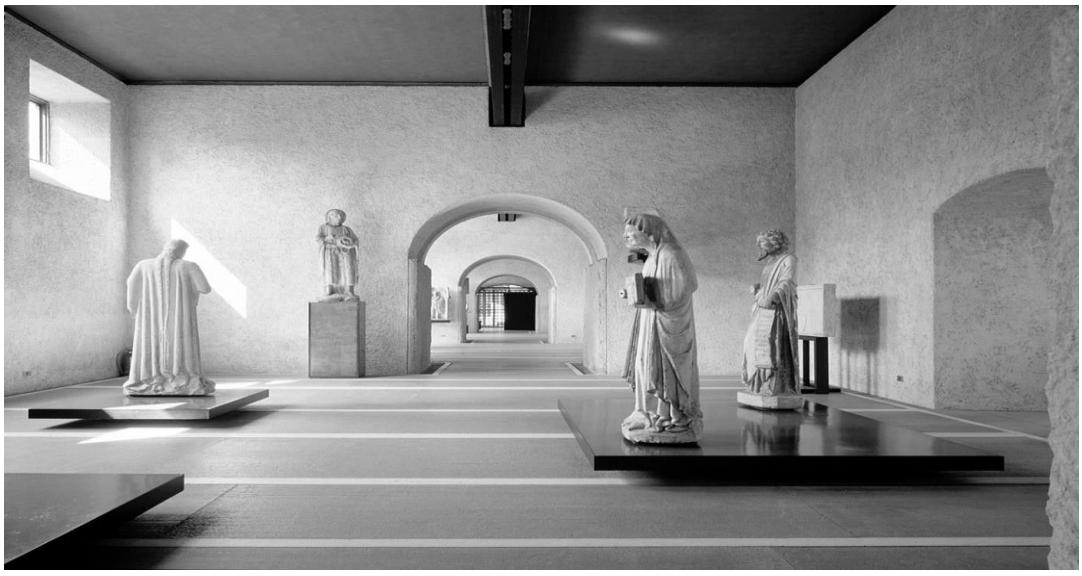
One-Day Guide to Verona

Verona is one of Italy's most fascinating cities, renowned for its millennia-old history and extraordinary artistic heritage. Founded in Roman times, it became an important political and commercial centre, as shown by the many Roman monuments that still survive today.
In the Middle Ages it was ruled by the powerful Scaliger family, who enriched the city with castles and monuments and made their lordship one of the most powerful in Italy. Under Venetian rule, Verona enjoyed a period of stability and economic and cultural prosperity, becoming a major centre for art and culture in the Veneto region.
Verona is also known worldwide thanks to William Shakespeare, who set the tragic story of Romeo and Juliet here. Yet the city has much more to tell: today its entire historic centre is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, symbolising a perfect blend of history, art and romance.

Below is a one-day itinerary for discovering some of the highlights of this beautiful city:

Here you will find the castle built in 1354, the oldest in the city - its name means "old castle" in Italian. Inside, you can visit the Castelvecchio Museum, which traces Verona's history and is considered a masterpiece of contemporary architecture thanks to Carlo Scarpa's restoration. The museum is also known worldwide for the sensational theft of several works of art, recovered in Ukraine only in 2016 after an extraordinary international search. (1 hour)



With limited time, we suggest viewing the castle from the outside and taking some photographs on the Scaliger Bridge, which connects the castle to the Arsenal, a nineteenth-century barracks. In the Middle Ages, the bridge was essential as an escape route for the Scaliger family in the event of a popular uprising or enemy attack. Many street artists perform here, and you can take iconic photographs of the Adige - Italy's second-longest river - while admiring the swallow-tailed Ghibelline battlements, symbol of the faction that supported the emperor against the pope.
(30 minutes)



Next to the castle stands the Arco dei Gavi, one of the oldest Roman arches in history. It is especially important because it is one of the few arches commissioned by a patrician family, the Gavi, for decorative rather than military purposes. The architect's signature can still be seen on the stones, an almost unique feature worldwide. Its location is also noteworthy: it is not the original one, because Napoleon had the arch dismantled in 1805 so his army could move more quickly along the ancient Via Postumia, the Roman road linking Genoa and Aquileia. It was rebuilt stone by stone in this splendid position in 1932. (15 minutes)



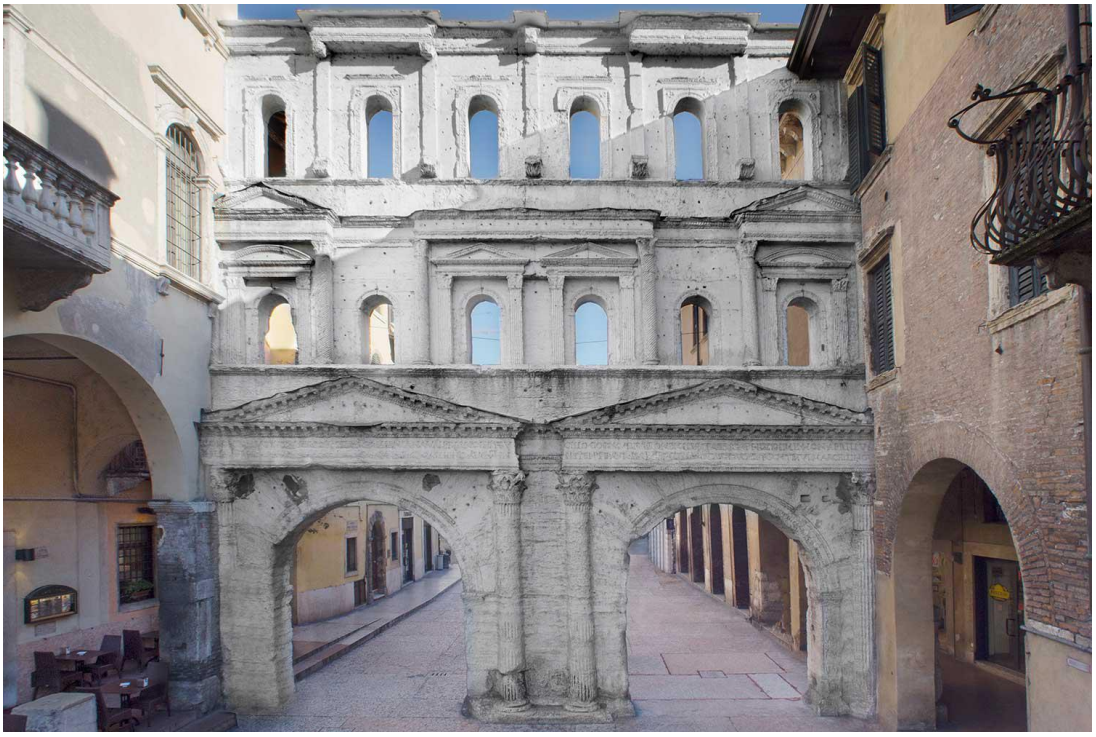
To complete the Castelvecchio area, visit the Arsenal Gardens on the opposite side of the castle. Here you can relax, take photographs and see the Verona Arsenal, a nineteenth-century building in Austrian architectural style that once served as a storehouse for weapons, cannons and animals. Inside, you can also see the remains of an ancient Roman-era mill.



2) PIAZZA ERBE AREA: (2-3 HOURS)

From Castelvecchio, follow the old Via Postumia toward the historic city centre. Along Corso Cavour you will pass fine examples of palaces built between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, including Palazzo Bevilacqua and Palazzo Canossa. At the end of the street you will find Verona's best-preserved Roman gateway: Porta Borsari. This impressive entrance formed part of the Roman defensive system; traces of the Roman walls, dating to the first century AD, can still be found in nearby streets.
The name comes from bursarii, the tax collectors who charged the entrance toll in the Middle Ages, from borsa, meaning

"purse". A straight line on the gate marks the water level reached during the Adige flood of 1882. It remains a vivid reminder of the power of nature and of how an entire city can be submerged.
(15 minutes)



Continuing along the former Via Postumia, we enter the heart of the city through Corso Porta Borsari.

Here you will find churches, historic palaces and shops, including the world's smallest jewellery store. At the end of the street you enter Piazza delle Erbe, now considered one of Italy's most beautiful squares. As its name suggests, the city market was held here, and the square was the central

hub of Veronese life during the Middle Ages; even earlier, it was the Roman forum. Today the traditional market has given way to rows of tourist stalls. (30 minutes)



As soon as you enter the square, look up at the buildings. You will see splendid frescoes, including those on the Mazzanti Houses depicting mythological scenes, such as the Battle of the Giants, and various allegories. These sixteenth-century frescoes are among the many examples found throughout Verona that earned it the title Urbs Picta, the "painted city", and made it famous worldwide. To display their culture, wealth and status, private citizens commissioned leading artists to fresco their buildings, producing around 300 decorated structures - a historical record.

Now look toward the centre of the square, where you will see the Madonna Verona fountain, built in 1368 by order of Cansignorio della Scala and now a symbol of the city. The central figure is actually a Roman statue from the first century AD, to which hands and a head were added in the Middle Ages. Beside the fountain stands the berlina, a twelfth-century marble canopy where the podestà once sat during installation ceremonies. It was also used for punishment: those convicted were tied here in the pillory. Opposite Palazzo Maffei stands the Column of Saint Mark, a white-marble column topped by the winged lion, symbol of Venetian rule after the Veronese lordship fell to the coalition of Milan and Venice.

Every building in Piazza delle Erbe is remarkable. Alongside the Domus Mercatorum

arts and crafts), Palazzo Maffei is also worth noting: a splendid Baroque palace decorated with statues of Greek deities. Beside it rises the tower that housed one of Europe's earliest bell clocks. Inside the building you can visit the Casa Maffei Museum, a superb private collection displayed in a unique setting.
(1 hour)



linked to the former Roman forum by a small arch from which a whale rib hangs. Legend says it will fall only when a person "pure of heart" walks beneath it; despite the passage of popes and kings, it has remained in place. The square is surrounded by buildings that shaped the city's history, including

Palazzo del Podestà, also known as the Government Palace, where Dante Alighieri stayed during his exile as a guest of Cangrande della Scala. Many Veronese also call this Piazza Dante because of the poet's presence and the statue at its centre. Dante greatly appreciated his stay in the Scaliger city and deeply admired the young Veronese lord, describing him as an enlightened and generous prince. He dedicated the entire Paradiso canticle, the most spiritual and complex part of his work, to Cangrande. If you enjoy museums, the palace also houses the modern art gallery.
The Loggia del Consiglio is another outstanding building, a masterpiece of the
Venetian Renaissance, with polychrome marble and statues of famous Veronese figures from

Roman times, such as Catullus and Pliny the Elder, looking down over the square from the roof. The Palazzo della Ragione, or Town Hall, completes the ensemble. Inside is the beautiful Old Market Courtyard with its monumental red-marble Scala della Ragione,

together with Palazzo di Cansignorio, the former seat of the court and captain, recognisable by its tower and inner courtyard. (20 minutes)
If you are interested in archaeology or photography exhibitions, we also recommend
the International Centre of Photography within the Scaliger archaeological excavations, where ancient remains are combined with temporary photographic exhibitions.
(30 minutes)



the Torre dei Lamberti. To appreciate its scale, construction began in 1172 and continued until 1464; the tower reaches 84 metres, while the Leaning Tower of Pisa is only 56 metres high. The Torre dei Lamberti remains Verona's tallest building and offers a 360-degree view across the entire city.
(15 minutes)

exceptionally important monumental funerary complex. Here you will find the individual tombs of the della Scala family, Verona's medieval lords. The tombs are considered among the greatest masterpieces of Gothic art in Europe because of their verticality and the richness of the marble carving. The wrought-iron enclosure is particularly fascinating: it was assembled without welding, using only interlocking joints, and is a masterpiece of craftsmanship. Cangrande's tomb is especially famous because its equestrian statue is one of the very few medieval sculptures to portray a knight with a broad smile, reflecting his charismatic personality and popularity among the Veronese.
(20 minutes)



3) VIA CAPPELLO AND JULIET'S BALCONY: (1 HOUR)

From Piazza delle Erbe begins a shop-lined street connecting the historic centre with San Fermo, a splendid church worth visiting on a future, longer stay in Verona.

Along the street you will find the remains of Porta Leoni, one of the two Roman gates - together with Porta Borsari - that still survive. Its name comes from two lion sculptures discovered nearby. Unlike Porta Borsari, only half of the original gate remains; the matching half was lost over the past 2,000 years. For centuries the gate was incorporated into medieval buildings as a load-bearing wall, until it was rediscovered and uncovered in the nineteenth century. Nearby you can also see Roman remains of its foundations and paving, which show that the Roman city level was more than two metres lower than today's streets.



to Juliet's balcony, now moved to the Teatro Nuovo. The balcony is a historical reconstruction: it was added to the courtyard in the 1930s by the municipality to create a visual link with Shakespeare's tragedy. Although the house dates from the thirteenth century and belonged to the Cappello family, the balcony was added later and fashioned from a fourteenth-century sarcophagus.
The story of the two lovers undoubtedly made Verona famous worldwide and

Verona has far more to offer than this balcony.
Once inside the courtyard, you can take a photograph beside the iconic statue of Juliet.

The statue is a replica; the original is kept inside the house museum, which is mainly worth visiting if you want a photograph from Juliet's balcony. The statue became famous because of a tradition claiming that touching its right breast brings good luck in love. The gesture is so common that it literally wore away the metal, requiring restoration and replacement. Although this is a modern ritual with no historical basis, it has become one of Verona's most recognisable symbols worldwide.



Leaving the Piazza delle Erbe area behind, we approach the more modern centre of the city: Piazza Bra. Its name is a corruption of the Lombard word braida, meaning "open ground" or "suburban field", because the area once lay outside the city walls.
To reach it, walk along iconic Via Mazzini, a beautiful street paved with Verona's red marble and the centre of the city's shopping district. Here you will find major international fashion brands, as well as

beautiful palaces and churches. A small hidden gem is the lower floor of the Benetton shop, where the remains of Roman houses and their splendid mosaics can still be seen, free of charge. Another curiosity is the lion's-mouth letter box at number 71, where citizens under Venetian rule could submit written accusations of crimes.
(20 minutes)



At the end of Via Mazzini, Piazza Bra opens before you: a vast square, much larger than St Peter's Square or Piazza Navona in Rome, or Piazza del Plebiscito in Naples. It contains the Verona Arena, the city's most important monument. Around the square are several other notable buildings: Palazzo Barbieri, an imposing Neoclassical building and the current town hall; Palazzo della Gran Guardia, a monumental seventeenth-century palace once used for military reviews and now for exhibitions and events; the Portoni della Bra, two large medieval arches marking the entrance to the square and topped by a clock donated to the city in 1872; the Visconti Walls, remains of the fortifications commissioned by Gian Galeazzo Visconti in the late fourteenth century; and the Monument to Victor Emmanuel II, the equestrian statue of Italy's first king in the centre of the gardens.



After looking around the square, focus on the Verona Arena. It is the best-preserved Roman amphitheatre in the world and the undisputed symbol of the city. Built around the first half of the first century AD, probably under Emperor Tiberius, it predates Rome's Colosseum by almost forty years. In Roman times it hosted gladiatorial combats, staged naval battles and wild-animal hunts, and could hold up to 30,000 spectators.

The monument's history was not always positive. For many centuries in the Middle Ages, it was used as a quarry for building stone, a venue for judicial duels, a market and even a red-light district; in the thirteenth century, prostitutes were required to live in its arcades. The opera era began only in 1913, when Giuseppe Verdi's Aida was staged to mark the centenary of his birth. Since then it has become the world's largest open-air opera house, and Verona hosts one of the world's greatest opera festivals. Much of its modern success is due to the Arena's remarkable natural acoustics. Until recently, opera singers performed without microphones and their voices could still reach the highest tiers.

There are countless curiosities about the Arena. As noted above, Veronese citizens used it as a quarry for centuries, and its stones can still be seen in the façades of houses and palaces throughout the city. In this way, the Arena's building material became a fundamental part of Verona, allowing many residents to say that they effectively live "inside" the Arena even when their homes are hundreds of metres away.

The Verona Arena has also set a world record connected with the Olympic Games: it became the first UNESCO World Heritage monument

in the world to host an Olympic ceremony, creating a unique setting and a link between our present and the Roman history of 2,000 years ago.



After visiting the Roman amphitheatre, pause and consider how much history you have explored in only a few hours and a short walk. This is why Verona's entire historic centre is a UNESCO World Heritage Site: almost no other city offers such a dense concentration of more than 2,000 years of uninterrupted history and culture.

This has been only a taste of what Verona can offer. We therefore hope you return soon to discover other essential parts of the city's history, including the Castel San Pietro area, San Zeno and the Cathedral district, as well as Verona's many museums.

For now, the 3 Amici team sends you a warm goodbye and hopes to welcome you to our properties very soon.

