

Emilia Romagna

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REGIONS
OF
ITALY



San Petronio Piazza Maggiore, Bologna

Emilia-Romagna is a region found in north-central Italy that boasts that it is the oldest inhabited area of the Italian peninsula. Its hyphenated name is derived from the union of two historic regions, Emilia and Romagna. The Provinces of Emilia-Romagna were historically called Emilia in the western area and included the provinces of Piacenza, Parma, Reggio Emilia, Modena, Ferrara and the western part of the province of Bologna. The eastern area which included the provinces of Ravenna, Rimini and Forlì - Cesena was collectively called Romagna. Within Emilia-Romagna is also the independent republic of San Marino, the most ancient republic in Europe.

Emilia-Romagna is regarded by many as having the highest quality of life with its combination of industry, history, seacoast and food. Today it is also considered one of the richest European regions. These results have been achieved by developing a very well-balanced economy that comprises Italy's biggest agricultural sector as well as a long-standing tradition in automobile, motor and mechanics manufacturing and a strong banking and insurance industry. Industry in the region presents a varied and complex picture and is located along the Via Emilia. The food industry (e.g. Barilla Group) is particularly concentrated in Parma, Modena and Bologna as is the mechanical and automotive industry (e.g. Ferrari, Ducati, Lamborghini, Maserati,). Tourism is increasingly important, especially along the Adriatic coastline. Emilia-Romagna is widely regarded as a region with some of the best food and cuisine in Italy.

Mangiamo ! Let's Eat!

Parma boasts recognition as a Creative City of Gastronomy. Along with the whole Food Valley, it is universally known for its ability to preserve a gastronomic heritage without rivals, continuing to produce delicacies known worldwide as Parmigiano Reggiano, balsamic vinegar, Parma ham, and mortadella. Bologna is famous for its Ragù known in English as Bolognese sauce (which is *never* served on Spaghetti) and for fragrant mortadella. While mortadella and prosciutto di Parma always steal the scene, it is Culatello di Zibello that is the region's crowning glory of hams! If you have never lived in or visited this region, you have never eaten it. This slowly cured boneless ham made from the choicest muscle of the pig's rump has a unique sweet-musky flavor and

almost velvety texture. Only 30,000 are produced a year (versus almost ten million Prosciutto di Parma). Even in Italy, culatello is hard to find beyond the very best shops and restaurants.

The most recognized cheeses from the region are, of course, Parmigiano-Reggiano and Grana Padano. Parmigiano-Reggiano is made only with the superior quality milk obtained from the red-coated (Razza Reggiana) cows of Reggio Emilia. Parmigiano Reggiano is at its best when it has been aged for between 24 and 30 months. True Italian parmesan must be stamped on the rind with the name, Parmigiano-Reggiano, and is only produced in the western half of Emilia-Romagna. Grana Padano is a semi-fat hard cheese left to age naturally at least nine months to more than 24 months. The name 'Grana' refers to its grainy texture while 'Padano' refers to the area, Pianura Padana, where the cheese is produced.

The original balsamic vinegar, Aceto Balsamico Tradizionale, is produced only in this region in the neighboring towns of Modena and Reggio Emilia. It is made exclusively of cooked down pressed grape juice and must be aged for a minimum of 12 years in wooden barrels before being bottled. The word "tradizionale" is essential on the label. The balsamic vinegar which is not tradizionale is made only of the less-expensive ingredients of vinegar and sugar. There are three broad wine areas: Emilia, Bologna, and Romagna. In Emilia, the favorite wine to drink with all the rich local specialties is Lambrusco, tart, dry and worlds away from the sickly export version. Bologna's local grape, Pignoletto, makes a very fine sparkling traditional white wine. The region's best wines come from Romagna where the whole area makes superb Sangiovese. Sangiovese di Romagna wines have for years been winning top prizes both nationally and internationally for their excellence.

Some regional desserts include zuppa inglese, a custard-based dessert made with sponge cake and Alchermes liqueur and panpepato, Christmas cake made with pepper, chocolate, spices, and almonds.

A Quick History Lesson

The fascinating history of Emilia-Romagna dates to Roman times when the region of Emilia was ruled by imperial judges. After the fall of the Roman

Empire, the Lombards, a Germanic tribe, founded the kingdom of Lombardy in northern and central Italy. This kingdom, which included the region known as Emilia, flourished until the Lombard dynasty was overthrown by Charlemagne in 774. From the 6th to 8th centuries, the region, Romagna, was under Byzantine rule and Ravenna was the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire. In the 8th century, this region became a province of the Papal States when Pepin, the son of Charlemagne, donated the land as a favor to the Pope in 754. During the 10th century, the entire area of northern Italy became a part of the Holy Roman Empire under Germanic control. The Holy Roman emperors had varying degrees of control over northern Italy until the close of the Middle Ages. In the 12th century, the papacy increased its political influence and city-states began to form in opposition to the Holy Roman emperors. The northern cities formed the Lombard League and were successful at destroying imperial power. For the next few centuries, both Emilia and Romagna were ruled by papal legates, representatives of the Pope sent to manage the government of the people. Many regions in northern Italy, including Emilia, came under French control during the Napoleonic era. After the Congress of Vienna in 1815, there was a growing movement for Italian National unity and independence. In 1848, a revolution in Vienna initiated uprisings against Austrian rule. The following decades saw uprisings in several regions and in 1861 the Kingdom of Italy was established. During the Italian Unification, the territories of Emilia and Romagna became part of the Kingdom of Italy. The Kingdom of Italy was a state which existed from 1861-1922 when King Victor Emmanuel II of Sardinia was proclaimed King of Italy. After World War I, Italy was wracked by political upheaval, mass strikes, high unemployment, and broader economic chaos. The stage was set for Benito Mussolini and the National Fascist Party to enter the national political scene. The National Fascist Party ruled Italy from 1922 to 1943 with Benito Mussolini as head of government.

Italy was an important member of the Axis powers in World War II, battling on several fronts with initial success. However, after the German-Italian defeat in Africa and in the Soviet Union and the subsequent Allied landings in Sicily, King Victor Emmanuel III placed Mussolini under arrest and the Fascist Party in areas (south of Rome) controlled by the Allied invaders was shut down. The new government signed an armistice on September 1943. German forces immediately occupied this region and created a puppet state still led by Mussolini and his Fascist loyalists. The country descended into civil war. Shortly after the war and the liberation of Italy, civil discontent led to the institutional referendum on whether Italy would remain a monarchy or become a republic. Italians decided to abandon the monarchy and form the Italian Republic, the present-day Italian state.

Did You Know?

Emilia-Romagna is the birthplace of some of the most important artists in the history of music, Giuseppe Verdi, conductor Arturo Toscanini, and the world-famous operatic tenor Luciano Pavarotti. The region is well known in Italy for its popular rock and folk musicians, such as Laura Pausini, Samuele Bersani, Luciano Ligabue, Vasco Rossi, and Zucchero. The famous film director, Federico Fellini, director of *La Dolce Vita*, comes from this region.

Guglielmo Marconi and Luigi Galvani are the two most notable scientists from Emilia-Romagna. Guglielmo Marconi was an Italian physician and Nobel Prize winner who changed the global understanding of electromagnetic waves. This father of modern radio launched the first wireless telegraph signal in 1895 from Villa Griffone, his residence at the time. Marconi developed the first radiotelephone device and began to study the short-wave beam system which sixteen years later he used as the basis for the development of radar. The famous scientist and discoverer of biological electricity, Luigi Galvani, is another Emilian scientist who revolutionized the world. Today, Galvani is remembered for the invention of the galvanometer, electrochemical cells, and galvanization.



Palazzo Ducale, dalla Ghirlandina



Mosaics, Ravenna

Sites to See

Bologna, the capital of Emilia-Romagna, is known for its historical beauty and is considered by many to be second only to Venice. Bologna is also the home of the University of Bologna, the oldest university in Europe, founded in 1088. Construction of the cathedral in Bologna was halted by the Pope when he discovered that the Basilica would be larger than his in Rome. In the Basilica is a huge sundial that stretches 67.7m down the eastern aisle. This was instrumental in discovering the anomalies of the Julian calendar and led to the creation of the leap year.

In Modena, within a few meters we find three unique buildings included on the UNESCO World Heritage Sites list: Piazza Grande, the Cathedral, and its Ghirlandina tower, considered the symbol of the city. The Cathedral, built in the twelfth century by the joint work of two great artists, the architect Lanfranco and the sculptor Wiligelmo, is a supreme example of early Romanesque art with its piazza and soaring tower.

Ravenna, the City of Mosaics, is filled with buildings and treasures that demonstrate great artistic skill, including a wonderful blend of Graeco-Roman tradition, Christian iconography and oriental and Western styles.

Ferrara became an intellectual and artistic center of the Italian Renaissance in the 15th and 16th centuries. Ferrara is a marvelous example of Renaissance splendor perfectly preserved. This can be seen in the roads, façades of the buildings and the other artistic treasures the town has to offer.

Other cities of note are Rimini, one of the largest and most popular seaside resorts in Europe, with over 15 miles of fine white sand and an eclectic mix of charming hotels, beach bars, and restaurants. Faenza, home of the International Museum of Ceramics is internationally acclaimed for its ancient ceramics industry dating back to the 13th Century. Maranello is where sports car enthusiasts can visit the Ferrari Museum to see the most prestigious cars produced. Imola is the location for the Enzo and Dino Ferrari Autodrome, a large venue for bicycle and motorcycle races. Emilia Romagna is a region that will immerse you in the wealth of enchanting history and captivating flavors embodied in the beauty of its food, music, and cars.

