



# Guide to locations in relation to Sikh History in Italy

## Forli Indian Army War Cemetery

Address: Via Ravegnana 278P - 47100 Forli (FC) Emilia Romagna.

GPS: Latitude: 44.233388, Longitude: 12.060227



**Take the autostrada A14, Bologna to Ancona and exit at Forli. Follow the road into the town of Forli for about 3 kilometres and the Indian War Cemetery can be found on the left hand side, opposite the Communal Cemetery.**

City of Forli is on Via Emilia, the ancient Roman road that connected Rome to Piacenza. The images on this page are from two cemeteries of Forli. The Indian cemetery includes Hindu, Sikh and Muslim soldiers from British India, who had died in Italy during the second world war. Between September 1944 till May 1945, around 50,000 soldiers had come to Italy from British India, out of which 23,000 had been wounded and 11% (around 5,800) had died. Though called "Indian" cemetery, it also has graves of soldiers who had come from cities that are today in Bangladesh and Pakistan. Italian Sikhs have built a memorial to remember Sikh soldiers who had died here and in August Sikhs gather every year for a day of remembrance and pride.



Forli Indian cemetery of second world war soldiers, Italy - S. Deepak, 2011



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**Source: Sunil Deepak, Kalpana.it**

[https://www.kalpana.it/photographs/italy\\_emilia\\_romagna/forli\\_cemetery01.htm](https://www.kalpana.it/photographs/italy_emilia_romagna/forli_cemetery01.htm)



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Source: Commonwealth War Graves Commission

<https://www.cwgc.org/visit-us/find-cemeteries-memorials/cemetery-details/2005200/forli-indian-army-war-cemetery/>



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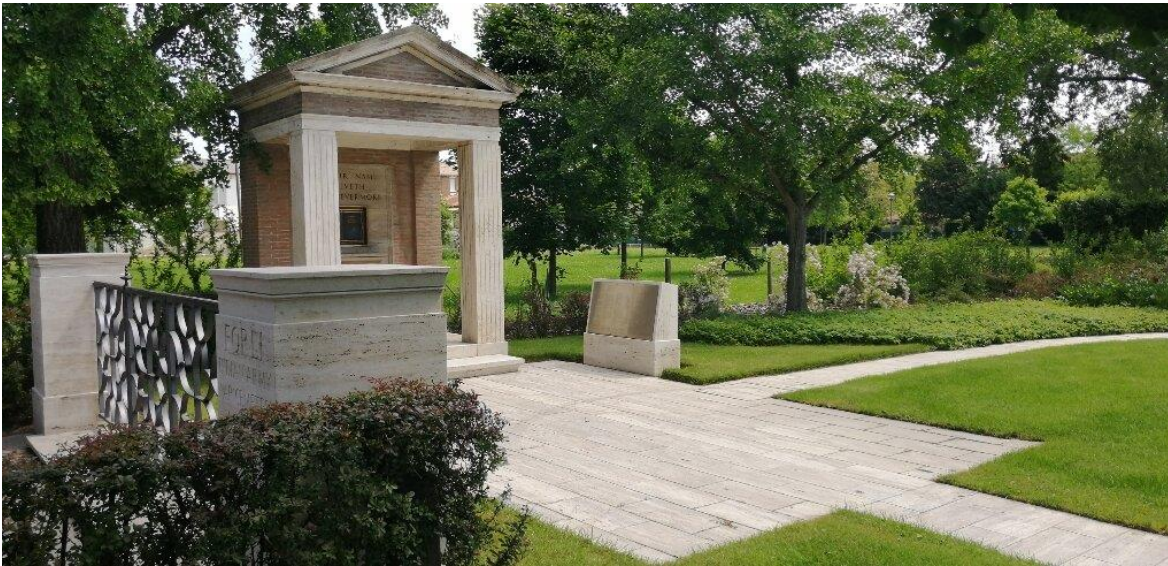
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On 3 September 1943 the Allies invaded the Italian mainland, the invasion coinciding with an armistice made with the Italians who then re-entered the war on the Allied side. Following the fall of Rome to the Allies in June 1944, the German retreat became ordered and successive stands were made on a series of defensive lines. The site of this cemetery was selected in December 1944 by the 10th Indian Division, which had come into the line in the Adriatic sector south of Cesena at the beginning of October 1944. The division had played an important part in the heavy fighting, in appalling weather, between then and the end of the year, suffering considerable casualties. It had been preceded on the Eighth Army front by the 4th Indian Division which had left to go to Greece, and during the fighting in the spring of 1945, the 8th Indian Division also fought on this front. Forli Indian Army War Cemetery contains 496 Commonwealth burials of the Second World War. The cemetery was designed by Louis de Soissons. Within the cemetery, is the Forli Cremation Memorial commemorating nearly 800 Hindu and Sikh officers and men of the Indian Army.



Source: Commonwealth War Graves Commission

<https://www.cwgc.org/visit-us/find-cemeteries-memorials/cemetery-details/2005200/forli-indian-army-war-cemetery/>



## Guide to locations in relation to Sikh History in Italy

### **Sangro River War Cemetery**

Address: Contrada Sentinelle s.n. - 66020  
Torino di Sangro (CH) Abruzzo.

GPS: Latitude: 42.218406, Longitude: 14.535594.



The Cemetery lies in the Contrada Sentinelle in the Commune of Torino di Sangro, Province of Chieti. Take the autostrada A14 and exit at Val di Sangro. After 2.5 km from the exit turn right onto the SS16, Pescara to Vasto road, for nearly 2 km. There is then a sharp right turn up to cemetery.

The cemetery is permanently open and may be visited anytime. The cemetery main gate is kept locked outside of the gardeners working hours to prevent wild boars entering at night. The gate can be opened by entering the code 1221 on the combination padlock.

On 3 September 1943 the Allies invaded the Italian mainland, the invasion coinciding with an armistice made with the Italians who then re-entered the war on the Allied side. Allied objectives were to draw German troops from the Russian front and more particularly from France, where an offensive was planned for the following year. Progress through southern Italy was rapid despite stiff resistance, but by the end of October, the Allies were facing the German winter defensive position known as the Gustav Line, which stretched from the river Garigliano in the west to the Sangro in the east. By 4 November, the Allied force that had fought its way up the Adriatic coast was preparing to attack the Sangro river positions. A bridgehead had been established by the 24th and by nightfall on the 30th, the whole ridge overlooking the river was in Allied hands. The site of this cemetery was selected by the 5th Corps and into it were brought the graves of men who had died in the fierce fighting on the Adriatic sector of the front in November-December 1943, and during the static period that followed. In addition, the cemetery contains the graves of a number of escaped prisoners of war who died while trying to reach the Allied lines. Sangro River War Cemetery contains 2,617 Commonwealth burials of the Second World War. Within the cemetery will be found the Sangro River Cremation Memorial, one of three memorials erected in Italy to officers and men of the Indian forces whose remains were cremated in accordance with their faith

Source: Commonwealth War Graves Commission

<https://www.cwgc.org/visit-us/find-cemeteries-memorials/cemetery-details/2021204/sangro-river-war-cemetery/>



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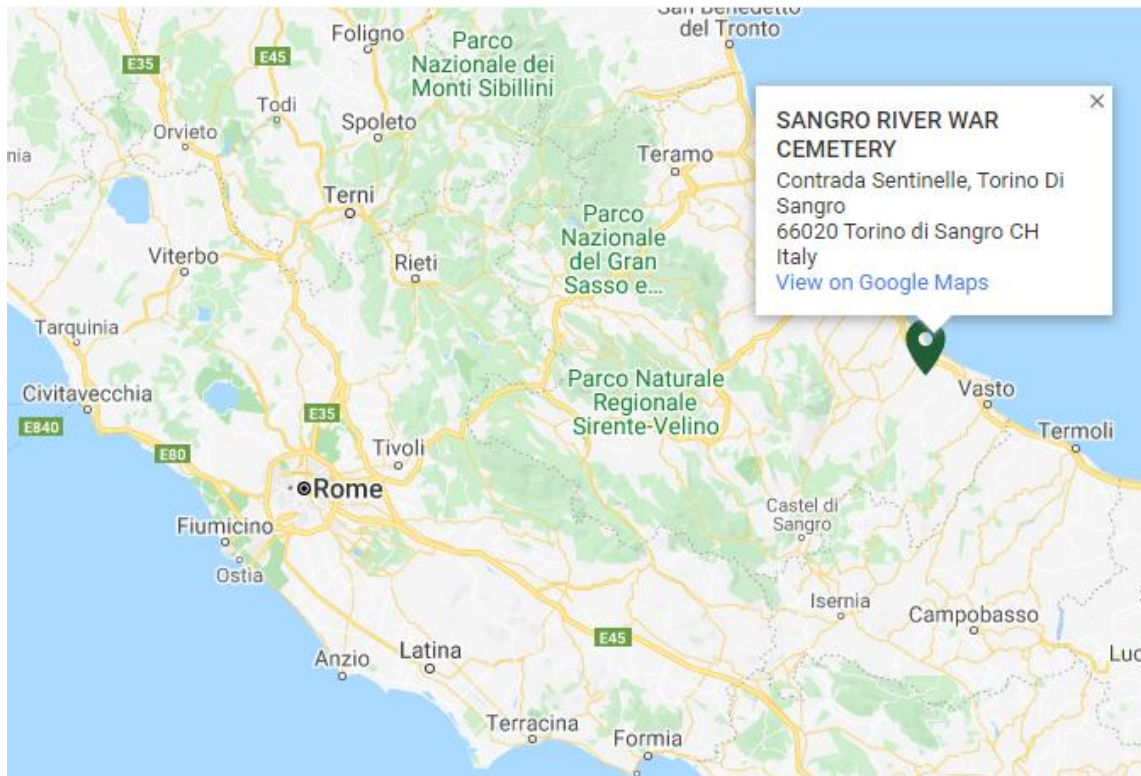
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## Guide to locations in relation to Sikh History in Italy

### General Jean-Baptist Ventura



GENERAL VENTURA.

The bas-relief which measures approximately 36 x 66 inches has been unveiled outside the **birthplace of General Ventura's mansion** and was produced in Punjab, India but serves as not just a memory of the general but also connects all the countries together.

The project was initiated by the SK Foundation UK, in collaboration with Commune of Finale Emilia and Sikhi Sewa Society of Italy.

It is known that European mercenaries had been employed at the Sikh court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the early 19th century. Among the first to arrive in Punjab were Jean Baptiste Ventura, an Italian and Jean Francois Allard from France in 1822, both of whom later became the trusted officers of the Maharaja, and served till his death in 1839.





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## General Jean-Baptist Ventura

Address required for the birthplace of General Ventura in the small town of Finale Emilia (to investigate)

