

## The Public Library

I moved to Cesenatico when I was pregnant with my son. Without doubt the public library was the place that helped me become the person I am today.

My father was a great reader, and I grew up among books, so, when my son was born, I tried to recreate something that I felt belonged to me. It was easy, housed in a warm building, a little like if it were the heart of this town. I really felt that I had arrived and also that I was very much part of something that had the right way about it.

It is in this library that I met many of the townsfolk, a place where you are reciprocally linked by invisible, but sticky threads, like a "good spiders web", which holds you close and creates bonds.

It is here where everyone can find time for themselves, a sense of belonging. I like that this is a public place, which welcomes anyone, like the soul of free culture. Students come to study and exchange ideas, older people browse newspapers, reading groups meet, small children listen to stories and play... even tourists stop here to read. I come to the library to read up on my work, often in the children's section, which is my favourite area, I feel at home there.

This building, which once also housed the town hall and a school, was converted into a library in 1974 and it was renovated between 2006 and 2008. It was originally a Casa del Fascio (used by the National Fascist Party during the war years) accessed from a monumental entrance on another side of the building. Today, however, it is the large windows of the entrance onto the square that invite you to enter, whilst at the same time the librarians welcome you with more formality, I like this very much. You can look around, get lost in the different floors that need to be explored, because you understand that you are in a special place, designed to be experienced and, at the same time, it reminds you that Cesenatico is by the seaside.

Even if you are not a reader you will want to climb the stairs, discover all the different areas and spaces, whilst you listen to the steps that become echoes. The room dedicated to the little ones is a theatre where, on soft cushions, you can listen to the stories that come from the illustrated books. In the meeting room, the glass almost disappears, wood covers the walls just like a cabin below deck on a ship.

Upstairs, in a large room, is the Maritime Library. The shelves bear many blue spined books that talk about navigation, seascapes, cruises, adventures, biology and oceanography...

The poetry of the sea can be seen and taken in from the large windows overlooking the Port and its canal, a piece of poetry on paper balanced with the daily life of iron, wood and fishermen's nets.

Looking out, you return to everyday life, to the reality of work, to the history of a town that is built and lives around its port.

At a certain time in the afternoon a cloud of seagulls arrives and flies around the fishing boats as they return from sea.

The library is a ship that has landed in the port of Cesenatico, but which allows those who enter to escape with their imagination.

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