**Florence**

Florence was founded as a Roman military colony about the 1st century BCE, and during its long history it has been a republic, a seat of the duchy of Tuscany, and a capital (1865–70) of Italy. During the 14th–16th century Florence achieved preeminence in [commerce](https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/commerce) and finance, learning, and especially the arts.

The present glory of Florence is mainly its past. Indeed, its historic centre was inscribed on [UNESCO](https://www.britannica.com/topic/UNESCO)’s [World Heritage List](https://www.britannica.com/topic/World-Heritage-site) in 1982. The buildings there are works of art abounding in yet more works of art, and the splendours of the city are stamped with the personalities of the individuals who made them. The geniuses of Florence were backed by persons of towering wealth, and the city to this day gives testimony to their passions for religion, for art, for power, or for money. Among the most famous of the city’s cultural giants are [Leonardo da Vinci](https://www.britannica.com/biography/Leonardo-da-Vinci), [Michelangelo](https://www.britannica.com/biography/Michelangelo), [Dante](https://www.britannica.com/biography/Dante-Alighieri), [Machiavelli](https://www.britannica.com/biography/Niccolo-Machiavelli), [Galileo](https://www.britannica.com/biography/Galileo-Galilei), and its most-renowned rulers, generations of the [Medici family](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Medici-family).

Scholars still marvel that this small city of moneylenders and cloth makers without much political or military power rose to a position of enormous influence in Italy, [Europe](https://www.britannica.com/place/Europe), and beyond. The Florentine [vernacular](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/vernacular) became the [Italian language](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Italian-language), and the local coin, the florin, became a world [monetary](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/monetary) standard. Florentine artists formulated the laws of [perspective](https://www.britannica.com/art/perspective-art); Florentine people of letters, painters, architects, and craftspeople began the period known as the [Renaissance](https://www.britannica.com/event/Renaissance); and a Florentine navigator, [Amerigo Vespucci](https://www.britannica.com/biography/Amerigo-Vespucci), gave his name to two continents.

The city has remained an important cultural, economic, political, and artistic force into the modern era, setting trends in political administration (especially under Mayor Giorgio La Pira in the 1950s and early ’60s) and even cultural [innovation](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/innovation) (as in its influential Modernist train station designed under Giovanni Michelucci, its [football](https://www.britannica.com/sports/football-soccer) [soccer] stadium by [Pier Luigi Nervi](https://www.britannica.com/biography/Pier-Luigi-Nervi), and the Archizoom radical design movement active during the 1960s and ’70s). The region around the city has a modern and [dynamic](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/dynamic) economy based on small industrial production. The city itself is far more dependent on [tourism](https://www.britannica.com/topic/tourism), though it also has developed newer sectors such as information technology. Florence’s key role as a market centre is reinforced by its location at the nexus of transport lines connecting northern and southern Italy. Area 40 square miles (104 square km). Pop. (2006 est.) 366,901.

**The Main Florence Facts**

* Florence was once the capital of the Kingdom of Italy. ...
* Florence was the birthplace of the Italian Renaissance. ...
* More than 15 million visitors explore Florence each year. ...
* The Ponte Vecchio bridge is a famous landmark of Florence. ...
* Hitler prevented the destruction of the Ponte Vecchio in World War II.

   
Florence is the Birthplace of the Piano, Invented by Bartolomeo Cristofori in the 18th Century.

 Gucci was founded in 1921 by Guccio Gucci in Florence.

 Florence was the first city in Europe to have paved streets in 1339.

 Florence is the Birthplace of Leonardo Da Vinci, who was born in the lower valley of the Arno River on the 15th of April 1452.

 Florence is the Capital City of the Region of Tuscany.

 Between 1865 and 1870, Florence was the Capital city of the United Kingdom of Italy.

 The World’s most famous nurse, Florence Nightingale was born in Florence on the 12th of May 1820.

 In the late 16th Century, Opera was Invented in Florence.

 The people of Florence spoken Fiorentino, which was the Tuscan dialect and now the parent language of modern Italian.

 The Legions of Giulio Ceasar founded the village in 59BC and named it Florentia, Now known as Florence.

 The oldest church in Florence is the Basilica di San Lorenzo and burial place of the Medici Family.

 Almost a third of the world’s art treasures reside in Florence, according to UNESCO,

 The Salvatore Ferragamo Shoe Museum has thousands of pair of shoes on display, one of the oddest Museum.

 “Il Duomo” of Florence took approximately 140 years to build.

 8. Between the 13th and 18th centuries, lions were kept in a den in front of the Duomo for the amusement of the citizens and became the symbol of independence for Florence.

 The Ponte Vecchio is the only bridge in Florence that survived World War II. Hitler stated that it’s too beautiful to destroy.

 The Duomo in Florence is the 3rd largest in the world, only beaten by St.Peter’s Basilica in Rome and St. Paul’s in London.

 The Medici family was once the richest family of Florence, they ruled the city for around 350 years, making their fortune themselves as bankers, businessmen, and art dealers as well as gaining political power.

 The Grand Duchy of Tuscany was the first state to abolish capital punishment in November 1786.

 Florence has had two floods; one on November 4, 1333, and November 4, 1966.