

MY AREA -IMOLA

Imola (*Jômla* in the local dialect) is a town and "comune" in the province of Bologna with about 68,974 inhabitants. Imola is the largest town in the province by extension and the second by population, after Bologna. It is the fifth "comune" of Emilia Romagna.

Imola is situated along the Via Emilia, on the river Santerno. The town is rich in history; therefore, it has historical buildings and many places of attraction. It is a very welcoming city with a nice and old centre with shops, cinemas, bars and some venues for teenagers.

In 2014 according to ISTAT (National Institute of Statistics) in Imola there were around 6,184 foreign people of different nationalities. Most of them come from Romania, Albania, Nigeria, Tunisia, Moldavia, Pakistan, Poland, Ukraine, China and Russia.

Most of the inhabitants of Imola are Christian Catholic, but now with many different ethnic groups other religions are represented such as Orthodox and Islamic religion.



Imola's History

Imola, the ancient Roman town called Forum Corneli, was first a Bronze Age settlement on Mount Castellaccio and the great necropolis of the sixth and fifth centuries BC. During the Roman Empire the town was an agricultural and trade center, famous for its ceramics. The name Imola was first used in the 7th century by the Lombards, who gave it to the fortress (the present Castellaccio), then the name passed to the city. Imola was in 412 the scene of the marriage of Ataulf, King of the Visigoths, to Galla Placidia, daughter of the Emperor Theodosius the Great (the union of two different worlds). During the Gothic war and after the Lombard invasion, Imola was held alternatively by the Byzantines and the Barbarians. The medieval years were marked by bloody struggles for dominance in the

territory and Imola was against Bologna, Faenza and Ravenna . Between 1300 and 1500 three important and powerful families succeeded in the ruling of the city: Alidosi, Manfredi and Visconti. In 1426 the city was again part of the territory of the Pope who had already ruled it earlier on. Then the city was given to the Sforza family and Imola had its heyday. From 1504 until the unification of Italy, except in the Napoleonic period, Imola is part of the Papal State.

In a changed political situation in the 1930s, there is the construction of large sanatoriums in the hills surrounding the city, which, together with the large psychiatric hospitals, confirmed its medical traditions of almost a thousand years old. During the Second World War, Imola was hit hard because it was closed to the Gothic line (The war front line in the area for nearly one year). In 1944 and 1945 Imola fought hard for liberation and it was awarded a gold medal for its value. Since the 1950s the city began to expand with the construction of suburbs and the industrial area, reflecting a progressive change in the city's economy which passed from predominantly agricultural to industrial and tertiary .



The Rocca and other interesting sights

The Rocca is the fortress of the town. It was built in 1332 on the ruins of preexisted defensive tower (dated 1261) on the architectural typical style of Middle Ages and Renaissance. It was fortified with protective walls and nine corner towers that later were encased inside four bigger circular towers, able to withstand bombardments. In the internal courtyard stands still the fortified tower with a noble living quarters named Palazzetto. Many aristocrat families lived there, as for example the Alidosi, the Visconti and the Manfredi. Under the papacy of Sixtus IV, the city was ruled by Girolamo Riario (nephew of the pope) and his wife, Caterina Sforza. Unfortunately during a period of crisis for the

lords, caused by the death of the pope, Cesare Borgia besieged and conquered a big number of Romagna fortresses (including the Rocca in Imola). There still is a map drawn by Leonardo Da Vinci. During the domination of the Papal State, the Rocca became a prison till 1958 when restoration work began and finally the fortress became a museum.



Today the Rocca museum houses a Collection of Weapons. The main part comes from the purchase of a private collection bought in the 1960's, shortly before the Rocca was opened to the public. As for the weapons that were originally part of the fortress armory we only have a collection of stone shot left.

During the restoration work many ceramic pieces were found, among the most important pieces is the Dinner set of dishes displayed in the South-West tower while jug decorated with the eagle, Alidosi's coat of arms, is showed inside the keep.

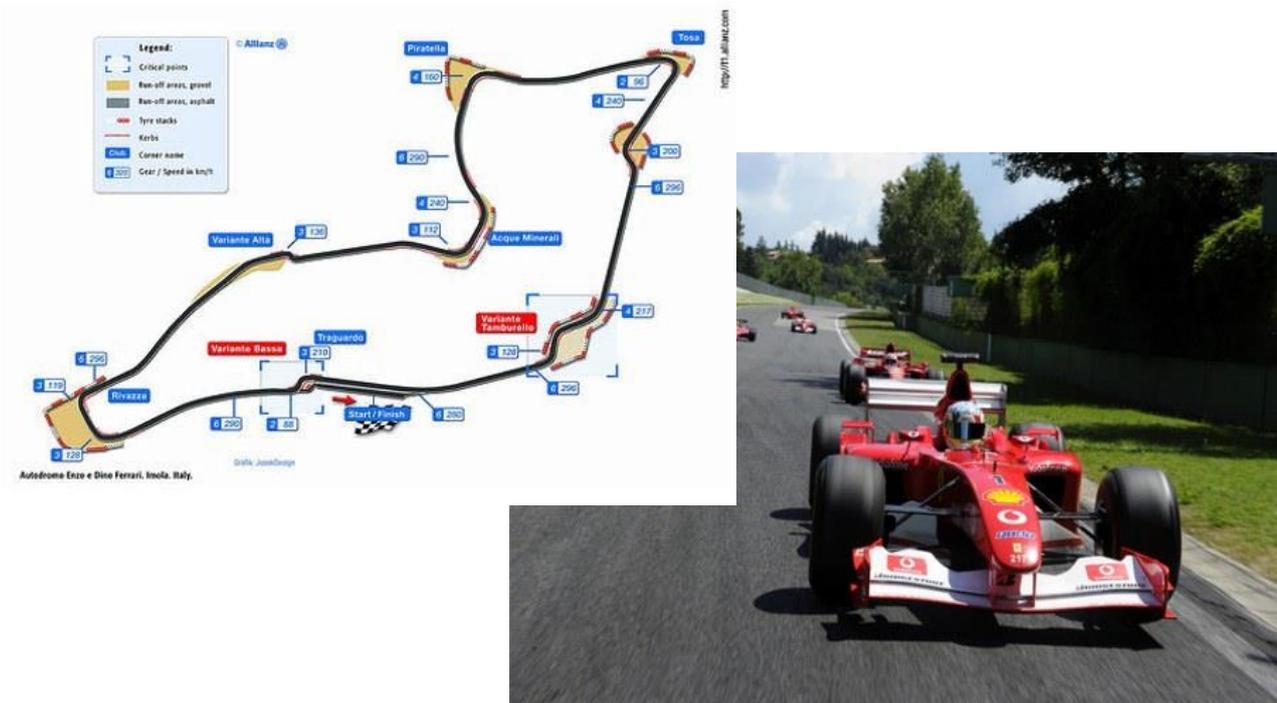
TOZZONI PALACE The ancient Tozzoni building is located in the center of Imola and it was transformed into a palace between 1726 and 1738. The project was designed by Alfonso Torreggiani and Domenico Trifogli in the baroque style. The Tozzoni family inhabited the building for five centuries and since 1981 it has housed a museum. The perfectly preserved rooms are furnished with artistic works among which paintings and some wonderful sculptures by Francis Janssens. The palace's main characteristics are the façade with a huge doorway, the magnificent hall on the first floor which you can enter walking up the spectacular staircase.



” L’ Autodromo” - The Racing track

In our region (Emilia-Romagna) we have a very great passion for motorcycle and car racing. Just consider that famous brands as Ferrari, Maserati and Lamborghini were born and are still based here.

The “Autodromo Internazionale Enzo e Dino Ferrari” is the racing track in Imola, it is 80 kilometres east of the Ferrari factory in Maranello. The circuit is named after Ferrari founder Enzo and his son Dino who died in the 1950s. It was inaugurated in 1953 and it hosted the Formula One Grand Prix of San Marino and the Moto GP. The circuit was first used for motorbike races, then with the addition of chicanes, the circuit was used for quite a few years for the Formula 1 races. Now the circuit is back to motorcycle races, but it is also an important venue for musical events, in fact the rock band “AC/DC” will be in Imola at the racing track on the 9th for its only Italian performance. Every September the track is the location for an enormous exhibition and market (CRAME) of spare parts for old cars and motorcycles.



...SOME FAMOUS PEOPLE FROM IMOLA...



GIULIANO POLETTI

Giuliano Poletti (Imola 19 November 1951) is an Italian politician and he is currently the Minister of Labor and Social Policies. He was appointed on February 22, 2014 by the Prime minister Matteo Renzi. He has always been interested in politics but before being a minister he worked as a company director.

MASSIMO MONTANARI

Massimo Montanari is an Italian historian from Imola. He is currently Professor of Medieval History at Bologna University, and he is one of the leading world experts in Food studies. He has been invited as visiting professor to a number of leading universities in Europe, Japan, the United States, Mexico and Canada.



One of the books written by Montanari

ROSANNA MARANI

Rosanna Marani ([Imola](#), 12 October 1946) is an Italian journalist and television host. She started out in journalism at “La Gazzetta dello Sport” on November 18, 1973, with an exclusive interview to Gianni Rivera, a famous footballer. She has worked in television for over 40 years but now she has retired and she is engaged in volunteer work for the protection of animals.



ANDREA COSTA

Andrea Costa (30 November 1851 – 19 January 1910) was an Italian socialist activist, born in Imola. In 1892 he founded the “Partito dei Lavoratori”, (the party of workers). In his latest years he was an active politician; he was elected as a representative of Imola in the Italian Parliament. He died in 1910.

There are many monuments and streets named after him in different cities in Italy. In Imola there's also a school called “Andrea Costa”.



The dark side of Imola

THE ASYLUM



The Observance asylum was built in 1890, because of the growing need for beds, that the existing Central asylum was not able to handle. At the time Luigi Lolli, founder and director of the existing asylum, decided to build a decentralized structure that consisted of independent pavilions. It had a capacity of about 1000 patients and that covered, with the agricultural colony, an area of approximately 75,000 square meters.

After the death of Lolli in both hospitals a situation of real degradation, which forced the Imola charity congregation to put the two buildings up for sale. The headquarters was purchased by the Province of Bologna in 1897, but the "Osservanza" remained Imola's property. Eventually the situation end up with the coexistence of two independent mental



hospitals in Imola, which housed patients coming from different parts of Italy and suffering from different diseases. In particular, the Osservanza hosted patients who were not coming from the province of Bologna and those with chronic mental disorders. Having to accommodate a growing number of patients, at the beginning of the XX century the hospital enlarged.

But citizens of Imola knew what really happened inside the Asylum. Most of time families forced their mentally ill person to enter the asylum and relieve the family from any kind of worry or trouble (or sometimes to get rid of them). At that time, the therapy they usually got was the electroshock.

The asylum formally was closed on 31st December 1996 as a consequence of a changed law (Basaglia) concerning asylums and new therapies to cure the mentally ill people.

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Source: <http://visitareimola.it/eng/>
<http://blog.impossibleliving.com/2011/02/psychiatric-hospital-osservanza-imola-italy/>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Autodromo_Enzo_e_Dino_Ferrari