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Forbes

Emilia-Romagna: Balancing Innovation & Identity

Located in northern Italy between the Apennines & the Adriatic, the region of Emilia-Romagna moves forward without haste. Its strengths—craftsmanship, culture, food & industry—are not being reinvented but steadily refined. From high-speed rail links & AI research centers to plastic-free beaches & working farms, the region continues to balance progress with continuity.



Emilia-Romagna President, Michele de Pascale: Leading with Vision



Fontana del Nettuno, Bologna. Ph. Aldo Dallari

How is Emilia-Romagna strengthening its innovation ecosystem?

Emilia-Romagna is Italy's industrial diamond, renowned for its excellence in automotive, mechatronics, ceramics and agri-food. Our strength lies in transforming raw materials into globally competitive products. In recent years, we've paired this with major investments in digital infrastructure. Today, we are the Italian capital of supercomputing, home to Bologna's Tecnopolo and the Leonardo HPC—one of Europe's most powerful systems. Artificial intelligence and big data now drive innovation across all sectors. While this digital transition is a success story, the green transition must be guided by smarter EU policies and strong public investment—so it supports growth instead of creating barriers.

What role does infrastructure play in sustainability & competitiveness?

Emilia-Romagna sits at the heart of Italy's mobility grid. As the country's only horizontal region, it connects north and south—and serves as a critical corridor



"The strength of our region is our people—skilled, determined & united by purpose."

MICHELE DE PASCALE

President, Emilia-Romagna Region

for people and goods. Our transformation is visible in major investments: Ravenna's expanded port system, Bologna's central high-speed rail hub, and the city-wide redesign of Bologna's mobility through tram and airport connectivity. These aren't standalone projects—they're part of a unified ecosystem that strengthens logistics, supports business and reduces

environmental impact. In a region that exports more per capita than any other in Italy, sustainable, efficient infrastructure is key to maintaining global competitiveness and fostering responsible tourism.

How are you managing the challenges of the green transition?

We fully support the shift to renewable energy and sustainability, but we face structural limits. Unlike southern Italy, we don't benefit from high solar or wind yields. Still, we're pushing forward—investing in offshore wind, inland renewables and energy security, including major legislation for "suitable areas" for clean energy development. Yet, we must protect excellence. Take our ceramics industry: it has one of the world's lowest emissions per square meter, but EU carbon regulations risk penalizing this leadership. If production shifts abroad to less-regulated regions, global emissions rise. We believe in pushing sustainability to its limits—but always with fairness, strategy and industrial viability.

What long-term legacy do you envision for the region?

Our legacy is a unique balance of economic strength and social justice. Emilia-Romagna is admired not only for its manufacturing, but for its universal public services—healthcare, housing, welfare—offered regardless of income or status. People come from across Italy to be treated here because we don't ask for credit cards, just health cards. This commitment to equity, combined with our global exports and labor ethic, is what transformed us from a poor postwar region into one of Italy's most prosperous. In this new era of AI, digitalization and green transition, we will continue to lead—but always by holding these two values together: innovation and inclusion. ●



Rimini to host Routes Europe 2026



HOSTS OF ROUTES EUROPE 2026
Rimini, Italy | 18 – 20 May 2026

routesonline.com

AVIATION WEEK
NETWORK



Byzantine brilliance in Ravenna

From Motor Valley to Michelin Stars: Emilia-Romagna’s New Tourism Playbook

While many of Europe’s top destinations are working to restore their pre-pandemic travel momentum, Italy’s Emilia-Romagna is executing a more nuanced and inspiring strategy—one that looks beyond short-term gains and aims instead to architect a future-ready tourism ecosystem. With a blend of ancient cities and AI tools, culinary excellence and cloud computing, the region is re-writing the playbook for sustainable, resilient and experience-rich tourism. In 2024, Emilia-Romagna recorded over 14.5 million tourist arrivals and a record-breaking 61.8 million overnight stays. International tourism surged, especially from DACH countries. Germany alone saw over 10% growth, helping the region move toward its ambitious 2030 goal of attracting four million German visitors annually and raising foreign market share to 35%. “We never aimed to simply go back to how things were,” says Roberta Frisoni,

Regional Councillor for Tourism, Trade & Sport. “We saw an opportunity to redefine our identity. Emilia-Romagna today is a destination of depth, culture and connection. Our mission is not just to grow,

but to grow with intention.” That intention is evident in the region’s data-driven strategy. At its core lies a tourism observatory powered by Google Cloud, one of Europe’s most advanced. It tracks real-time analytics on visitor flows, airline capacity, digital sentiment and pricing trends, enabling not only reactive decisions, but proactive and predictive ones. This allows regional authorities to anticipate shifts in demand and allocate resources with striking efficiency. Yet Emilia-Romagna’s evolution is anything but clinical. Digital innovation is matched by cultural warmth. The region’s iconic foods—Parmigiano Reggiano, Prosciutto di Parma, traditional balsamic vinegar and handmade pastas—are now part of an immersive experience economy. Tourists can take cooking classes in Bologna, visit Modena’s traditional aceto balsamico makers, or follow curated food trails through medieval hill towns dotted with trattorias and artisans. This authenticity permeates the region. In Rimini, a major regeneration of the historic Riviera beachfront has transformed it into a model of sustainability, with plastic-free beaches, green landscaping and walkable design. Meanwhile, enhanced cross-border train services from Switzerland, Germany and Austria are positioning rail as a luxurious, low-impact



Ducati legacy on display



Crafted by hand, perfected by tradition



Cyclists cruise through storied streets

travel option that enhances the visitor journey while reducing carbon footprints. Connectivity—physical and digital—remains a cornerstone. Airports in Bologna, Parma, Forlì and Rimini are being upgraded to improve flight connections and passenger experience. Emilia-Romagna’s airport network offers access across the entire region—from coastal resorts to cultural centers. Ongoing infrastructure upgrades support the goal of welcoming an increasingly global and diverse visitor base. This improved access comes at a pivotal moment, as Emilia-Romagna rises as a MICE destination. In 2026, it will host Routes Eu-

rope in Rimini, bringing over 1,200 aviation professionals and 100 airlines. For a region that sees air connectivity as a tool for development, this event is a catalyst. Past hosts report lasting gains in connectivity—Emilia-Romagna expects no less and is preparing to fully leverage the event’s momentum. Sports tourism is another key growth engine. The 2024 return of the Formula 1 Emilia-Romagna Grand Prix drew over 200,000 spectators to Imola. The Misano World Circuit continues to deliver some of MotoGP’s most exciting weekends. Meanwhile, cycling and triathlon events attract athletes and fans from around the

globe, cementing the region’s reputation for adrenaline-filled experiences and year-round sports appeal. Following the Tour de France stages and the Italian Bike Festival, Emilia-Romagna will host Velo-city in Rimini in 2026. What truly sets the region apart is how its institutions and industries work together. Regional agencies, municipalities, cultural groups and private companies collaborate through flexible partnerships that appeal to both investors and entrepreneurs. The Data Valley initiative is a prime example—uniting universities, supercomputing centers, government bodies and private firms to drive innovation in AI, big data and sustainable development. It’s not just cooperation—it’s ecosystem engineering, fine-tuned to long-term progress. The results are compelling. Tourism contributes about 8% to regional GDP, with a goal to double that to 16% by 2030. Growth is not driven by volume, but by thematic diversity: food and wine, wellness, culture, nature, sports—even industrial tourism through Motor Valley, which showcases Emilia-Romagna’s world-class automotive cluster including Ferrari, Lamborghini, Ducati and Maserati. But heritage and horsepower are only part of the story. Emilia-Romagna is emerging as a contemporary creative hub. Cities like Bologna, Modena and Parma are buzzing with innovation in design, music, film and digital arts. Events like Under the Stars of Cinema, Motor Valley Fest and Verdi Festival, and others are reshaping the region’s cultural identity. With strong support from local institutions, creative clusters and university incubators are thriving—fostering start-ups, immersive exhibitions and new storytelling formats that blend tradition with innovation. In blending tradition with innovation, Emilia-Romagna is positioning itself as a forward-looking region with a clear tourism strategy. Its true strength lies in the example it sets: that economic development can align with cultural preservation, that growth can be intentional, and that sustainability can be integrated without compromising quality. ●



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Motor Valley's Andrea Pontremoli: Driven by a Shared Passion

What defines Motor Valley's unique industrial ecosystem?

Motor Valley is far more than Ferrari, Lamborghini, Ducati or Dallara. It's an incredibly dense and interconnected industrial district with over 16,000 companies—ranging from highly specialized 10-person operations to world-class manufacturers. Each one leads globally in its own niche: exhaust systems, cabling, titanium components and more. The secret lies in our cooperative spirit. We are not an ego-system with one dominant player and dependent suppliers; we are an ecosystem where firms collaborate freely, without rigid hierarchies, creating a decentralized and resilient industrial model. This culture of mutual excellence gives us a competitive edge on the global stage.

How is education shaping the future of Motor Valley?

To secure long-term leadership, we helped establish MUNER—Motorvehicle University of Emilia-Romagna—together with four major universities and ten flagship companies. We designed nine advanced en-



"Tourism lets people experience our traditions—from racetracks to castles, from engines to cuisine."

ANDREA PONTREMOLI

President of Motor Valley Development

gineering programs in fields such as electric vehicles, autonomous systems and race car design. Students don't just study theory—they use real industry tools: Formula One simulators, wind tunnels and engine test benches. Industry engineers teach specific courses like tire dynamics or carbon fiber materials. This fusion of academia and re-

al-world expertise ensures students graduate with deep, applied knowledge. In Motor Valley, companies don't just compete for the best engineers—they help shape them.

What role do startups & innovation play in the ecosystem?

Startups are a vital part of our strategy for continuous innovation. The Motor Valley Accelerator, based in Modena, finances and nurtures early-stage ventures while helping them integrate into the broader ecosystem. These startups are a source of fresh thinking, especially in areas like mobility, materials and digitalization. Larger firms benefit by absorbing new technologies, while students and researchers bring energy and curiosity. Alongside this, we're heavily investing in professional training—preparing mechanics, laminators and 3D printing experts—to keep innovation thriving at every level of the value chain.

How do tourism & tradition intersect with technology?

Tourism is a powerful storytelling tool for us. All major companies here offer immersive visitor experiences—from museums and factory tours to on-track test drives. The Motor Valley Fest brings it all together: three vibrant days of speed, history, innovation and craftsmanship. Visitors don't just see technology; they feel it in motion. Beyond cars, the experience includes food, landscapes and culture—because what we build and how we live are intimately connected. A stay in a medieval village restored by locals, a wine tasting after a factory visit—this is how we invite the world to understand us: through emotion, excellence and shared passion. We believe that experiencing our region—from race-tracks to rolling hills—is the best way to truly understand the values behind our products, our people and our future. ●

Autodromo di Modena_Ph. Motor Valley Development



Modena Cento Ore blends speed with style.

Taste, Tradition & Transformation: A Conversation with Roberta Frisoni

Why is Emilia-Romagna called Italy’s “Food Valley”?

Emilia-Romagna, located in Northern Italy between Lombardy and Tuscany, is world-famous for its outstanding culinary heritage. Nicknamed the “Food Valley,” it boasts the highest number of PDO and PGI products in Europe—44 in total. Iconic examples include Parmigiano Reggiano cheese, Prosciutto di Parma, Traditional Balsamic Vinegar, Mortadella Bologna and sparkling Lambrusco wine. Travelers can explore this gastronomic paradise along the ancient Roman road Via Emilia, which connects Piacenza with Rimini. Food lovers can dive deeper at 27 dedicated food museums or learn to make handmade pasta at Casa Artusi in Forlimpopoli, a tribute to author and gastronome Pellegrino Artusi.

How has the region’s Adriatic Coast been transformed in recent years?

The traditional hospitality of the Emilia-Romagna coast remains unchanged, but the surroundings have been won-



“With investments in hotels, transport & major events, we are strengthening our position as a top-tier destination for both leisure & business travelers.”

ROBERTA FRISONI

Regional Councillor for Tourism, Trade & Sport

derfully reimagined. All coastal destinations are advancing major waterfront regeneration projects, with over €350 million invested in total. Green spaces, wooden promenades, cycle paths, open-

air gyms and inclusive playgrounds have replaced asphalt, improving beach access for everyone.

What can cycling enthusiasts look forward to?

With over 9,000 km of bike routes, Emilia-Romagna is a dream for cyclists of all levels. Scenic paths like the 460-km Via Romagna pass through charming villages and historic towns, while the Ciclovia del Sole offers 50 km of relaxed riding through Modena’s countryside to Bologna. For food lovers, the 70-km Food Valley Bike trail winds through Parma’s rich culinary landscape. The region boasts over 100 bike hotels and 200 bike-friendly accommodations. After hosting three Tour de France stages in 2024, Emilia-Romagna will welcome the Giro d’Italia and the Italian Bike Festival in 2025—and in 2026, Rimini will host Velo-city, a global cycling summit.

How can tourists reach Emilia-Romagna easily & what’s new in 2025?

Emilia-Romagna is closer than ever! Flights connect the main European cities with the airports of Bologna, Rimini, Forlì and Parma. The region can also be easily reached by train. 2025 is full of events: Formula One in Imola in May, Moto GP in Misano and Ironman in Cervia both in September, and the Davis Cup in November. Don’t miss the Notte Rosa (Pink Night) on June 20–22, celebrating summer with concerts and parties along the coast. For culture lovers, Ferrara will mark 30 years as a UNESCO World Heritage Site with exhibitions, historical banquets and Renaissance-themed events from May to December. Not to be missed is the next edition of Routes Europe, the airline industry’s most important networking event, which will be held May 18-20, 2026 in Rimini. ●



Where the city meets the sea – Rimini’s Parco del Mare

2026 Rimini
16-19 JUNE 2026

velo-city-conference.com



Parco del Mare, Rimini_ Ph. Davide Piras



Councillor Allegni: Promoting Biodiversity, Culture & Inclusion

How is the region preserving its cultural legacy while fostering innovation?

Emilia-Romagna celebrates its rich cultural heritage through over 150 festivals and more than 200 venues, including 117 historic theatres. Events like the Ravenna Festival and the Verdi Festival 2025 blend tradition with fresh creative visions from both renowned and emerging artists. Special attention is given to youth through programs like the Toscanini Conducting Competition and the Verdian Academy. We support modern expression too—such as the LOST electronic music festival held in the iconic Labirinto della Masone. Our goal is to keep culture alive, accessible and evolving, not just preserved. The region is also home to major UNESCO sites and unique institutions like the International Museum of Ceramics in Faenza.

What are the region's priorities in conserving forests & biodiversity?

Emilia-Romagna is home to 2,700 plant species and over 350 vertebrates, stretching from the Adriatic coast to the Apennine ridges. Sixteen percent of the territory is protected, with 14 regional parks, 15 nature reserves, 167 Natura 2000 sites and three UNESCO Biosphere Reserves. Sites like the ancient beech forests of Sasso Fratino and the wetlands of Comacchio are crucial to both European and global ecosystems, supporting rare species and vital migration routes. We're working to expand protected areas to meet EU biodiversity targets—30% protected land, 10% strictly protected—and to create a Regional Ecological Network that connects habitats across the territory, enhancing ecosystem resilience and preserving natural heritage for future generations.

How is Emilia-Romagna integrating nature into urban spaces?

We're shifting urban planning toward



Salina di Comacchio (FE). Ph. Francesco Cavallari

Po Delta's pink residents in perfect harmony



"Green & blue infrastructures are reshaping our cities into healthier, more resilient places to live."

GESSICA ALLENI

Regional Councillor for Culture, Parks & Forestry
Biodiversity Protection & Equal Opportunities

sustainability by treating green areas as essential infrastructure and prioritizing ecological design. Our cities are becoming "sponge cities" and "oasis cities," with rain gardens, urban forests, permeable parking lots, and shaded boulevards to

combat heat, flooding and air pollution. These green and blue infrastructures provide vital ecosystem services, enhance climate resilience and improve overall quality of life. Through the EU-funded 2021–2027 Regional Development Plan, we're funding 20 projects to build this vision across urban and peri-urban areas, setting a model for future cities.

What initiatives are being taken to promote gender equality & social inclusion?

True inclusion requires action across workplaces, schools and communities. We support women's access to work, fund anti-discrimination and anti-violence initiatives, and promote gender education for teachers. Our anti-violence system includes 23 shelters, 56 safe houses and 15 centers for men who have committed violence. We also fund emergency housing and the "Freedom Income" to support women leaving abusive situations. Cultural accessibility is also key—for example, "Theatre No Limits" in Cattolica, Italy's only venue to offer audio description for its entire season, enabling inclusive live performances. ●

Colla's Recipe for Growth: Building Europe's Data Valley

What makes Emilia-Romagna's economic model so successful?

The region's strength comes from a deep-rooted culture of collaboration, shared responsibility and long-term vision. High-quality relationships—between academia, institutions, industry and civil society—are the backbone of our success and the true competitive advantage. These connections allow us to design and implement strategies collectively, not in isolation or conflict. The Pact for Work and Climate is a concrete example: it aligns public and private actors behind a shared vision of sustainable, inclusive growth that benefits everyone. Add to this our pride in doing things well, our focus on excellence and a strong work ethic, and you get a region capable of competing globally with top-tier, high-quality, niche products that reflect both tradition and innovation.

How are you promoting innovation & digital transformation?

We've created one of Europe's most advanced innovation ecosystems, built on collaboration between regional institutions, universities, research centers and business networks. The High Technology Network includes 12 technology hubs and research labs, with DAMA (Data Manifattura)—a key node in our Data Valley—at the center. DAMA hosts world-leading supercomputers and AI infrastructure, offering cutting-edge capabilities to both public and private sectors. We invest heavily in training, with programs for youth, workers and researchers. Importantly, we passed Italy's first law to attract and retain talent, making the region a magnet for expertise.

What are your priorities for the green transition?

Our energy strategy is moving toward decentralized production and consumption. We were the first Italian region to



"With supercomputing, AI & world-class research hubs, Emilia-Romagna is Europe's Data Valley."

VINCENZO COLLA

Vice President & Regional Councillor for Economic Development & Green Economy

pass legislation for energy communities, and we are funding business-led projects in renewable energy and efficiency. We support wind (including a major offshore project in Ravenna), biomethane, solar hydrogen and CO₂ capture. At the same time,

we're building circular economy models focused on recycling and reuse, especially in sectors like packaging, agroindustry and construction. All of this is backed by research, because innovation is essential for a sustainable future.

How are you strengthening ties with the DACH region?

Our relations with Germany, Austria and Switzerland are long-standing, strategic, and rooted in mutual trust. We collaborate on Horizon Europe projects, academic exchange and industrial partnerships—especially in sectors like automotive, robotics and advanced manufacturing. Many DACH-based multinationals have chosen Emilia-Romagna for key investments, drawn by our skilled workforce, innovation ecosystem and strong infrastructure. Looking ahead, we see great potential in the development of TEN-T corridors to connect our regions, and we want to work together on green logistics and shared decarbonization efforts. These ties are not only economic but also cultural, scientific and deeply human—built to last. ●



Data Valley powering Europe's digital transformation

Photo by Elite Reports, i-Stock

PDO AND PGI PRODUCTS

from

EMILIA ROMAGNA'S FOOD VALLEY



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enjoyed worldwide!

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Alessio Mammi: Leading with Innovation & Sustainability

How does Emilia-Romagna balance tradition & innovation in agri-food production?

Our region employs over 70,000 people in agriculture and hundreds of thousands in the agri-food sector. With 44 PDO and PGI products, Emilia-Romagna's Food Valley generates €3.6 billion out of €8.5 billion at the national level. Our total agri-food value is €34 billion, with nearly €10 billion exported. Geographical Indications are key to maintaining social and economic activity in rural areas. Food here is not just nutrition—it's culture, history and research. We work closely with producers and consortia to protect traditional know-how while encouraging excellence in products like Parmigiano Reggiano, balsamic vinegar, wines and cured meats.

How is the region fighting counterfeiting & protecting its PDO & PGI products?

The new EU regulation on Geographical Indications strengthens protection, sustainability and transparency for consumers, offering stronger legal tools and clearer labeling. We believe the best defense is strong promotion: taking our products abroad, letting people taste and understand their quality and authenticity. We've invested over €30 million in national and international promotional activities to support producers and consortia. In 2024 alone, Emilia-Romagna exported €725 million in agri-food products to the U.S. We will return to the Summer Fancy Food Show in New York in 2025 and participate in Expo 2025 in Japan to expand commercial relations, boost recognition and open new global markets.

What role does technology play in the future of agriculture in the region?

Technology is vital to help agriculture face climate change, which has caused floods, droughts, frosts and crop diseases. Through our new Rural Development



Aged to perfection - Parmigiano Reggiano



"The best way to protect our products is to bring them to the world & let people taste their excellence."

ALESSIO MAMMI

Regional Councillor for Agriculture
Agri-food, Hunting & Fishing

Plan, we're investing nearly €1 billion over five years, including 5% in research and innovation. This supports collaboration between research centers and businesses to develop mechanical and digital solutions for resilient farming.

Long-term investments include a climate forecasting center linked to the Leonardo supercomputer and the UN's Mediterranean university hub in Bologna, both crucial for studying climate impacts. But national policies must also align to support these efforts.

How is Emilia-Romagna promoting sustainable practices in agriculture?

We're allocating 42% of our Rural Development resources—€429 million—for agro-environmental measures. These include low-impact farming techniques, organic agriculture and efforts to preserve biodiversity and landscapes. We're also investing over €560 million to modernize our water systems—storing water when available, to use during droughts. Ongoing projects focus on flood prevention, mountain slope protection and irrigation infrastructure, all designed to make our agri-system more resilient. Sustainability means protecting not only the environment but also farmers' incomes and the long-term wellbeing of our communities. ●

FACES OF CHANGE

The Leaders Making a Difference in Emilia-Romagna



MASSIMO MEZZETTI
Mayor, Modena

How is Modena focusing on German-speaking tourists in its 2025 strategy?

In 2024, visitors from German-speaking countries made up a remarkable 23% of Modena's total foreign arrivals—more than double the next market, France. Recognizing this, the city is doubling down on outreach to Germany, Austria and Switzerland for 2025. Modena's appeal lies in its rich blend of gastronomy, culture and heritage. With multiple Michelin-starred chefs, deep-rooted wine traditions and the legendary Ferrari and Maserati brands nearby, it offers an immersive luxury experience. The Romanesque architecture, UNESCO-listed cathedral and high-caliber museums round out the offering. German-speaking tourists value authenticity, quality and cultural depth—all of which Modena delivers in a relaxed and refined setting. The city sees this audience not just as visitors, but as long-term ambassadors and partners in meaningful cultural exchange and sustainable growth.



Duomo di Modena_Ph. Nacchio Brothers via VisitModena



KATIA TARASCONI
Mayor, Piacenza

How are you shaping Piacenza as a destination for innovation & investment?

Piacenza's strategic crossroads position—linking Northern Italy's industrial heartland with key European corridors—has always been a source of strength. Today, we are capitalizing on that advantage through targeted investment in logistics, trade and advanced manufacturing. The Piacenza Expo plays a vital role, hosting high-level events across sectors like food innovation, hydrogen and precision engineering. At the same time, we are enhancing collaboration between public and private sectors to promote sustainable growth, modern infrastructure and the unique character of our villages and valleys. Our goal is clear: to position Piacenza not only as a city of historical significance, but also as a competitive center for business and innovation—where tradition and enterprise evolve together to generate tangible value for investors, residents and visitors alike.



Piazza dei Cavalli, Piacenza_Ph. Angelo Mostacchi



MICHELE GUERRA
Mayor, Parma

How is Parma combining gastronomy & sustainability to attract tourists?

As a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy, Parma offers world-renowned delicacies like Parmigiano Reggiano and Prosciutto di Parma—products rooted in centuries of tradition and made with passion and respect for the land. The city is committed to sustainability: many local producers, trattorias and Michelin-starred restaurants embrace eco-friendly practices, from sourcing seasonal ingredients to reducing food waste. We also promote green mobility with an extensive bike-sharing network, pedestrian-friendly zones and safe cycling paths that encourage slow, conscious travel. Visitors can explore food markets, artisanal shops and countryside producers, all while minimizing their carbon footprint. The result is a blend of quality, authenticity and environmental responsibility—hallmarks of Parma's tourism vision and values that resonate with today's mindful travelers.



Duomo, Battistero, San Giovanni Evangelista_Ph. Città di Parma



MATTEO LEPORE
Mayor, Bologna

How does Bologna appeal to today's sophisticated & globally minded tourists?

Bologna positions itself as a refined alternative to Italy's tourist hubs, attracting experienced travelers looking for authenticity, culture and quality of life. As a UNESCO Creative City of Music and Italy's gastronomic capital, it offers a rich blend of history, nightlife and culinary excellence. The city has a unique demographic dynamism, welcoming over 5,000 new residents annually, which contributes to its cosmopolitan atmosphere. Unlike more



Palazzo Re Enzo, Basilica di San Petronio, Bologna_Ph. Roberto Carisi

congested destinations, Bologna offers walkable beauty, a thriving arts scene and high-speed rail access to cities like Florence, Milan and Rome. Its average tourist stay of three days, above the national norm, reflects

growing recognition among discerning visitors. Bologna rewards curiosity—with every visit offering a connection to Italian culture, regional identity and the spirit of innovation that defines the city.



JAMIL SADEGHOLVAAD
Mayor, Rimini

How is Rimini strengthening its appeal to German-speaking tourists in 2025?

Our city is experiencing record growth from German-speaking countries, with arrivals from Germany alone increasing by 7% in 2024 and visitor numbers up by 9.6% year-on-year. This market now ranks as the city's top foreign tourism source. We are also leveraging direct train connections from Munich, expanded flight routes, and geo-targeted digital campaigns in key German, Austrian and Swiss cities. Rimini is also promoting its cultural assets—historic



Ponte di Tiberio_Ph. VisitRimini

sites, gastronomy and year-round events—to appeal beyond sun-and-sea travelers. With a strong focus on quality, sustainability and infrastructure upgrades, the city is positioning itself not just as a seasonal beach

town, but as a 12-month destination tailored to the expectations of central European travelers seeking authentic, multi-dimensional experiences in a place that combines heritage, comfort and accessibility.

**Melinda
Snider**
Managing
Director

**Laetitia
Saint Maur**
Development
Director

**Abigail
Simpson**
Production
Manager

Jeb Adams
Production
Manager

**Íñigo López
González**
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