



BOLOGNA PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Bologna is not only home to the oldest university in the Western world dating back to 1088 but one of the most developed cities in Italy. It often ranks as one of the top cities for the quality of life. It is also world-renowned for its gastronomic offerings, often being referred to as Bologna the fat (*Il grasso*).

The city is characterised by many well-preserved medieval structures and elegant and extensive arcades (*or porticos*), totalling more than 38 kilometres in the city's historical centre alone.

At the end of the 12th century, Bologna had more than 100 fortified towers of which some 20 remain today.

Bologna is also home to numerous important churches, including the basilica of San Petronio (*the patron saint of Bologna*), the church of Santo Stefano (*the seven churches*) and the elegant sanctuary of San Luca linked to the city by porticos which run continuously from Porta Saragozza.

TRANSPORTATION

A compact centre with most sites being within easy walking distance from one other, Bologna is a relatively easy city to get around by foot or by public transport. Alternatively, there are plenty of taxis available.

Bologna is served by Bologna International Airport, Guglielmo Marconi Airport (*BLQ*) with regular flights to and from major cities around the world. An ATC Aerobus connects the city with the airports and leaves from the train station roughly every 15 or 20 minutes until midnight.

BANK AND EXCHANGE

The national currency in Italy is the euro (€). Banks are normally open Monday to Friday 08.30-13.30 hrs. and 15.00-16.00 hrs. They are closed on Saturday and Sunday. Many banks have automatic currency exchange machines that also take credit cards.

Exchange offices at airports and main railway stations are normally open 06.00 - 22.00 hrs.

The main international credit cards (*VISA, American Express, Diners, Eurocard/Mastercard*) are widely accepted in most large retail outlets, petrol stations, hotels and restaurants. Please beware, however, that smaller businesses may not accept credit card payment so we recommend that you check prior to purchasing.

Service is usually included in the bill in bars and restaurants, but tips are welcome.

Travellers cheques are best exchanged at an exchange office ("Cambio") as they are not accepted as payment in general stores, restaurants and hotels. Banks may also decline to change travellers cheques.

CLIMATE AND WEATHER CONDITIONS

Bologna has a temperate climate with warm summers and cold winters. Average temperature in the summer is 19°C – 32 °C and 8°C - 0°C in the winter months. It is not uncommon to have snow fall in the city.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

European Union passport holders do not need a visa to visit Italy. Many other nationalities are also exempt for stays of up to 3 months. However, if in doubt we highly recommend that you check with your local Italian embassy or consulate before travelling.

PHONE NUMBERS

The most important telephone numbers in case of emergency are: 113 or 112 for calling the police/carabinieri, 115 for the fire brigade and 118 for the ambulance service.

ELECTRICITY

Voltage is 220V AC, 50Hz. Plugs have two or three round pins. Foreign voltage could require an adapter.

FOOD & WINE

Bologna is renowned for its culinary tradition. It has given its name to the well-known Bolognese sauce, a meat based pasta sauce called *'ragù*. Since the city is located in the fertile Po River Valley, the rich local cuisine depends heavily on meat and cheese. Particularly, the production of cured pork meat such as *prosciutto, mortadella and salame* is an important part of the local food industry. Well-regarded nearby vineyards include Pignoletto dei Colli Bolognesi, Lambrusco di Modena and Sangiovese di Romagna. Tagliatelle al ragù, lasagne, tortellini served in broth and mortadella, the original Bologna sausage is among the local specialties.

SHOPPING

The four main shopping streets (*Via dell'Indipendenza, Via Ugo Bassi, Via Rizzoli and Via D'Azeglio*) lead off Piazza Maggiore in crossroad formation. All the big-name Italian designers are found here, as well as a proliferation of antiques and books. Most shops open 09.30-13.00 hrs and 15.30-19.30 hrs, although the bigger stores stay open all day.

A flea market sets up shop from dawn to dusk, every Friday and Saturday, at the Parco della Montagnola.

For a real local taste of Bologna, the daily produce market on Via Clavature, (*east of Piazza Maggiore*) in Via Tamburini, Via Caprarie 1, is the place to buy homemade pasta, local ham and cheese or to enjoy your meal at the sit-down restaurant at the back.

