

MAGIC

The Gathering

GRAND PRIX

FLORENCE 2015



TRAVEL GUIDE

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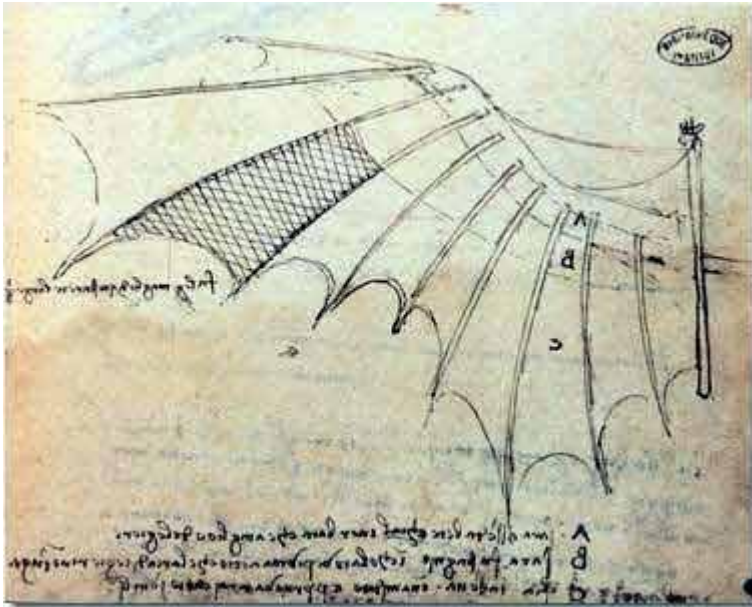
1. WELCOME TO FLORENCE

Florence, the spectacular capital of the region of Tuscany, is located on Italy's northwest coast. It is a stunning medieval city divided into two parts by the river Arno that flows from the Apennines through Florence and Pisa and on to the Ligurian Sea. Florence is considered one of the most beautiful cities in the world with its overflow of palaces, churches and museums filled with masterful paintings and sculptures.

The city has been founded in 59.B.C by Julius Caesar's war veterans, who named it "Florentin", for its flourishing beauty.

Florence experienced its time of greatness in the 14th century when the powerful Medici family made its entry onto the world scene, eventually becoming bankers to the papacy. Cosimo Medici became the ruler

of Florence and sponsored artists such as Donatello, Brunelleschi and Filippo Lippi.



In 1469, the grandson of Cosimo, Lorenzo, took over power. He was responsible for the great development of art, music and poetry; and was a patron to philosophers and artists such as Botticelli, Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo.

From 1860 to 1875, Florence has been the Capital of Italy.

In Firenze, as in the rest of Italy, the current value is Euro.

The local language is italian, and very few people speak fluent english.

Florence is spellbinding. It is captivating to visit and so very difficult to leave!

2. VENUE



Grand Prix Florence 2015 will be held at Fortezza da Basso, located right next to Florence Historic Centre and part of it: players will be playing and judges will be doing judgy things inside a marvelous masterpiece of military renaissance architecture.

Fortezza da Basso is a fort inserted in the fourteenth century walls of Florence.

Its official name is the Fortress of Saint John the Baptist (Fortezza di San Giovanni Battista), famous in the world for a variety of fairs held here, most notably “Pitti Immagine Uomo” one of the most acclaimed fashion fairs in the world.



The official address of the venue is **Viale Filippo Strozzi, 1.**

3. HOW TO GET THERE

By plane

Florence is served by its own small city airport (code: **FLR**) and a bigger international one located in Pisa (code: **PSA**).

[Terravision](#) connects both airports together with a stop at Florence main train station, Firenze Santa Maria Novella, for just 4.99€ one way. Other bus companies fill the gaps between Terravision departures, you'll find them right outside the airports or the Florence main train station.

If you fly to Bologna Airport (code: **BLQ**) [Appennino Shuttle](#) connects the GP location to the airport, and it's cheaper than trains.

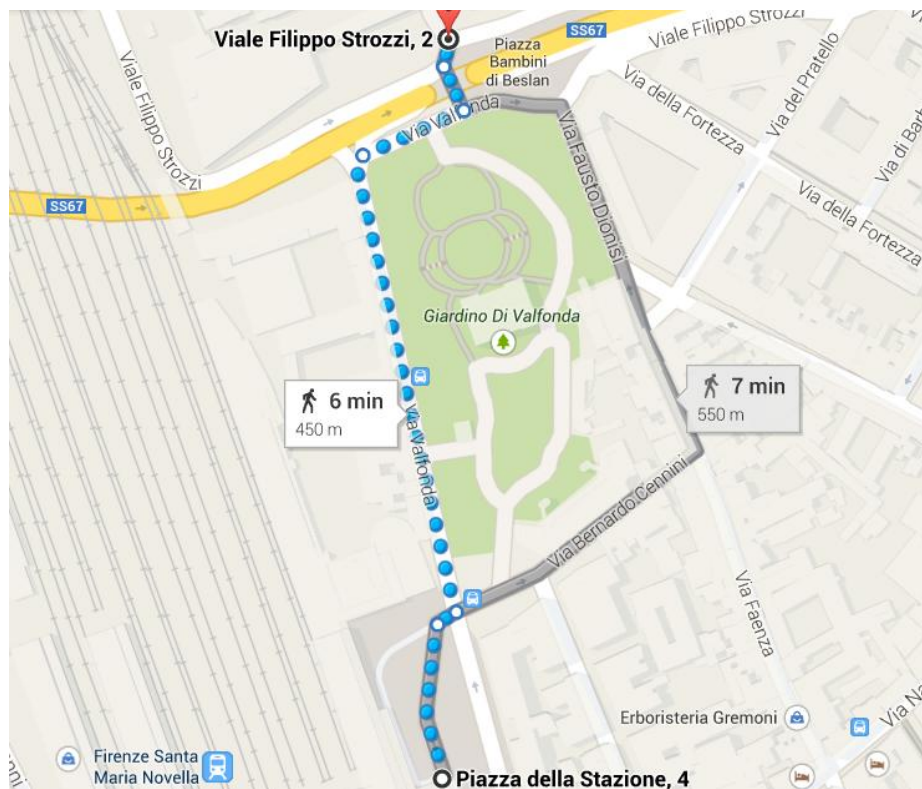
By train

Firenze Santa Maria Novella is Florence main train station, and it's located right next to the venue: Milan, Bologna and Rome are very well connected to Florence, with trains. You can check on [Trenitalia](#) or [Italo](#) for high speed trains to and from Florence.

By car:

The closest highway exit for Florence Historical Center is located on the A11/E76 highway (once again connecting Pisa to Florence through Pistoia and Lucca).

There are several parking lots and garages spread across Florence, the biggest one being the one located under the train station Firenze Santa Maria Novella.



4. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

[Ataf](#) handles bus system in Florence. They easily connect all the city, and with a single ticket (1,20€) you can travel on any line for 70 minutes (even changing busses).

You can usually buy tickets at “Tabacchi” (Tabak shops) or Newsstands. Google maps is helpful enough to understand which bus you have to get, and the timings too.

You also have the option of an phone app you can find in your phone store:



Android:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=it.softeco.temporealeataf&hl=en>

iPhone/iPad: <https://itunes.apple.com/en/app/ataf-2.0/id815601465?mt=8>

We have a tram line connecting Scandicci to Florence. You can use the bus ticket on it, with the same pricing and time restrictions. Google maps is your friend again!

If you are bold enough you can try [their website](#) which is only partially translated in english.

We have only official Taxis in Florence, but there are two companies handling bookings and Taxi calls. The biggest one is [4390](#) (+390554390) and the smaller one is [4242](#) (+390554242). Taxi in Florence aren't too much expensive, neither cheap.

You can usually pay with credit cards on board.

However, in the historical center of the city (near the location) the best way to move around is walking, because a lot of streets are closed to cars and busses.

5. ACCOMODATION

If want the cheapest accomodation you can find a lot of hostels spread across Florence starting at around 20€/night:



Hostel Youth Meeting Home (2.1 km from the venue)

<http://goo.gl/DTXMrG>

~20€/night in ten bed mixed dormitory rooms

Hostel Archi Rossi (0.3 km from the Venue)

<http://www.hostelarchirossi.com/>

~25€/night in four to six bed mixed/female dormitory rooms

If you you want to breath Florence, and use your room just for sleeping, your best price/value option is choosing a B&B next to the venue, starting from 40€/night in a double/twin room:

La Notte Blu (1.0 km from the venue)

<http://goo.gl/Hmfmqk>

~40€/night in twin/double room

La Gioconda (0.9 km from the venue)

<http://goo.gl/SfRJBR>

~50€/night in twin/double room

If you instead want the maximum comfort the remaining option is an hotel room, starting from 60€/night:

Hotel La Fortezza *** (0.9 km from the venue)

<http://www.hotelfortezza.com/>

~60€/night in twin/double room

Hotel Ginori al Duomo ***** (0.8 km from the venue)

<http://www.hotelginorialduomo.com/en/>

~75€/night in twin/double room

Hotel Executive ***** (1.1 km from the venue)

<http://www.hotelexecutiveflorence.com/>

~85€/night in twin/double room

Room Mate Luca ***** (0.7 km from the venue)

<http://luca.room-matehotels.com/en>

~100€/night in twin/double room



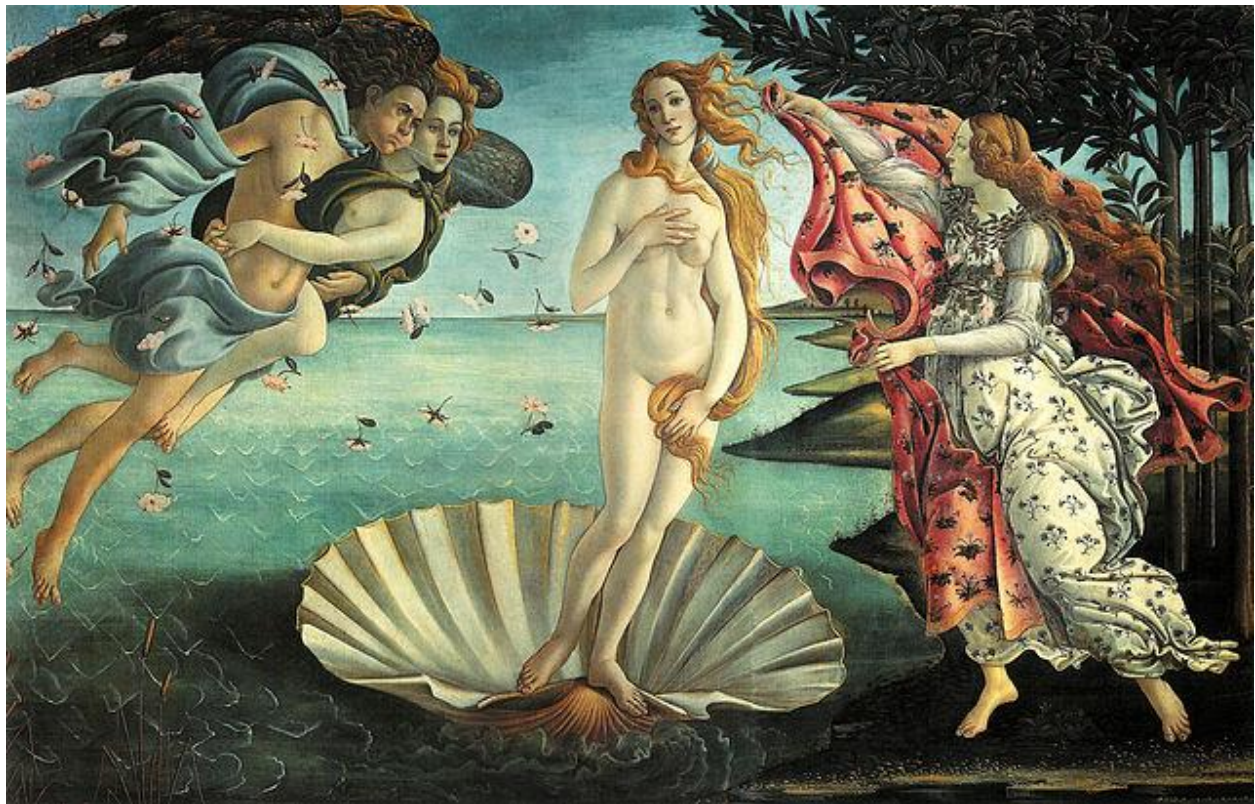
6. TOURISM

This is a small sample of relevant places you should prioritize visiting Florence for the first time. You can live in Florence for your whole life and still miss something, so: know you can't see and visit everything and, if you want, follow these guidelines, split into categories and suggested priority within each of them.

[Map Here!](#)

MUSEUMS

Galleria degli Uffizi. This is one of the oldest and most famous art museums of the Western World. The Renaissance paintings that you will find here are one of a kind. These are paintings by famous artists such as Michelangelo and Da Vinci. In high season waiting times can be up to five hours that's why we recommend you to [reserve a ticket in advance to have shorter queue.](#)



Museo del Bargello. The National Museum has its setting in one of the oldest buildings in Florence that dates back to 1255. Initially the headquarters of the Capitano del Popolo (Captain of the People) and later of the Podestà, the palace became, in the sixteenth century, the residence of the Bargello that is the head of the police (from which the palace takes its name) and was used as prison during the whole 18th century. It is now the most important museum of sculpture of Tuscany, in which you can find sculptures of Donatello, Michelangelo, Bernini, Ghiberti and Brunelleschi.

Palazzo Pitti and Boboli. The Pitti Palace, which was formerly the residence of the grand-dukes of Tuscany and later of the King of Italy, now houses several important collections of paintings and sculpture, works of art, porcelain and a costume gallery, besides providing a magnificently decorated historical setting which extends to the Boboli Gardens, one of the earliest Italian gardens famous also for its fountains and grottoes.

PLACES

Piazza Santa Croce is one of the main squares of the historic centre of Florence, Italy. It is located near Piazza della Signoria and the National Central Library, and gets its name from the Basilica of Santa Croce that overlooks the square. It is also a famous place of Firenze's nightlife.



Basilica of Santa Croce is the largest Franciscan church in the world. Its most notable features are its sixteen chapels, many of them decorated with frescoes by Giotto and his pupils, and its tombs and cenotaphs. It is the burial place of some of the most illustrious Italians, such as Michelangelo Buonarroti, Niccolò Machiavelli, Ugo Foscolo.

Piazza del Duomo is located in the heart of the historic center of Florence. It is one of the most visited places in Europe and in the world; here we can find the Florence Cathedral with its dome - *Cupola del Brunelleschi* - Giotto's Campanile, the Florence Baptistery, the Loggia del Bigallo, the Opera del Duomo Museum, and the Arcivescovile and Canonici's palace. Climbing **Florence's Duomo**, with the huge dome by Filippo Brunelleschi, is one of the most breathtaking experience you can have in Florence. From there you can dominate the whole city and have an unique view. But, beware! The steps to get on top are **463**, that could be pretty challenging before or after a GP!

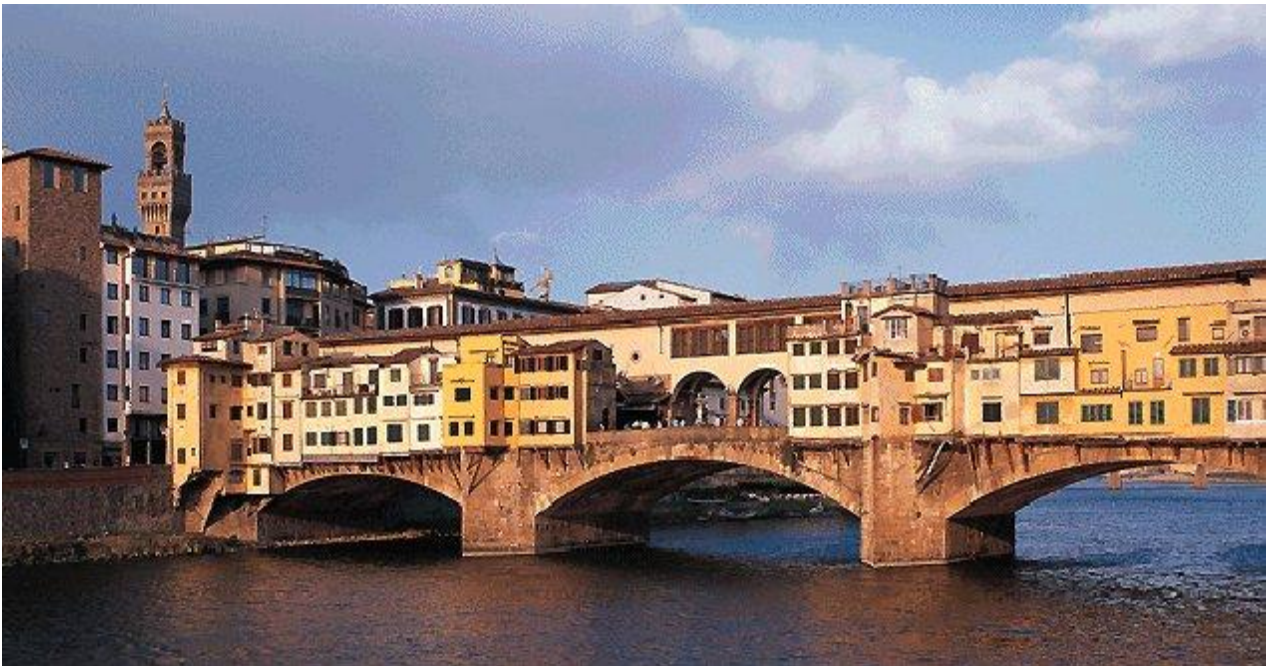




Piazza della Signoria has been the political heart of the city since the Middle Ages and still is at present day. It is a singular urbanistic creation that began taking shape from 1268 onwards, when the Guelph party gained control of the city again and decided to raze the houses of their Ghibelline rivals to the ground. The square is bordered by a series of houses that date from the 14th-16th centuries, among them the Tribunal of the Mercanzia (1359, an ancient court of justice that dealt in

commercial matters), and 16th century Palazzo Uguccioni, whose facade is thought to have been designed by Raphael.

Ponte Vecchio is one of Florence's landmarks and probably the most photographed bridge in the city.



The most famous bridge of them all was built at the narrowest part of the Arno. It's distinguished as being the only remaining bridge to have houses and shops on it.

In part this is because something important was built on top of those: the Vasari Corridor. This secret passageway built by Vasari for Duke Cosimo I de' Medici in 1565 links Palazzo Vecchio to the Pitti Palace.

Piazzale Michelangelo is the most famous square in Florence with its magnificent panoramic view of the city, and it's located in the Oltrarno district of the city (you can see a very self-explanatory pic at the very beginning of this guide). The famous view from this observation point overlooking the city has been reproduced on countless postcards and snapshots over the years. To get there you will have to walk the tiny streets of San Niccolò neighborhood.

Oltrarno, the section of Florence on the other side of the river from Piazza Della Signoria, it's the more "intimate" area in Florence, (compared to the rest of the city) and in many ways feels like a small town. In this area you will find a lot of history and art heritage: monuments, museums, churches, palaces, parks: Pitti Palace, the Old Bridge, **Santo Spirito Square**, the Gardens of Boboli, but also handcraft shops, artisan workshops, mosaic-makers, wood carvers, gilders, goldsmiths carrying on a century-old tradition of both spirit and working methods. And last but not least a great number of restaurants and cafes maintaining the typical atmosphere. Santo Spirito is a very good area to spend a night drinking in one of the many pubs and bar.

7. THE BEST FOOD IN TOWN

At SMN you can find Burger King and McDonalds as fast-food restaurants, while going in the center you'll find a lot of Chinese Rotisseries.



A very good place where to eat is [San Lorenzo Market](#) where you can find a lot of different restaurants and pubs. Eat **Panino con Lampredotto**! This delicious abomasum sandwich might sound strange but it is delicious. You can only have this local delicacy in Florence so this is your chance! There are lampredotto stalls near every important square in the city.

Dolce Vegan is a small bar where you can order **vegan** or **vegetarian** dishes with the self-service formula: first you place your order, then they call your name and you go pick up your food and bring it back to your table. The menu is very simple but the quality is good. It's not in a touristic area, even if it's located in the center of Florence (Via San Gallo 92r).

8. LOCAL GAMES STORE

[Stratagemma](#) is the nearest shop from the location. It is located near the dome and it's the oldest Game Store in Florence. It has various availability of games and goodies, including RPG Manuals, miniatures, and TV-Shows Merchandise. It's an all-around Nerd Shop, and the owner speak Japanese too!

Indeed, you can find it while visiting the city center. It's a shop aimed at fun and fun formats like commander, archenemy, conspiracy drafts. You will find a very good and fun ambient, but not a competitive one.

[Seven Dragons](#) is the second oldest shop in Florence. It organizes Legacy/Draft and competitive tournaments every Wednesday night, from 21:00, and every Saturday. You can get there with a bus from SMN Station.

[Games Academy Firenze](#) if you want to see a human-sized Iron Statue, this is the right place for you! They play competitive Modern every Tuesday night, and every Friday Afternoon. They sell comics and books too if you are interested in them.

9. SAFETY AND GENERAL TIPS

Being in Italy can be marvelous and impressively difficult at the same time, so you'd better prepare to it. Italians love to have meals as cookery is extremely good around here. If you hang around with Italian people prepare to have long and deep dinners.

Italians also have a predilection for chaos, so improvisation and rule breaking are the norm: queues are incredibly blurred and you'll always have to fight to retain your priority until served (it will be useful to keep this in mind at public events stage).

Italy is also a place known all around the world for fashion brands, and it will be easy to find unlicensed hawkers on the streets pretending they're selling legit branded stuff that is actually fake. There is a full array of laws enforcing brands protection against fakes so you'd better avoid buying that stuff as the risk of getting fined is pretty high.

On trams and buses it is better to keep baggage watched and wallets secured as pickpocketing is a thing especially in those crowded places.

It is also not unusual to find beggars and scammers in public places, so it is strongly advised to avoid people asking for money and/or asking to sign petitions and the like.

10. I NEED HELP!

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