

TIPS ... SPOTTED by Zeno



IL MOLO - 8-minute walk

Frank, the manager of Il Molo, is truly a character. His huge passion for beer has turned Il Molo into a local landmark for quality beers and sour beers - so much so that he created "Acido Acida", the sour-beer festival. If you love beer, you absolutely have to go and see Frank - but never tell him you just want "a little beer", because he might kick you out! He won't offer you anything to eat with your beer, like a real English pub. If you want crisps, you'll find them up high, above a fridge: you have to ask for them and you pay for them... hahaha!!!

Via Contrari 36 - 320 2174940



OSTERIA IL FRANTOIO - 30 years in business [vegetarian/vegan] - 14-minute walk

In 1993, Luca - host and owner - turned an Este family salt warehouse into an osteria, making his dream come true: well-made dishes, simple but with top-quality ingredients. Luca will tell you about the dishes and guide you in choosing the wine. I have a soft spot for his bruschetta, cappellacci with ragù, pumpkin flan, and the cuts of Iberian pork: I can't wait to go back.

Via Baluardi 51 - 0532 761698 - 335 7118561



IL SORPASSO [vegetarian/vegan] - 14-minute walk

Beatrice in the dining room and Saro in the kitchen are a fantastic couple and the heart of Il Sorpasso. Very enjoyable cooking, rich in vegetables and unusual salads. I love the fried anchovy meatballs, the swordfish skewer, the lemon salad (or the olive one), and their ricotta. Oof... I'm hungry already!!!

Via Saraceno 118 - 0532 790289



LA CANTINETTA (sandwich bar) - 30 years in business - 13-minute walk

I have a weakness for historic places where you can still breathe the air and atmosphere of the past - and where you always find the house specialty that made the place famous. Every now and then I have to go to La Cantinetta to taste the legendary "Pano Bordon" and their trio of crostini.

Corso Porta Po 61 - 0532 202439



PIZZERIA DA GIUSEPPE - 10-minute walk

Another historic spot. I like going to Giuseppe for a quick bite at the counter: a margherita still served on sheets of greaseproof paper, cut so you can eat it with your hands. And don't miss their "ceci" (called "farinata" in Ligurian): crispy on top and soft inside - spectacular with a sprinkle of pepper and a draught beer.

Via Carlo Mayr 71 - 0532 761701



LOCALINO - 5-minute walk

Zamp (as we call him) is totally crazy. He tells it like it is, and together with Michele they bring Localino to life with their friendliness and availability (as long as you don't drive them mad 😊). His cutlet is incredible - a giant "petroniana" to share among three people. If you're in a hurry, avoid Localino, because Zamp says (rightly) that to eat well you need to take all the time you need... and at his age - which is also mine - he doesn't feel like running around like a madman anymore.

Piazza Torquato Tasso 4 - 335 8174981



RETROBOTTEGA – 3-minute walk

“Retrobottega” because it’s the back room of the Travagli butcher shop, where Jack’s dad and brother work - and Jack runs the Retrobottega. Jack loves natural wines and you can taste them here. When you hear a bell ring, it means the hot “bombette” are out: fantastic little sandwiches!!!

Piazza Municipale 17/a – 0532 1860115



MARACAIBO – -minute walk

At Maracaibo you always feel good: they’re friendly, the place is cozy and warm, prices are fair, cocktails are well-made, and the location is perfect. Before dinner or after dinner, I’d definitely stop by.

Via Contrari 13 – 346 6274851



THE LAB – 4-minute walk

If you’re looking for a great burger in a modern venue packed with young people, The Lab is the right place. But you won’t find only burgers: there are other very tempting dishes and an incredible wine list you’d never expect.

Via Guglielmo degli Adelardi 9/a - 0532 203421



PIZZERIA ORSUCCI ARMANDO – 14-minute walk

Another historic pizzeria. It’s pure luck to grab one of the very few tables at Orsucci - I try often and almost never succeed. My tip: go at 7:00 pm or at 10:30 pm. The beauty of Orsucci is that they offer only four things: margherita with or without mozzarella, ceci, and in winter a fantastic castagnaccio. Here too, pizzas are baked in small pans, served on greaseproof paper, and you eat with your hands. I loooove it.

Via Saraceno 116 - 0532 760000



QUEL FANTASTICO GIOVEDÌ – 30 years in business [vegetarian/vegan/ceeliac] – 13-minute walk

With Mara it’s always a sure thing. A place loved by locals, with consistent quality. I always feel like going there to taste their risotto with lobster, curry and scallops: outstanding!!! Ask for a generous portion.

Via Castelnuovo 9 - 0532 760570 - 328 1646231



MAKORÈ – 7-minute walk

If you’re looking for a “serious” dinner, but without sacrificing pleasure, Makorè is one of those places where fish is a serious matter: it’s created in symbiosis with the adjacent fishmonger, bringing to the table refined, modern, and carefully researched seafood cuisine.

In the dining room, you can also see the team at work, with an open kitchen, and you can choose between tasting menus or an à la carte selection.

Via Palestro 12 - 0532 092068



LA PROVVIDENZA – 30 years in business [vegetarian/ceeliac] – 17-minute walk

If you’re looking for a typical Ferrarese menu in a warm, historic setting - and with Andy Warhol works on the walls - La Provvidenza is exactly what you’re looking for.

Via Ercole I d’Este 92- 0532 205187 - 389 7681544



AROMA Bistrò – 12-minute walk

A new, beautiful and modern place, also offering tapas for aperitivo, on one of the main food & beverage nightlife streets. Fish-focused.

Via Saraceno 19 – 0532 500653



LE DUE COMARI [veget-ceeliac] - 4-minute walk

Meat & fish – specialty: parmigiana with octopus (parmigiana con polipo).

Piazza Sacrati 22 - 0532 773676 - 373 8642888



CUCINA BACILIERI - 9-minute walk

The most elegant restaurant in Ferrara, full of atmosphere. Michele, the chef, deserves a star that still hasn't arrived. If you're looking for a relaxing and very pleasant evening, Cucina Bacilieri is for you.

Via Terranuova 60 - 0532 243206 - 339 7791639



MESSISBUGO - 11-minute walk

An iconic spot for young people, located on the main nightlife street. Great also for a burger or a platter for dinner.

Via Carlo Mayr 95 - 0532 764060



PIZZERIA ESTE BAR - 10-minute walk

A historic, family-run venue in the center of Ferrara, active since 1975 just steps from the Cathedral and the Castello Estense. Born as a pizzeria, today it offers high-quality pizzas with different dough options and a full restaurant menu (meat and fish), accompanied by a rich cellar of Italian and international wines. Cozy, family atmosphere, now carried on by the second generation.

Via delle Scienze, 13 - 0532 240323



LASCIATE ENTRARE IL SOLE - 6-minute walk

Eleonora (my wife) and Chiara (her business partner) made their dream come true: a concept store dedicated exclusively to women. Lots of research, objects and clothing for the kind of woman I love - someone who loves to look beautiful and feel good.

Via Voltapaletto 7 - 0532 204058



IL FILONIFICIO - 6-minute walk

Alice is adorable. She created a unique micro-bakery and in her workshop she makes real delicacies. You have to go: queue up, and if you come on Saturday morning she also serves breakfast.

Via Voltapaletto 24 - 348 5399381



GAVOCI 1969 - 24-minute walk

Giovanni GAVOCI tells his story like this: "... Our Story begins back in 1969, in a land beyond the sea. I remember a small workshop where my grandfather worked tirelessly, creating almost from nothing those things that were so fascinating to me: bespoke shoes. Today I can say that passion, talent, craftsmanship techniques and the careful selection of materials are the characteristics that distinguish our brand and allow us to achieve world-class excellence, earning the trust and satisfaction of our customers."

GAVOCI is a true artist, moving with great mastery and determination in his small workshop just beyond Ferrara's ancient walls. With just 8 minutes by bicycle you can go and admire one of the very few artisans still out there.

Via Caldirolo, 84 - 0532 471357



THE FERRARESER – 7-minute walk

An idea that first became a magazine that doesn't exist (on purpose) and then a small physical shop where you can buy - or simply admire - beautiful works. The Ferrareser is an association of Ferrarese illustrators and artists united to tell the city through the covers of an imaginary magazine.

Via Contrari 20/a



USTARIAZA paninoteca – 30 years in business – 8-minute walk

Legendary "panino con mascarpone", super Instagrammable thanks to all the memorabilia.

Corso Piangipane 61 - 3487429400



IL CAPPELLAIO ... NOT QUITE MAD – 46 minutes by car

In Codigoro, along the road that leads to the Po Delta, there's a special place hidden away: the atelier of Roberto Lucchi, a young artisan who chose to bring back the ancient craft of hat-making.

Driven by the desire to create a truly unique hat, Roberto recovered historic equipment and traveled throughout Italy to learn from master craftsmen. Today he makes made-to-measure and personalized hats, combining tradition, hands-on skill and innovation.

Stopping by his atelier is a rare experience: an authentic encounter with an ancient know-how transformed into a contemporary object, meant to express the personality of the person who wears it.

Via Enrico Fermi, 35 – Codigoro – 348 0983645



LE PIASTRELLE DI ANAIS

A small project created by big dreamers. Some posts appeared on Anais' page showing small tiles with different drawings, inviting readers to find them and spot them around the city, on peeling and abandoned walls of historic (and anonymous) buildings. Curious, I jumped on my bicycle to hunt for these square tiles.

They are truly hard to find - even for a Ferrarese who knows every street and has a great photographic memory. But when you do find them, they're wonderful: white, clean, small, with laser engravings. Photographing them is poetry, and this kind of urban art is an idea that can only come from true dreamers.



LA COLONNA E LE PIETRE TOMBALI

During a guided visit to the Jewish Ghetto and the brand-new MEIS (National Museum of Italian Judaism and the Shoah), I discovered something I didn't know. The Borso d'Este column, located to the left of the horse's face in front of the Cathedral, is built in layers of pink Verona marble and white Istrian stone. But why?

In 1716, a devastating fire required the column to be rebuilt, replacing much of the stone. To source the material, they turned to Jewish cemeteries, reusing ancient tombstones made of white Istrian stone. That's why the two colors and the two materials. Very few traces of this remained, and the story was forgotten for a long time - until 1960, when the column was dismantled for restoration and the truth was discovered.



ENOTECA FERRARI – 5-minute walk

Andrea Ferrari is an independent bottler and creates fabulous whiskies and rums that sell out as soon as they're released - especially abroad. Recently, he finally achieved another dream: opening a small wine shop where he can offer his own products as well as other labels. If you love whisky, you can't miss a stop at Andrea's... say hi from me.

Via Garibaldi 135



PERFETTA – 40 minutes by car

Perfetta is a small Ferrara pride with global resonance: from Berra, in the heart of the province, comes some of the most highly regarded competition bowls, chosen by champions and enthusiasts seeking the best of Made in Italy. The company, acquired in 1995 by Andrea Varzella, has transformed from a primarily internationally oriented company to a true laboratory of innovation, where research, design, and craftsmanship meet in every detail: a company that continues to spread the name of Ferrara (and its excellence) well beyond Italy's borders.

Via Sandro Pertini, 1 – 44033 Berra (Ferrara)

LI XIA – 4-minute walk **VEGAN**

Authentic Chinese cuisine: at the tables you'll find not only locals, but also many people of Asian ethnicity. Better than five TripAdvisor stars! Many meat and fish dishes (as tradition dictates), but also numerous tofu-based options (the most famous plant protein today) as well as lots of vegetable dishes. Rice, glass noodles, spring rolls, special cooking techniques and spices. And if you order online, there's a dedicated plant-based menu section too! In short: the typical experience is there, and the choice is there too. Recommended dishes? Thai vegetable noodles with vegetables, tofu stew with cashews, and golden cauliflower.

Piazza Sacrati 43

TAJ MAHAL – 4-minute walk **VEGAN**

Leaving the Far East, we fly to India. Indian cuisine is naturally rich in vegetable dishes - sure, that helps - but credit to Taj Mahal for bringing it to Ferrara. Swirls of curry and sesame, basmati rice as if it were raining. When we crave ethnic food, we almost never think "Indian", but for vegetarians and vegans this can truly be a turning point. Writer's tip: go in a group and order lots of starters - really lots: samosa, vegetable pakora, aloo pakora, paneer pakora (for those who eat animal-derived foods) - and naan of every kind. Then, as a main course, there's an entire plant-based section called "khana shakahari", plus a few basmati rice options.

Via Garibaldi 89

NORMA'S BURGER – 10-minute walk **VEGAN**

Here's the special mention: a burger joint. And precisely because of that, it has only one plant-based option - but I swear it's worth it. The menu is very small overall, so we forgive the single veg alternative, called "No Meat". Juicy, filled with super fresh vegetables, soft bun: this (not) burger is out of this world. Highly recommended: the sweet potato fries, even in their Nutella version. The only downside is the very limited seating, which fills up almost immediately. Be ready to queue (it moves fast) or order takeaway.

Via Carlo Mayr 59/b

APERITIVO TIME? **GEN Z**

Skottadito – In the historic center, ideal for aperitivo, apericena and after dinner. Live music on some evenings. **Laudano e Misture** – For refined cocktails and a sophisticated atmosphere, with high-level mixology. **Apelle** – Known for innovative cocktails and a trendy vibe; perfect if you want to try new flavors. **Antico Caffè** – A historic café in Ferrara, elegant setting and a wide selection of drinks: perfect for a classic aperitivo.

SUSHI SPOT **GEN Z**

Crudo – Japanese restaurant praised for fresh fish and artistic presentation. A must for sushi lovers. **Taberu** – Cozy place with a wide selection of sushi and hot Japanese dishes. Great for a casual dinner with friends. **Yun** – Fresh sushi and a relaxed atmosphere. Overlooks the Volano river: very scenic. **Koi** – Located in the former Stock Exchange palace, for a high-quality sushi experience with a contemporary touch.

PIZZA & MEAT TIME **GEN Z**

Basilico – Known for artisan wood-fired pizzas, high-quality ingredients and light doughs. **Giuseppe** – Traditional pizzeria; you can also eat at the counter on sheets of greaseproof paper. Excellent ceci. **Ciro's** – Authentic Neapolitan pizza with a soft dough and tall crust, using ingredients imported directly from Naples.

COCKTAILS, WINE & COOL NIGHTS **GEN Z**

Places to dance: **Sinatra, College, Giardini Sonori** – Dance floors and DJ sets for every taste.

Live music after dinner: **Skottadito, Apelle, Locanda del Furioso** – Great for live sets and DJ performances. **Zuni** – cicchetteria & live music. A unique place mixing art, culture and live music in a contemporary, engaging atmosphere.

WHERE TO HANG OUT **GEN Z**

In Verdi – Piazza Verdi is the Gen Z symbol spot: an evening meeting point for chatting and drinks. **Piazza Rio / Piazza Ariostea** – Another meeting place: by day (sunny days on the grass), or in the evening for an aperitivo. **Duomo** – Next to the Cathedral, where a street full of bars and aperitivo spots begins. **Saraceno** – A street dedicated to food & beverage.

A FEW TIPS FOR COMACCHIO

VASCO & GIULIA – Comacchio Fish.

Via L. Muratori 21 – +39 0533 81252

AL PONTICELLO – Comacchio Sleep & excursions in the valleys with Riccardo, the owner.

Via Don Minzoni 2 – Comacchio

OSTERIA ARCADIA – Santa Giulia di Porto Tolle Fish & boat excursions in the valleys.

Via Luigi Lungo 29, Santa Giulia di Porto Tolle – +39 0426 388334

AND FINALLY, ALSO FOR RAVENNA

CA' DE VEN – Ravenna Piadina and Romagna dishes, historic venue.

Via Corrado Ricci 24 – +39 0544 30163

OSTERIA PASSATELLI – Ravenna Romagna dishes, venue created inside an old cinema.

Via Ponte Marino 19 – +39 0544 215206

DARSENALE – Ravenna The first brew-pub in Ravenna's docklands.

Via d'Alaggio – +39 392 3777568