

## **Macerata**

Macerata is a charming, old, walled university town built between the 15th and 18th century and enfranchised in 1320. Noteworthy buildings include the Sferisterio theatre, now an open-air opera venue. Macerata is also a lively college city with many bars, cafes and restaurants. Partly built from bricks of the ancient Roman town of Helvica Ricina, which is now reduced to ruins. But Macerata offers more: beautiful churches, the charming Piazza della Liberta and a famous modern museum: Palazzo Ricci.

### **Duomo**

#### *Piazza Strombi*

Construction of the baroque Macerata cathedral started in the 15th century. Some parts, like the façade, are still unfinished. Inside are beautiful sculptures of the enthroned Madonna and 2 triptychs of Maria, the oldest one by Allegretti Nuzi de Frabriano dates back to 1369 and the newer version which is attributed to Gionavanni de Carolis is from the 16th century.

### **Basilica delle Madonna della Misericordia**

#### *Piazza Strombi*

With the pope's consent, Macerata can call itself the city with the smallest basilica: Madonna delle Misericordia. The oval-shaped, beautifully decorated building originates from 1736 and was designed by Luigi Vanvitelli.

### **Piazza delle Liberta and the Torre Civica**

#### *Piazza della Liberta*

The Piazza della Liberta is the heart of the city. The square houses among others the Palazzo dei Priori, the Teatro Rossi and the Loggia dei Mercanti built in renaissance-style. In good weather conditions, the 64 metre Torre Civica gives a splendid view eastwards over the sea and westwards to the majestic Monte Sibellini.

### **Museo Palazzo Ricci**

#### *Via Ricci 1*

Palazzo Ricci houses the best collection of modern Italian art in Le Marche, owned by an artistically-minded bank manager. Especially the paintings are extraordinary and represent all main schools of modern art, such as the surrealism and futurism. There are works of Crucianelli, Carlo Carra, Severini, De Chirico, Morandi and many others.

### **Pinacoteca and Museo Civico**

#### *Via Don Mizoni*

Palazzo Buonacorsi, situated between the Piazza Strombi and the Piazza della Liberta, is the new accommodation of the Pinacoteca and the local museum. It has paintings by Carlo Crivelli and Sassoferrato. As Macerata used to be famous for its couches as well, antique couch lovers can really indulge themselves in the Museo Civico.

### **Sferisterio**

Built between 1819 and 1829 as a sports arena for local games, the *palla di barcciale*, the Sferisterio has grown into Macerata's famous summer opera theatre. With its extraordinary acoustics, the theatre seats 2,800 visitors. For more information on the festival, go to [www.sferisterio.it](http://www.sferisterio.it).

### **Urbs Salvia and Abbazia di Fastra**

Some 15 kilometres south west of Macerata are two sites close to each other along the SS78. Urbs Salvia used to be a flourishing Picene and later on Roman town until it was destroyed by the Gothic King Alarik who also plundered Rome. You can still see how impressive the amphitheatres must have been. Not far from it is the Abbazia di Fiastra. This abbey was built by Cistercian monks in 1142, mainly with bricks from the nearby Urbs Salvia. Underneath the abbey, in its spooky dungeons, an archaeological museum is vested.

## **Restaurants**

- *L'Enoteca*, Contrada Mozzavinci 16-17, Macerata, tel 0733 231897. One of the best restaurants in Le Marche, situated in an old wine cellar, serving local specialties cooked in a modern and creative way. Menu € 44-56. Special wine menu. One star for the chef, Michele Biagiola, by Michelin 2009, and two forks for the very pleasant surrounding. Closed during 10 days in mid-August, Sundays, Mondays and Tuesdays. No lunch. Mastercard, Visa, American Express and Diners accepted.
- *Le Case*, Contrada Mozzavinci 16-17, Macerata, tel 0733 231897. In the same building and with the same owner as L'Enoteca, but slightly less ambitious and cheaper. Regional cuisine with ingredients from local farmers. Menu € 26-35. Closed during 10 days in mid-August, Sundays, Mondays and Tuesdays. Mastercard, Visa, American Express and Diners accepted.

## **Location**

Macerata is located at about 50 kilometres from Sopra e Sotto. On your way to Macerata you cross the sloping land of Le Marche.