

Bicocca

The new Bicocca neighbourhood is the outcome of the first large-scale redevelopment scheme in Milan; it is located on 1,000,000 sqm formerly occupied by the Pirelli and Ansaldo factories. Studio Gregotti Associati designed a new urban centre by integrating housing, retail and office spaces with culture, science, research and leisure. Università degli Studi Milano-Bicocca has quickly become Lombardy's fourth university centre, while other facilities such as the Arcimboldi Theatre and Hangar Bicocca provide cultural events. In the next few years, Istituto Besta will relocate here, and the University will expand its facilities.

12. Università degli Studi Milano Bicocca



The University was established in 1998; today, it has 30,000 students. Its buildings are marked by typical red façades. There are two major compounds: a newly built one around Piazza della Scienza, and two totally renovated 1920s buildings. Students gather in the tree-shaded piazzas and courtyards.

15. Collina dei Ciliegi



Cherry hill, named after its decorative trees, is the main green area in Bicocca, and the first you find as you get here from Milan.

16. Teatro Arcimboldi

The excellence centre of the neighbourhood, a white building with a huge slanted skylight over its hall.



17. Bicocca Village



A large leisure-time centre, with 18 cinemas, a sports and wellness facility, a playground, many shops, bars and restaurants.

18. Hangar Bicocca

The Hangar is a huge 15,000-sqm former Ansaldo plant that has become a cult destination for contemporary art.



NORTH ITINERARIES THROUGH "THE CHANGING CITY"

Over the last few years, Milan's transformation involved the whole city in all directions: from the historic centre, to the new urban centres that are being created on former industrial sites. Valuable urban sites are refurbished, and new ones appear, dedicated to work, housing, culture, education, and leisure. Sometimes, whole new neighbourhoods are created, with new parks, public spaces and high-quality architecture, sometimes individual artefacts show a renewed vitality and experimental approach in the city. The best Italian and international architects are working in Milan, also thanks to the co-operation between public organisations, namely the City Administration, and private businesses. New urban planning tools and international design contests, now often used by private entities as well, have produced the results we see in these itineraries through "the changing city". This is a way to get to know the transformation of our city and to cast a closer look at the new urban and architectural assets of Milan.

Gianni Verga
Councillor for Land Development
City of Milan



CONOSCERE MILANO

LA CITTA' CHE CAMBIA

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13. Palazzi Uffici



14. Residenze

The Esplanade residential complex runs along Viale Sarca on an elevated bank, while ten towers around a sunken pedestrian piazza are the neighbourhood's heart. Another building has a student residence, and two more provide social housing.



19. Parco Nord Milano



Parco Nord Milano is a successful example of a multi-city park, now visited by over 2 million people every year. Meadows, trees, ponds, cycling and pedestrian lanes have replaced the factories, landfills and wasteland that was here until the 1980s. It spans over six cities. It was first started in 1983, and now 400 of its total 600 hectares are completed. The Park hosts many sport, cultural and educational events; it has urban vegetable gardens, playgrounds and an outdoor theatre.

Bicocca's landmark is the new headquarters of Pirelli RE. It is built around the impressive cooling tower, that stands as a symbol of the site's industrial heritage. The Deutsche Bank severe building is also noticeable. More office spaces exist at the Siemens headquarters, three towers, and the Pirelli R&D labs.

The land North of Milan is dry. Water flows from the mountains in the underground, and only comes back to surface South of the city. This is an ideal habitat for both housing and factories. Ever since the 19th century, the road and railway connections towards the north-east have been powerful drivers for business facilities, then industrial transformation pushed the factories farther from the city centre, all the way to the Greco railway station and to the borders of Sesto San Giovanni. Between the Spanish Walls and the Central Station, in the middle of new housing schemes, the Garibaldi-Repubblica area remained; it was destined to become a business centre after World War II, but the project was never completed. It is now about to be built, but with new and richer functions than were originally thought. The new Lombardy Region office tower will be built nearby, designed by New York's Pei, Cobb & Freed and by Milan's Caputo Partnership, and the new City offices. Also in the area, there will be the Fashion City tower, designed by Cesar Pelli, and the Trees Library, an education-oriented park created by Dutch studio Inside-Outside.

Further out, some former industrial buildings have become office and multi-purpose centres. Here, modernity shows itself in glass and steel. Shapes would inevitably look all the same, but they are brightened up by strong design elements. This is not the image that Bicocca shows, that is being totally renovated after the end of its industrial cycle. Boxy volumes enclose open areas or overpass streets. They are the university buildings, leading to the residential neighbourhood and its shopping centre. The Arcimboldi theatre stands out, with its huge, slanted skylight breaking through the buildings around it. Green areas are at the periphery of Bicocca, but they have a poetic name, Cherry Hill, built from the debris of demolished factories. Parco Nord Milano is much larger, also located on a former industrial site; it is an extraordinary green respite for the city and for the neighbouring towns. Besides these urban-scale schemes, that are likely to extend renovation to the neighbouring areas too, smaller-scale initiatives also foster redevelopment. Among them, the Mediateca di Santa Teresa, a refurbished baroque church that has already become a destination for people who are looking not just for multi-media culture, but also for a high-quality venue for relax and restoration.

1. Civico Acquario



Milan's Aquarium opens again after three years of work. The redevelopment entailed a radical renewal of the exhibition tanks, focussed on the "River" theme. Ground-floor halls have been totally transformed, to accommodate new spaces for teaching and for theme exhibitions, the auditorium and library were renovated. Technological installations are brand new, and the outside has been refurbished as well.

2. Corriere della Sera

In the last few years, the large Corriere complex has been redesigned by Studio Gregotti Associati International: some recent buildings were demolished, others redeveloped, a new large inner courtyard built, a new shade of yellow was used to paint historic buildings, dark grey aluminium panels and metal grids contain the technical installations.



4. Biblioteca degli Alberi



As its name suggests, this new 107,000-sqm park is an actual "trees library", to provide a new way to get to know plants, shrubs and flowers by means of information disseminated throughout the park, such as the Flowers and Insects Museum. The project will be completed in five years, its first installations are expected to be ready in two-three years.

5. Città della Moda

The landmark of Fashion City will be a high-rise tower, and an elevated piazza surrounded by offices, shops, fashion showrooms, a hotel and houses. The MODAM museum and the Fashion School will be especially important: the former will also exhibit photography, advertising and art; the latter will be a Higher Education centre. American architect Cesar Pelli designed Fashion City's master plan.



8. Sede Torno



The headquarters of Torno are located in two buildings: a beautiful redeveloped 1960s building, with a glass-covered façade designed for energy conservation; and an impressive curvy structure in glass and steel, also innovative in terms of energy performance.

9. Stelvio 57

The site of a former pasta factory is now occupied by a new and light office building, marked by a huge crystal curved wall. Its simple architecture and curtain wall make it very light, also thanks to savvy use of reflections. Architect Roland Gantes designed it.



3. Mediateca di Santa Teresa



The first large "bookless library" in Italy, the Mediateca di Santa Teresa is the digital section of Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense, located in a former baroque church. The project, co-ordinated by AIM, involved the total refurbishment of the building, that now has 120 computer workstations, an archive of over 1,000 films and 400 CD-ROMs, a 110-seats conference room. A cosy glass and steel "cube", with outdoor garden, hosts the bookshop and cafeteria.

Area Garibaldi Repubblica

The Garibaldi Repubblica area, a very large abandoned site in the centre of Milan, finally sees a concrete redevelopment plan after fifty years of neglect. In the next few years, 35 hectares of urban land will be redeveloped, most projects having been chosen through international design competitions. Three main elements will be built: the Giardini di Porta Nuova 100,000-sqm park; the new institutional centre, with the offices of the Lombardy Region and of the City of Milan; and the privately-developed Fashion City scheme.

6. Nuova Sede Comune Milano



The new City Administration building will be a representative and welcoming one. A 150-metres tower will rise, that can accommodate about 1,500 people; it will replace the current technical offices. During 2006, an international competition will be called, to appoint the designers, builders and managers of the complex.

7. Regione Lombardia

The new headquarters will gather functions and services currently scattered around the city in a single complex. The project for the site includes a 160-metres tower for political and representative offices, surrounded by four lower buildings reserved to culture and entertainment, public services, an auditorium and schools.



10. Bodio Center



A large and modern office centre has been built on the South border of the Bovisa neighbourhood. Its 67,000-sqm site was formerly occupied by the Alcatel factories; the new centre comprises five buildings around a piazza with a white sail-shaped structure and landscaped spaces for the 4,000 people who work here.

11. Maciachini

"Maciachini Business & Multifunctional Park" is the name of the redevelopment scheme on the former Carlo Erba area, 100,000 sqm in the north-west part of Milan, that has been totally abandoned in the late 1980s. The new development, managed by Europa Risorse, will breathe new life into this city district, with offices, shops, hotels, restaurants and bars, sports and leisure facilities and green spaces.

