

Practical Information

Castle (Monumental area)

7.00 am - 7.30 pm Monday - Sunday

Castle Museums

9.00 am - 5.30 pm Tuesday - Sunday

Last admission 5.00 pm (only for ticket holders)

The ticket office closes at 4.30 pm

The ticket is valid for one day and includes the entrance to all of the Castle Museums

Free admission on every first and third Tuesday of the month from 2.00 pm

Closed on Monday, December 25th, January 1st, May 1st

www.milanocastello.it

For information about educational department service: c.educastello@comune.milano.it



CASTELLO SFORZESCO



OUTDOOR MUSEUM

The Courtyard of Arms

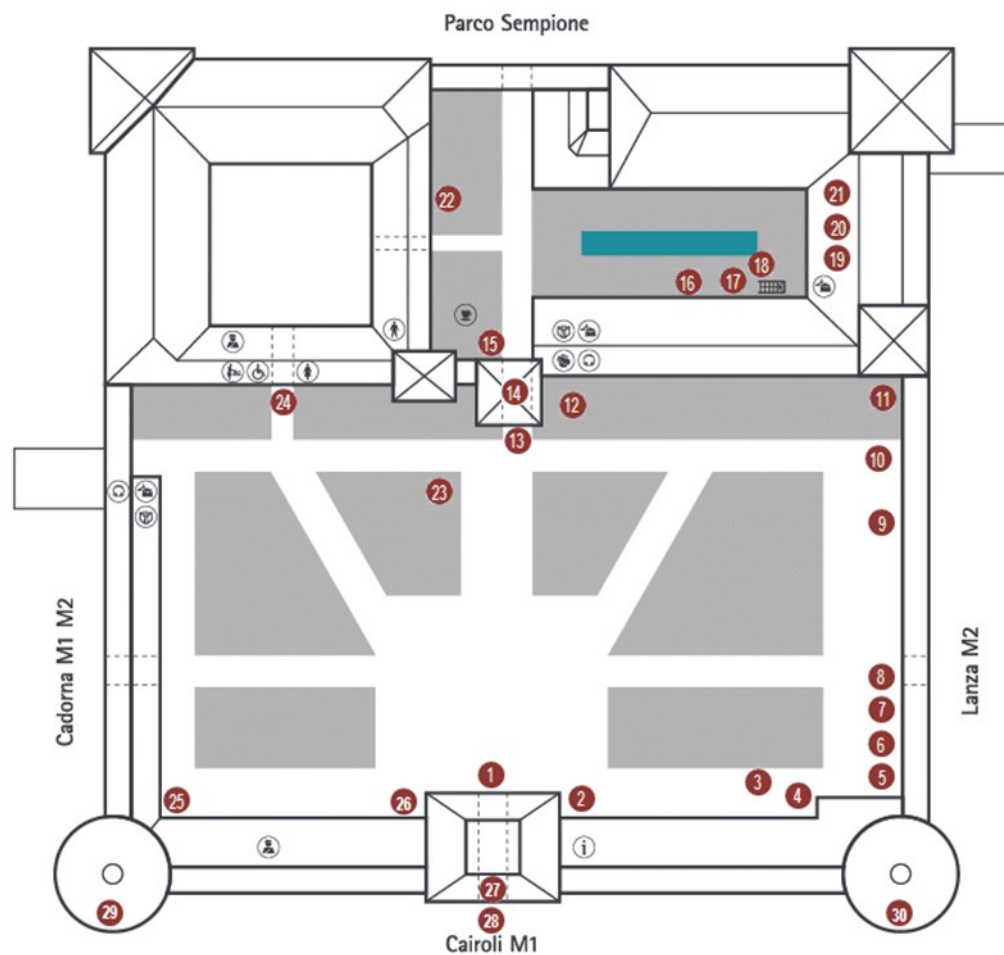
The Courtyard of Arms, once military headquarter, is dominated by the Filarete Tower. The tower's name comes from Antonio Averulino called Filarete, who designed the tower built in 1452, fallen in 1521 and reconstructed by Luca Beltrami in 1905. The circular fortified towers were built in 1452 by design of the architect Gadio and renovated, as well as the courtyard, by Luca Beltrami. Going towards the Ducal Courtyard you can see the moat of the medieval ring of walls, the dead moat, and Bona Tower, built on instructions of Bona of Savoy, who moved here after the killing in a conspiracy of her husband Galeazzo Maria Sforza.

The Ducal Courtyard

The part dedicated to the ducal residence is preceded by a colonnade "of the elephant", so called for the fresco, designed by the architect Benedetto Ferrini in 1473. The ducal apartments, housing Galeazzo Maria Sforza since 1468, covered the ground floor and the first floor, connected by low step stairs that made it possible for the Sforza to go up and down by horse. The stairs end at the first floor in the lodge of Galeazzo Maria Sforza. In the north-western corner is the Falconiera Tower (seen only from Sempione Park) that contains, at the ground floor, the Sala delle Asse decorated by Leonardo da Vinci.

The Rocchetta Courtyard

Rocchetta is a fortress inside a fortress, its tough external appearance, with high windowless defensive walls, is softened inside by a colonnade. The capitals are adorned by the emblem of Visconti and Sforza families, commissioned by Galeazzo Maria Sforza. Recent restorations discovered under the vaults the decorations commissioned by Luca Beltrami at the beginning of '900. The north-eastern corner hosts the Castellan Tower (seen only from Sempione Park). The ground floor of the tower contains the Chamber of the Treasure, a room decorated under Ludovico il Moro with a fresco depicting the mythical guardian Argo, made by Bramantino.



* this order serves as a reference, you can start at the closest to you point

1. Trifora, 1904, various masters, brick, terracotta

Although it appears as an ancient piece, the trifora was built between 1901 and 1904, commissioned by Luca Beltrami, in charge for the restoration of the Castle, and based on multiple sources and similar elements.

2. Endeavors of the little dove on the sun, XV century, Lombard sculptor, marble

It was part of a series of reliefs representing the endeavors of Visconti and Sforza families. "A bon droyt", "With good reason", is the motto thought by Petrarch for Gian Galeazzo Visconti, matched by a dove representing peace.

3. Slab with an emblem, XIX-XX century, Lombard sculptor, marble

B.T. are the initials of Beatrice Tenda, Filippo Maria Visconti's wife. The emblem comes from a little building once built in Dogana street, demolished in 1827 for the extension of Piazza del Duomo.

4. Shield with the emblem of Visconti, XVII century, Lombard sculptor, stone

The "curled up" shield represents the crowned viper swallowing a boy. It was originally the emblem of the Visconti family and was later adopted by the Sforza family as well.

5. Findings from Pusterla de' Fabbri, Lombard sculptors, marble

The Pusterla, one of the minor gates of Milan's medieval ring of walls, was also built using pieces of roman monuments. In 1900 the gate was demolished and the classical fragments were moved here, while the Pusterla is at the entrance of Museum of Ancient Art.

6. Architectonic elements XV-XVII sec., stone, terracotta, murals, limestone

Between these elements you can see the remains of a courtyard from Turin street, a gate of unknown origins and the remains of Landriani palace from Bassano Porrone street.

7. Emblem of Velasco, 1612, Lombard sculptor, marble

What you see is the emblem of Juan Fernández de Velasco, Governor of the Duchy of Milan between XVI and XVII centuries. He left a toponomastic reminder in the city: in his name were built Piazza Velasca and the close by skyscraper.

8. Emblem of Milan City, 1890, Francesco Pelitti, stone

The emblem of Milan has ancient origins and the first examples come from the XII century. The hereby present emblem was conceived by Luca Beltrami for the front of Marino Palace, which he was charged to reconstruct, and made by the sculptor Francesco Pelitti.

9. Sarcophaguses and erratic tombstones, III-IV centuries, marble

In this area are present multiple sarcophaguses, most of them of unknown origins. The inscriptions, in some cases partially readable, allow us to discover the names of the deceased, like Statia Sabina or Marcus Campilius.

10. Christ the Redeemer, 1673, Giovan Battista and Giuseppe Vismara, ceppo gentile

Originally, the statue crowned the column of Verziere, a popular market in Milan for its fruit, vegetables, flowers and retail goods. The column was built in 1580 for the end of the plague and the statue, added in 1673, in the XIX century was replaced by a copy in bronze.

11. "Falcone", XV century, Lombard masters, marble, stone, steel

The "falcone" stood by the Darsena harbour, by Laghetto street near Duomo. Barges full of materials for the building site of Duomo arrived there through the canals. The hook was used to pick up the marbles and unload the barges.

12. Round shots, Lombard masters, stone

These groups of rounds shots, with calibers varying from 15 to 45 cm, are made of cannonballs launched against the walls of the fortress during the various sieges that the Sforza Castle has suffered.

13. Keystone, 1450, Lombard sculptor, marble

The keystone with a Visconti-Sforza emblem is located at the culmination of the arch of the so called Gate of Giovia. This was the name of one of the gates of Milan's medieval ring of walls, around which the castle developed. F/S are the initials of Francesco I Sforza.

14. Sculpture group, XV century, Lombard sculptor, Candoglia marble

The three sculptures, Announcing angel, Heavenly Father and Head of a bearded man, were originally part of a group of exceptional dimensions, while the provenance of the said group is still debated.

15. Ausonio's tombstone, XVI century, Lombard stone-cutter, Apuan Alps marble

The praising inscription is testimony of the town's pride, and reproduces a notorious poem written by the Latin poet Decimo Magno Ausonio (310-293 A.D.), who describes Milan as a city "second only to Rome".

16. Emblem held by two angels, XV century, Lombard stone-cutter, Candoglia marble

It's very likely that the emblem, reminding similar representations with angels holding the emblem of a family, was wanted by Galeazzo Maria Sforza and was collocated on one of the Castle's facades until 1607, when it was moved here.

17. Don Diego Pimentel's gates, 1607, Lombard masters, stone and marble

The gate, testimony of the period of Spanish domination, was made for don Diego Pimentel, who has been the last castellan at the beginning of '600. The entrance lead directly to his apartments and is topped by his emblem, and was walled in 1904.

18. Pine cone, XII century, Lombard sculptor, marble

This particularly interesting handworks were normally placed at the highest point of a building, and for this function was called an acroters in architecture. Similar elements were already well documented in the classical period. This one was found in 1893 in Cappuccio street.

19. Saint John the Evangelist, XIV century, Master of the Loggia degli Osii, sandstone

The statue adorned the facade of San Giovanni in Conca, Barnabò Visconti's Palatin church (Palatin = "of the palace"). His and his wife's funerary monuments, coming from that building, are now in the Museo d'Arte Antica. La church was demolished in 1949.

20. Gian Giacomo Mora's tombstone, 1630, Lombard stone-cutter, white marble

The tombstone was situated by the column built near Mora's home. He was accused of propagating the plague of 1630: the charge was followed by torture and death sentence, described on the tombstone and rewritten by Manzoni in "History of the Column of Infamy".

21. Views with exotic animals, 1476, painter from Ferrara, mural

The reason behind this representation is probably the gift of an elephant made by Borso d'Este, Lord of Ferrara. The presence of exotic animals, especially big cats, in castles is well documented by similar works.

22. Wall fountain, XV-XVII century, Lombard sculptors, Candoglia marble, granite

The back of the fountain is richly decorated with, in the center, the cantaro or "vessel of life", while the sink, maybe coming from an interior, is embellished by a sequence of Sforza endeavors. The various parts were assembled together in 1904 by Luca Beltrami.

23. Saint John of Nepomuk, 1729, Giovanni Dugnani, marble and bronze

The statue, wanted by the last castellan, represents a Czech saint protector of soldiers, killed by drowning and particularly worshipped by Austrian soldiers. Similar statues are also present on bridges along of the Navigli canals.

24. Francesco I Sforza's emblem, 1450, Lombard sculptor, marble

The emblem represents the viper and the crowned eagle. In the first paragraph, the inscription attests that, 4 March 1450 Francesco I Sforza came to power. The second paragraph declares the date of reconstruction of Castrum Portae Jovis.

25. Keystone with a shield, XV century, Lombard sculptor, Angera limestone

The enigmatic shield shows letters that were only partially adopted by the Greek alphabet and the interpretation of the word still isn't clear, while it roughly translates as "ANIMO" (soul/intention/courage).

26. Keystone with emblem, XV century, Lombard sculptor, Angera limestone

The keystone features the emblem of the Savoy family, topped by a crested lion and surrounded by a garland made of branches, while the ribbony motive dates back to an intervention made by Ernesto Rusca in 1904.

27. Monument to Saint Ambrose, 1904, Luigi Secchi, marble

In the middle of '500s the central tower of the Castle was adorned with a statue of Saint Ambrose. Most of the tower was destroyed by an explosion of a deposit of gunpowder in 1521. It was later rebuilt by Luca Beltrami, who commissioned to Luigi Secchi the statue. you see now.

28. Monumento a Umberto I di Savoia, 1903, Luigi Secchi, marmo

In the immediate aftermath of the killing of Umberto I, 29 July 1900, upon Luca Beltrami's proposal, central tower of the castle was rebuilt, destroyed in 1521, dedicated now to the second king of Italy.

29. Emblem of the Saint Spirit tower, 1455 /1904, Lombard masters, marble

On the spearheaded serizzo vestments stands out the giant marble depiction of the viper, but the part you can see today is a reconstruction made by referencing similar emblems in 1904.

30. Emblem of the Carmineto tower, 1455/1898, Lombard sculptor, marble

Just like the previous emblem, the original was partially destroyed, like many other heraldic depictions, during the French domination starting in 1796. It was reconstructed in 1898 together with the peak of the tower.