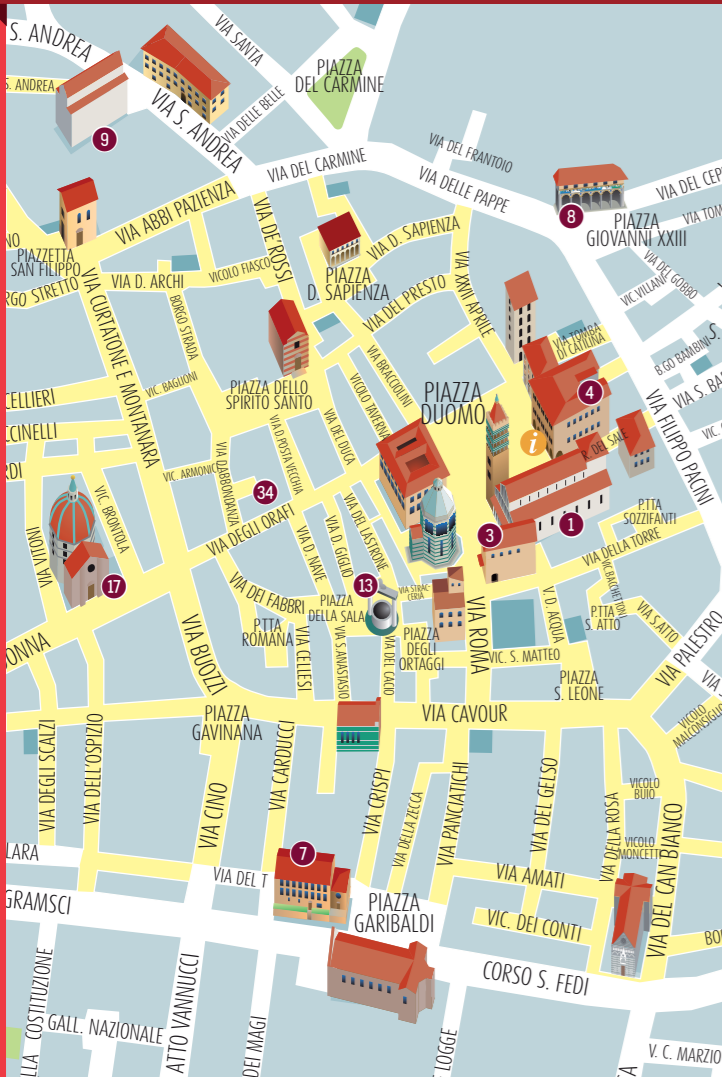


# JACOBEAN ITINERARIES\*



\* Detail of the large map of the city of Pistoia

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Cover: St. James, silver altar

Photo: Stefano Di Cecio

Cathedral of S. Zeno



## THE SILVER ALTAR OF ST. JAMES

This **silver altar** is one of the most important examples in Europe of the Jacobean pilgrimage and cult. Originally created for the no longer extant chapel of St. James, it was constructed at the behest of Bishop Atto, in the first two bays of the cathedral's right aisle to house the saint's relic upon its arrival from Santiago de Compostela in 1145. The altar is currently located in the Chapel of St. James, formerly the Chapel of the Crucifix. It was built in several stages, between 1287 and 1456, by generations of the most important medieval



Bishop Atto, enamel, front paliotto, beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> c.



Madonna Enthroned, reredos, end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century

Original Sin, right side paliotto, 1361-1364



Preaching of St. James, front paliotto, 1316



Busts of the Prophets, reredos - left side, Filippo Brunelleschi, 1401

and Renaissance artists. The embossed gilded silver construction is composed of separate parts that have become a single structure over time. Authorized by the General Council of the Commune and the People of Pistoia in 1287, the first to be made was the reredos, or silver *tabula*, which was placed above the marble altar in the Chapel of St. James. The reredos and a pre-existing *paliotto*, or "*tabula ante altare*" (which dates to 1261), were

damaged in 1293 following the famous theft by Vanni Fucci, which recounted Dante Alighieri in the XXIV canto of his *Inferno*. A new paliotto **A** was built in 1316 by Andrea di Jacopo d'Ognabene, the Pistoiese goldsmith. With 15 panels, it illustrates Stories of the New Testament, Stories of St. James, and a Christ in Majesty between Mary and St. James.

Between 1330 and 1340, the reredos was first enlarged. In 1361, work began on the side *paliotti*. The one on the right **A<sub>d</sub>**, has nine panels with *Stories of the Old Testament*, the work of the Florentine goldsmiths Francesco di Niccolò and Leonardo di Ser Giovanni (1361-1364). The *paliotto* on the left **A<sub>s</sub>**, has the *Stories of St. James*, again by Leonardo di Ser Giovanni (1367-1371). Between 1380 and 1390, the goldsmith Piero d'Arrigo Tedesco worked on modifying the *reredos* **B**. He re-used the main figures from the 1287 "*tabula*": the *Madonna with Child Enthroned* **B<sub>1</sub>**, the

*Eulalia* **B<sub>2</sub>**, co-patron of Pistoia; and *St. Zeno* **B<sub>3</sub>**. They were incorporated into a larger order, together with statuettes by Tedesco and from other sources, e.g., the *Blessing Christ* **B<sub>4</sub>** from a processional cross. The large statue in the round of *St. James enthroned* **B<sub>5</sub>**, a masterpiece by Giglio Pisano (1349-1353), was placed in a large niche in the mid-section. The crowning of the reredos was designed by the Pistoia painter Giovanni di Bartolomeo Cristiani; it was carried out between 1394 and 1398 by the goldsmiths Nofri di Buto from Florence and Atto di Piero Braccini from Pistoia, who embossed the figure of the *Blessing Christ* **B<sub>6</sub>** between *angelic choirs* **B<sub>7</sub>**. After the altar was consecrated in 1399, the completion of the two sides of the reredos, with figures of Prophets, Doctors of the Church, Evangelists, and other saints, was entrusted to various artists. Standing out among these is the work of the very young Filippo Brunelleschi, one of the greatest Renaissance

artists the silver altar has his busts of the prophets *Isaiah* and *Jeremiah* **B<sub>s1</sub>**, a full-length *St. Augustine* **B<sub>s2</sub>**, and a seated *St. John the Evangelist* **B<sub>s3</sub>**. Created in 1401, it is placed on the left side of the reredos. In front of the altar is the monumental *reliquary of St. James*, executed in Florence by Lorenzo Ghiberti in 1407 (with a dated inscription on the base). It contains a small piece of bone considered to be an authentic relic of the Apostle James the Greater that, according to tradition, arrived from Santiago de

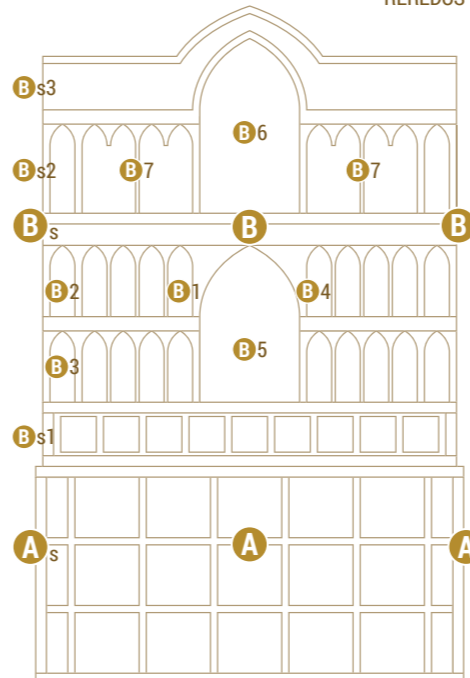
Reliquary of St. James



Compostela in 1145. The altar and reliquary were part of the "*Treasure of St. James*", kept in the "*sacristy of the fair ornaments*", as described by Dante. Today a rich collection of this precious patrimony of sacred art is kept in the Cathedral Museum located in the Ancient Palace of the Bishops.

Silver altar of St. James, 1287-1456

- A** PALIOTTO
- A<sub>s</sub>** LEFT PALIOTTO
- A<sub>d</sub>** RIGHT PALIOTTO
- B** REREDOS
- B<sub>s</sub>** LEFT REREDOS
- B<sub>d</sub>** RIGHT REREDOS



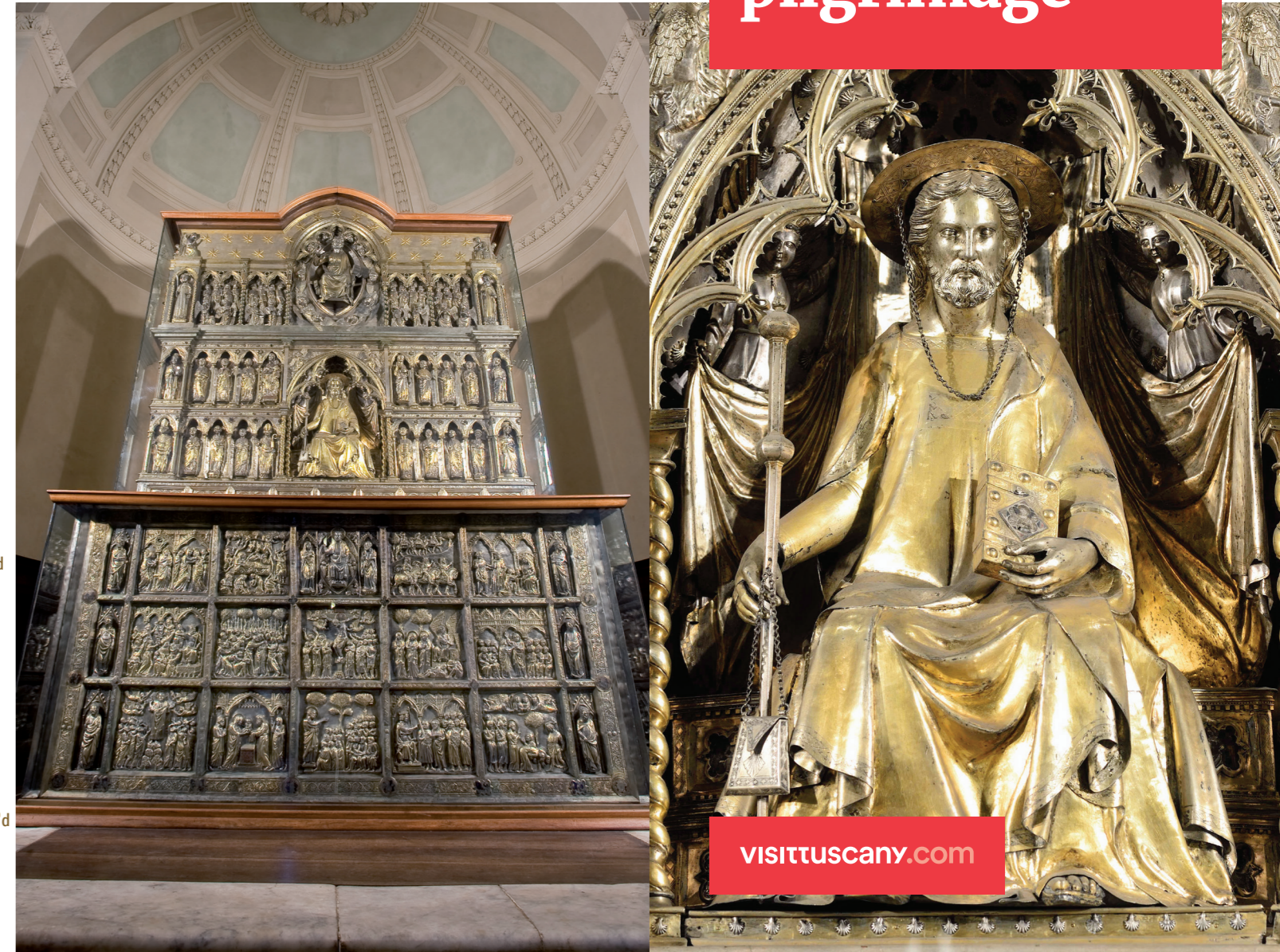
"I rained from Tuscany. A short time since into this cruel gorge. A bestial life, and not a human, pleased me, Even as the mule I was; I'm Vanni Fucci, Beast, and Pistoia was my worthy den ... What thou demandest I cannot deny; So low am I put down because I robbed The sacristy of the fair ornaments, And falsely once 'twas laid upon another."

*The Divine Comedy*, Dante Alighieri  
(Translated by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)

Pistoia e Montagna Pistoiese



## Pistoia and the Jacobean pilgrimage



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# Pistoia

## & THE PILGRIMAGE

Pistoia has strong ties to the pilgrimage tradition, as demonstrated by both historical documentation and the city's works of art and its monuments. Beginning in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the city became the only Jacobean cult center in Italy when, in 1145, Bishop Atto arranged to have brought from Santiago de Compostela a relic (a skull fragment) of the apostle James the Greater, who was then proclaimed Pistoia's patron saint. Pilgrims going to either Rome or Santiago de Compostela could reach Pistoia easily, as it was well connected to the Via Francigena, and visit the chapel of St. James to venerate the relic and to ask for the apostle's "grace" and intercession.

To assist pilgrims, the *Opera di S. Jacopo* was established as the cathedral and in the

adjacent Bishop's Palace established after the mid-11<sup>th</sup> century. This institution also was entrusted with overseeing the saint's cult and administering the "Treasure of St. James". In addition, the city had hospices for pilgrims, the poor, and wayfarers. These included the *Spedale di S. Jacopo* (mid-11<sup>th</sup> c.) as well as the better known *Spedale del Ceppo* (late 13<sup>th</sup> c.) that specialized in caring for the sick, becoming the city's hospital. In the second half of the 1300s, the hospice and hospital of the Tau was founded, specializing in the treatment of St. Anthony's fire. Nevertheless, the pilgrimage culture has survived in Pistoia over the centuries as can be seen in Pistoia's places of worship and in its traditions, especially those related to Jacobean festivities.

## JACOBEOAN ITINERARIES

**CATTEDRALE DI S. ZENO**  
**A Right portal:** once the access to the no longer extant chapel of St. James that, upon entering, had been located in the first two bays of the right aisle since its origin in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Still legible on the portal architrave is the Latin inscription that reads, "You who come, learn what the Curia of Christ says/ whoever (you are), avoid evil,

do good, [and] you will live for centuries" (late 12<sup>th</sup> c.). On the left of the decorative spirals is the figure of a phoenix, a symbol of immortality as well as of the resurrection. Under the loggia to the right of the portal, Mary Salome is depicted as she asks Christ to welcome the children and the apostles John and James into Paradise. The lunette on the wall of the Bishops' Ancient



Pilgrims, detail of the cycle of the Works of Mercy, Spedale del Ceppo, Santi Buglioni, third-fourth decades of the 16th century

Palace of contains the image of St. James, patron saint of Pistoia. With his right hand, he blesses the city, while his left hand embraces its miniated reproduction (Giovanni Battista Naldini and Giovanni Balducci - fresco, end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century).

**B Counter-façade wall:** in the lunette of the portal, the benedictory Christ is seen between the apostles James and John (fresco, end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century).

**C Counter-façade wall:** the monument of the bishop St. Atto is located between the central entrance and the right portal. The three central panels are from the saint's ancient sepulcher and depict with great narrative effectiveness the key moments in the acquisition of the relic of St. James (Sienese school - marble bas-

relief, first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> c.).  
**D Counter-façade wall:** on the left side of the portal is the marble sepulcher of Bishop Baronto Ricciardi and his brother Bonifazio. The tiles of the original Gothic monument remain, with the Madonna and Child enthroned in the center. On the left, Baronto is presented by St. Zeno and, on the right, Boniface by St. James (Sienese/Pisan workshop - marble bas-relief, 14<sup>th</sup> c.).

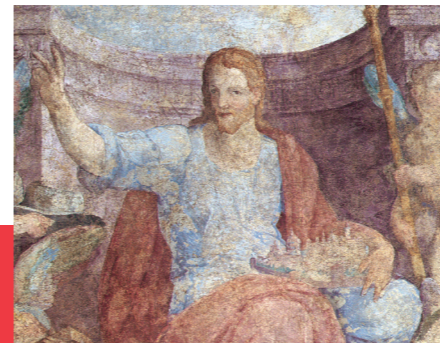
**E First bay:** stoup, probably belonged to the chapel of St. James, with relief busts of the apostles Peter, Paul, John, and James plainly visible in the "nicchio", the pilgrimage shell (workshop of Nicola Pisano - marble furnishing, end of the 13<sup>th</sup> c.).

**F Right aisle, current Chapel of St. James, formerly Chapel of the**

**Crucifix:** the silver altar of St. James (various artists - 1287-1456) and the reliquary of St. James (Lorenzo Ghiberti - 1407) are placed here. On the left wall of the chapel is a depiction of St. Atto solemnly welcoming Mediovillano and Tebaldo upon their return from Compostela with the precious Jacobean relic (Pietro Ulivi - mural painting, 1843-1846).

**G Right-hand aisle, Chapel of S. Atto or of the relics:** the gilded and silvered bronze urn of St. Atto, with medallions illustrating the bishop's virtues (1855). On the right is the *Braccio di S. Zeno*, an arm-shaped reliquary with a hand raised in blessing (Enrico Belandini - 1369).  
**H I Tribuna:** in the right niche, a giant, painted clay statue of St. James; in the left niche, a statue of St. Zeno (early 17<sup>th</sup> c.).

MAP → 1



St. James, Pistoia's patron saint, the loggia of the cathedral, the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century



St. James, Pistoiese craftsmanship, first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century

Mission of St. James, marble relief, late 12<sup>th</sup> century



MAP → 3

### ANTICO PALAZZO DEI VESCOVI

The palace houses the **Museum of the Cathedral**, part of a more extensive museum tour that is accessible only with a guide. The sophisticated goldsmithery works in the Treasure of St. James are kept here, which include the chalice and cross reliquary of St. Atto (gilded silver - end of 13<sup>th</sup> c.). The building also contains the original Sacristy of the Treasure of St. James, the famous "sacristy of the fair ornaments" looted by Vanni Fucci, described by Dante Alighieri in Canto XXIV of his *Inferno*. The audience room of the *Opera di S. Jacopo* displays a fresco of the Crucifixion with Mary, St. James, St. John, and John the Baptist (Giovanni di Bartolomeo Cristiani - 1387), medallions, and figures of saints on the vaults and walls (Sano di Giorgio - 1407) as well as a monochrome fragment of Pistoiese pilgrims departure for Compostela, on the south wall (unknown artist from Pistoia - early 15<sup>th</sup> c.).



Cross reliquary of St. Atto, gilded silver, late 18<sup>th</sup> century

### PALAZZO COMUNALE

**Courtyard:** on the right upon entering is the stone sculpture of St. James (Pistoiese manufacture - first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> c.), from the destroyed Salesian convent built in the 1600s under the supervision of the *Opera di S. Jacopo*.

**Sale affrescate:** seen entering on the left, in the splay of a closed window, is the votive fresco of the Madonna with St. James and St. Zeno (unknown painter from Pistoia - 1438).

MAP → 4

### MUSEO CIVICO D'ARTE ANTICA IN PALAZZO COMUNALE

The city's main museum has numerous paintings with iconic images. The first among these is The Madonna of the Pergola by the Pistoiese Bernardino Detti, located on the first floor. Displayed along the staircase leading to the upper floors of the museum is the glazed ceramic altarpiece from the no longer extant chapel of St. James (Benedetto Buglioni - 1490). In the section dedicated to 17<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>-century painters from Pistoia and Florence, special mention

should be made of the sketch by Giuseppe Valiani that reproduces the Glory of the Virgin surrounded by St. James and St. Zeno with the city of Pistoia and in the background, St. Atto kneeling in adoration. The museum has the marble relief (late 12<sup>th</sup> c.) depicting the Mission of St. James, from the destroyed portal of S. Jacopo in Castellare (a church not currently open to visitors).

MAP → 4

### SPEDALE DEL CEPPO

**Arcade:** built in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, the loggia is adorned with tondi by Giovanni Della Robbia and a frieze illustrating the seven Works of Mercy, created by Santi Buglioni. Looking at the hospital, the first panel on the left is dedicated to the welcoming of pilgrims, portrayed with the distinctive symbols of a Jacobean pilgrimage.

MAP → 8



Detail of the balustrade, Galleria Vittorio Emanuele, beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century

### PIEVE DI SANT'ANDREA

**Portal:** the architrave depicts the theme of the Journey of the Three Kings, considered the first pilgrims in Christian history. This work from 1166 is by Guamonte and his brother Adeodato.

MAP → 9

### BASILICA DELLA MADONNA DELL'UMILTÀ

**Atrium:** the shells, or "nicchi", in the four angular pendentives of the small dome in the atrium of the basilica were introduced as references to the Jacobean cult (Ventura Vitoni - 1506-1507).

MAP → 17

### GALLERIA VITTORIO EMANUELE

Inaugurated in 1912, the gallery served as both an exhibiting gallery and a theater for variety shows and cinema. An important example of the Liberty style in Pistoia, the building's façade is adorned with wrought-iron-balustrades bearing plant motifs. In the center is a pilgrim's shell, one of the city of Pistoia's symbols (Fonderia Michelucci - iron and cast iron).

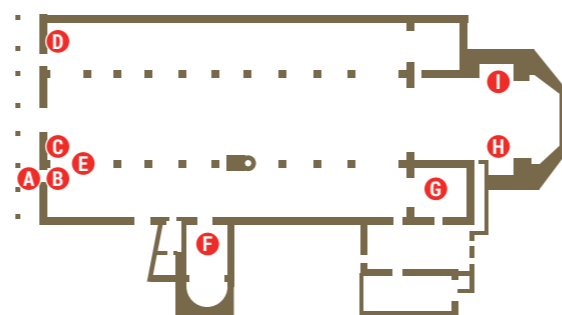
MAP → 34



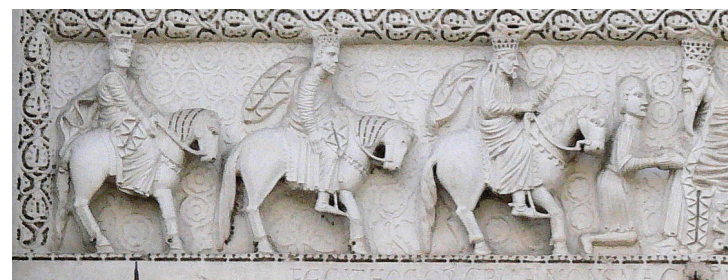
Madonna of the Pergola, Bernardino Detti, 1523



The shell, or "nicchio", the pilgrim's symbol



The Three Kings, detail of the architrave, parish church of S. Andrea, Guamonte and Adeodato, 1166



The well of the Leoncino, Piazza della Sala

