

## PISTOIA AND THE ROMANESQUE STYLE

**Destination: Pistoia** - The Cathedral of S. Zeno, the Church of S. Bartolomeo in Pantano, the Church of S. Giovanni Fuorcivitas, the Church of S. Pier Maggiore and the Church of S. Andrea. *We also advise visits to: some other important churches on the territory.*

Pistoia experienced its period of greatest splendour between the 11<sup>th</sup> and the 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, after the arrival of the reliquary of St. Jacob in the city, and acquired the Romanesque aspect that is its principal characteristic even today. This same characteristic was preserved even after many of the buildings had been constructed or reconstructed. Pistoia marks one of the most interesting moments in the vast and varied chapter of the Tuscan Romanesque period. The most important churches in the city, reconstructed in Roman-

esque style between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, were given a basilican layout on three naves divided by colonnades with a semicircular apse and no transept. The use of contrasting colour, taken from the Pisan Romanesque culture, was applied in a more showy manner in Pistoia, where the contrast between the *white marble* or *alberese* stone and the "*green marble of Prato*" was accentuated, as were the alternating keystones or horizontal strips in the arches, thus diminishing the natural chiaroscuro of the architectural structure.

### The Cathedral of S. Zeno



According to experts, the renewal of the Romanesque period in Pistoia first started with interventions on the Cathedral. In the course of the centuries, the building, of early mediaeval origin, was subjected to a series of changes and embellishments. The exterior, carried out between the sec-

ond half of the 13<sup>th</sup> and the 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, is characterised by the two-colour effect, typical of the Romanesque style of Pisa-Lucca inspiration. The small blind arches and the two-coloured lozenge elements on the left side giving onto the square, recall solutions similar to those adopted for the Church of S. Giovanni Fuorcivitas. The interior, with the exception of the tribune and the apse, carried out during later alterations, is characterised by the simple and solid aspect that is so typical of Romanesque structures.

*The Cathedral also contains:*

**on the exterior:** the lunette above the external doorway representing the *Madonna and Child and angels* by Andrea della Robbia, 1505.

**in the interior:** the *monument to Cardinal Niccolò Forteguerra*

carried out on a design by Andrea Verrocchio and completed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century - the Pappagalli Chapel with the *tombstone* designed by Verrocchio for the *Bishop Donato de' Medici* in 1474 and the *Holy Conversation* by Lorenzo di Credi - the Chapel of the Crucifix containing the *silver altar of St. Jacob* carried out between 1287 and 1456 that includes some figures carried out by Filippo Brunelleschi - the *Crucifix* painted by Coppo di Marcovaldo and his son Salerno in 1275 - the *monument to Cino da Pistoia* of the 14<sup>th</sup> century by a Sienese artist - the 13<sup>th</sup> century *Holy water stoop* inspired by the art of Nicola Pisano - the *bas-reliefs* in the 14<sup>th</sup> century *funeral monument of Bishop Atto*.

**How to get there:**

*by car, from the Pistoia motorway exit: keep to the right and continue as far as the roundabout. Take the third exit, going past the Infopoint structure and then turn left at the railway bridge. Turn right at the end of the road into Via IV Novembre; carry straight on here and then take Via Cellini, the second road on the left, to reach the free Cellini car park. A shuttle service leaves from here for the old city centre (tel. 800 277825, active from 6.40am to 8.30pm); get off at the bus stop in Piazza Garibaldi. From here take Via Panciatichi on the left and continue straight on as far as Piazza del Duomo.*

*by train: all the destinations on the itinerary are a 10/15 minutes walk away from the station.*

**Info and reception:** Cathedral of S. Zeno

Piazza del Duomo - Pistoia - tel. 0573 25095

**Opening hours and prices:** daily 8am-12.30pm and 3.30-6.30pm - entrance free

entrance to visit the silver altar: € 2.00

### The Church of S. Giovanni Fuorcivitas



Reconstructed in the 12<sup>th</sup> century on the site of an earlier church, it was decorated on the northern side with a two-coloured marble facing that, although inspired by the Pisan Romanesque style, possesses some completely original characteristics thanks to the close alternation of pale strips and green Prato marble.

The sculptor Guamonte carried out the architrave with the *Last Supper* in bas-relief for the north entrance door between 1160 and 1170. The interior is built on a single nave with an apse ending in a flat wall and has not only maintained some of its original Romanesque characteristics, clearly visible in the small and narrow one-light windows on the left-hand side, but also

those acquired during the Gothic enlargements, especially in the area around the apse.

*The church also contains:*

**in the interior:** the *Visitation* by Luca della Robbia, dating from the mid 15<sup>th</sup> century - the *pulpit* of 1270 by fra' Guglielmo da Pisa, built onto the right-hand wall - the *Holy water stoop* illustrating the Cardinal and Theological Virtues and carried out by the workshop of Nicola and Giovanni Pisano in the late 13<sup>th</sup> century - the 13<sup>th</sup> century *Crucifix in wood*.

**How to get there:**

*on foot, from the Cathedral of S. Zeno: turn left and continue along Via Roma. At the crossroads with Via Cavour, turn right to reach the northern façade of the Church of S. Giovanni Fuorcivitas, situated on the left.*

**Info and reception:** The Church of S. Giovanni Fuorcivitas

Via Cavour - Pistoia - tel. 0573 24784

**Opening hours and prices:** daily 7.30-12am and 5-7pm  
entrance free

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### The Church of S. Pier Maggiore



Of Lombard origin, it acquired its present form in 1263. Although it was restructured again in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the façade and the sidewall, in two alternating colours and boasting a wealth of sculpted decorations, still show the typical characteristics of the Pistoia Romanesque style.

Attributed to the workshop of Guido da Como, the architrave above the main entrance door shows *Jesus giving the keys to St. Peter surrounded by the Virgin Mary and the Apostles*. Suppressed between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the church contains a rich artistic patrimony though it is at

present closed to the public.

#### How to get there:

*on foot, from the Church of S. Giovanni Fuorcivitas: turn right and continue along Via Cavour and Via Palestro. At the end of Via Palestro, turn right into Via S. Pietro until you come to the small square hosting the church.*

**Info and reception:** Church of S. Pier Maggiore

Piazza S. Pietro - Pistoia

**I.A.T. Pistoia:** Piazza del Duomo, 1 - Pistoia

tel. 0573 21622

**Opening hours and prices:** the interior of the church is not at present open to visits by the public

### The Church of S. Bartolomeo in Pantano



The present building, in Romanesque style, was constructed on the site of an ancient Lombard church for Prior Buono in 1159. The ornamental theme used for the façade, decorated with five arches raised up on columns and edged with strips of two-coloured marble, can be

found repeated in several areas and once more recalls the Romanesque style of Pisa-Lucca inspiration. Some important sculptures dating from Romanesque times, like the corner lions used to support the central arch and an architrave portraying *Christ and the twelve Apostles*, attributed to Gruamonte, the sculptor who also carried out the bas-relief on the façade of S. Giovanni Fuorcivitas, still decorate the façade. Although the interior has been altered and restructured several times over the centuries, its overall aspect, on three naves divid-

ed by columns and a semicircular apse, recalls the architecture typical of the Tuscan Romanesque style.

*The church also contains:*

**in the interior:** the *pulpit* by Guido da Como of 1250 - the *bas-reliefs in marble* that come from a destroyed Romanesque pulpit - the 13<sup>th</sup> century fresco of *Christ with St. John the Baptist and St. Bartholomew* in the apse - the ancient *Crucifix in wood*.

#### How to get there:

*on foot, from the Church of S. Pier Maggiore: retrace your steps along Via S. Pietro. On reaching the crossroads, turn right into Via Pacini and continue as far as the crossroads with Via S. Bartolomeo (opposite Ripa del Sale). Turn right and continue as far as the church square.*

**Info and reception:** Church of S. Bartolomeo

Piazza S. Bartolomeo - Pistoia - tel. 0573 24297

**Opening hours and prices:** daily 8am-6pm - entrance free

### The Church of S. Andrea



The present building dates from the 12<sup>th</sup> century and still shows numerous characteristics of the Pistoia Romanesque style. The façade, decorated with blind arches and lozenge elements, is faced in two-colour marble of Pisan inspiration. The sculpted decoration on the architrave above the central entrance door also dates from the second half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century; it was carried out by Gruamonte, with the help of his brother Adeodato, and represents the *Journey and the Adoration of the Magi Kings*, a fairly rare subject in this type of context, but

that can perhaps be explained by the fact that the parish church stood on one of the most important routes for the pilgrims. The two decorated capitals placed below the architrave are the work of Master Enrico. The solemn and severe interior presents the ancient spatial division of basilican type, with mighty stone columns and walls, a single high and narrow apse, illuminated by a series of one-light windows, placed one above the other,

and a trussed and painted ceiling in wood.

*The church also contains:*

**in the interior:** the *pulpit* by Giovanni Pisano, dated 1301 - *two Crucifixes in wood* by Giovanni Pisano - the *statue of St. Andrew*, originally on the façade and now replaced by a copy, attributed to the sphere of Giovanni Pisano - the *inlaid and carved and marble panels*, probably from the enclosure of the Romanesque presbytery in the Cathedral of Pistoia.

#### How to get there:

*on foot, from the Church of S. Bartolomeo: retrace your steps along Via di S. Bartolomeo and then turn right into Via Pacini. Keep to one side of Piazza dell'Ospedale and then walk up Via delle Pappie. At the end of this street, bear left to walk up Via del Carmine. At the first crossroads, turn right into Via di S. Andrea and continue as far as the church square.*

**Info and reception:** Church of S. Andrea

Via S. Andrea - Pistoia - tel. 0573 21912

**Opening hours and prices:** daily 8.30am-5.30pm  
entrance free

### We also advise visits to:

The Romanesque style that developed in Pistoia in this period was destined to become very popular and thus influence the choices made for carrying out minor churches, as, for example, in the Churches of **S. Michele in Cioncio** (Via de' Rossi), **S. Maria Nuova** (Largo S. Maria), **S. Maria in Borgo Strada** (Via Borgo stretto) and **S. Salvatore** (Via tomba di Catilina), whose

façades still bear decorative details that seem to recall the churches described above.

The exteriors of some buildings were still decorated with the typical colour contrasts of the Romanesque style even in the Gothic period, though the two colours were placed further apart, as in the case of the **Baptistry**, built opposite the Cathedral in Piazza del Duomo, or as in the case of the Church of **S. Paolo** (Corso Fedi) or that of **S. Francesco** (Piazza S. Francesco).