6€, reduced rate 4,5€

Free entry: under 6 years old, disabled people  
Agreement: Banca di Piacenza associated , Club Iren, Città alla carta-Città d'arte della Pianura Padana



## MUSEO GAZZOLA

| Gazzola Museum |

The Palace, headquarters of the Gazzola Institute Foundation and of the Art School, dates back to the middle Ages. It was probably built by the noble Piacentine Fontana family that kept it until the late 17th century, when it was given up to S. Sisto monastery. It was then sold to Count Gian Angelo Gazzola, in 1699. After his death, Gazzola's son Felice bequeathed it to the Congregation of Piacentine Aristocrats, which was established to manage his patrimony and to help poor young women and talented young men. The main entrance is located in Via San Tommaso and leads into a hall surmounted by a tunnel vault that guide to a courtyard with three porticoes decorated with round arches supported by granite pillars. The upper loggia, which is accessible by means of a staircase, is characterized by 15th-century Doric order capitals. Inside, the complex has undergone numerous reshuffles; in 1873, the southern wing

### THE PALACE

■ Gazzola Palace  
(16th - 17th century)  
Entrance and open  
gallery





of the Palace facing via Gazzola was raised to give place to some classrooms and, in 1903, the premises on the noble floor were arranged to host the first Civic Museum of the city. In 1975, the collections of the Civic Museum and the weapons belonging to Count Gazzola were transferred to Palazzo Farnese. The rooms were then used as a laboratory, a depot and some of them were designated as Gazzola Museum. Two 18th-century doors inside the museum attest to the splendor of its furnishings and architecture, while the meeting room and the library on the ground floor still maintain their original 19th century decorations.

■ **Mulinaretto (1660-1745)**

Above: portrait of the Count Felice Gazzola  
Below: portrait of the Count Gian Angelo Gazzola

**COUNT FELICE GAZZOLA**



Count Felice Gazzola (1698-1780) was an artillery general in the army of Carlos 3rd of Spain. In his will (1771) he decided, after taking care of the livelihood of his cousins and not having direct heirs, to have his assets sold to finance dowries for poor girls and scholarships for six artistically talented, young Piacentine men. His desire was to support an artistic rebirth in his hometown after the end of the Farnese dynasty and the advent of the Bourbons that had caused an artistic void in the city; he was also stimulated in his decision by the presence, in Parma, of a School of fine Arts, since 1757. Felice learned about politics from his father Gian Angelo Gazzola, a delegate of Duke Francesco Farnese in London in 1713 and general commissioner of the artillery of Parma and Piacenza. Felice entered the army in 1733 under don Carlo of Bourbon (son of Elizabetha Farnese and Philip 5th), who he followed to Naples and Madrid, entering into the group of his most trusted men. Count Gazzola was extremely competent in military techniques, especially in artillery, which induced him to found the artillery Academy in Segovia. He was also an enthusiast of furniture and tapestry (he helped furnishing the Royal Palace in



■ Left: **Luigi Miradori known as Genovesino** • Holy family (1639)  
Right: **Gaspere Landi** • Ettore scold Paride (1794)

Madrid), of archeology (he promoted digs and surveys in Paestum) and art (he was Giambattista Tiepolo's protector in Spain and set up a rich collection of paintings, sketches and engravings as well as a well-provided library). The Count died on May 5th, 1780 and was buried in the church of S. Martino where his friend Giambattista Tiepolo was also buried; later his body was moved to the Army Museum in Madrid, where it still lies. After the death of this multifaceted aristocrat and the reading of his will in 1781, his last volitions were carried out by a congregation of aristocrats related to the Gazzola family and previously chosen by him.

Besides the Art School, the Gazzola Institute Foundation includes an archive (with records of all the students and the teachers of the school) and a museum that was built up during the 19th century thanks to pupils' essays, donations, inheritances and purchases. There are over 200 paintings, ranging from the 16th to the 20th century, realized by local artists (Gaspere Landi, Carlo Maria Viganoni, Stefano Bruzzi, Francesco Ghittoni, etc.) and by Italian/international painters (Gian Nicola Manni, who was an

**THE MUSEUM**



■ **German imitator of Albert Altdorfer**  
S. Giorgio kills the dragon (16th century)



■ **Gian Nicola Manni (attr.)**  
Circumcision (1498)



■ Left: **Carlo Maria Viganoni** • Cincinnato let the plough (1827)



Right: **Giovanni Mauro Della Rovere known as Fiamminghino**  
Torture of S. Donnino (17th century)

Albrecht Altdorfer's pupil, Giovan Mauro Della Rovere, known as *Fiamminghino*, Luigi Miradori – called il Genovesino – Domenico Piola, Giuseppe Maria Crespi, Margherita Caffi, Ignazio Stern, etc), about 40 statues, 400 swords belonging to Count Antonio Parma (now in the Farnese Civic Museums) as well as over 2,000 sketches and etchings and about 100 plaster moulds of statues and bas-reliefs, most of which were brought from Rome in 1830 by Carlo Maria Viganoni. The Gazzola Museum has always been a real, tangible cultural and artistic centre for Piacentine people, especially from 1903 until the 1960s, when it was the first museum of the city, with its collections from the Curia, the Collegio Alberoni, the Civic Hospitals and the Town Hall.

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Via Gazzola 9, Piacenza

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■ **Visits:** by appointment



# MUSEO CIVICO DI STORIA NATURALE

| Civic Museum of Natural History |

The public Slaughterhouse was built between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. The construction started the 12th of May, 1892 but it was enlarged and completed only in 1912, when the Ice Factory was built. In 1914, in an area that had recently been bought by the Municipality, was built also a tripe shop. The design architect Diofebo Negrotti headed the Technical Office of the Municipality from 1889 to 1916 and named the engineer Giovanni Perreau as building supervisor.

## THE ICE FACTORY

The museum has 2,000 sq. mt of expositive space which includes exhibition halls, equipped educational labs, a show area and an auditorium. Along the expository itinerary there are multimedial devices that put the visitors in contact with the reality of Piacenza's particularly rich and diversified territory. The organization and staging of the museum was planned according to the most modern and innovative criteria and aims to recreate natural habitats, to arouse the curiosity and the astonishment that normally accompany an outdoor excursion. The number of traditional showcases is reduced, to allow a direct contact between the visitor and the exhibition; for this purpose some of the exhibition pieces can be touched by the visitors, making the museum usable also for blind people. The core of the exhibits come from the historical collections belonging to Romagnosi Technical High School, which were collected, catalogued and classified by teachers, researchers and enthusiasts, like the teachers Michele Del Lupo and Giacomo Trabucco,

## THE MUSEUM

■ **Civic Museum of Natural History**  
The deer





■ Civic Museum of Natural History  
Show room

## THE EXHIBITION ITINERARY



■ Civic Museum of Natural History  
Exposition way: plain, hill and mountain

who took care of the rock and mineral collections, and the ornithologist scholar Edoardo Imparati who curate the avifauna collection. Among the most important collections, particularly interesting are the 1820 *Flora Italiae Superioris*, Raffaele Del Prete's *Malacology collection* and the recently purchased, prestigious *Giovanni Dosi* mineral collection, with samples from various geographical areas. The scientific and didactical activities of the museum are attended by the *Piacentine Society of Natural Sciences*, whose chief aim is to appraise the provincial local territory.

The new exhibition itinerary is organized in three halls that follow the characteristics of the natural habitats of the plains, hills and mountainous areas of our province. The *Plains* hall is divided into two main sections: the floodplain and non-floodplain territories, which are divided by a stylized model of the Po River's bank. In the floodplain area, the environments mainly represented are sandbanks and river islands, hydrophilic woods, riparian zones, oxbow lakes and groves of reeds, together with the main bird species that live in these areas (for examples Montagu's harrier and common tern).

The non-floodplain sector is represented by a blow-up representation of the most important environments, such as hedges, cultivated fields, Karst springs and alluvial fans. In the *Hills* hall, visitors can find a reconstruction of the three main types of woods that characterize this landscape: oak, chestnut and pine forests. In particular, there are various in-depth analyses of the fossils in the badlands of Castell'Arquato and Lugagnano, of the vertebrates coming from the Po Quaternary period, of the ophiolite outcrops of Parcellara rock, of the sandstone surface of Rocca d'Olgisio and of the basin area of the Trebbia River. The *Mountains* hall is divided into two major sectors: one is dedicated to the last glacial period in our Apennines while the other is more generically devoted to mountain environments.

The first sector contains descriptions

of peat bogs, of small glacial lakes, of the typical flora and fauna on Monte Nero together with a representation of the main vegetation changes that have occurred since the last glacial period. The interesting, life-size models of newts allow close observation of these peculiar amphibians, otherwise unlikely to be seen in nature. The second sector describes the streams, high pastures, beech trees and the typical mountain flora and fauna. Particular attention is paid to the two super-predators currently present in our province: the golden eagle and the wolf, in front of which a stuffed adult deer stands out.



The expositive itinerary of the Piacenza Oil & Natural Gas Museum narrates the role that the province of Piacenza had in the history of Italian hydrocarbon industry. It is made up of two sections: the first, inside the Museum of Natural History, explores the theme of the formation of hydrocarbons from a geological point of view and gives a schematic explanation of the topic. The second section is in the Negrotti Pavillion and follows the history of natural gas and oil in Piacenza, from its beginnings (period of Roman Veleia) up to the artisan phase of the 15th and 18th centuries, and then to the end of the 19th and 20th centuries, during the Industrial Revolution. The chronological sequence of texts and images illustrates the most crucial events and protagonists of Piacentine oil and natural gas research.

## PIACENZA OIL & NATURAL GAS MUSEUM



■ Above:  
Civic Museum of Natural History  
Erbario Flora Italiae Superioris and Tormalina di Dosi Collection  
Below: Oil&Gas Museum  
Show room, part.

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**E-mail:** museoscienze@comune.piacenza.it

**Web:** www.msn.piacenza.it

**Visits:**

- tue., wed., fridays 9:30am-12:30pm
- thursdays, saturdays, sundays 9:30am-12:30pm/3:00-6:00pm
- closed Mondays

Piacenza Oil & Natural Gas Museum:

- saturdays: 9:30am-12:30pm/3:00-5:30pm
- sundays: 3:00-5:30pm

# MUSEO CAPITOLARE DI SANT'ANTONINO

| Saint Antonino Capitular Museum |

## ■ Missal Choral (15th century)



## ■ Lombard School Saint Antonino (end of 15th century)



In the sixteenth-century premises adjacent the Basilica and overhead the Chapter Sacristy, is located a Museum with collections of decors and paintings taken from the chapels that were demolished during repairs made in 1915-1930, along with other precious objects belonging to the treasures of the church itself. Noteworthy are two reredos, which are both attributed to the Master of the reredoses in Saint Antonino. The first dates back to 1425-30 and depicts eight *Episodes of Saint Antonino's Life* (perhaps used as a litter for the Saints reliquaries) and the second, realized in the middle of the fifteenth century, depicts *The Holy Father Conferring Blessings* with the dove of the Holy Spirit among six prophets. A third dossal (1470-1480), by an unknown Piacentine painter, depicts a fragmented *Crucifixion* in the centre, surrounded by the erudite Saints of western Church - Saint Augustine, Saint Jerome, Saint Gregory and Saint Ambrose. Very interesting pieces are also a late-15th century *S. Antonino*, attributed to an unknown Lombard artist, and the *Birth of Mary* by G.C. Procaccini. In the Museum are conserved also: the *Crowning of the Virgin* by Giovanni Battista Trotti (called Malosso), two sketches by Robert de Longe which represent some stories of St Antonino's Life as they were painted in the presbytery, and, most importantly, *The Discovery of Saint Antonino's Body* and *The Discovery of the Saint's Head*. The museum contains, then, several silver ornaments such as chalices and monstrances (15th-19th centuries). Among the reliquaries, some are particularly outstanding: the *Holy Thorn* because of its worshipping value and, for



■ Left: **Robert De Longe**  
The Discovery of Saint Antonino's Body, sketch (end of 17th century)  
Right: **G. Battista Trotti known as Malosso**  
Crowning of the Virgin, part (early 17th century)



its artistic significance, the one called *Of the Blessed Gregory 10th* (late Gothic). The museum also houses rare examples of illustrated manuscripts (mostly dating back to the 15th century), parchments documents and incunabula from the Church Archive that is one of the oldest in the city, with documents dating back to the 8th century.

■ **ADDRESS:** S. Antonino cloister, Piacenza

■ **Tel:** +39.0523320653

■ **Visits:** by appointment

## ■ Master of the reredos in Saint Antonino Eight episodes of Saint Antonino's Life (1430 ca.)



# MUSEO AMBIENTALE DI PALAZZO COSTA

| Environmental Museum in Palazzo Costa |

Palazzo Costa, designed by the architect-designer Ferdinando Bibiena and realized at the end of the 17th century for the Counts Costa (rich Genoan merchants and bankers) houses the *Horak Foundation*, which includes in its collections noteworthy paintings and luxurious antique pieces of furniture. The grand staircase leads to the Bibiena Gallery, where 76 large incisions of Bibienesque architecture are displayed. They are all taken from the collection *Architetture e Prospettive dedicate alla maestà di Carlo Sesto Imperatore (Architectures and Perspectives dedicated to the Emperor Charles 6th's Majesty)*, designed by Giuseppe Galli Bibiena and etched by A. Pfeffel in 1740. One room is dedicated to the pieces of Salvator Rosa, containing one of the most important collections of this



■ Left: **Salvator Rosa** • Mario in front of the Ruins of Carthage  
Right: **Palazzo Costa (end of 17th century)** • Coats of Arms room with the masterpiece of Salvator Rosa



■ Left: **Workshop of Leonardo da Vinci** • Madonna dei fusi, part.  
Right: **Costa Palace (end of 17th century)** • Honour staircase

great Neapolitan Master in Italy. Among these paintings *Mario in Front of the Ruins of Carthage*, which had been shown in Capodimonte Museum, stands out as one of Rosa's greatest masterpieces. The Art Gallery is then dedicated to works of art by various 17th century Italian artists, and are representative of different artistic movements; the Florentine school is therefore represented by C. Dolci, F. Furini, O. Marinari, F. Botti; the Roman one by A. Sacchi and Mario dei Fiori; the Flemish school area shows a well-known self-portrait by A. Van Dyck and an altarpiece from the workshop of P. P. Rubens. There are paintings by Luca Giordano, S. Badalocchi, M. Stom. G.G. Barbelli and pieces coming from G.M. Delle Piane, alias *Il Mulinaretto*, and G. P. Panini's workshop as well as a precious version of the *Madonna dei fusi* realized in Leonardo's workshop, which was previously shown in the Civic Museums in Palazzo Farnese in Piacenza.

■ **Anton Van Dyck**  
Self portrait



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**Visits:** free guided tours for groups by appointment

# PICCOLO MUSEO DELLA POESIA

| Museum of Poetry |

This museum was officially recognized by Minister Franceschini as the first and only museum dedicated to Poetry in Europe. The Piccolo Museo – which is a member of the *National Association of Local and Institutional Museums* (ANMLI) – has created a Scientific Committee made up of poets, artists and scholars with proven international experience. Its President is Guido Oldani from Melegnano, (manager of the Argani series of poetry edited by Mursia, and creator of Terminal Realism). The leitmotif of the collection is certainly Italian 20th-century poetry, but parenthesis of poetry of other periods and places, from Dante to Leopardi, from Goethe to Baudelaire, up to the most significant contemporary poetry, are present along the exposition with books, anthologies, literary magazines and even some rare items. Neither are letters, records, paintings or sculptures overlooked: they make this an awe-inspiring, unique museum. Together with its intimate atmosphere, it is also

■ **Ossi di Seppia** by Eugenio Montale  
Authentic opera, third edition



necessary to recognize the dynamism that nonetheless characterizes the exhibition.

The museum's role is indeed to be a working presence in coeval art and poetry, and to get involved, through the Art Gallery, with those intellectuals who are part of our contemporary literary and artistic scene and who try, with their experimental works, to merge the past with the present and future.

Among the rarities of the museum, are mention-worthy: *Crestomazia Italiana Poetica* by Count Giacomo Leopardi (first and only edition), *Rime* by Francesco Petrarca explained by Count Giacomo Leopardi (second part-first edition), *Viaggetto in Etruria* with Giuseppe Ungaretti's autographed dedication, (a work of art unknown by critics, having never been published), an autographed letter written by Giuseppe Ungaretti to the famous Belgian poet Hellens, *Ossi di seppia* (definitive third edition, autographed by Eugenio Montale), *Appuntamento ad ora insolita* by Vittorio Sereni (with signed dedication), *Mediterranee* by Umberto Saba (first edition - autographed), *Dal fondo delle campagne* di Mario Luzi (first edition - autographed).



■ **Rime** by Francesco Petrarca with interpretation by Giacomo Leopardi



■ **Authentic letter** by Ungaretti to the Belgian Poet Hellens

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- open from wednesday to saturday 11:00am-7:00pm
- sundays by appointment, free entry

# MUSEO DELLA CIVILTÀ CONTADINA

| Museum of Piacentine Farming Culture |



- Above: **Aveto Valley typical kitchen**
- Middle: **plain kitchen**
- Below: **bedroom with the traditional bed-warmer**

In the hardworking silence of the countryside, only 5 km far from the heart of Piacenza, visitors can find the *Museum of Piacentine Farming Culture* inside *G. Raineri* High School. This school has always been very interested in innovation, being nonetheless strongly aware of the local culture and traditions, as well as of the identity and excellence of the Piacentine territory. This Museum is the cornerstone of an educational project started at the beginning of the 1990s, which continues to engage students and adults interested in making younger generations conscious protagonists of a future whose roots go deep into historical memory. The vitality of the Museum and its interest in events of national importance and up-to-date affairs are achieved through themed exhibits, participation in debates and workshops, in addition to publications like the magazine *Gente della terra piacentina (People from Piacentine Territories)*. The Museum's beginnings date back to the 1980s, when Roberto Porcari – an enthusiast of rural traditions – gave the School his personal collection of equipment, tools and objects commonly used in the past. Today there are about 2,500 exposed items, divided by topic and positioned in different areas: an artisanship hall, showing no-longer-used tools, another focused on agriculture, the cellar, a room about dairy production, a large area dedicated to Giuseppe Verdi, who was also a *Piacentine farmer*, with wagons and tools once used to work in the countryside. Moreover visitors can admire furniture and knick-knacks from a typical flatland kitchen and bedroom, together with other coming from a kitchen of the Aveto Valley; these evocative settings document the simple lifestyle of the past,



- Left: **masks used in farm celebration**
- Right: **cabinet with a wine-container for transportation**

which was in close contact with Nature. The show cases in which are exposed small objects communicate to the visitors the characteristics of school-life, childhood games, popular religion, typical of a hard-working and frugal existence. The rooms and tools come to life thanks to the countless gigantic black-and-white posters by the great photographer Tino Petrelli (1922-2001), who, after a long and illustrious career, who became fond of the Museum, becoming a member of the *Association for the Appreciation of Piacentine Farming Culture*, which manages the Museum. The artist's skill and perception fixed and consigned to history those unique moments of 20th century farming lifestyles, caught in children's gaze and in the gestures and efforts of men and women who lived in a world that is now completely outdated and, therefore, in danger of oblivion.

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By appointment, free guided tours all year round for schools, people or groups



# MUSEO ORNITOLOGICO

| Ornithology Museum |

Inaugurated on October 16th, 2010, the Museum is the result of a rewarding collaboration between the Municipal Administration of Piacenza and the managers of a no-profit organization, the Italian Federation of Ornithology (FOI). They succeeded in achieving, through perseverance, a wide-scope educational and cultural project. What makes this no-profit Museum unique in comparison to other similar structures is the exhibition of various species of European birds as well as a collection of birds bred by amateur members of the FOI and of the World Ornithological Confederation. Domesticated examples of rare beauty can be seen, such as native canaries, exotic parrots and their hybrids.

The exhibition is spread out over five halls with over 1,800 specimens plus a large auditorium for the projection of videos and documentaries about the world of ornithology. Outside, two large aviaries -one for parrots and one for other bird species- house alive specimens and are also used as rehab and reintroduction centers for wild local birds.

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**Visits:**

- from tuesday to friday 9:00-11:00am

- sundays (from september to may)

10:00am-12:00pm/3:00-6:00pm

Tickets: full rate: € 4,00

reduced rate

(under 14 years old): € 2,00

groups: € 3,00

## THE PASSERINI LANDI LIBRARY

Piacenza's Public Library has its roots in the historical **Studium**, founded in 1278 with papal privileges, where every kind of knowledge merged together through public readings of texts of different subjects. In the 16th century, the three main Associations or professional affiliations of Doctors (Judges, Arts and Medicine, Theology) participated in it, also because they owned the majority of books and manuscripts. A radical change occurred when the Jesuits settled in Piacenza, called in by Duke Ottavio in 1583, after a positive, 20-year experience in Parma. They were given the new Church of S. Pietro, which was inaugurated in 1587 and, ten years later, they began to build the college near the church, where educational and formative activities took place for the privileged part of the population. For this reason, the Jesuits had exclusive educational power in the city in relation to other religious orders and they earned an outstanding role in the College of Theology. In February 1768, after the Society of Jesus was suppressed in most of European nations and Italian states, it was also expelled by the Duchy and its patrimony confiscated. The formation-education reform was entrusted to the Piedmont clergyman Paolo Paciaudi, who chose teachers from different religious orders and had an inventory of the remaining books compiled in 1773. At the time the institution owned about 10,000 tomes and five years later The Royal Library was opened five hours a day for students and for "every honest citizen" in the ex-Jesuit college and was managed by the historian Cristoforo Poggiali. In 1791, 15,800 volumes were donated by Count Francesco Passerini to the College of Theology; he had been Prime Minister during the govern of Ranuccio 2nd. In 1809, Lotario Tomba arranged an enlargement of the hall to make room for newly acquired books, which came from various suppressed convents, for an amount of 11,000 books (4,000 from S. Agostino). The biggest acquisition came from Marquis Ferdinando



■ Above:  
exposition view  
Below: aviary



Library external view | Libro d'Ore • Virgin Officio



► Landi's (1778-1853) donation: about 56,000 books and 1,300 manuscripts and is one of the most relevant private book collections in Italy both for quantity and quality. Donations continued until the late 19th century, transforming the Passerini-Landi in one of the most important library in Italy: 2,000 manuscripts, 1,000 incunabula, 13,000 books from the 16th century, 20,000 books from the 17th century and even more from the 18th and 19th centuries, 5,000 prints and 5,000 photographs. The family jewels are: the 827 **Salterio** belonging to Empress Angilberga, written in gold and silver letters, the 1336 **Landiano Codex 190**, the oldest copy of Dante's **Divine Comedy**, the 15th century, perfectly illustrated **Officia of the Virgin**, **Lectionaries** and **Gospel Books** and a fragment of the **Decameron**, attributed to Boccaccio himself. After the Jesuits' return to Piacenza (1793-1806 and 1836-1848), Palazzo San Pietro was donated to the City by the Unitarian Government. Piacenza administrators decided then to create, first a High School focused on humanities next to the Library (transferred in Viale Risorgimento in 1937), then the Romagnosi Technical Institute, and finally, the Faustini Junior High School (until 1996). The building also houses the Historical Institute of the Resistance and of Contemporary Times (ISREC) since 1997. Restoration works were carried on from 1984 to 1998, giving back to both the public halls and the conservative storehouse their dignity, and underlying the importance of the library thanks to the excellent antiquities collection, its numerous reading rooms and to the Children's Library named after the writer Giana Anguissola. The most beautiful area of this building, organized around three courtyards, is the monumental hall, which is the main icon of the Library.

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