



Ph. Paolo Cortesi

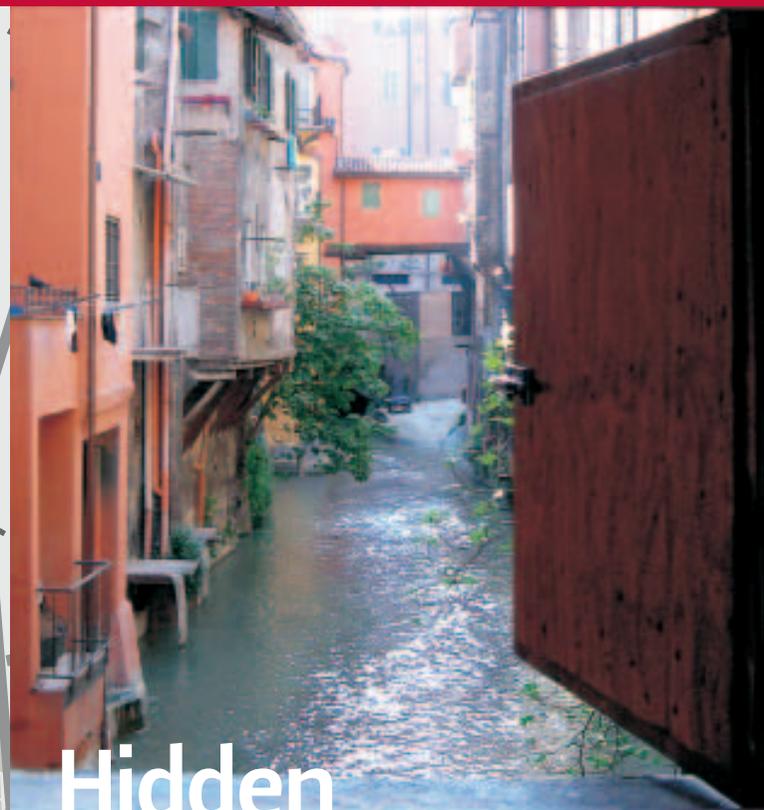
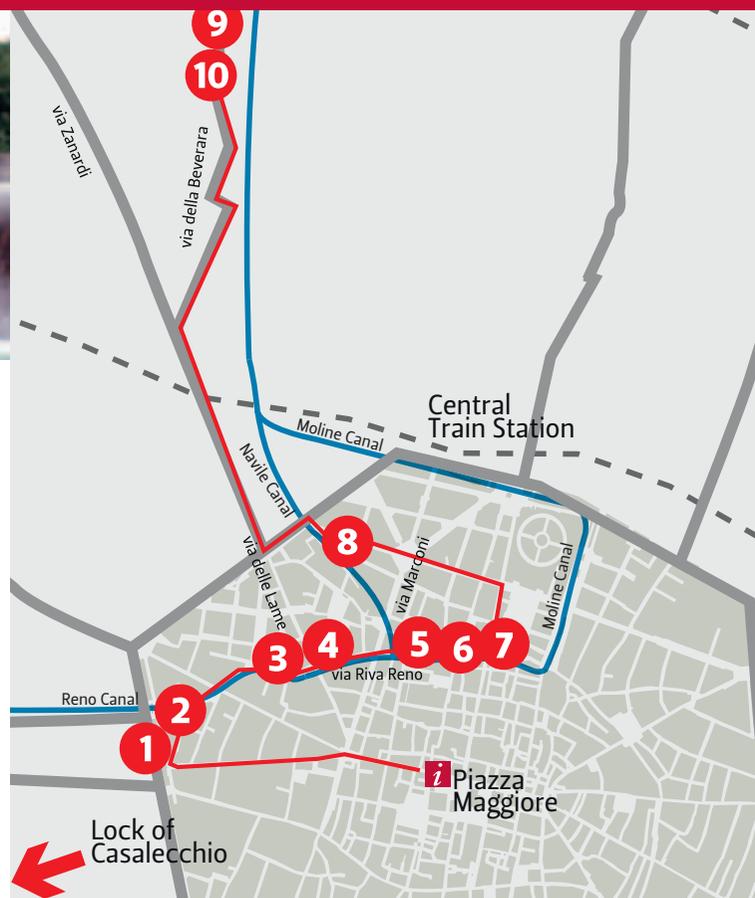
## Artificial hydraulic system

The Savena and Reno Canals were dug during the Middle Age to bring the waters of the two rivers into the city centre. The Savena canal enters the old city at Porta Castiglione. The Reno canal starts from a big lock in the nearby town of Casalecchio and runs beneath via Riva Reno and via della Grada as far as via Capo di Lucca. Once out of the centre, the canals flow into the Navile, a once navigable channel, 36 km long, which connected Bologna with the cities of the North and international trade.

## Lock of Casalecchio di Reno

Via Porrettana 187, Casalecchio di Reno

The current structure of the **lock on the Reno** dates back to 1894, built after the river overflowed its banks, and is a real “hydraulic monument”, stretching the entire width of the river. It consists of the lock itself (the oldest part about 160 meters long) and an overflow (85 metres); between them there is a sturdy watershed. Just downstream of the lock of Casalecchio are the Paraporti: Scaletta, Verocchio and San Luca. Together these hydraulic works are able to clean the channel and return to the river the gravel and sand that would reduce the riverbed if deposited. During harsh winters, the surface spillway of **Paraporto Scaletta**, better known as “the ice house”, stopped sheets of floating ice from being carried towards the city, where they could damage the wheels of the water mills and thus harm local industries.



# Hidden Canals in Bologna

Bologna has a 60 km network of largely covered over canals. As early as the twelfth century the city provided itself with a hydraulic system consisting of locks, canals and underground pipes that distributed the water which was used mainly as an energy source for trades.



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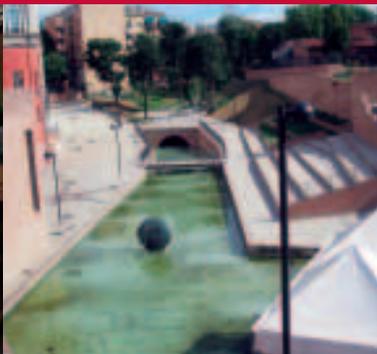
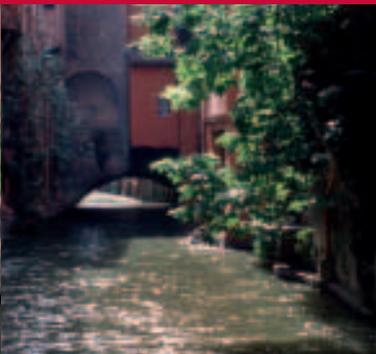
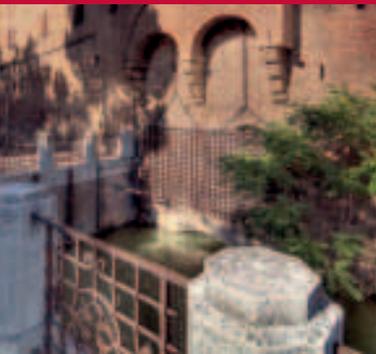
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topografia metropolitana bolognana

For further information and visits:  
Consorzi dei Canali di Reno e Savena in Bologna: tel. +39 051.6493527  
[www.consorzireno-savena.it](http://www.consorzireno-savena.it)





## 1. Grada *Viale Giovanni Vicini, 19*

The structure dates back to the fourteenth century and is where the Reno canal enters the city. Its name comes from the iron gratings still visible on the Baraccano building, which prevented debris being carried in by water to block culverts and damage the water wheels inside the walls.

## 2. Pellacanerìa della Grada

*Via della Grada, 12*

The building, now headquarters of the Consortium of the Savena and Reno Canals, was erected on the river Reno in 1681 for the tanning of hides. A small power station was installed from 1889 to 1926 for the use of the Hospital Rizzoli. A plaque on the building and a bronze statue at the crossroads with via San Felice indicate the presence of many public wash-houses used until the middle of the last century.

## 3. Church of the Bridge of Blades

*Via delle Lame, 50*

After the plague of 1572, the "Sanctuary of the Bridge of Blades" (from "blade" which indicated a swampy area) was built at the intersection of via Riva Reno and via Lame, on the stone bridge which spanned the canal at this point.

## 4. Manifattura Tabacchi

*Former tobacco factory – Via Riva di Reno, 72*

The large Liberty style building, which now houses the Film Library of Bologna, is on the site once occupied by the convent of Santa Maria Nuova, suppressed by Napoleon in 1801 and converted into a tobacco factory. The canal waters were used to drive the mills that cut the tobacco leaves. A little further on, in the middle of road, you can still see some "mechanical combs", made in the '80s to block any debris carried by the waters.

## 5. View from the bridge in via Malcontenti *Via Malcontenti, 15*

In via Malcontenti there is a first sight of the Reno Canal, where you can see the only remaining watering place, used for washing carts and watering animals.

## 6. Little window in via Piella

*Via Piella, 16*

You can enjoy another charming view over the Reno Canal from a recently restored little 'window' in the nearby via Piella.

## 7. Via Capo di Lucca *Via Capo di Lucca, 10*

The Moline Canal runs partially uncovered for a stretch between the buildings. The name comes from the 15 big grain mills of the XV century. The energy to drive the mill wheels is due to the steepness of the canal bed and to 9 artificial drops with a system of movable sluice gates. On the right side of the street there still are some Renaissance millers' houses, designed by Vignola, which are a rare example of public housing of the period.

## 8. Salara *Via Don Minzoni, 18*

Built at the end of the XVIII century and restored between 1991 and 1995, the Salara was once a deposit for the salt that came from Cervia. A grain loft was later added on top, and buttresses were necessary to strengthen the original structure. It is the only remaining building of the old city port which was built by Vignola in 1548 and demolished in 1934. From here, boats transported goods and people along the Navile canal towards Ferrara and Venice in about 40 hours. In the middle of the XVIII century a fleet of fifty boats made a thousand trips a year, carrying almost 23.000 tons of goods.

## 9. Sostegno del Battiferro

*Via della Beverara, 123*

Designed by Pietro Brambilla and originally made of wood, it was rebuilt in masonry by Vignola in 1548 and modified on various occasions after that. It is an important hydraulic work that allowed boats from the sea to pass the great differences in level of the Navile Canal to reach the city. The word "Battiferro" comes from an old iron and copper beating works. In the surrounding area there are many industrial archaeological finds: on the right bank of the canal: the remains of a rice husker and a brick kiln. And on the other the first hydroelectric power station in Bologna, built in 1901. Finally, the Fornace Galotti brickworks, now restored and used as a museum.

## 10. Industrial Heritage Museum

*Via della Beverara, 123*

Built in 1887 by Celeste Galotti, the brickworks with its Hoffmann furnace was used until 1966. The Museum illustrates the economic history of the city and its surrounding area, from the Modern to the Contemporary Age. An interesting section shows how between the XV and the XVIII centuries Bologna was a centre of silk production, thanks to technological innovations and a system of production that used water power. The focal point of the section is a working model of a silk mill, scale 1:2, rebuilt to evoke the memory of this astonishing machine lost in the 19th century.

Industrial Heritage Museum Fornace Galotti  
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From January 1st to May 31st and from October 1st to December 31st  
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday from 9.00 to 1.00  
Saturday from 9.00 to 1.00 and from 3.00 to 6.00  
From June 1st to September 30th  
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