



**Comune di Cagli**  
Assessorato al Turismo  
Assessorato per i Beni Culturali  
e Monumentali



**CAGLI**  
**ART & HISTORY**

English

**THE HISTORIC**  
**CENTRE**



## A BRIEF HISTORY



The walled town of Cagli has a certain austerity of appearance, the compactness and severity of its imposing buildings reflecting the stern 11thC teachings of St Peter Damian, prior of the nearby Abbey of Fonte Avellana who condemned decorative architecture as a form of “visual arrogance”.

Gazing at the palaces and squares around which the town is built, the eye is attracted by the green Apennine mountains, the ever-present backdrop that in autumn is infused with the red and yellow foliage of the season.

Cagli, one of the 6thC strongholds of the Byzantine Pentapolis, was regularly mentioned in itineraries from ancient Roman times. Servius Honoratus, in his 4thC Latin commentary on Virgil's Aeneid, made reference to Cales [modern-day Calvi] in the Campania region, which was not, he said, to be confused with Cale [Cagli] on the Via Flaminia.

The free *Comune* of Cagli was founded at the end of the 12thC and quickly subdued more than 52 surrounding castles, overthrowing the rural lords and threatening the feudal powers of the abbots. Its expansion established the borders of the diocese of Cagli and, in the 4thC Greciano became its first bishop.

When the city was partially destroyed by fire, started by Ghibelline factions in 1287, it was moved down from the slopes of Monte Petrano and rebuilt anew on flatter land, incorporating the pre-existing suburb. The rebuilding of the city, under the patronage of Pope Nicholas IV, followed Arnolfo di Cambio's grid-pattern town plan. The state-of-the-art urban layout may have inspired Leon Battista Alberti in his design for *The Ideal City*. Some of the features in this famous painting may be the work of Laurana (Alberti's close collaborator), including, in the background, a mountain very similar to the plateau of Monte Petrano.

The relationship between *The Ideal City* and Cagli is not just a simple coincidence: the Montefeltro family displayed a particular interest in Cagli over a long period. What is more, according to Franceschini, the lands of the Montefeltro family, until they became a part of the Papal States, formed a “regional state, an expression of the princely family, of the cities of Urbino and Cagli

and of their surrounding countryside”. Indeed “the towns of Urbino and Cagli participated on an equal basis in the pact of February 1376” with the Montefeltro lords.

Despite the blow dealt by the fire of 1287, Cagli soon returned to being a prosperous centre. A register of taxes paid to the Church in 1312, revised after a heavy fall in population due to famine, shows that Cagli then numbered around 7,200 inhabitants.

Shortly afterwards, in the *Constitutiones Aegidianae* of 1357, Cagli appeared among the nine major cities in the *Marca* (along with Pesaro, Fano and Fossombrone).

The economic development of the city centred mainly on the manufacture of woollen cloth (later also silk) and the tanning of hides, industries that grew considerably under the dukes of Urbino.

When the Duchy of Urbino was handed over to the Papal States in 1631, Cagli became subject to the same economic policies as the rest of the Marche region, principally cereal cultivation. The low yields in the upland Apennine areas brought about an unstoppable decline.

Gradually the city found itself excluded from new movements in art history. The town's notable artistic heritage, already damaged by the violent earthquake of 1781, was further reduced by Napoleonic plundering.

The Unification of Italy stirred up strong anticlerical feelings. The building of the Fano-Fabriano-Rome railway, the construction of the new Municipal Theatre, and new public spaces gave substance to the progressive vision of the future. At the same time, the confraternities were stripped of their roles in city life and the monasteries were confiscated.

Cagli's destiny was now absorbed within the wider context of Italy's national history. The railway line was destroyed by Nazi forces in 1944 and the Via Flaminia lost its importance as a major road, marking a long period of decline for Cagli and the surrounding valleys, which was to be reversed only towards the end of the second Millennium.

## MUNICIPAL THEATRE

(Piazza Niccolò IV) 13

The city's third theatre was opened in 1878 with a performance of the opera *Violino del Diavolo*, written especially for the occasion by Agostino Mercuri. Its original 19thC theatrical machinery still survives, together with backdrops and wings by Girolamo Magnani, Giuseppe Verdi's favourite set designer. The theatre was built to plans by Giovanni Santini (creator of theatres at Orvieto and Narni), with modifications by Coriolomo Monti, and is an outstanding example of eclectic style. The internal decorations - the work of Alessandro Venanzi - surprise both for their sumptuousness and the quality of their detail. The ceiling of the auditorium

- with the great chandelier from the workshop of Francesco Pucci - features the allegorical figures of the Liberal Arts. Venanzi's painted stage curtain depicts Frederick Barbarossa's encampment on the edge of the city in 1162. The *Teatro Comunale*, in which Mario del Monaco made his debut, is one of the region's main theatrical centres. Companies come here to rehearse their shows before setting off on tour around Italy's major theatres, ensuring that Cagli's stage is filled throughout the year.

## TOWER-SECRET PASSAGE-FORTRESS AND CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY SCULPTURE

(Via del Torrione) 14

The fortified complex, built in 1481, was designed for Duke Federico da Montefeltro by Francesco di Giorgio Martini. The famous military architect, in his *Treatise*, places Cagli as first among his six outstanding fortresses, and describes it in great detail with a certain degree of pride. Particularly unusual is the secret passage (the *soccorso coverto*) that links the tower to the imposing ruins of the diamond-shaped fortress (demolished in 1502).

The fortifications date back to that productive period of transition, when artists such as Francesco di Giorgio Martini were testing out innovative solutions to the problems posed by new developments in artillery.

Since 1989, the rooms of the tower - which have a certain sculptural form themselves - have hosted the Centre for Contemporary Sculpture, containing specially commissioned works by sculptors of international renown such as Alamagno, Coletta, Gastini, Icaro, Kounellis, Lorenzetti, Mattiacci, Nagasawa, Nunzio, Paolini, Porcari, Uncini, and Zorio.



## PALAZZO BERARDI MOCHI-ZAMPEROLI AND POLO CULTURALE DI ECCELLENZA

(Via Imbriano Alessandri, 39) 8

This imposing *palazzo* was enlarged at the beginning of the 17thC, to designs by Anton Francesco Berardi. Its architecture was further refined in the 18thC by another Berardi (Anton Francesco junior) who was a pupil of Fontana and worked alongside Murena, a close collaborator of Vanvitelli.

Beneath the frescoed upper rooms, decorated by pupils of Barocci, on the ground floor is the *Polo Culturale di Eccellenza*, with libraries and archives (in preparation), while on the top floor is the *Centro di Documentazione della Scultura* (in preparation) with drawings and models of public sculptures by 20thC Italian artists. On the main *piano nobile* various art exhibitions take place during the year.





## CHURCH OF SAN FRANCESCO

(Piazza San Francesco) 29

The church, dating from 1234, is the pivot around which Cagli was rebuilt in 1289, under the patronage of the first Franciscan Pope.

The marble portal with its inlaid lintel and spiral columns (with the stylized owl on the lower left-hand side) dates from 1348. Inside, the recent dismantling of the 19thC vaulting above the apse has brought to light medieval vaulting above with a cycle of frescoes dating from the 1340s. These frescoes are believed to be the work of Mello da Gubbio and show influences of the Sienese artist Ambrogio Lorenzetti.

The two fragments of 14thC frescoes on the counter façade are from the circle of the *Maestro* of Montemartello. On the side altars the principal works (anticlockwise from the right) are: two fragments of framed frescoes, once attributed to Antonio Alberti da Ferrara, now attributed to the Secondo Maestro dell'Oratorio del Battista of Urbino; the *Miracles of the Snow* by Ernst van Schayck (1617) and the young Gaetano Lapis (1730); a wooden processional crucifix, from the Northern European school, from the second half of the 15th century; an altarpiece by Raffaellino del Colle (1540). The organ – attributed to Baldassarre Malamini – is the oldest in the Marche region and dates from the second half of the 16thC. Beside it, on the left, is one of three wash drawings by Battaglini da Imola from 1529 (the other two are beside the main altar).

In the piazza in front of the church is a bronze statue of Angelo Celli by Angelo Biancini, which was erected in 1959, in front of the loggia built in 1885.

## CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA DELLA MISERICORDIA

(Via Marconi) 33

The church bears the same name as the confraternity that has been based here since 1301. The sturdy portal, dating back to 1537, is topped by a 16thC fresco of the *Madonna della Misericordia*. The interior was decorated with frescoes, of which several large fragments still remain: the *Martyrdom of St Apollinia* (1455) is by Jacopo Bedi from nearby Gubbio, while the others have elements that are reminiscent of the Basilica of San Francesco in Assisi.

The main altar, with its 15thC canopy with the *Four Evangelists*, also has a remarkable polychrome group in the niche depicting the *Madonna della Misericordia*. On the two side altars are works by Claudio Ridolfi, thought to date from 1625, and the *predella* showing the *Massacre of the Innocents* by Girolamo Cialdieri (1634).



## CHURCH OF SANT'ANGELO MINORE

(Via Lapis) 27

Passing through the loggia (built in a 15thC style, though erected in 1560), the interior has an elaborate main altar dating from the mid-17thC. Made from gilded and lacquered wood with great Solomonic columns, at its centre is the painting signed “THIMOTHEI DE VITE URBINAT. OPUS” portraying the *Noli me tangere*. This is the most important painting by Timoteo Vito (pupil of Francia), alongside his work in the mausoleum of the Dukes of Urbino. Its figures are strongly influenced by Raphael and its colours have a gem-like depth and almost enamelled tones. It has been described by the Italian art critic Vittorio Sgarbi as a “sublime masterpiece” that “seems like a vision in this small oratory”. This work by Viti (who worked beside Raphael on important commissions) has been dated by Cuppini Sassi to 1504.

## TOWN HALL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

(Piazza Matteotti, 1) <sup>9</sup>

Piazza Matteotti - once known as Piazza Maggiore – is dominated by the 13thC *Palazzo Pubblico*, or Town Hall, built to house the city's governors. The building, onto which was added the *Palazzo del Podestà* (the monumental façade overlooks Via Alessandri), was donated by the *Comune* to Federico da Montefeltro in 1476. The Duke commissioned Francesco di Giorgio Martini to carry out works to transform it into a ducal palace, but the works were never completed. The lowering of the raised entrance, the creation of a loggia (of which only the benches and corbels remain), and the vaulted rooms on the ground floor, all date from this period. The surrounds for the clock on the front of the building date from 1575 and are by Finale, while the statue of the *Madonna con Bambino* is from 1680 and was commissioned in Venice. To the side of the undecorated entrance are three standard measuring units – piede (foot), braccio (arm) and canna (cane) – to these should be added the stub of a Roman column known as the “Cagliese quarter” now positioned just inside the main room on the ground floor. The fresco in the lunette on the back wall is of the *Madonna col Bambino, San Michele Arcangelo e San Geronzio* (1536) attributed to Giovanni Dionigi. Also on show - as an extension to the Archeological Museum - are objects including ducal coats of arms of both the Montefeltro and Della Rovere families, communal emblems – including one of St Michael - and an elegant pair of dolphins. From the Entrance Hall, the door to the left of the entrance from the piazza takes you down to the *segrete*, a dungeon-like basement with ceramic fragments discovered during excavation works, and Medieval masonry including a civic coat of arms, capitols, a rose boss, a garland carving, and drain covers from the civic aqueduct. Heading out of the *Sala del General Consiglio* the passageway under the fresco is framed by a 15thC doorway decorated with the emblems of Duke Federico in bas-relief. From here one enters the courtyard. At its centre is the sculpture *Ordine Cosmico* by Eliseo Mattiacci (1997). The Archaeological Museum (currently being enlarged) occupies parts of the 13thC *Palazzo del Podestà*. The fountain at the centre of Piazza Matteotti was built in 1736 by Giovanni Fabbri, to a design by Anton Francesco Berardi junior.



## CHURCH OF SAN GIUSEPPE

(Via Leopardi) <sup>12</sup>

This church was once known as Sant'Angelo Maggiore and used by the city's governors. Its barrel vaulted interior is decorated with Mannerist stucco-work. The paintings by Cialdieri (later restored by Patanazzi) portray events from the life of St Joseph, while high-relief figures (kings, patriarchs and biblical figures) decorate the niches around the walls. At the centre of the vaulting is *Charity*, linked by telamons to the other theological virtues. On the two late-16thC side altars are plaster statues of St Joseph and Our Lady of Sorrows, with ornate plaques by Finale. On the main altar is the *Archangel Michael* by Lapis (1764) between 17thC frescoes by Girolamo Cialdieri.



## CATHEDRAL BASILICA

(Via Fonte del Duomo) <sup>5</sup>

The Cathedral was modified over a period of a century, from 1646. The Gothic portal of the medieval building can still be seen on the left wall – it dates from 1424 and was built by Maestro Antonio di Cristoforo of Cagli (the 17thC painted decoration is by Lodovico Viviani of Urbino). After a disastrous earthquake in 1781, Pietro Giacomo Patriarca's tall dome was replaced by the present-day rounded vault. The bell tower is topped by an octagonal brick belfry, built in 1790 to a design by Giovanni Antinori. The main works are: in the right nave, the altarpieces by Gaetano Lapis (1758) (2nd chapel) and by Sebastiano Conca (1720) (3rd chapel); in the transept, *The Patron Saints* by Luigi Garzi (1704) and the *Madonna and Child with Saints Peter and John the Baptist* commissioned in 1695 by the Medici of Florence and painted by a member of the Nasini family; in the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, two canvasses by Gaetano Lapis (1754 & 1756); in the left nave, an *Annunciation* from the workshop of Barocci, a fragment of a 16thC fresco of the *Immaculate Conception* attributed to Giuliano Persciutti of Fano (though perhaps by Dionigi of Cagli), and the 17thC *Eternal Father* by the local artist Giambattista Gambarini in the tympanum above the altar. The organ was built by Nicola Morettini in 1889.



**CHURCH OF SAN DOMENICO**

(Via Lapis) **24**

The church was built by the Celestines, a branch of the Benedictine order, after the reconstruction of the city in 1289. The front portal dates from 1483, the apse from 1655 and the bell tower from 1654. Inside, the principal works are by Giovanni Santi, father of Raphael. These are (from the left) the funeral monument with a fresco of *Christ in the Tomb between Saints Jerome and Bonaventure* (1481) and the celebrated *Tiranni Chapel*, considered to be his masterpiece, which dates from the early 1490s. Beside the Virgin's throne, the work depicts an angel gazing outwards from the scene; it is traditionally believed that this



is a portrait of Raphael as a child, while the face of St John the Baptist appears to be a self-portrait of Santi himself. The early works of the divine Raphael contain references to both paintings. On the opposite wall of the church, in a niche, is the 16thC *Annunciation*, once attributed to Girolamo Genga and more recently to Timoteo Viti. Beside it is the *Presentation in the Temple* by Gaetano Lapis. 14thC frescoes can be seen beneath the 1576 layer of plaster. In the spacious crypt (stairs to the side of the *Tiranni Chapel*) is a cycle of frescoes by Antonio Viviani (1560 - 1629).



**PONTE MALLIO**

(Via Flaminia) **37**

This superb bridge, from Roman Republican times, is one of the most imposing Roman remains along the ancient consular road, the *via Flaminia*, which dates back to 220 BCE. The bridge was built using large blocks (some more than a cubic metre) of which were put into place without mortar. The section of dressed cornelian stone dates from a later restoration, perhaps at the beginning of the Roman Imperial period.

**DISTINTI SALUMI**

**National Charcuterie Fair**

*Distinti Salumi* - a national celebration of Italian and international charcuterie takes place annually in Cagli at the end of April when the town showcases the best charcuterie from the rich gastronomic culture of Italy. Cagli is now known as a national marketplace for high-quality charcuterie and is seeking to become a leader in the promotion of traditional breeds, free range pigs and the production of top quality meat and charcuterie. ([www.distintisalumi.it](http://www.distintisalumi.it))



**PRINCIPAL EVENTS**



### PROCESSION OF *CRISTO MORTO*

The Easter liturgy reaches its powerful climax on Good Friday. The procession in the late afternoon, after the deposition in the Cathedral, ends in front of the church of San Giuseppe, where the two images of Our Lady of Sorrows and Christ are brought before each other. In the evening, four hundred confraternity members, barefoot and hooded, from five confraternities form the religious procession that precedes the carriage bearing the veiled statue of the Dead Christ, in a ritual that remains unchanged since the 16thC.



### CORPUS CHRISTI PROCESSION

The city's streets are carpeted with flowers, arranged by citizens and worshippers as a demonstration of popular piety, for the procession in which the priest carries the consecrated host, under a rich canopy, accompanied by members of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, in a tradition that has continued uninterrupted since the 15thC.

### PALIO STORICO GIUOCO DELL'OCA

Old rivalries between Cagliari's historic Quarters form the background to this competition, which traces its history back to 1543. The Eve of the event (the 2nd Saturday of August) begins with the investiture of the *Captains* and the offering

of oil to the patron saint. In the evening everyone gathers in the Quarters to share traditional dishes, hoping that fortune will be on their side. On the day of the *Palio* (the 2nd Sunday of August) the *Magistrate*, accompanied in procession, displays the trophy of the golden goose. Dice throwers move the score-markers of the respective Quarters on a 54-square board, while young players battle each other in contests which moves them backwards or forwards on the board until the winner is proclaimed. In the evening, there is general celebration or consolation in the outdoor taverns of the four Quarters ([www.giochistoricicagliari.it](http://www.giochistoricicagliari.it))



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<http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cagliari>

#### Ufficio Cultura - Comune di Cagliari

Piazza Matteotti, 1 - 61043 Cagliari (PU)

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#### Associazione Turistica Pro Loco

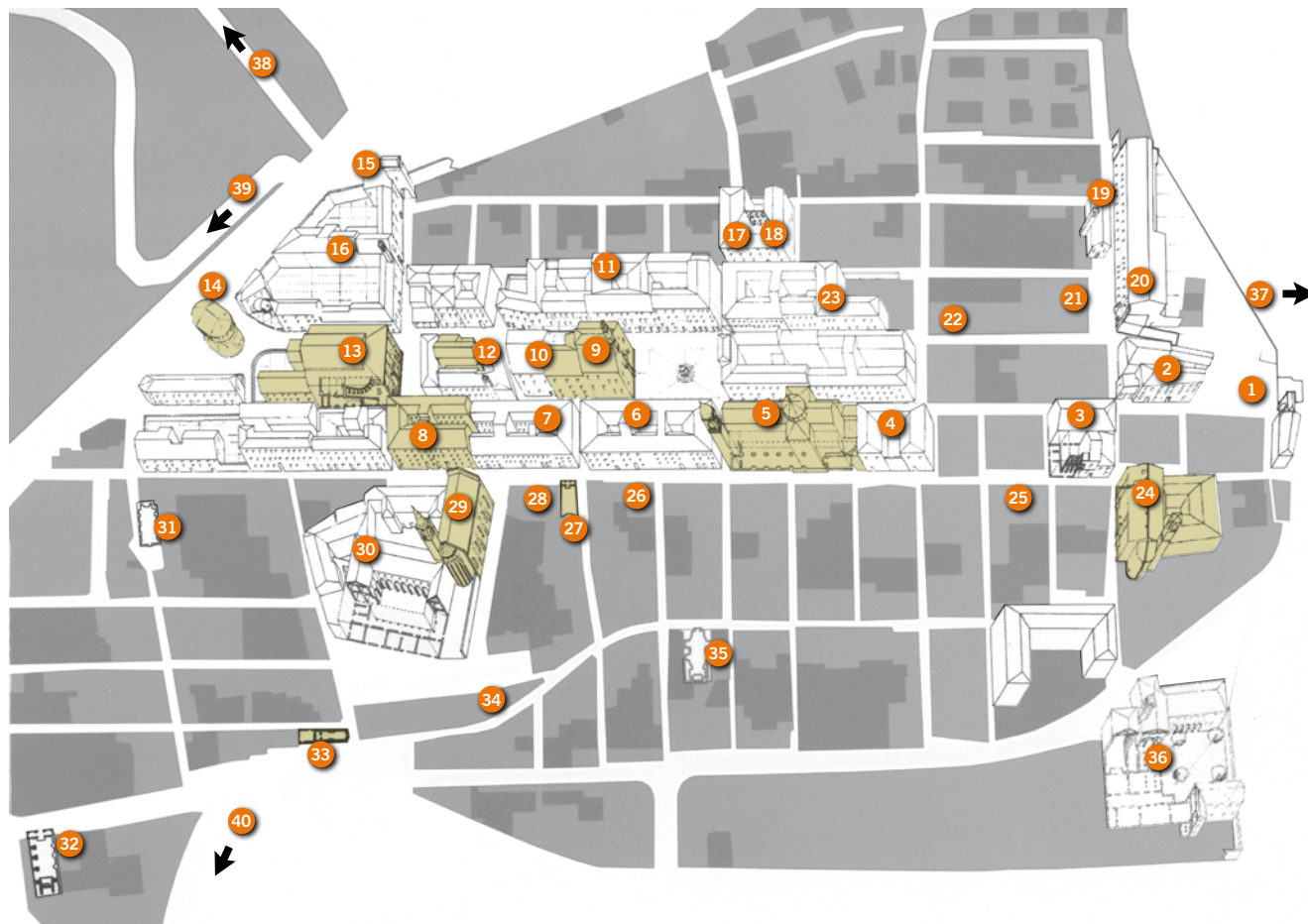
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|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 1. Porta Lombarda                                     | 10. Archeological Museum                   | 19. Church of San Bartolomeo     | 31. Church of San Pietro                     |
| 2. Palazzo Preziosi-Brancaleoni                       | 11. Palazzo Marcelli-Materozzi-Brancaleoni | 20. Palazzo del Seminario        | 32. Church of Sant'Andrea                    |
| 3. Palazzo Tiranni-Carpegna                           | 12. Church of San Giuseppe                 | 21. Palazzo Luzi-Rigi-Luperti    | 33. Church of Santa Maria della Misericordia |
| 4. Palazzo Episcopale                                 | 13. Municipal Theatre                      | 22. Palazzo Felici               | 34. Casa Gotica                              |
| 5. Cathedral Basilica                                 | 14. Tower & Sculpture Centre               | 23. Palazzo Luzi                 | 35. Church of San Filippo                    |
| 6. Palazzo Boni                                       | 15. Porta Massara                          | 24. Church of San Domenico       | 36. Church of Santa Chiara                   |
| 7. Palazzo Ugolinucci Mochi-Onori                     | 16. Church of San Nicolò                   | 25. Palazzo Benamati-Lapis       | 37. Ponte Mallio                             |
| 8. Palazzo Berardi Mochi-Zamperoli and Polo Culturale | 17. Palazzo Tiranni-Castracane             | 26. Palazzo Luperti-Passionei    | 38. Church of Santa Croce                    |
| 9. Town Hall                                          | 18. Palazzo Tiranni-Castracane Museum      | 27. Church of Sant'Angelo Minore | 39. Capuchin Friars Church and Monastery     |
|                                                       |                                            | 28. Palazzo Garulli              | 40. Church of San Geronzio                   |
|                                                       |                                            | 29. Church of San Francesco      |                                              |
|                                                       |                                            | 30. Municipal Library            |                                              |

**Suggested itinerary:** Tower **14** - Municipal Theatre **13** - Palazzo Berardi Mochi-Zamperoli and Cultural Centre **8** - Church of San Francesco **29** - Church of Santa Maria della Misericordia **33** - Church of Sant'Angelo Minore **27** - Palazzo Pubblico **9** - Cathedral Basilica **5** - Church of San Domenico **24** - Ponte Mallio **37**

**Editor:** Silvano Straccini; **text:** Alberto Mazzacchera; **translation:** Richard Dixon; **photos:** Municipal Archive, Alessandro Adami, Gabriele Arseni, Maurizio Bolognini, Raffaele Ceccarelli, Adriano Gamberini, Tommaso Majonchi, Alberto Mazzacchera, Leandro Picchi, Michele Sereni; **graphics:** Diametro; **printed:** July 2008 edition.