



2 THE PALACES OF POWER AND THE TOMBS OF THE GREATS

– 1,1 Km

Leaving the Ponte Vecchio garage, on the other side of the Arno river, you can glimpse the majestic courtyard of the [Uffizi](#) and more in the background, the tower of the public palace, also known as [palazzo della Signoria](#). If we go behind the political center of Florence, we arrive at [via del Proconsolo](#) and here stands another crenellated tower, that of the [palazzo del Bargello](#), built in 1255 as the headquarters of the Capitano del Popolo and the Podestà, in the sixteenth century the palace became the seat of the [Bargello](#) (chief of police) and prison. At the end of the 19th century, with the unification of Italy, the building was restored and became the first national museum, to house Renaissance sculptures but also a vast collection of [Arti Minori](#) subsequently enriched with substantial donations: ivories, bronzes, medals, fabrics, jewels and furniture from the entire Mediterranean area, including the rich Arab world. Among the sculptures are works by [Michelangelo](#) on the ground and [Donatello](#) on the first floor.

Leaving the [Bargello](#) continue towards the Franciscan basilica of [Santa Croce](#), the so-called Pantheon of Italy thanks to the many tombs of famous Italians gathered here: [Michelangelo](#), [Galileo](#), [Machiavelli](#), [Rossini](#), to name a few.

The church it is in gothic style and was started by [Arnolfo di Cambio](#) in 1294. Inside there are still splendid Gothic frescoes by [Giotto](#) and his school, as well as the Crucifix by [Cimabue](#). Included in the ticket is a visit to the cloisters and other areas of the convent.