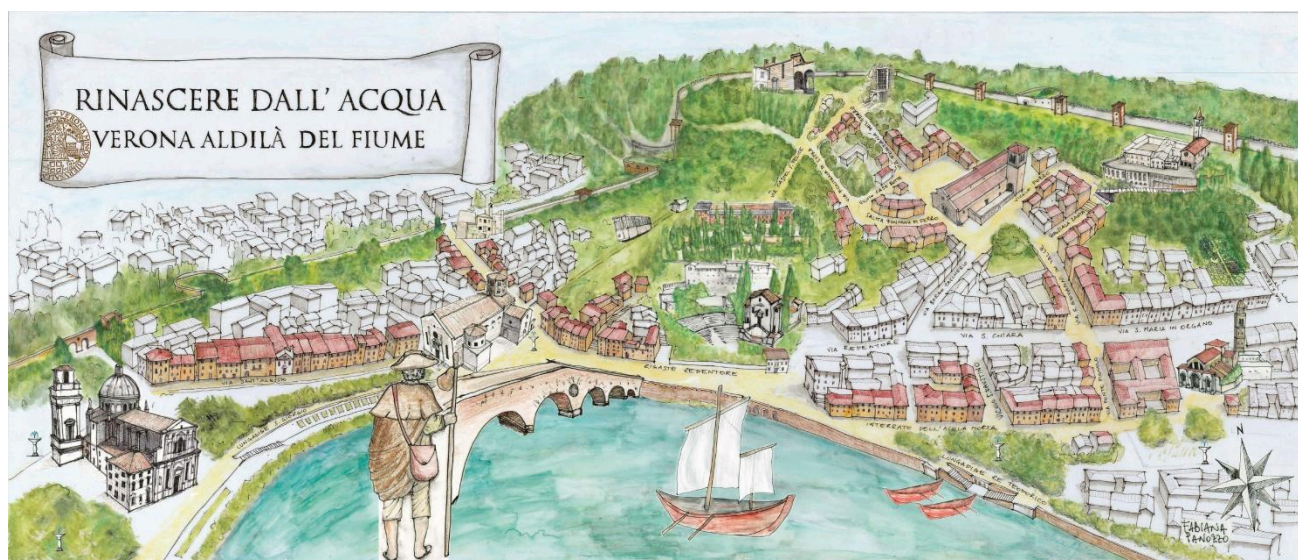




VERONA MINOR HIERUSALEM  
UNA CITTÀ DA VALORIZZARE ASSIEME

## REBIRTH FROM WATER, VERONA BEYOND THE RIVER



If you're seeking to uncover a lesser-known and less frequented side of Verona — one that is surprising, profound, and captivating, where history, nature, and beauty seamlessly intertwine — we invite you to explore the itinerary "**Rebirth from Water – Verona Beyond the River**" by Verona Minor Hierusalem.

The route begins at the ancient **Ponte Pietra**, tracing the historical and spiritual ties between Verona and Jerusalem. It leads you across the river to a part of Verona centered around the city's oldest and original heart: **San Pietro Hill**. This hill, home to Verona's first Roman settlement, was a site of ancient worship and one of the earliest Christian communities. Today, its theater steps and the lush greenery of its trees are beautifully reflected in the shimmering waves of the **Adige River**.

The river itself becomes the blue thread weaving this journey together, reflecting the sky's light and inviting us to reconnect with its waters, rediscovering Verona's historic identity as a city of land and water—once known as the "**great seaport on land.**" Walking through former canals and

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streams, now transformed into narrow alleys and hidden passages, you encounter secret squares, glimpses of medieval walls, and stone-paved streets climbing the hillside, flanked by caper plants and geraniums. Along the way, kind and knowledgeable volunteers welcome you, guiding you to churches that hold remarkable treasures. The journey begins with the humble **Church of Saints Siro and Libera**, nestled on the steps of the Roman Theater. This sacred site hosted Verona's first Christian ceremony and was later transformed into a Baroque gem by a devout **Confraternity**. Next, you discover **Santa Maria in Organo**, an ancient Lombard-era abbey that flourished anew during the Renaissance. Enveloped in a continuous tapestry of frescoes and exquisite paintings, the abbey reveals its most extraordinary treasures in the choir and what was once called "**the most beautiful sacristy in Italy.**" Here, the brilliance of **Fra Giovanni** comes to life through his masterful Renaissance wooden inlays, featuring intricate perspectives of ideal cities, geometric solids inspired by the golden ratio, and lifelike symbolic animals so vivid they seem almost tangible.

Continuing the journey, we walk up to the ancient baptismal church of **San Giovanni in Valle**, where the magnificent Romanesque apse enchants visitors. Within its crypt lies a rare early Christian sarcophagus adorned with intricate sculptural reliefs. From here, a short detour takes us to **Santa Maria di Betlemme**, now known as **San Zeno in Monte**, where a terrace offers an unforgettable panoramic view of Verona. Descending — whether from here or from San Pietro Hill — we arrive at **Santo Stefano**, a church steeped in history and rich in relics and art. Its layers of history unfold through its early Christian, early medieval, and Romanesque past. Next, we visit **San Giorgio**, whose harmonious dome, labyrinthine floor, and paintings by masters like **Veronese** and **Tintoretto** transform it into a magnificent gallery of sacred art. The itinerary comes full circle—like the cycle of water—back to **Ponte Pietra**, a place to return to, unchanged yet somehow transformed, perhaps a little more at peace and with a brighter smile.

*Text by Davide Adami*

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*Translations by Elisa Mosele*

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