



1 THE BEST OF THE BEST – 1.5 Km

Starting from the Ponte Vecchio Garage, you can reach the famous [Ponte Vecchio](#) in just a few minutes, the oldest bridge in the city, built after the terrible flood of 1333. The goldsmith shops that embellish the bridge were once butchers' shops and only after 1565, with the construction of the [Corridoio Vasariano](#), the butchers were forced to give way to the goldsmiths. The passage above the shops was in fact used to connect the public administration building of the new [Grand Duchy \(Uffizi\)](#) with the new palace that Duke Cosimo I de Medici, or rather his wife Eleonora, had acquired as the new family seat: [Palazzo Pitti](#). The corridor still connects the two buildings and takes its name from its builder: the architect [Giorgio Vasari](#).

After crossing the bridge, you can turn right to walk along the Lungarno and in a few minutes you will reach the square of the [Uffizi](#). The huge building, now a world-famous museum, was actually built in 1560 to reorganize the administration of the new grand duchy of Tuscany, given that [Cosimo I de Medici](#) had just brought all the Tuscan cities under his dominion and was about to receive the grand ducal crown from the pope.

From the square of the [Uffizi](#) you can already clearly see the medieval tower of the [palazzo della Signoria](#), later called [palazzo Vecchio](#), seat of the Florentine Republic since the end of the 1200s and still today the seat of the Municipality of Florence, but also a splendid museum. The palace was built by the architect [Arnolfo di Cambio](#) and enlarged over the centuries following, especially at the beginning of the Medici rule, when the square in front of it was also transformed into an open-air museum. Even today you can admire the original statues of the [Perseus by Cellini](#) (1545) and of [Rape of the Sabine women](#) of [Giambologna](#). The [David](#) on the square is instead an ancient copy, while Michelangelo's original can be found in the [Accademia Gallery](#).

At the end of the square, take [via Calzaioli](#) to go towards the religious center of the city: the [piazza del Duomo](#). Beginning around the year 1000 and ending in the mid-fifteenth century, the Florentines raised the three religious buildings that symbolize the city in the square: the [Baptistry of San Giovanni](#) (begun in 1000 and finished at the end of the 13th century), the [Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore](#) (1294 – 1436) and the bell tower designed by [Giotto](#) at the beginning of the fourteenth century.

If you have time, a visit inside the [Battistero](#), with its splendid mosaics and one in the Museum of [Opera del Duomo](#) which preserves the original gilded bronze doors of the Baptistry, two of which absolute masterpiece by [Lorenzo Ghiberti](#), as well as many other masterpieces that once they were inside the religious buildings.