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BOLOGNA LA GRASSA! (THE FAT ONE)

Food and Wine Tour

“When you hear talk of Bolognese cuisine, give it the reverence it’s due” *Pellegrino Artusi - 1891*

For centuries, **Bologna** has been renowned for good culinary taste and **gastronomic excellence!** It’s no accident that the first “**mention**” of Mortadella was in Bologna and harked back to Roman times no less! Indeed, Mortadella was the first food product in history ever to be granted a kind of protected status, with Cardinal Farnese’s ahead-of-its-time DOP/IGP decree of 1661!

And in a city so profoundly immersed in academic spirit, how could there not be **The Learned Brotherhood of the Tortellino?** Since the 1960s, the Brotherhood protects and promotes the most important traditional recipes, which are officially preserved in statute at the **Bologna Chamber of Commerce**, inside the splendid neogothic Palazzo della Mercanzia (external visit).

If the passion for good food runs deep throughout the city, it’s in the so-called **Quadrilatero** area that this passion is really on full display. With its labyrinth of narrow streets and alleys and surrounded by medieval buildings housing (and sometimes hiding!) **artisan food shops, historic shops and centuries-old taverns**, this corner of the city is always heaving with people.

Along these streets, whose charming names hark back to their trading origins, the delicacies of Bolognese cuisine (and not only) are revealed in all their lavish abundance.

It’s impossible not to be won over by the vivid colours of the fruit and vegetables on display, and by the golden colours of all the fresh pasta on view, such as Tortellini, Tortelloni, Passatelli and Tagliatelle. And in the same vein, the heady mix of the multitude of aromas will leave you feeling just a little woozy: the charcuterie hanging in the shop windows; the ever-present Parmiggiano Reggiano accompanied by a few drops of balsamic vinegar; the fresh fish from the Adriatic.

The food and wine tour takes place exclusively in the historic centre of Bologna, and provides the chance to see the main places of interest, such as **Piazza Maggiore**, **Palazzo Comunale**, the **Chiesa di San Petronio**, the **portico del Pavaglione** and the external courtyard of the **Palazzo dell’Archiginnasio**. Also on offer is entry to the impressive rooms of the **Teatro Anatomico** and **Stabat Mater** –tickets available in situ for € 3.00 p/p.

A short stroll leads to the charming **Mercato delle Erbe**, one of the old covered markets in Bologna. Opened in 1910, it is still home to the “*treccole*”, the food stalls full of fruit, vegetables, and many other fresh products from around the region.

Tastings of local delicacies are available, such as chocolate (the famous Cremino Fiat was born right here in Bologna), charcuterie, balsamic vinegar, Parmiggiano Reggiano, and all accompanied by excellent local wines.

Available in the afternoon is a trip to the **Museum of Ice Cream** at the world leading Carpigiani company 13km outside Bologna. The visit consists of a guided tour of the museum and selected tastings, as well as the chance to take part in a sorbet/ice cream making workshop.