

Welcome to Casa Romei!

This leaflet will help to guide you during your visit to the museum, following the route shown. If you have limited time, we recommend focusing on the points indicated by the **yellow diamonds**, where you will see some truly unforgettable features!

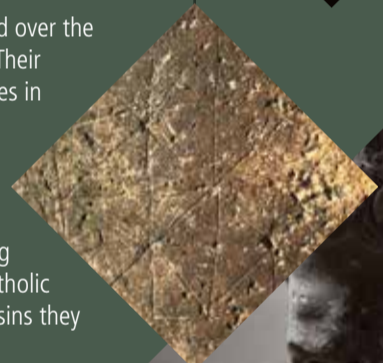
Go further and find out more...

To celebrate his rapidly rising social status, Giovanni Romei probably had his house decorated with the symbol of St Bernardine, also making the most of the coincidence between the date of his last sermon in 1443 and the date building work started on the house. The trigram with the letters IHS had to be the largest and most striking in all of Ferrara, originally enhanced by a polychrome and gold finish and surrounded by painted figures of saints.



Large heraldic shields decorate the walls of the large loggia on the ground floor, probably evidence of an important reception held here in the 1470s and attended by the dukes of Este, the Bentivoglio family from Bologna and members of the most important families living in the city at the time.

Eight *tabulae lusoriae* (chequerboards) have been carved over the centuries on the parapet of the loggia at Casa Romei. Their reconstruction has made it possible to identify six games in total: Tris, Tris with variations, Alquerque and the Game of the Hare. The *Libro de los juegos*, written in the 13th century by Alfonso X El Sabio, is the first real treatise to classify games according to the criterion of "games of wit" and "games of chance", establishing their rules. Games of chance were forbidden by the Catholic Church and mediaeval municipal laws, because of the sins they entailed: blasphemy, perjury, the risk of fights...



The rampant dog within a shield symbolizes the nobility acquired by Giovanni Romei in 1458 when Pope Pius II made him Count of Bergantino, Bariano and the Lateran Palace. The emblem can be seen all over the building: in frescoes, on painted ceilings, capitals and the well. See if you can spot them and count them all. There are more than you might think!



Grotesques were a genre of painting very much in vogue during the 16th century. In his autobiography, Benvenuto Cellini explains that the word comes from the grotte (caves) of the Colle Esquilino (one of the seven hills surrounding Rome), where the underground remains of Nerone's Domus aurea were discovered in 1480. Many famous painters wanted to go down into the caves to study the imaginative paintings that were found there. Chimeras and monsters, geometric and naturalistic decorations formed the repertoire of the grotesque. The paintings were small in size, but very colourful and light.



MUSEO DI CASA ROMEI

Via Savonarola, 30 Ferrara

INFO AND RESERVATION

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OPENING HOURS

8:30 am - 02:00 pm Sunday to Wednesday

02:00 pm - 07:30 pm Thursday to Saturday

(Last admission 30 minutes before closing time)

Discover also The Museo Archeologico Nazionale of Ferrara not far from here!




CASA ROMEI MUSEUM


Your Visit

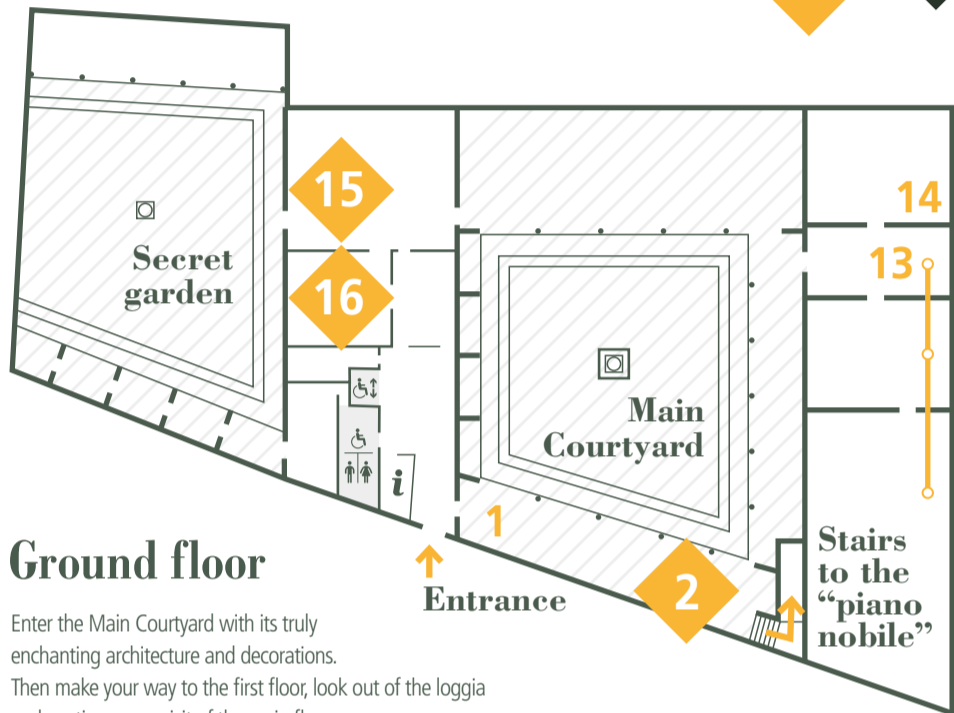
The itinerary

Key feature 

 30/40 min.

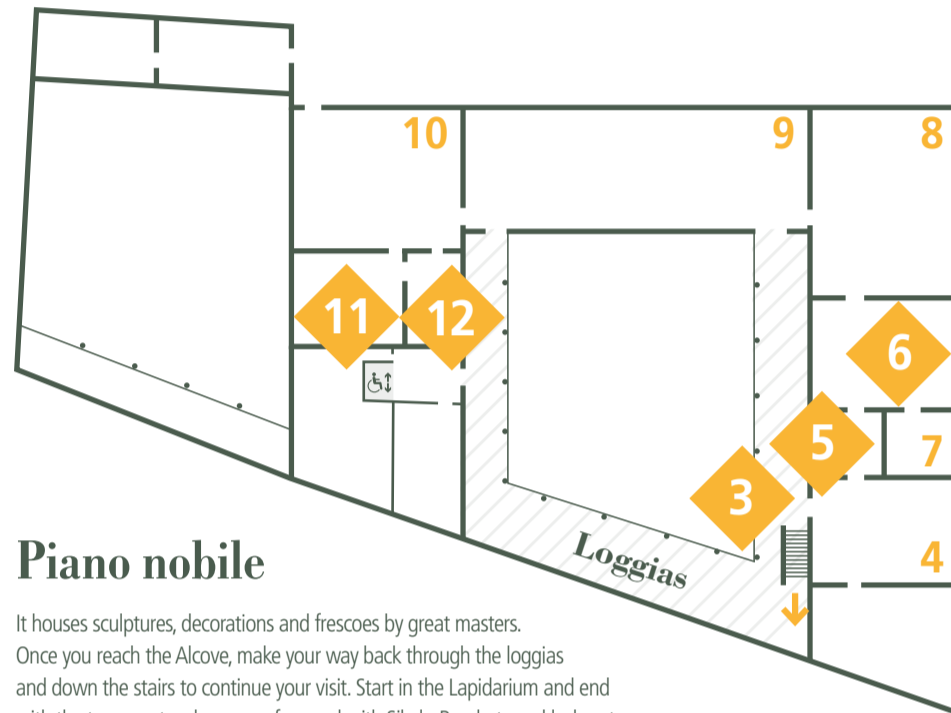
Recommended 

 01 hour and 30 min.



Ground floor

Enter the Main Courtyard with its truly enchanting architecture and decorations. Then make your way to the first floor, look out of the loggia and continue your visit of the main floor.



Piano nobile

It houses sculptures, decorations and frescoes by great masters. Once you reach the Alcove, make your way back through the loggia and down the stairs to continue your visit. Start in the Lapidarium and end with the two spectacular rooms frescoed with Sibyls, Prophets and lush nature.

2 Main Courtyard The loggias were a later addition to the original core of buildings, refining the space of the irregularly shaped courtyard. The diverse and consistently daring nature of the solutions chosen for the corner structures of the arcades reveal the various stages of construction, started in 1443.

3 Loggias The main courtyard would have been very different in the 15th century, with bright colours and elegant decorations. The large loggia on the ground floor is still adorned with beautiful painted patterns, while the galleries upstairs feature elegant tondi (circular paintings) containing Giovanni Romei's crest a rampant hound surrounded by creeping vines and fluttering ribbons.

5 Second Room Alfonso Lombardi was born in Ferrara in c. 1497. He was a renowned sculptor and medalist who moved to Bologna as a young man and later worked in

Rome, under the protection of Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici. He died prematurely in Bologna in 1537. Demonstrating his celebrity at the time, Giorgio Vasari dedicated an entire chapter of his *The Lives* to his life and work. Casa Romei houses two important sculptures attributed to him: St Nicholas of Tolentine and a terracotta tile with the Deposition of Christ.

6 Room of Tobias and the Angel The name of this room comes from the biblical episode frescoed in the centre of the vaulted ceiling. It depicts the young Tobias setting out on a journey, guided by the Archangel Raphael. The frescoed central panel is attributed to the painter from Ferrara Sebastiano Filippi, known as Il Bastianino (c. 1532 - 1602). The brightly coloured and rich grotesques, typical of the 16th century, are attributed to Filippi's workshop.

11 Green Room This room, probably once used as a bedroom, houses a splendid polychrome stucco Madonna, attributed to Donato di Niccolò di Betto Bardi (Florence, 1386 - 1466), better known as **Donatello** - and his workshop - one of the greatest sculptors of the early Renaissance. This piece in Casa Romei is the only example of the Florentine artist's work in Ferrara and features alongside a beautiful selection of sculptures, dating from the 14th to the 18th century.

12 Alcove This intimate little room has long been considered Giovanni Romei's private office. It has a coffered ceiling decorated with sophisticated woodcut prints on paper with a green background. Each square panel features **four female heads** surrounded by leaves, grouped around a rosette in the centre.

15 Room of the Sibyls Overlooking the unassuming smaller courtyard, this room is typical of the Middle Ages. It is dominated by its

large fireplace with polygonal hood, decorated with frescos and a terracotta frieze in the Gothic style - the only example of its kind remaining in Ferrara. The family crest with a rampant hound above a shield, flanked by the initials of Giovanni Romei (*CR, Zoanne Romio*), stands out in the centre of the hood. The wall decorations were probably painted when Giovanni Romei married Polissena d'Este. The composition is dominated by the solemn representation of the **twelve Sibyls** (or prophetesses) standing in front of the garden with a cane trellis.

16 Room of the Prophets The haloed heads of the Prophets emerge from the foliage of four different trees within a garden surrounded by red rose bushes. Next to the tree, on the best preserved wall, we can observe a **monumental female figure** in a green dress in the act of praying. This smaller room originally housed a fireplace at the centre of its external wall.

