

# BOLGONA

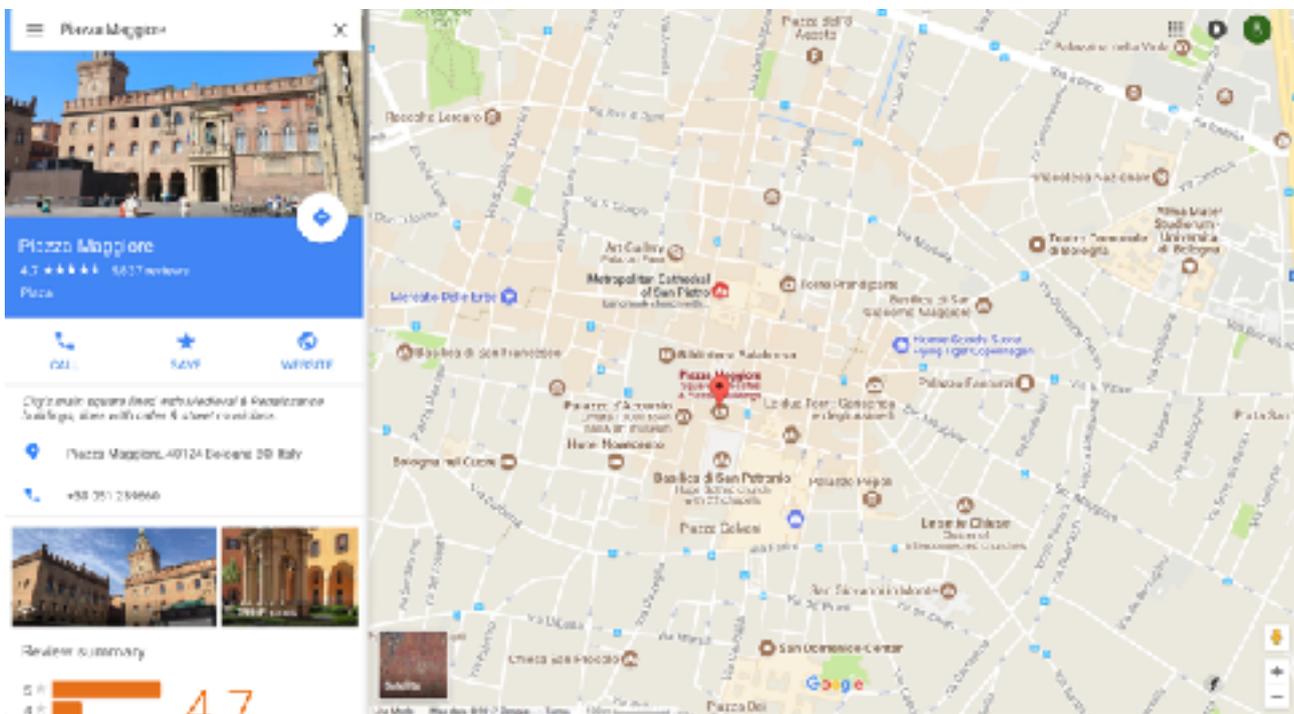
## Notes from the sideline

So these few pages are thoughts from one who has visited Bologna Book Fair for the SCBWI; thoughts on getting around and some of things I loved doing and seeing etc.

As an anchor point for the experience I have used Piazza Maggiore (and not the fair venue because really there is soooo much to do away from the fair)

**<http://tinyurl.com/y93n89ah>**

(this is a great big long url that is centred on Piazza Maggiore).



### Getting there

Well that is simple. You just board the plane and disembark at Marconi Airport (<http://www.bologna-airport.it/en/travellers.aspx?idC=61676&LN=en-US>) .

- First thing was how to get to the fair / hotel from the airport.
  - It's crazy busy at Bologna airport a day before the fair so there are often stacks of folks
  - taxis are quick and simple, although you might have to wait a bit if you are not one of the first in queue.

- Note if you arrive on the weekend the roads in and around the Piazza (centre of town) are restricted or closed to your taxi might drop you 'near' your hotel if it can't get there. Make sure you get clear directions to your accommodation.
- Rail etc is all here at the website for the fair <http://www.bookfair.bolognafiere.it/en/visit/get-directions/2499.html>

### **Accommodation**

- The fair is located a distance away from the centre of town so it is best if you want to do more than just attend the fair (this is Bologna after all you so you will definitely want to) look for accommodation in and around the city centre which is *Piazza Maggiore*. (see map above).

### **Money**

- Credit debit cards everywhere and grab Euros before leaving home.

### **Drinking coffee**

It's everywhere (walk up Via del Indepenza and there are plenty - but also in small side streets) and you drink it sitting at a table and dining on pastries or cheeses.

Or more commonly you drink coffee standing (sometimes at high tables) and very very quickly - and not those great big no-flavour adulterated coffees ... its *un caffe*; *caffe latte*; or *cappuccino* (and this one ONLY in the morning); *macchiato*. Don't ask for those weird things to be added to your coffee ... its coffee its coffee its coffee. And standing and drinking coffee is often cheaper than sitting supping and lingering and ...

### **Piazza Maggiore**

- where all the action is at the centre of town. It is closed on the weekends to cars and transport and allows foot traffic - and it is wonderful. Walk and walk and walk around the centre.
- You can't miss the Fountain Of Neptune - and look for the lights if you are there at night.
- On weekends when streets nearby are closed this is filled with activity ... often musicians and buskers - we have seen a grand piano rolled up and then be played for what seemed like hours live bands and soloists ... it is brilliant.
- Sit in a coffee shop opposite the Basilica on the edge of the Piazza, sip coffee, feast on a pastry and just watch. It is a wonderful place to observe the happenings.

### **SO FOOD and Eating** in Bologna

This is a MUST. There are so many good restaurants.

Try the ragu.

Buy gelato

There are ristoranti, pizzerias, osterias, trattorias. And — walk any of the side streets off the Piazza and FRESH FOOD is there ... displayed in the windows, and on shelves outside the store.

So many wonderful cheeses *Parmigiano-Reggiano* (it's from this area) and Balsamic Vinegar and Prosciutto. And then there is the gelato,

If you see it ... just grab it. That's what we did. Yes there might be a little over indulging but it is well worth it. The local pre-cooked pasta is also brilliant ... it goes wonderfully well with the Sunday evening meal here at home and I can't wait to stock up some more!

All over the city of Bologna are absolutely fantasmagorical eating establishments. Here are a few where we have dined:

- La Trattoria Pizzeria la Mela, <http://www.trattorialamela.it>
- Buca Manzoni <https://www.bucamanzoni.it>
- Ristorante Teresina
- Bar Guiseppe (piazza maggoria)
- Cafe Zamboni
- Ristorante Pizzeria Mangiassieme
- LA PROSCUITERRIA
- Gelarterriagia un mondo

### Things to see & do:

- **Twin towers**
  - try for the photos from various positions
  - Walk the steps to the top of the tower ... there are 498 steps. It costs €3 but is well worth it for the view. Its narrow and steep so take care.
  - The **Asinelli tower** is the tallest leaning tower in Italy ... not Pisa!!! That's just a bit of trivia.
  - Don't miss strolling around this area as well. The Sie streets are full of wonderful porticos ad decorations.
- Get out early in the morning and stroll and watch the side **street stalls** being set up. Grab an espresso,
- Don't miss **Piazza Santo Stefano**
- **Open canals** - many are covered but make your way to Via Piella (<http://tinyurl.com/y7eswavl>) and have sticky around. amazing.
- MUST see: **Biblioteca Salaborsa** - bologna's Central Public Library ... there is a glass floor in parts and you can see ancient foundations. <http://www.bibliotecasalaborsa.it/home.php> (its in Italian!)
- There are retail shops but that is not the reason that you are in Bologna!
- A little further out is the **Modern Art Museum of Bologna MAMbo** <http://www.mambo-bologna.org/en/>

## Churches

- Basilica of San Petronio:
  - located in the square this church has had hoardings around it during restoraton but now it is hoarding free. It is wonderful. It is free entry so dont miss seeing it
- *Cattedrale Matropolitana di San Pietro*.
  - This is the Main cathedral for bologna ... don't miss it.
- Others:
  - just wander around the main square - there are numerous churches tucked away on the side streets and they are amazing to view. Many seem to be open lots of the time and you are able to wander in and observe. There are services often running at different times of the day.

## Walking around Bologna

Do it! There are lots of streets and alley ways ... take them and see what you can find. Just keep track of the Piazza and from many places you can see the Twin Towers Bologna.

Cobblestone Streets around the piazza so take care with your wheeled bags so take care dragging them. There are wide paved footpaths leading to the piazza as well but you will be crossing some cobblestones.

Take the sidestreets ... wander!

### See **websites:**

Bologna Uncovered <https://bolognauncovered.com>

Bologna welcome <http://www.bolognawelcome.com/en/>

- check out <http://www.bolognawelcome.com/en/home/card/whats-included-euros-30>

## Getting to the fair

Once the fair begins on Monday morning the most convenient (ie: quickest) way of getting to the fair is to catch a taxi - especially on the first day when you might be lugging lots of bits and pieces around. Many hotels have a taxi pickup service at the front door and will ring for a taxi for you.

There is also a free shuttle bus. This also operates throughout the day and afterwards too. This is most definitely the best way of returning to the Piazza or places along the route as taxis can take a while to arrive at the fair venue and there are often long long queues - especially if you are leaving the fair at closing time. You can collect bus schedules at registration or when collecting your guides etc. As soon as I dig out the old Isiting I will add this here.

If you are taxiing around try and share a taxi with other attendees ... you get to know the industry folk and it is cheaper splitting the fare. And if you are stuck by yourself with no Italian except *piccolo* and *bambini*, just say Book Fair - all taxis should get you there.

There are also public busses as well.

Further details are here:

<http://www.bookfair.bolognafiere.it/en/visit/get-directions/2499.html>

## At the fair

The advantage of attending the fair in a SCBWI year is that you are NEVER alone. We are a home away from home, although we are NOT a minding service for your bits and pieces. BUT we are a welcome sight - so we have been told.

Immerse yourself in the fair. There are 5 halls. Plan out what you want to see and which booths when you get your guide book.

Food is scattered around the different halls.

Bring well-padded walking shoes - there is carpet laid at the fair but it is thin.

Some of the activities that you must see:

- The various cafes. All of these have events scheduled throughout each day of the fair.
  - Illustrators Cafe,
  - Authors Cafe
  - Translators Cafe
  - Digital Cafe
- New this year (2017) was the Illustrators Survival Corner in hall 26. This is the place for new and less experienced illustrators and includes sessions on setting up portfolios, working with publishers and much more. The SCBWI is hoping to have input here as well. If you haven't been to the air you must see this.
- There is always a Guest of Honour country. In 2016 it was Germany and in 2018 it is China. They have an expansive presentation.
- Do see the Illustrators Exhibition from illustrators around the world.

- You cant miss the graffiti wall - illustrators (generally) plaster the wall with their business cards and more ... some of them quite ingeniously too. Add yours too ... and on that point make sure you arrive at the fair with business cards and postcards ... don't make them too cumbersome. Simply use the principal that you do when preparing for the portfolio showcases at our two big conferences in Los Angeles and New York.
- Try and get to the awards presentations.
- You might want to consider attending the pre fair DIGITAL CONFERENCE.
- Illustrators
  - A number of booths also have walk-in consultations - there are sign-on sheets at these booths or they advertise a time when they will see folk for consultations. Members have gathered wok from this.
  - Carry your portfolio to show.
- There are 6 halls;
  - 4 international
  - one for digital (last year there was even testing of new digital software available!!)
  - one for licensing.
- If you are into Digital then you might want to try and see the PreBologna MasterCalss ... *The 5th Annual Dust or Magic Masterclass – held in conjunction with the [Bologna Children's Bookfair](#) – will be held Sunday afternoon, March 25, 2018 in the headquarters of the [Bologna Children's Bookfair](#), in Bologna Italy. The international gathering brings leading digital experts together for demos and deep conversation about trends and design issues affecting children's publishing. See: <http://dustormagic.com/masterclass/>*

*... there is more to add about the fair and Bologna after fair hours and over the next week or so I will add this so you might want to check back.*