

Parma to Bologna with a side trip to
Ravenna

Km's to Rome:514

Reluctantly we leave Parma on day 66 for a visit to Ravenna. Quite an experience being on a train again as the countryside rushed past. Ravenna was chosen for a visit because of its reputation for mosaics as decoration and artworks, we were not disappointed. We signed up for the daily pass to visit the historical sights. This is an example of the artwork on the



ceiling of the bishops palace.

In the main church there are some outstanding mosaics, including this one of Empress Theodora, who by marrying Justinian before his accession to the Byzantine throne in 527 became the Empress and one of his principal advisers. Theodora of supposed Greek heritage had quite a chequered past before marrying, but as this is a family blog I won't provide details, suffice it to say she was

euphemistically referred to as a dancer. Theodora was a very successful empress but unfortunately died when 47.

Klimt the artist visited Ravenna and in a postcard home to Austria described it as a wet and broken down place.

However he was able to get some inspiration from the mosaics, particularly the one of



Theodora and used the techniques in his portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer. Adele was reputedly a "close friend" of Klimt who also died young at 43, something for the conspiracy theorists, also both prime numbers.

Dante who is buried at Ravenna also used the mosaic art as part inspiration for his divine comedy. He was 56 when he died so a break with the prime numbers.

Unlike Klimt we found Ravenna a lovely place to spend a few days, the buildings are restored and the people and food are very enjoyable. If given the chance I would recommend a visit, Carol went back for a second visit while I was off walking. We headed back to Bologna, Carol



to do her week long Italian class me to complete the walking from Parma to Bologna. I said goodbye to dearest friends and when by love the pilgrim new to this is pierced to hear, far off, the evening bell. I wished I had not heard the bell as the walk to Bologna was particularly uninspiring. I caught the early morning train back to Parma and set off for the plains south of the main road from Parma to Bologna, first stop on day 70 was to be Albinea.

It was a big walk on a hot and sultry day so I arrived at my accomodation a little worse for wear, in fact I probably looked more like a swagman than a sophisticated elderly walker. The accomodation was part of a farming activity producing a very up market balsamic vinegar. I



stood at the gates waiting to be let in and was approached by a distinguished elderly lady who gave me the once over. I explained that I had a reservation to which she replied, I will see about that, in rather a haughty voice. An underling came out and showed me to me room making me promise not to come out until I left the next morning-just kidding. But it did make me dress up to go down for breakfast wearing a shirt with a collar for the first time in several weeks. As you can see it was a very nice place, I toured the grounds before leaving and they were exceptionally maintained and beautiful.

On booking out I was asked where I was heading, on replying Sassuolo, he expressed some surprise that I would walk through the tyre manufacturing area of Italy. He was right it was a dreadful walk with a dreadful stay in an

industrial town. Passed this sign on a post on the way out of the town. Given the results in Sweden last week and the anticipated result in Italy it's going to take more than a few signs to stop the growth of the extreme right wing politicians taking control of parliaments.

If I had my time again I would have headed further south to the foothills of the Apennine ranges before heading east to Bologna. This is the only person I meet over the four days while out walking, she was doing a five day walk with her dog. It is a



new circular walk running up into the foothills and back to Bazzano where I stayed a night, a big improvement on the previous nights stay. Day 73 found me heading into Bologna via the back door, I was able to find a way into the city which avoided most of the heavy traffic. While I was out walking Leigh my son had arrived in Bologna to join us on the next stage of the walk, here we all are catching up for dinner.

While in Bologna we took a tour of the rare book section of the university of Bologna's library, it had one book from 1923 in its subjects catalogue about Australia.

Our next stage is a walk from Bologna to Florence called the Way of the Gods. Bonne Camino.

