

A long weekend in Florence:

Photo Album



View of the Arno and the centre of Florence from the *Piazzale Michelangelo*

N.B. All photos in this album are my own, unless noted otherwise.

Trip to Florence, from 23 to 26 January 2025

I arrived at Florence airport on Wednesday 22 January 2025, 20:00, from Roissy CdG airport. I took a taxi (flat fee between the airport and most hotels in the city centre), to join my sister at the B&B ***Le Stanze del Duomo***.¹ It is ideally located in the city centre, close to the Duomo and at a walking distance to main monuments and museums.

Thursday, 23 January 2025

After a good breakfast, we wandered in the streets from the hotel towards the *Ponte Vecchio*. We first had a look on the *Piazza della Repubblica* (guide p. 55):



Piazza della Repubblica

Then we admired the *Piazza della Signoria* (guide p. 57), where stand the *Palazzo Vecchio* and the *Loggia dei Lanzi* (guide pp. 55 & 58). This place has embodied the political power since its creation in 1268 and was used for centuries as the main city location for people to gather and celebrate, or for public executions. This is where the scene of a violent fight takes place in James Ivory's movie *A Room with a View* (1986), adapted from E. M. Forster's novel.

¹ Address: Via Martelli 8, Duomo, 50129 Firenze. See [Le Stanze del Duomo](#) | [Sito ufficiale](#) | [B&B Firenze centro](#)



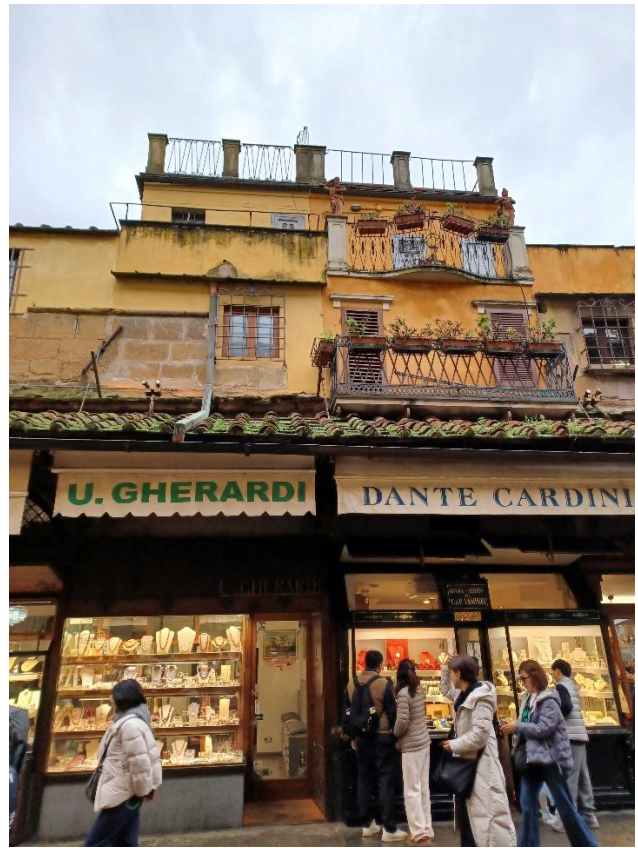
Piazza della Signoria : views of the Palazzo Vecchio and the equestrian statue of Côme I (1594), zoom on the Fountain of Neptune (1565), and view of the Loggia dei Lanzi from the entrance of the Palazzo Vecchio.

The *Loggia dei Lanzi* was converted into an art gallery in the 16th century. Under its three arches, we can admire (among many antic and Renaissance treasures) the bronze statue of *Perseus* (1545-1554)

by Benvenuto Cellini et Giambologna's marble sculptures *Rape of the Sabine Women* and the less famous *Hercules and Centaur* (1599), here below:



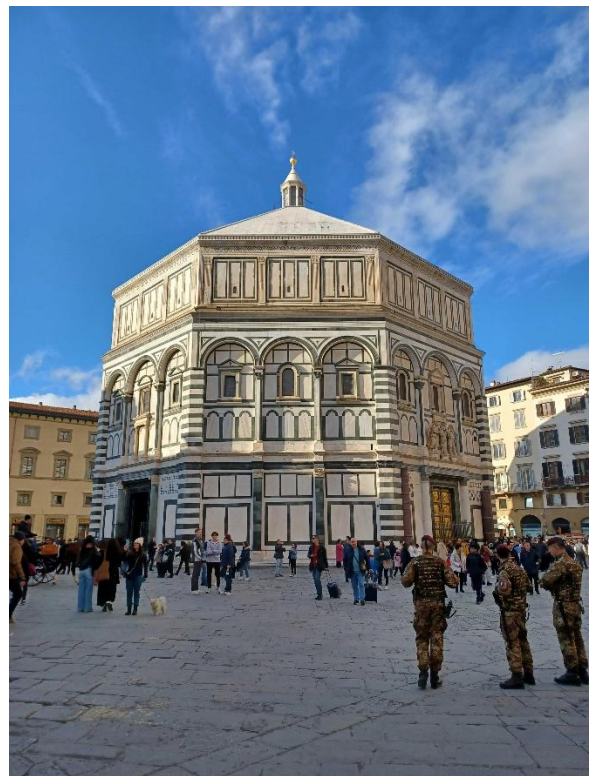
Then we strolled on the Arno's riverside, under Vasari's Corridor (guide pp. 43-44), and on the *Ponte Vecchio* (guide pp. 50-51), to do some window-shopping and admire Benvenuto Cellini's bust.





View on the Arno, the *Ponte Vecchio* and Vasari's Corridor from the Uffizi Galleries.

Back to the *Duomo* (guide pp. 32-35), the tourists' queue—to visit the cathedral of *Santa Maria del Fiore* (started in 1296)² and its impressive dome, designed by Brunelleschi—had finally shortened!



² See: [Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore | Opera Duomo, Florence](#)



Beautified with the sunlight, the external walls are covered in white, red and green marble (respectively coming from Carrara, Prato and Sienna) with geometric figures and stylised flowers. Giotto's bell tower and the baptistry frame the Cathedral, whose building mixes Gothic and Renaissance styles harmoniously.

"Inside, the naves are set out by the immense pillars and ample gothic arches of Talenti, while the floor decorations in inlaid marble mosaic are by the grand ducal workshops of the 16th-17th centuries. The space is illuminated by 44 stained glass windows, developing a design by the main Florentine artists of the 14th century and earliest Renaissance. On the walls we can admire works of art from different eras and by different hands, including famous masterpieces from the 15th century, such as the monumental clock frescoed by Paolo Uccello, the gigantic equestrian portraits of the English *condottiere* John Hawkwood (1320-1394) by Uccello, and of the *condottiere* Niccolò da Tolentino by Andrea del Castagno, and the celebratory portrait of Dante Alighieri (1465) painted by Domenico Di Michelino" (see photos next pages).

(Source: [Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore | Opera Duomo, Florence](#))

"The dome is an absolute masterpiece of art, enchanting the world since the moment of its creation: the symbol of Florence, of Renaissance culture, and of all Western humanism... [It] was built between 1420 and 1436 to a plan by Filippo Brunelleschi and is still the largest masonry vault in the world. The lantern is a white marble tower, 21 metres (68.9 feet) in height, whose weight counterbalances the thrust forces of the internal dome, exactly as planned by Brunelleschi. At the top of the lantern stands the "golden ball" by Verrocchio, placed in 1471, although the current one is a reconstruction made in the early 1600s. The architect would unfortunately never see this completed work, having died in 1446." (Source: [Brunelleschi Dome | Opera del Duomo, Florence](#))

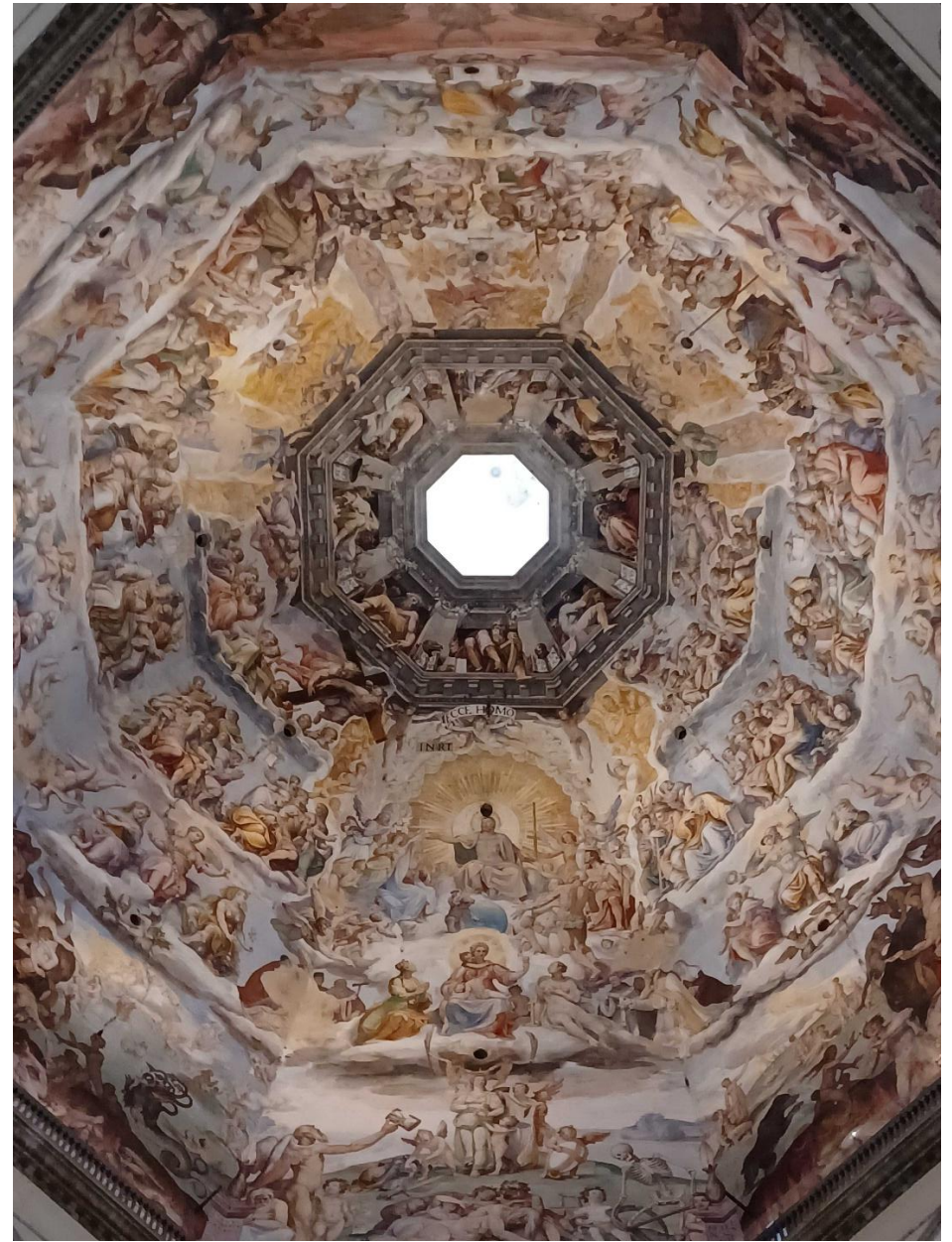


Dante, Firenze e i tre regni della Divina Commedia, by Domenico di Michelino and Alesso Baldovinetti ³

³ Image downloaded from the catalog: [Opere d'arte - OPAFI Catalogazione](#)



The frescoes on the monumental clock (1443) are by Paolo Ucello.



One cannot help feeling overwhelmed by the *Last Judgment*, painted by Giorgio Vasari and Federico Zuccari on the internal vault in 1572-1579.

Then we had a late lunch of home-made pasta, at Nuti's ⁴ in *Borgo San Lorenzo* :



After lunch, we visited the Basilica of San Lorenzo, its cloister, and its treasures exhibited in its vaults.⁵ Although its external facade looks much less impressive than *Santa Maria del Fiore's*, inside the Basilica I felt much impressed by the sheer splendour of the building and the beauty of its artworks.

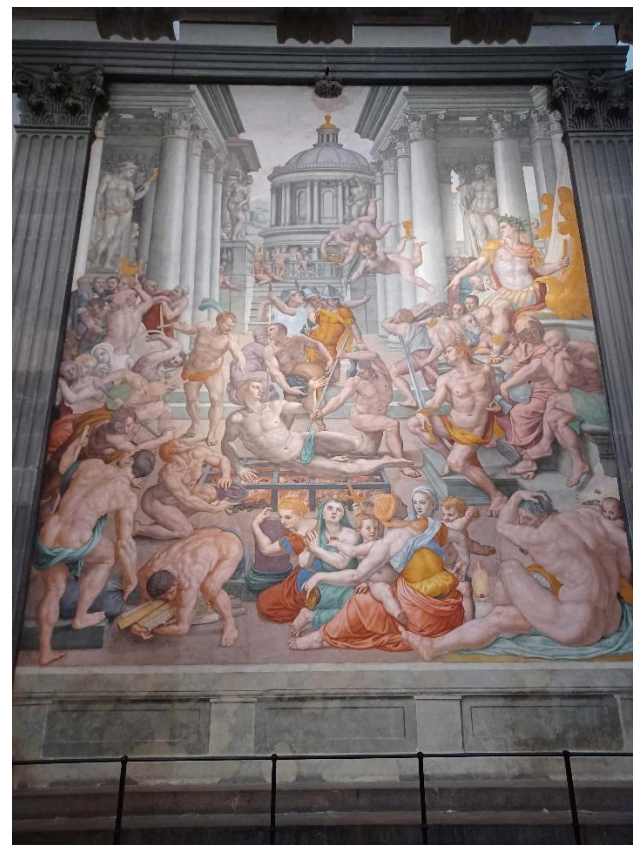


⁴ See: [Cucina tipica toscana dal 1953 - Il Grande Nuti - Firenze](#)

⁵ See details on their internet page: [Basilica di San Lorenzo e complesso Mediceo Laurenziano](#)



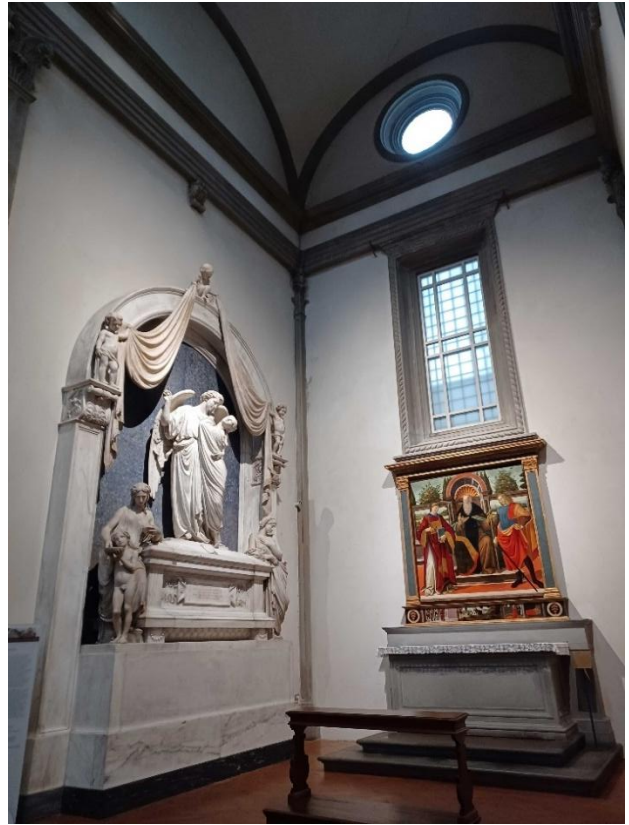
Filippo Brunelleschi devised a single space forged by a stringent study of geometry and proportion: one's gaze embraces the entire building to converge on the high altar. The basilica's monumental character is further enhanced by the play of light and using only two colours: the white of its walls and the grey of the *pietra serena* stone used for the columns and other details. The Medicis' coat of arms (with red bowls) is omnipresent in the decoration of Florence's monuments.



Passion Pulpit (front) and Resurrection Pulpit (back) by Donatello and his assistants (1515)

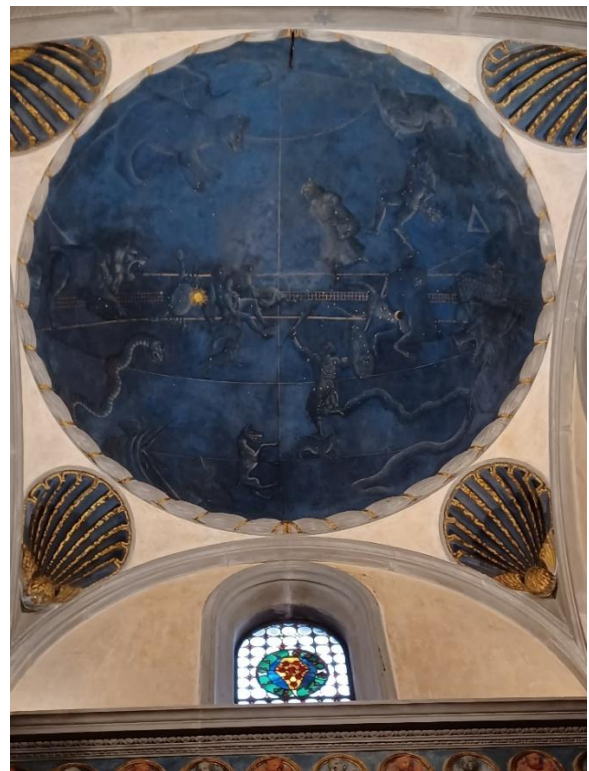
The Martyrdom of St Lawrence (1565-68), fresco by Bronzino

The Annunciation (1445), Filippo Lippi's masterpiece, sits in the Martelli Chapel for which it was originally painted. In the other chapel facing it, stand the *Tomb of Berta Moltke Hwitfeld* (1864), by Giovanni Duprè, and *St Anthony the Abbot with St Lawrence and St Julian*, an oil on wood by the workshop of Domenico Ghirlanda (second half of the 15th century).



The Annunciation (1445) by Filippo Lippi

The little brochure, given with our ticket, also draws our attention on *The Marriage of the Virgin* ⁶ (1523) by Rosso Fiorentino, and its Mannerist style (picture below, on the left). The Old Sacristy, designed by Brunelleschi and completed in 1429, was the first Renaissance building in history, moulding the style of ancient Rome into a stringent geometric harmony (the cube and the sphere, the square and the circle), and adorned with terracotta sculptures by Donatello. The bronze doors on either side of the altar are also Donatello's work. The small dome over the chancel shows the sky above Florence on 4 July 1442 in a gold and lapis lazuli fresco attributed to Pesello.



⁶ Source : [Rosso fiorentino, sposalizio della vergine, s. lorenzo - Marriage of the Virgin \(Rosso Fiorentino\) - Wikipedia](#)



The cloister of the Basilica of San Lorenzo

The exhibition of religious treasures (from the Renaissance to the 19th century) is in the vaults under the Old Sacristy: a few examples are shown in the Appendix at the end of this photo album.

From San Lorenzo, direction to the Central Market place, then the *Piazza dell' Unità Italiana*, and the *Piazza di Santa Maria Novella* (guide pp. 75-76), where I only took a photo of the beautiful façade of the *Basilica di Santa Maria Novella*, quite dark under this cloudy sky.



After a well-deserved break into *Caffè dei Fossi*, via Fossi, we strolled in that street, full of art galleries and antiques shops. Then from the *Piazza Carlo Goldoni*, we walked past the Arno on the *Lungarno Corsini* towards the *Ponte di Santa Trinita* (guide p.57), from which we had a delightful view on the *Ponte Vecchio* at dusk:



Then we walked into *Via De'Tornabuoni* (guide p. 55), a street full of luxury shops set in beautifully renovated palaces:



Windows of the Ferragamo shop/museum (photos by N. Anglessy).

Friday 24 January 2025

Visit of the famous Uffizi Galleries (guide pp. 38-45).⁷ I only took two photos there—one of the Gallery and one view upon the *Ponte Vecchio* and Vasari's Corridor—because I intended to buy a book offering better pictures of my preferred paintings than any I could have taken during my visit (see bibliography).



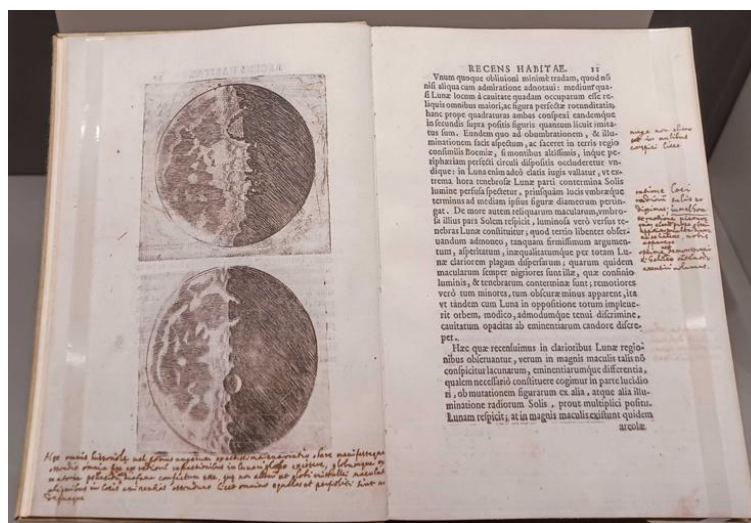
I spent most of my time in the rooms of Botticelli (A 11-12), Léonardo da Vinci (A 35), Raphael and Michelangelo (A 38), Bronzino (D 13), Caravaggio and his « followers » (D 29 à D 33).

⁷ See [The Uffizi | Uffizi Galleries](#).

Then I went to the **Galileo Museum**⁸, located at the corner of the street near the riverbank, just outside the Uffizi Galleries (guide p. 60). As I had done a lot of research to write my paper about the relationship between art and science in “modern” history⁹, I wanted to see the superb collection of scientific instruments formed by the Medici Family—patrons of the arts AND science—over the years, and which was housed for about two centuries in the Uffizi Gallery alongside masterpieces of ancient and modern art. Here below are just a few examples :



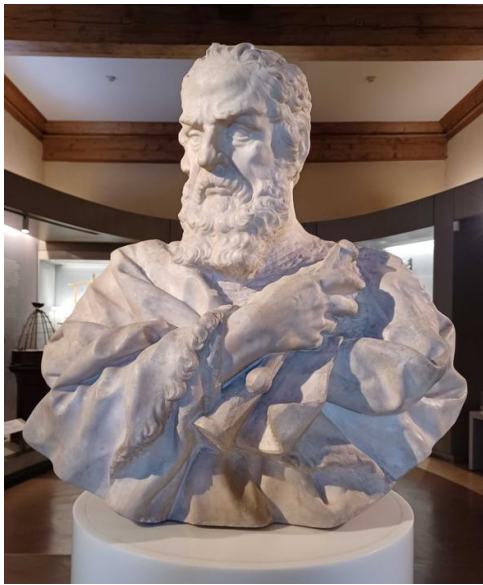
Antonio Santucci's armillary sphere (1588-1593)



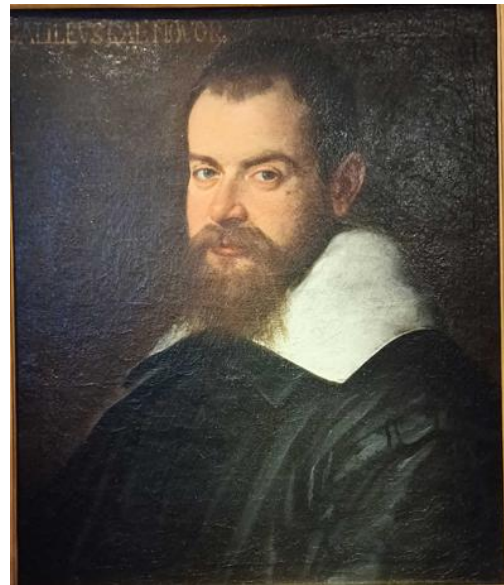
Galileo's *Sidereus Nuncius* (1610)

⁸ Voir : <https://www.museogalileo.it/en/>

⁹ Voir : [Science & Art in Britain's "Modern" History – The eternal student – anglophile version](#)



Bust of Galileo (1674-77), by Carlo Marcellini



Portrait of Galileo (early 17th century), by Santi di Tito



Astronomical clock (ca. 1575) attributed to Caspar Rauber (Germany).



Surveying compass, Italy, 16th century.

After a late lunch in a pizzeria, we crossed the Arno on the *Ponte Vecchio* towards the *Palazzo Pitti* and the Boboli Gardens. Unfortunately, as the latter close at 16:30, we had to postpone our visit to the following day. We took advantage of the clement weather to walk along the Arno towards the *Piazzale Michelangelo*, whose elevated situation offers beautiful views on the city centre:



View on the Palazzo Vecchio and the Duomo (Santa Croce is on the right side of the photo)



View on Santa Croce et the synagog (with its green dome)

As I would not have the opportunity to go and see the original of Michelangelo's *David* at the *Galleria dell'Accademia* during this stay, I contented myself with its bronze replica on *Piazzale Michelangelo*:



On our way back, we crossed the Arno on the *Ponte alle Grazie*, from where I took a photo of the *Ponte Vecchio* in the sunset. After this superb afternoon, we enjoyed having a drink on *Piazza della Signoria*, with a direct view on the *Palazzo Vecchio*...



Saturday 25 January 2025

En route towards Piazza della Signoria, Via de' Calzaiuli, I stopped to observe in detail the buildings of the Loggia del Bigallo (guide p. 54) and Orsanmichele (guide p. 59). As we cannot visit all the monuments in Florence, at least we can admire the facades of some of its architectural treasures!



Visit of the *Palazzo Vecchio*¹⁰, housing the exhibition *Michelangelo e il potere* (Michelangelo and the power) which was going to end on 26 January: [Michelangelo e il Potere | MUS.E.](#)



Framing the entrance of the Palazzo Vecchio we find in the foreground a 1910 replica of Michelangelo's *David* and Baccio Bandinelli's *Hercules and Cacus* (1530-1534) and in the background, Bandinelli's two *Terms* (1542).

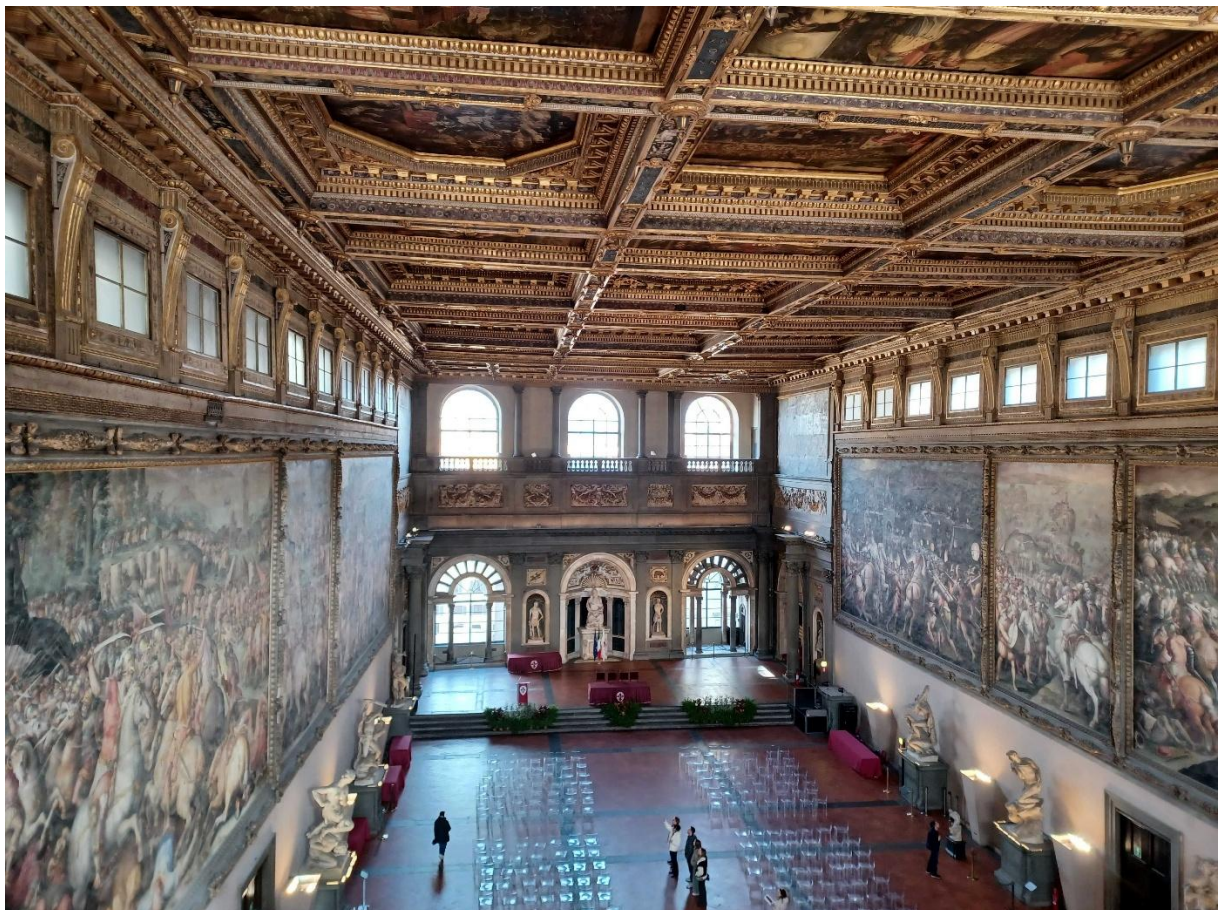


Michelozzo's Courtyard

¹⁰ See guide pp. 46-49 and the internet page: [Palazzo Vecchio - Wikipedia](#)



Detail of one of the vaults' paintings in Michelozzo's courtyard



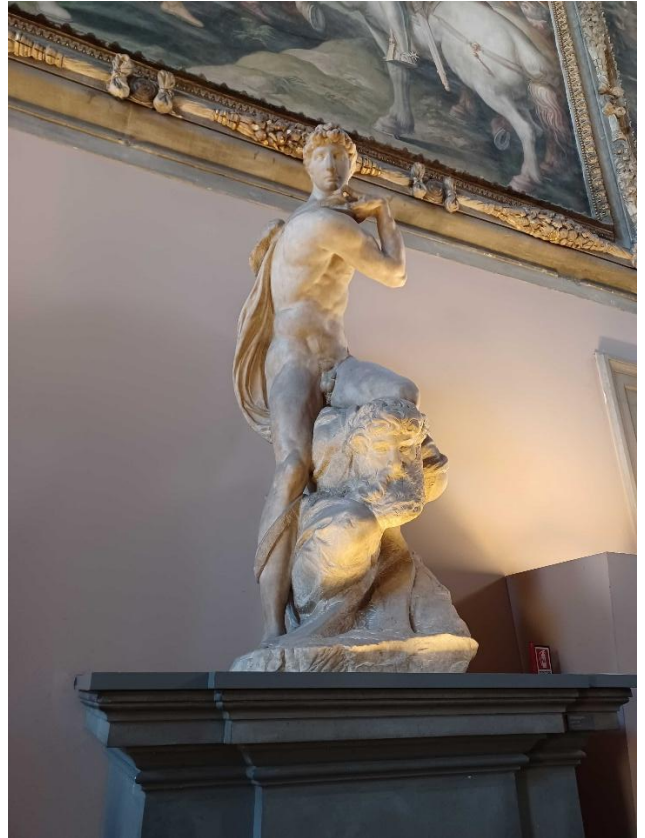
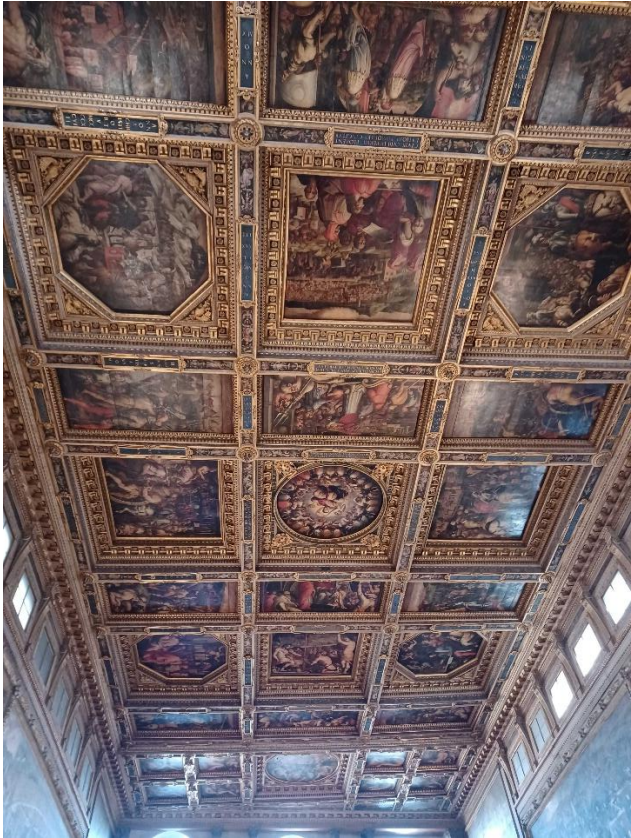
Hall of the 500: general view from a balcony upstairs.



Hall of the 500: *Battle of Marciano in Val di Chiana*, 1567-71, by Giorgio Vasari and Jacopo Zucchi.



Battle of Marciano in Val di Chiana, 1571, by Giorgio Vasari (brown ink applied with pen and brush)



Hall of the 500: Panelled ceiling and Michelangelo's *The Genius of Victory* (1532-34)



Eleonora of Toledo's appartements: detail of one of the vaults' decoration in the Green Room



Eleonora of Toledo's appartements: Eleonora's Chapel, frescoes by Bronzino (1540-45).



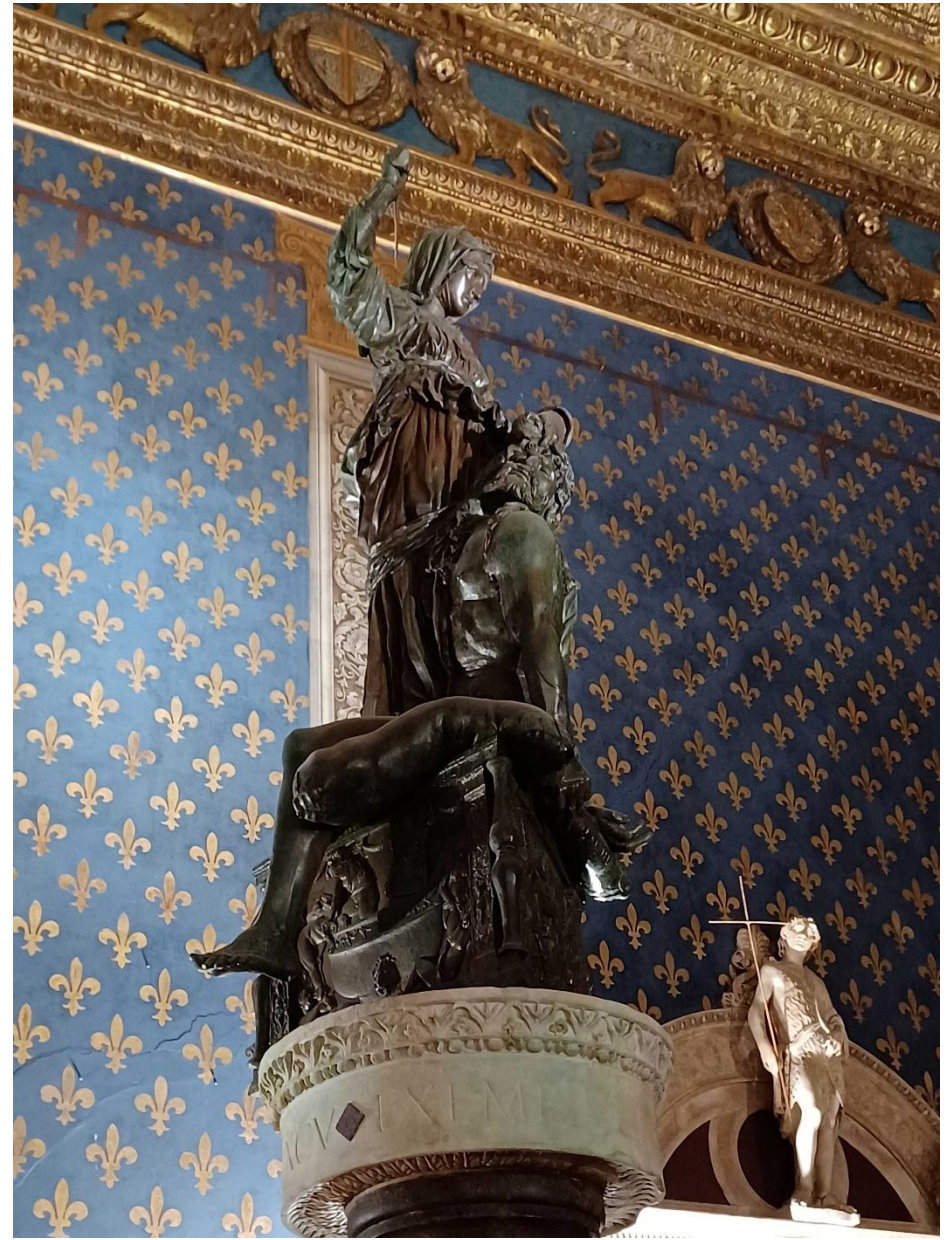
Apartments of Leo X : Ceiling in the room of Lorenzo the Magnificent, fresco by Vasari (1556-8).



Eleonora of Toledo's appartements: Room of Gualdrada, fresco by Vasari (1561-62)



Brutus (after 1537), Michelangelo and Tiberio Calcani



Hall of Lilies: *Judith and Holopherne*, ca. 1457-1464, by Donatello

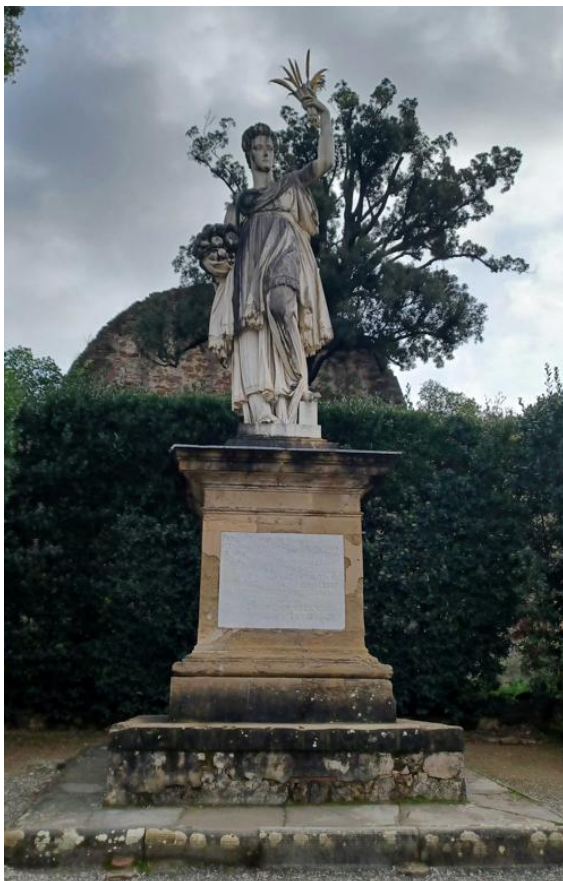
In the afternoon, we went to the *Palazzio Pitti* and the Boboli Gardens.¹¹



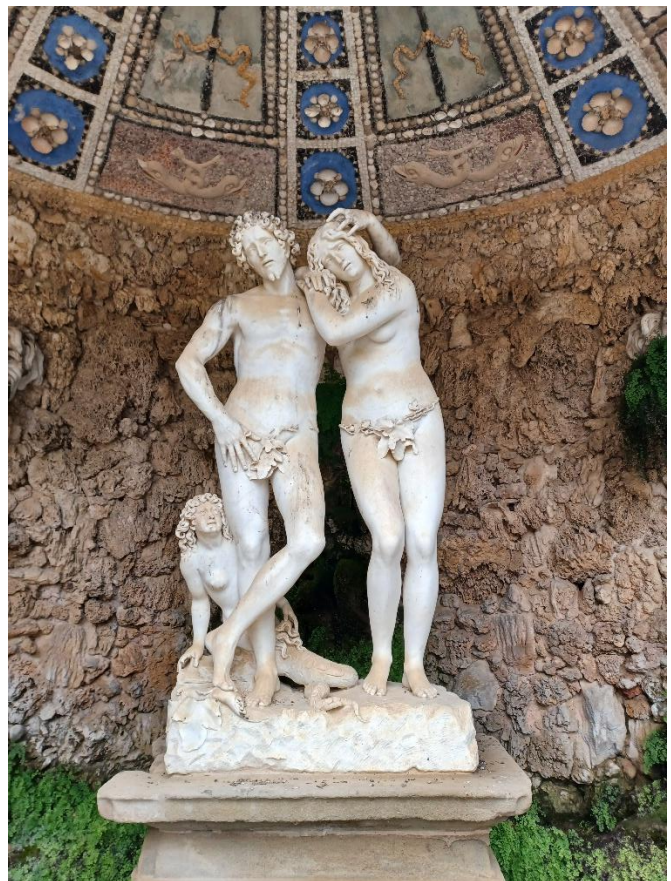
¹¹ See the internet page: [Boboli Gardens | Uffizi Galleries](#)

At the top of the gardens' hill, we find the Knight's Garden (a little barren in winter!) from which we have beautiful views on Florence's surroundings and Tuscany's landscapes:





The Abundance, by Giambologna (1529-1608)



Adam and Eve (1590-1610), by Michelangelo Naccherino

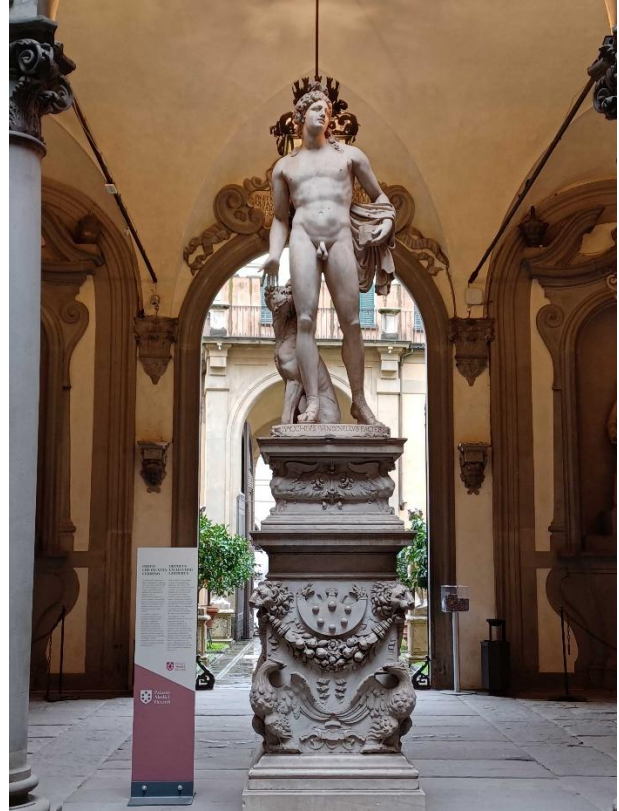
Leaving the gardens by the exit near the Lemon house and the Grotto of Adam and Eve, we reached the *Ponte alla Carria* through *Via Serragli*. In that area, we felt the pulse of another Florence, less touristic. Then from *Piazza Goldoni*, we walked through *Via Vigna Nuova* and *Via Strozzi* towards the *Piazza dell Repubblica*, where we enjoyed a sophisticated afternoon tea at Gilli's: [Caffè Gilli](#).

Dimanche 26 janvier 2025.

As the morning started with a violent storm, I took shelter into the *Palazzo Medici-Riccardi* ¹² which was very close to my hotel, and I did not regret it!



The column courtyard, designed by Michelozzo



Orpheus that enchants Cerberus, ca. 1519, by Bandinelli

Still vivid into my memory are the Chapel of the Magi, frescoed by Benozzo Gozzoli in 1459 and *The Madonna with Child* by Filippo Lippi:

“At the heart of the palace, the chapel was designed by Michelozzo and consists of a square-plan space with a recess slightly raised above the floor to accommodate the altar.

It could be accessed via two entrances: a private entrance for the family, and a public entrance for guests. The gilded wooden ceiling, finely carved by Pagno di Lapo, seems to reflect on the precious floor in polychrome marble. The walls were frescoed by Benozzo Gozzoli from 1459 onwards: the images depict the journey of the Magi towards Christ Child, who is in the foreground of the altarpiece painted by artists belonging to Filippo Lippi’s workshop. Starting from the wall to the east, the parade is headed by Caspar (in a white tunic), followed by Balthazar (in a green tunic) on the south wall, and by Melchior (in a red tunic) on the wall to the west.

The astonishing richness of details and ornaments is complemented by an accurate depiction of the landscape and characters of the time who join the holy parade: visitors will notice Cosimo and Piero de’ Medici, the young Lorenzo and Giuliano, Gian Galeazzo Sforza, Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta, and Pope Pius II (born Enea Silvio Piccolomini).”

(Source: [The Chapel of the Magi | Palazzo Medici Riccardi](#))

¹² See guide pp. 113-115 the Palazzo’s website: [The Museum | Palazzo Medici Riccardi](#)







On the same floor I could admire the lovely *Madonna with Child*, painted around the 1460s by Filippo Lippi, but I could not take a decent photo of it because of the light reflections on the glass window protecting the painting. Here is nonetheless an image of it from the internet.¹³



Then the visitor is guided towards the Mirror Gallery, commissioned by the Riccardi family and constructed between 1670 and 1677. However, the decoration of the vaulted ceiling by Luca Giordano only began in the summer of 1682 and was completed in 1685.

“The mythological scenes on the four sides of the ceiling alternate with the four Cardinal Virtues at the corners, while the central fresco is a majestic tribute to the Medici family that testifies to the Riccardi’s enormous gratitude. The stuccoes and decorations that adorn the openings and large windows overlooking the Garden, complemented by four marvellous mirrors painted by Bartolomeo Bimbi, Pandolfo Reschi, and Anton Domenico Gabbiani, are equally rich and opulent. This function room hosted sumptuous balls and receptions, starting with the wedding banquet of Ferdinando de’ Medici and Violante of Bavaria, held in 1689.”¹⁴

¹³ Source: [Fichier:Madonna col bambino, palazzo medici riccardi, filippo lippi.jpg — Wikipédia](#)

¹⁴ Source: [The Galleria degli Specchi \(Mirror Gallery\) | Palazzo Medici Riccardi](#)



To conclude this delightful visit, I took a short stroll into the Medici Garden:



As the rain had stopped when I left the Palace, I took the *Via Cavour* towards the *Piazza San Marco* :



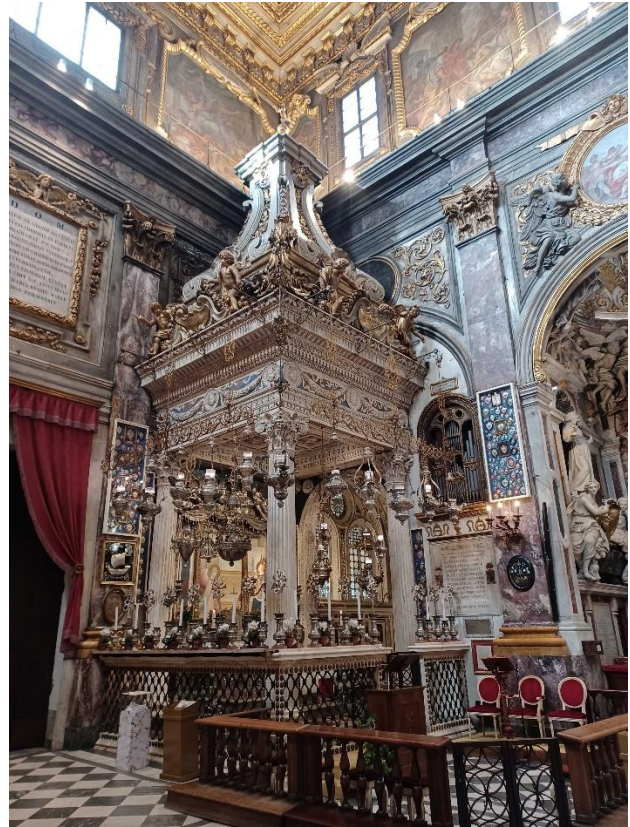
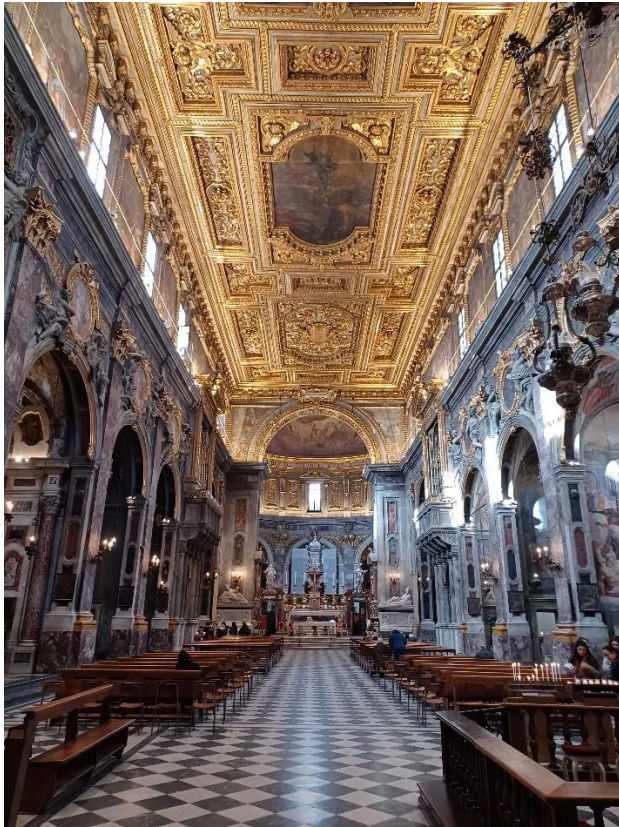
Then I took the direction of the *Piazza Santissima Annunziata*, where I visited the Basilica,¹⁵ a good example of baroque religious architecture.



From the portico on the *Piazza*, we go through the *Chiostro dei Voti*—a cloister with vaults and columns designed by Michelozzo—to access the nave.

¹⁵ See guide p. 134 and this webpage: [Basilica della Santissima Annunziata - Wikipedia](#)





Among the many sumptuously decorated chapels, I spent some time admiring the *Assumption* (ca. 1506)¹⁶ by Pietro Perugino (ca. 1446-1523).



¹⁶ Public domain: [Perugino, assunta dell'annunziata 01 - Basilica della Santissima Annunziata - Wikipedia](#)

On my way back to the hotel, through *Via Ricasoli*, where stands the *Galleria dell'Accademia* (and the original of Michelangelo's *David*) I noticed that the pavement leading to the museum's entrance was full of people, so I would have to plan my visit and buy a ticket in advance if I ever come back to Florence one day!

Anyway, my flight to Roissy being scheduled at 15:30, it was time to take a taxi for the airport.

Bibliography:



Appendix: the religious treasures of the Basilica of *San Lorenzo*



Reliquary of St Antony of Padua (1681-1684), silver, by M. Merlini. Design by P. M. Baldi.



Reliquary of St Barnabas the Apostle, 1654-56, silver and rock crystal, by Arrigo Brunich.



Reliquary of Pope St Mark (1622), silver, by Merlini il Vecchio. Design by Gilio Parigi



Reliquary of the Founder Saints (1715). Bronze, copper, silver, rock crystal and semi-precious stones.
By Giuseppe Antonio Torricelli and Grand-Ducal workshops. Design by Giovan Battista Foggini



Cope (end of 16th century), Florentine workshops, red silk velvet embroidered with spun gold and spun silver.



Cope, detail



Christ the Redeemer, ca. 1630, by Antonio Novelli. Gilded brass and silver on shaped wood