



MUSEO DELLA FINE DELLA GUERRA (End of the War Museum)

You can find this point of interest in Dongo - Path 1 - Stage 1

INFORMATION

Location: The “Museo della Fine della Guerra – Dongo Aprile 1945” is located at the ground floor of Palazzo Manzi, Piazza Paracchini 6.

Paving: the Palace hallway is paved with stone slabs; the exhibition area is paved with wooden tiles.

Architectural Barriers: to access the rooms of the museum from the courtyard there is a chute, after which one has to cross a wrought-iron gate. The museum is fully accessible by disabled persons, too.

Access: access to the Museum is by the round floor of Palazzo Manzi.

Services: parking available in the square and in the immediate surroundings; automated teller machine and Chemist in Piazza Paracchini; Tourist Office and Public Library inside Palazzo Manzi.

Leisure and food: bars, cafes and restaurants in the area.

Other information: for opening times and ticket prices, visit the [Museum's website](#)
Museum videos are available in 4 languages (Italian, English, German and French).

DESCRIPTION

(text by Alessandra Mutti on behalf of Cooperativa Turistica Imago)

Dongo is the place where Benito Mussolini and the “hierarchs” of the Italian Social Republic were captured and taken to the Town Hall, Palazzo Manzi, in order to formalize the arrest. Only a few days before, the Golden Hall, the palace’s hall of honour, had been arranged as mortuary for the Partisans slain by the fascist brigades.

Thus, the Palace became the backdrop for memorable historical events and is now the ideal setting for their recollection in a museum. And thus the innovative “End of the War Museum” was born in Dongo in April 2014: a virtual and interactive journey into the depths of one of the most controversial pages in Italian history.

Advanced multimedia technology thrusts visitors into the tragic contraposition which saw Italians fight against other Italians, which characterized the Resistance on Lake Como, as throughout the rest of Italy. Visitors will be able to experience the capture and execution of Mussolini and his “hierarchs”, the dramatic epilogue of the twenty-year long Fascist period.

The exhibition takes place in the ground floor rooms of the historic Palazzo Manzi: an enthralling multimedia narration, where the visitor is caught in a web of memoirs and tales. Video projections and soundscapes bring the heroes of the Resistance and the defeated of the War back to life, in an immersive journey designed to interest and provide extensive information to people of all ages.

The seven rooms are organized as follows:

ROOM 1 – The days of Liberation

Room 1 is an introduction to the Museum: it presents the situation in Italy in April 1945 and a wall-sized print shows Palazzo Manzi in those days. The newspapers hanging from the ceiling are there for all to read: one could say it’s “raining news.” Audio tracks broadcast Radio London announcements (coded messages and news), during which the voices of Sandro Pertini and of colonel Stevens are clearly recognizable.

ROOM 2 – Events in Dongo

There is a rather original “video” in Room 2, which is totally dark for the occasion: objects on a mirror-wall are lit-up. They narrate the capture of the fascist “hierarchs” and of Benito Mussolini. Finally, archive footage shows the execution of Mussolini and the hierarchs, including original images not shown before.

ROOM 3 – The years of Resistance

Room 3 is dedicated to the memory of Partisans. The walls host photographs of Resistance combatants, while you can hear a voice quoting excerpts of Partisans’ texts and letters.

ROOM 4 – The Red and the Black

Divided in two by a curtain carrying the colours of the Italian flag, room 4 consists of images and words written on panels which offer an account on the two conflicting themes of the resistant factory (Falck) and the Black Brigades' headquarters.

ROOM 5 – Memories of the Resistance: household stories

Possibly the most fascinating room of all: chairs are disposed around the fireplace as a recollection of when granddads, at night, told their grandchildren their stories. In this particular case they are the stories of Partisans, combatants, or whoever has memories of war or the Resistance.

ROOM 6 – The War beyond Dongo

Many are the themes touched on in this room, dealing with a territory which crosses the boundaries of Lake Como and covers other areas of Europe, too. In fact, one wall covered by panels narrates events relevant to the fight between Partisans and Fascists in the Como area and the phenomenon of contraband. On the opposite wall, the scenario extends to Europe, and the events of the war between '43 and '45. Particular emphasis is given to the Arromanches-les-Bains events, Dongo's twin town: Arromanches is in fact one of the Normandy locations where D-Day took place on 6 June 1944. Special attention is paid, too, to the liberation of the city of Como by the Partisans and the subsequent arrival of the Allies on the shores of the lake.

ROOM 7 – Snapshots of the Liberation

The room is an immersive environment: the video is projected onto the white walls of the room by means of mirrors. Images are reflected following an erratic pattern, so as to convey emotional disorientation. The videos narrate the days immediately prior to Mussolini's capture, when on the hills overlooking Dongo, Fascist soldiers killed many Partisans (including Giulio Paracchini, to whom the square where the Museum is located is now dedicated), creating a ill-feeling in town, just three days before the capture of Mussolini.