The fifteen historical people on the Original History Cards© are all linked to Pavia and its Province in various ways, and have been divided into five groups, with five corresponding colours:

Leaders	Visionaries	Philosophers	Scientists	Travellers
Hannibal	Einstein	Augustine	Golgi	Chaucer
Barbarossa	Leonardo da Vinci	Boethius	Spallanzani	Petrarch
Liutprand	Ludovico il Moro	Cardano	Volta	Mr Tels

During the game, each historical person may be taken by two monuments. But which ones? Well, let's begin at the beginning, shall we?

Some historians believe that the city we now call Pavia was founded on the site of an earlier Roman military camp. The *castrum* had been raised to protect a makeshift bridge constructed by the Roman Consul Publius Cornelius Scipio in November of 218 BC on his way to the fight **Hannibal**, the general of Carthage. Years later – no one knows exactly when – the Romans returned to the Ticino river to build a new bridge and found a city. Pavia's bridge today, the **ponte coperto**, may well stand on the same stretch of river as that first bridge, more than two thousand years ago, and the city of Pavia may well stand on the same site as that first *castrum*. Hannibal won the ensuing Battle of Ticinus, and proceeded to Casteggio, at the foot of the hills of the **Oltrepò Pavese**, already noted by the ancient Greek historian Strabo as a region of '**good wine** and hospitable people'. We're sure that Hannibal enjoyed a good cup or two while he was there, watering his elephants!

It was in Roman Pavia, or Ticinum, that the philosopher Severinus **Boethius** was imprisoned and then executed by the Ostrogoth king, Theodoric, in the early 6ᵗʰ century. For a thousand years after his death, Boethius' writings were standard texts for students, like those of the **University of Pavia**. Today his bones lie in the church of **San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro,** where they were placed by the Longobard **King Liutprand** in the early 8ᵗʰ century, who also placed there the bones of the early Christian philosopher **Saint Augustine** of Hippo. **Liutprand** also turned his attention to other matters, like making laws to protect the precious vineyards where the wonderful **wine of Oltrepò** was – and still is – made. Even Saint Augustine used **wine** as a metaphor in his writings – such as in his *Confessions*.

The German Holy Roman Emperor **Barbarossa** was a guest at the monastery attached to **San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro** on many occasions in the late 12ᵗʰ century, during his long campaign to subdue the Lombard city states. Some of his staunchest allies were the Malaspina family

of **Oramala** in the Oltrepò, of whom he was also most likely a guest. The followers of the Emperor were the Ghibellines, and one of the great Ghibelline families were the Viscontis of Milan, who built the **Castello Visconteo** in the late 14th century, when they were patrons of the great poet **Francesco Petrarca (Petrarch),** who fell in love with Pavia and wrote to his friend Boccaccio describing the many wonders of the city, such as the **Ponte Coperto bridge**. Just ten years later, another great writer came to the **Castello Visconteo**, **Geoffrey Chaucer** of England. In the great Visconti Library he found the inspiration of some of his *Canterbury Tales*. Chaucer had already translated Boethius into English, and highly esteemed Augustine, so there is little doubt he also visited **San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro.** At the time of the Viscontis, Pavia was the river-port of Milan, and here the Visconti war-fleet was based. When this fleet won a great victory over the enemy Venetian fleet, anchored at Cremona, the Pavian admiral, Pasino degli Eustachi, decided to return to harbour in triumph, decorating the captured Venetian vessels with colourful spoils of war: flags and banners, but also hats, cloaks, trousers… Pasino's ships entered Pavia in such a spectacle of colours that a tradition was born, still observed today: the Gran Pavese. This celebratory decoration of ships bears the name of Pavia in many of the world's languages. The **Castello Visconteo** also played host, in the late 15th century, to the duke of Milan **Ludovico il Moro**, patron of **Leonardo da Vinci. Leonardo** also studied anatomy at the Old San Matteo Hospital, now part of the **University of Pavia.** Both **Ludovico** and **Leonardo** helped transform **Vigevano** into one of the most elegant cities of Italy, with its Ducal Square and mighty castle.

While in Pavia, **Leonardo** took mathematics lessons from one Fazio Cardano, whose son **Girolamo Cardano** was born in Pavia in 1501. The newborn baby was unconscious due to a difficult delivery, and the doctors bathed him in warm **wine of Oltrepò** to revive him! He went on to become a great philosopher and Renaissance man, and a professor at the **University of Pavia** for many years. Among his successors at the **University** there were truly renowned professors. **Lazzaro Spallanzani** studied everything from volcanoes to microbiology, and, of course, how to grow grapes**. Alessandro Volta** invented the battery, making electric current possible. The first public place to receive electric lighting in Pavia was the **Castello Visconteo. Golgi** was the father of Neuroscience, so if we unfortunately know of the negative side effects of **wine** on the brain, it is also down to him!

But the greatest of all scientists to have lived in Pavia was unquestionably **Einstein**. As a teenager he spent two long summers here, studying, exploring, and possibly even falling in love. He met the young Ernestina Marangoni while swimming in the River Ticino beneath the **Ponte Coperto bridge**, and in later days he often thought of those good times. He also helped Ernestina's family with the **wine** harvest in **Oltrepò.**

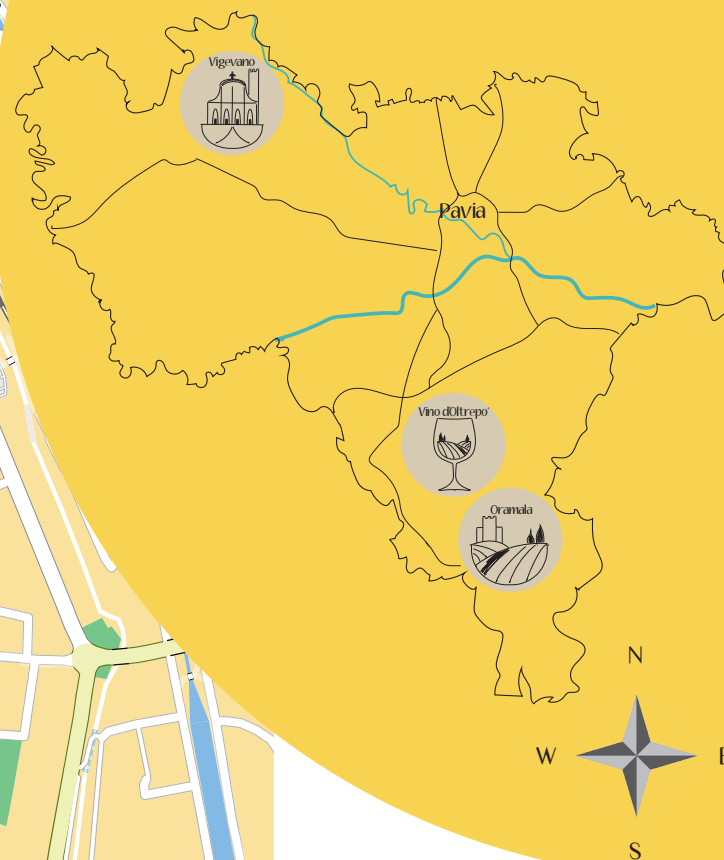*If you want to know more about Pavia and its historical people… come and follow one of The Original History Walks®*

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Have fun!   ***Ivan Fowler, Master History Walker***

Pavia

Province of Pavia

San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro

Castello Visconteo

Universita'

Ponte Coperto

Stazione F.S.

Viale Cesare Battisti

Viale Giacomo Matteotti

Via Severino Boezio

Via Roma

Viale Liberta'

Corso Cavour

Corso Carlo Alberto

Via San Martino

Via Luino

Viale Gorizia

Viale 11 Febbraio

Viale Bligny

Viale Argonne

Viale Canton Ticino

Corso Strada Nuova

Via Girolamo Cardano

Via Giacomo Rezia

Corso Giuseppe Garibaldi

Via Alessandro Volta

Via Ugo Foscolo

Via Porta Nuova

Viale Lungoticino Sforza

Ticino

Vigevano

Pavia

Vino d'Oltrepo'

Oramala

N · S · E · W

… if you have counted the historical people, you may have noticed that one is missing, **Mr Tels**. Who is Mr Tels? Eclectic and practical, ironic and never trivial, visionary and wise…
He is a source of inspiration who loves Pavia and his province. Come and meet him at iviaggiditels.it – vacanzepavesi.it – theoriginalhistorywalks.org

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