

## RIMINI THE GUELPH ( GUELPH RIMINI)

### FROM THE MIDDLE AGE TO THE RENAISSANCE

After the domination of the Goths and, later, of the Byzantine, Rimini became an independent commune in the XII century, during the period of the investment struggle between Church and empire.

In the XII century began an intense urban activity and construction period. The centre of civil power became "Piazza del Comune" (current Piazza Cavour), where were edified the "Palace of the Arengo" and the Palace of the Mayor" (podestà)

Starting from the XIII century, furthermore, established themselves between the city walls many religious orders: Saint Agostino's hermits, Saint Francis' minor monks and Saint Dominic's preachers monks, that built new churches and convents.

Distinguished artists worked into the city, between here Giotto, founder of the pictorial school of Rimini in the XII century, whose main members were Giovanni Da Rimini, Giuliano Da Rimini and Giovanni Baronzio

The most powerful family of Rimini, the Guelph's Gambacceri and the Ghibellines Parcitadi, disputed the civil power for the entire XIII century. After a first moment were the city promoted Ghibellines' cause, Rimini became Guelph, thanks to the advent of the Malatesta family in Verucchio.

In 1295, Malatestians conquered Rimini and made it capital of the lordship. For about two century the city had the hegemony on a vast territory, that overcame the geographic borders of Romagna, extending till San Sepolcro (1370-1430), Sestino and Senigallia.

Particularly important was Sigismondo Malatesta's lordship that coincided with the short but intense season of Riminese Renaissance (1432-1468).

Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta took power in 1432 and was an unprejudiced mercenary leader and at the same time great patron. he made sure of dynastic prestige through prudent matrimonial arrangements, getting married with Ginevra D'Este (died in 1440), Polissena Sforza and, in 1456, Isotta Degli Atti, and he wanted living shine to his name with the construction of the Malatestian Temple and the Sismondo Castle.

## Piazza Cavour

In Medieval period "Piazza Del Comune" (now Piazza Cavour) became heart of the city.

The Main building is the Majestic "Palace of the Arengo" (1204) in romantic-gothic style. Topped with battlements, here, in the late middle-age, the council of the citizens of Rimini reunited. The wide open gallery in the ground floor is set on mighty colonnades that support pointed arches; on the first floor there is a big hall full of polifora windows. The palace is next equipped with a bell tower, originally used also as a detention place. Alongside there is the Palace of the Mayor (1334) that introduces a prospectus with three frontal Gothic arcs; from the central one hung the rope used for the hanging of the guilty.

In the center of the square Pope Paul V's statue remains the only survivor monument of the 1600, to testimony of the Pontifical Kingdom.

On the short side of the square stands out the historic Galli Theatre, in neoclassical style, designed by Luigi Poletti and now in reconstruction phase after the damages caused by bombardments from the allies.

In medieval installation is also the Fountain of the Pinecone that, with the sound of his 15 cinnamons, it succeeded to thrill Leonardo Da Vinci.

"Fassi un'armonia colle diverse cadute d'acqua, come vedesti alla fonte di Rimini, come vedesti addì 8 d'agosto 1502" Leonardo Da Vinci

## The Old Fish Market

On the opposite side to Palace of the Arengo we can find the entrance for the eighteenth-century Old fish Market, project by the Riminese architect Buonamici. Still current are the long balconies made with stone, the big clock and on the corners four little statues of dolphins with a water spurt. In the little square at the number 24 there is the house where Giovanni Pascoli studied.

## Sismondo Castle

From Cavour Square, through Poletti Street, we get to Malatesta Square, where Sismond Castle stands massive. This mighty renaissance manor was projected by Sigismondo himself, with Brunelleschi as one of his consultants. The construction began in 20 May 1434 at 18:48 hours: the moment of the foundation was decided by Sigismondo according to elaborate calculations with precision from the astrologers of court.

During the construction, with the purpose to create a respectful ample band around the ditch, was demolished an entire set of buildings, including the baptistery of Saint John, Saint Mary's convent and the bishopric. For defensive needs, furthermore, the demolition of the superior part of the bell tower of the cathedral was ordered. The construction of the manor lasted 15 years, even if the registrations affixed on the portal of entrance and on some towers make his inauguration go back to 1446; anyway those jobs were esteemed until 1454, and it is possible that the fortress has not been accomplished according to the original project.

## Saint Augustine's Church

The church was cathedral of Rimini's bishopric from 1798 to 1809; dedicated to Saint John evangelist, it's note as "of Sant'Agostino" because it was controller by Augustine's fathers from the XIII century until Napoleonic suppressions. Located in Cairolì Street, nearby Cavour Square, it's in the historic centre of Rimini. The Church currently keeps part of the very fine pictorial cycle of the fourteenth century school of Rimini that adorned it before the jobs of renovation of the XVII century and that testified the religious and cultural importance.

## The Doomsday

Inside the City Museum of Rimini, in the room to him entitled it camps, stately, the Doomsday, a mural recently attributed to Giovanni Da Rimini, reemerged under the eighteenth-century plasters of Saint John Evangelist (Saint Augustine) after the 1916 earthquake, that also revealed all the other frescos of the fourteenth-century pictorial school of Rimini, preserved in the Church.

## Malatestian Temple

The Malatestian Temple, usually mentioned from the citizens as the Dome and in 1809 became cathedra with the name of Saint Dove, is the main catholic place of worship of Rimini. Completely renewed under the lordship of Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta with the contribution of artists including Leon Battista Alberti, Matteo de' Pasti, Agostino di Duccio and Piero della Francesca, is, although incomplete, the main artwork of the renaissance of Rimini and one of the most significative architecture of the Italian fifteenth-century in general.

Sigismondo made this work (first resurfacing and then demolishing a Franciscan church) with the idea that it should become a mausoleum for himself and for his young lover Isotta Degli Atti, that became then his third wife. The Malatesta wanted an enormous celebratory monument for himself and his lineage, predicting a structured iconography in a complicated pagan language: from here the denomination of "Temple". His project was not, however, never concluded and the temple remains incomplete.

The internal is typified in several chapels and pieces of art: the precious bas-reliefs of angels that play on blue playground, a Giotto's Crucifix and a fresco made by Piero Della Francesca.

### Sigismondo Malatesta praying in front of Saint Sigismondo

Sigismondo Malatesta praying in front of Saint Sigismondo is a mural (257x345 cm) made by Piero Della Francesca, dated 1451 and conserved in the Malatestian Temple in Rimini. In the exact center of the fresco Sigismondo Malatesta stays down on his knees, portrayed half-face with his hands folded, while prays for Saint Sigismondo, kings of Burgundy and his protector, portrayed seated on the throne above a step in the left part of the fresco and holding up in his hand the signs of his royal dignity: the scepter and the globe, besides the cap above which an aureole is found shorted in perspective. The likeness of the saint and the particular hat, reminds those of Sigismondo from Luxembourg, the emperor that in 1433 invested the Malatesta as knight and legitimized the dynastic succession, ratifying the taking of power on Rimini. So, the mural had such a religious as a politic value.

### Galliana Door

This civil door was built in 1200 to link the city with the port area along Marecchia River. It was part of the defensive city wall due to the enlargement of the city In the Fredrick II Barbarossa's period (XIII century). It replaced another door moved slightly more to the internal of the city. In the XV century it was restructured by the Lord of Rimini, Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta (1417-1468): we deduce it from the fact that in the beginning of the XX century in some excavations was regained a deposit of malatestian medals employed by Sigismondo himself to point out the works from him realized or restructure. From the bas-relief of Agostino Di Duccio (dated between 1449 and 1455) conserved in the chapel of zodiac signs in the Malatestian Temple, we can guess how the door was presented in the fifteenth-century. It's not a coincidence if the sculptor represents it in close shot: it was in fact a Malatestian artwork.

In the 16th century the door was closed and replaced with a tower that in the 18th century was named "Tower of the Knights".

Recent archaeological investigations have shown that a modern sewer pipeline (five-seventeenth century) passes in the center of the arc.