

San Giovanni in Fiore - Forense Abbey

The **Forense Abbey** boasts to primary things: it's one of the most ancient churches in Italy and it's one of the most important monuments dedicated to San Giovanni Evangelista, to the Virgin and the Holy Spirit. The church, in rigorous Romanic style, has suffered many restorations and ransacking, but still preserves some original architectonic elements, like the majestic portal formed by strips of slim columns, with spirals decorated with palms and leaves, and a large rose in the centre.

On the major altar in baroque style of Gian Battista Altomare, created in 1740, dominates the statue of the Baptist, patron of the county. The altar is illuminated by the sun's rays that filter through the three little stained glass windows that form a crown and a lovely central

rose. According to studies, the windows were picked by Gioacchino and represent the architectural expression of the Trinity. In the right hand side chapel there is a steep staircase that leads to the crypts, where you can admire the sepulchral niche of the Mystic on which can be read the famous verses of Dante of the XII song of Heaven.

