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Ferrara, city of the Renaissance, and its surroundings, UNESCO World Heritage Site

Lying in the middle of the Po Valley, Ferrara still has the atmosphere of the past, which blends in harmoniously with the atmosphere of the present.

Founded in the 6th Century, Ferrara reached the highest splendour and prestige during the Renaissance period with the Este family, which hosted the most important scholars, writers and artists of the era and which has left indelible signs everywhere: above all, in the colossal project of expansion and architectural embellishment of the city called Addizione Erculea, in the reinforcement of the defensive system of the walls, and in the impressive pictorial cycles belonging to the Quattrocento and Cinquecento. Since 1995, the historic centre of Ferrara has been included into UNESCO World Heritage list as a wonderful example of a town planned in the Renaissance and still keeping its historical centre intact. In 1999, the listing was extended to include the area of the Po Delta and the “delizie” court residences, so now the decoration is “Ferrara, city of the Renaissance and its Po Delta”.

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Ferrara: the city where Culture, Art, History and Events go hand in hand

Ferrara, thanks to its wonderful artistic, historical, cultural heritage and its richness of events and festivals, can attract visitors from different places every year.

Over the years, Ferrara has built up an international image as a city of art and culture. During the year, the city offers to its visitors the chance to attend to many important events, such as the exhibitions at Palazzo dei Diamanti, the Palio of San Giorgio – the oldest in Italy-, the Ferrara Buskers' Festival, Ferrara Sotto le Stelle, and the many others festivals and shows hosted in the city. Ferrara is a city of art, theatre, dance, music, festivals, fairs and entertainment, where you can feel the culture twelve months a year. Ferrara attracts visitors from different places and for different interests, every year. Its full schedule of events, such as the exhibitions at Palazzo dei Diamanti, attracts visitors from different places and for different interests, every year. Twelve months of art, festivals, music and entertainment, but also fairs, festivals and street markets, which combine culture and high quality tourism in every corner of Ferrara.

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The quality of life

Ferrara is a very liveable city and easy to enjoy thanks to its numerous services and connections.

The charm of its buildings, its wide linear streets and restful green areas, make Ferrara an admirable example of harmony and urban balance that has been maintained over the centuries. Ferrara is a very liveable city and easy to enjoy thanks to its numerous services and connections. The high quality of life promotes relationships between the city's inhabitants, making Ferrara a very liveable city and easy to enjoy thanks to its numerous services and connections. The territory extends from the plain to the beaches and includes natural sites of rare beauty.

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University Story

The University of Ferrara, one of Italy's oldest universities, has welcomed and educated illustrious personalities from the worlds of culture, the Arts and Science, such as Nicolò Copernico and Paracelso.

The University of Ferrara was founded in 1391 by the Marquise Alberto V of Este with the permission of Pope Bonifacio IX. The first courses to be inaugurated were Arts, Theology and Law and were taught by famous teachers such as Bartolomeo Saliceto, an expert among jurists. During the 15th and 16th centuries, Ferrara became one of the most thriving centres of Italian Renaissance culture and the University enjoyed a period of great prestige, thanks also to the presence of illustrious intellectuals such as Nicolò Copernico and Paracelso. After its assimilation into the Papal State in 1598, the University was transformed from a prestigious Estensi City University to a University in the outskirts. In the Napoleonic Age, with the plan for national universities, the University lost its power to grant degree titles and normal academic activity did not restart until 1816. After the unification of Italy, the University of Ferrara became a free university. In the years preceding the First World War, with over 500 students, the University was the most highly attended free university in Italy. The identity of the University is therefore rooted in a historical and cultural tradition which sets it apart from others. Since its foundation it has welcomed and educated illustrious personalities from the worlds of culture, the Arts and Sciences. In terms of its size, facilities and the quality and quantity of education and research, the university is a point of excellence within Italy. This is also demonstrated by its excellent position in international rankings.

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Education at Unife

The University of Ferrara, split into 12 departments and 47 centres, offers a complete, high quality education in its prestigious locations.

The University of Ferrara is split into 12 departments and 47 centres, offering over 50 degree courses and numerous research and postgraduate courses. Some facilities are located inside modern buildings, like the Chemistry/Biomedical Centre and the Science/Technology Centre, whereas others are located in ancient prestigious artistic and historical buildings.

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Ferrara campus

The University of Ferrara is centred in a large single campus and city life is marked by the presence of young people. Come and discover Ferrara Campus: it's the ideal place to spend the best years of your life.

What particularly characterises Ferrara is the strong link between the city and its University. The term Ferrara Campus aptly describes a city where services revolve around its students and where there is a warm welcome which attracts both national and international students. Ferrara is a Campus through and through. Simply walking along the streets of the city centre, particularly at night when they are vibrant with young Italians and foreigners, you get a real sense of the strong bond between University and city. An ancient Medieval and Renaissance city, Ferrara boasts a high quality urban network and management system which makes daily life pleasing for all its citizens and visitors. It also offers a cultural programme of the highest level, with concerts, exhibitions, plays and scientific and educational events organised by the University among just some of the opportunities that Ferrara affords. A people-friendly city with a strategic position not far from the cities of Venice and Florence, Ferrara is also an area of outstanding natural beauty. All of these elements combine to give Ferrara its unique atmosphere and much more: an internationally focused University of the highest standard. Come and discover Ferrara Campus: it's the ideal place to spend the best years of your life.

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