

WHY SHOULD I GO TO ROME



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THE CITY YOU DEFINITELY NEED TO
VISIT BEFORE YOU TURN 30 (OR 130)





THIS IS WHY!

It's hard, maybe even impossible, to find a city that compares to Rome when it comes to history, monuments, art, food, and the overall vibe. The beauty of Rome is something else. It hits you the moment you step onto the *sanpietrini*, the small cobblestones that have been part of the city for centuries.

People have been drawn to the seven hills of Rome for thousands of years. Some came to conquer, others to create. Some built temples and churches, others just soaked it all in. And somehow, all that energy still lingers in the air. Whether you're all about ancient empires, obsessed with art, curious about the Vatican, or just counting down the minutes to *aperitivo* – Rome won't disappoint. It's a city that stays with you long after you've left.

Compared to other European capitals, Rome doesn't have to be hard on your wallet. Food and drinks are surprisingly affordable, and the best way to explore is on foot, as every corner has a story. Whatever you do, make sure you give yourself some time to get a little lost. That's when the best bits happen.

So, why not let one of the many roads lead you to Rome? Come for the ruins, the gelato, the sunsets over the Tiber – or simply all of it.

In bocca al lupo – and enjoy *La Città Eterna*.

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NEIGHBOURHOODS

Most sites you'll want to visit in Rome can be found **within the Aurelian Walls**, built by Emperor Aurelian in the third century AD. Inside these walls, Rome is divided into various districts, known as *rioni*.

Centro Storico

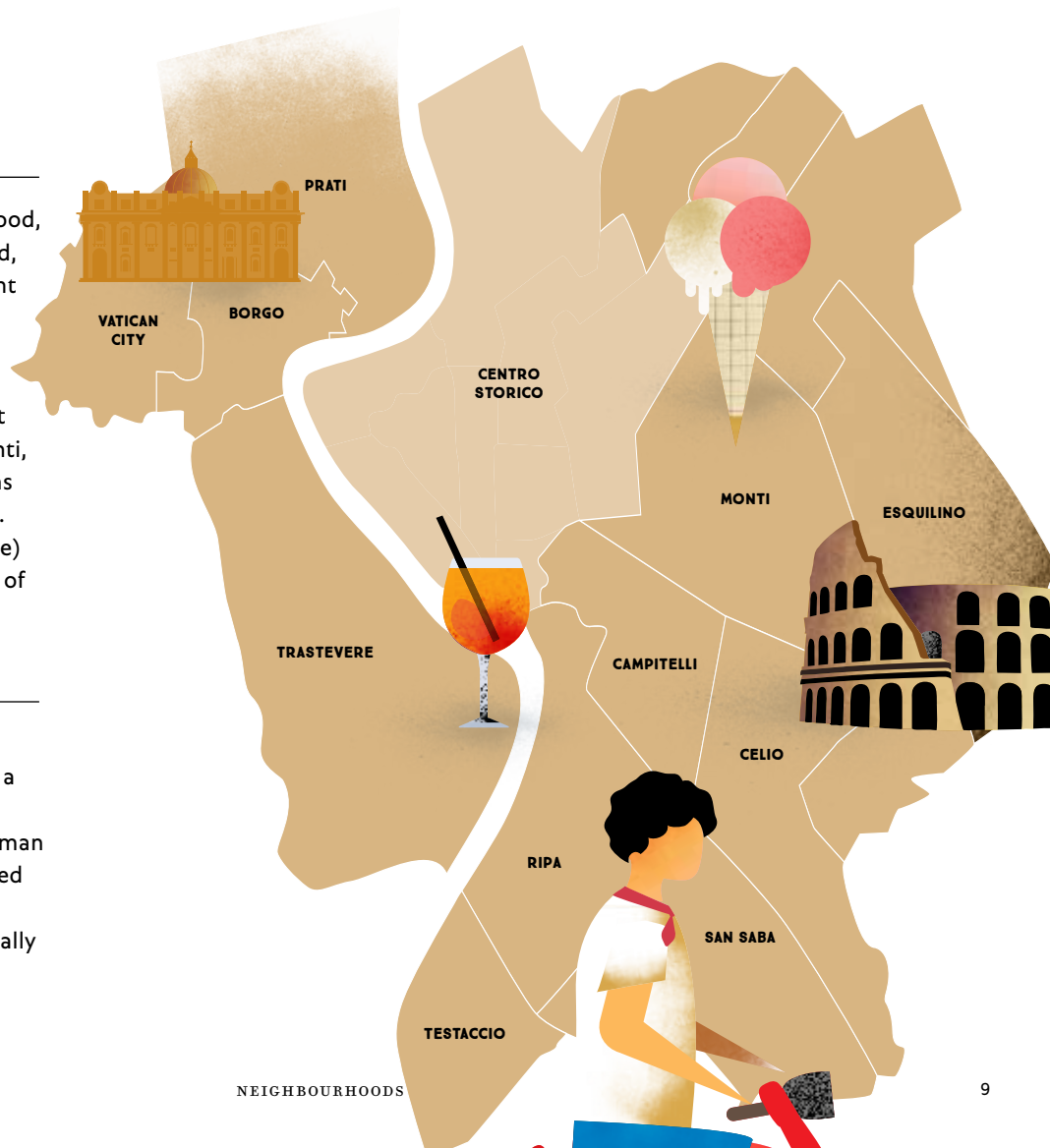
The *rioni* making up Centro Storico are where *La Grande Bellezza* happens. Here, you'll find Baroque showstoppers such as Piazza Navona, the majestic Pantheon and the Trevi Fountain. With Caravaggio's and Bernini's whichever way you turn, picture-perfect backdrops all around you, and miles of cobbled streets that have seen it all, Rome's historic centre will certainly leave you in awe. Bordering the Centro Storico lies Villa Borghese, Rome's most famous park.

Monti

Rome's oldest neighbourhood, and one of its most beloved, was called *Suburra* in ancient times. Rome's oldest *rione*, right next to the Fori, was the dodgy part of town in Ancient Roman times. That has changed since and Monti, with its central location, has that perfect bohemian feel. It is a good area for (vintage) shopping and offers plenty of great *aperitivo* spots.

Esquilino

Bordering the train station Roma Termini, Esquilino is a bit off the beaten path and offers a more authentic Roman experience. Once considered the new centre of Rome, Piazza Vittorio was historically a bustling hub, surrounded by shops, cafés, and iconic



markets. Today, it retains a lively atmosphere and among Esquilino's gems are some of Rome's most beautiful churches.

Trastevere

Trastevere is one of Rome's most charming and authentic neighbourhoods. This warm and lively district is full of narrow cobbled streets and vibrant piazzas. A must-see is the Basilica di Santa Maria in Trastevere, one of Rome's oldest churches. Piazza San Callisto is the perfect spot for a coffee or *aperitivo*.

Testaccio

Testaccio is often considered the most authentic neighbourhood within the Aurelian walls. Known for its traditional Roman food scene, this area offers a real taste of Roman life. You'll find an ancient mound of broken pottery in the heart of the district.

OUTSIDE THE WALLS

Vatican City & Borgo

Vatican City is steeped in history and spirituality and is home to two of the most iconic landmarks in Rome: St. Peter's Basilica and the Vatican Museums. The Borgo district offers charming streets lined with cafes and shops, perfect for a peaceful stroll.

Prati

Prati is an elegant neighbourhood known for its wide, tree-lined streets and beautiful early 20th-century architecture. It's ideal for shopping, with Via Cola di Rienzo offering a mix of high-end boutiques and local shops. Close to the Vatican, Prati offers a quieter, more refined atmosphere.

Ostiense & Garbatella

Bordering Testaccio, Ostiense is a vibrant, industrial area that has become increasingly popular for its mix of modern culture and history, and ancient art meets industrial architecture in Centrale Montemartini. Garbatella is known for its street art and unique garden city layout.

Trieste

Trieste's picturesque Quartiere Coppedè is a hidden gem with its eccentric, fairytale-like architecture.

San Lorenzo

Just behind Termini Station, San Lorenzo is a lively, edgy neighbourhood known for its bars, street art, and vibrant nightlife. It's a great place to enjoy good food, music, and a youthful atmosphere.

Pigneto

Pigneto is a trendy, up-and-coming neighbourhood, popular for its bohemian vibe. It's a hotspot for creative types and offers a mix of art galleries, indie cafes, and street art.

Flaminio

Flaminio is a quieter district with a strong cultural scene. North of Piazza del Popolo, the area is home to the MAXXI Museum, showcasing contemporary art and architecture.



**PRACTICAL
INFO**

TRAVEL

Rome is a very walkable city. Its monuments in the city centre are best reached on foot. Not only is it the best way to soak up the atmosphere and enjoy all the beauty that lies between the landmarks, but it is also completely free. As an example, it takes about 45 minutes to walk from the Colosseum to St. Peter's Basilica – assuming you don't stop for photos, gelato, or a spritz. From Villa Borghese, it's a little over an hour's walk to Testaccio. Along the way, you'll pass the Spanish Steps, the Trevi Fountain, and the *Bocca della Verità*. For the love of everything sacred, only cross streets at traffic lights or zebra crossings. That said, be prepared: cars won't stop until you start walking.

Roma Termini, the main **train** station, is named after the

ancient Baths of Diocletian located opposite the station. These baths, the largest in ancient Rome, could accommodate up to 3,000 people simultaneously and now form part of the National Roman Museum. Adjacent to Roma Termini, you'll find one of the city's oldest surviving archaeological features: the Servian Wall, constructed in the 4th century BC.

For train tickets, you can either queue at one of the slow and somewhat confusing ticket machines, or you can just use the *Trenitalia* app. Look for your train number on the large displays in the hall: the platform number is usually shown about 10-15 minutes before departure. Platforms 25-29 are located at the end of platform 24.



The **underground** system has three lines. Line A, the orange line, runs from southeast to northwest and is convenient for visiting the Basilica di San Giovanni in Laterano, the Spanish Steps, and the Vatican Museums. The blue line B connects the northeast to the southwest, with stops near the Basilica of St. Paul outside the walls, the Pyramid of Caius Cestius, the Circus Maximus, and the Colosseum. Lines A and B cross at Termini. Line C is currently under construction but runs from San Giovanni station to areas in the southeast, such as Pigneto, and will eventually extend to Piazza Venezia. Tap & go – using your card to touch in and out – is available on all metro lines (and is being rolled out across other modes of transport).

The San Giovanni underground station is an attraction in its own right. Along the walls by the escalators, you'll find markers indicating the different

historical periods and the corresponding ground levels they once occupied. Inside the station, archaeological artifacts discovered during the excavation of the tunnels are on display, offering a glimpse into Rome's layered history.

Rome's **tram** lines mostly run outside the city centre. However, line 8 offers a convenient connection between Stazione Trastevere and Piazza Venezia. Line 3 passes by Porta Maggiore and continues via Santa Croce in Gerusalemme and San Giovanni in Laterano, skirting behind the Colosseum before reaching the Circus Maximus and the Pyramid of Caius Cestius. It also runs near the charming Quartiere Coppedè.

Buses in Rome can be useful but are not always punctual – so there might be a little wait.

You can purchase **tickets** for metros, trams, and buses at

any bar with a blue T sign outside. Don't forget to stamp them once on board, as ticket inspectors show no mercy. For the latest information about public transport in Rome and for information about ticket options, check atac.roma.it.

In Italy, hailing a cab is not permitted, and throughout Rome you'll find **taxi** ranks marked with orange signs. Fares are calculated using a meter and are usually very reasonable. Download the *Free Now* app if you'd like to book and prepay a taxi.

Scattered across the city, you'll find **e-bikes** and **e-scooters** available to hire via various apps (Dott, Bird, Link, Lime).

When you're finished using them, please park them more considerately than others often do. Riding a scooter with two people is strictly prohibited and you can be fined. Be cautious and mindful of the (many) other people in the city centre.

For trips to the seaside, a local train line runs from Roma Termini through Roma Ostiense and Trastevere, reaching Fregene and Santa Marinella. The Metromare metroline connects Ostiense with Ostia for a quicker route to the coast and ATAC Metrebus Roma tickets are valid on this line (see atac.roma.it).



WHERE TO STAY

Rome is not cheap when it comes to hotels and Airbnb options. Prices vary significantly depending on the time of year. Typically, spring and autumn are more expensive, though in recent years, the low season has been limited to just a few weeks. It's advisable to stay relatively centrally as the outer regions of Rome can be challenging to reach by public transport. With a bit of research, and preferably some flexibility, everyone can find a nice spot that fits their budget.

Suite Art Navona

*Via Giuseppe Zanardelli,
20, 00186 Centro Storico,
suiteartnavona.com*

Found near Piazza Navona, Suite Art Navona is located right in the heart of Centro Storico and very close to Prati. The comfortable contemporary rooms offer a nice contrast to their bombastic baroque surroundings.

Casa Santa Sofia

*Piazza della Madonna dei
Monti, 3, 00184
Centro Storico,
casasantasofia.com*

Casa Santa Sofia is in the vibrant Monti neighbourhood and offers affordable accommodation. Overlooking Monti's central Piazza della Madonna dei Monti, this hotel features simple, clean rooms. Its location is close to the Colosseum and the Roman Forum, Piazza Venezia, Quirinal Hill, and Trevi Fountain.

Hotel Griffio

*Via del Boschetto, 144,
00184 Centro Storico,
hotelgriffo.com*

This hotel combines old-fashioned charm with modern comfort in Monti. The boutique hotel has a rooftop terrace with stunning views of Rome. Guests appreciate its proximity to iconic landmarks like the Colosseum while enjoying a quiet, cosy retreat.

Domus Vitra

*Via Cavour, 275,
00184 Centro Storico,
domusvitra.com*

A personal favourite, Domus Vitra is a modern boutique hotel with a minimalist yet very comfortable feel. Situated in Monti, between the Colosseum, Imperial Forums, and Piazza Venezia, Domus Vitra is your perfect home away from home, with the friendliest staff you can imagine.

Jo & Joe

*Via delle Quattro Fontane,
113, 00184 Monti,
joandjoe.com/roma*

This trendy hostel brings a youthful vibe to the heart of Rome. With its colourful design and lively communal spaces, it's an ideal spot for socialising and making new friends. There is a mix of shared and private rooms, ensuring there's something for everyone. Regular events and activities keep the energy high, while the location makes sightseeing a breeze.

Rome Hello

*Via Torino, 45,
00184 Esquilino,
theromehello.com*

This is a fun, welcoming hostel with a friendly atmosphere, making it easy to meet fellow travellers. With a mix of dorms and private rooms, it caters to various budgets. The communal spaces are perfect for socialising, and the staff is always ready to share local tips. Plus, its central location means popular sights are just a short walk away.

The Beehive

Via Marghera, 8, 00185
Esquilino, the-beehive.com

This charming hostel blends a touch of home with a vibrant community spirit. Its warm, inviting decor creates a cosy atmosphere. They organise *aperitivo* nights and city walks, and The Beehive is famous for their bagels. The rooms are clean and simple, and the friendly staff is eager to provide insider tips on local attractions and hidden gems.

La Casa di Amy

Via Principe Amedeo,
85, 00185 Esquilino,
lacasadiamy.com

La Casa di Amy offers a delightful, intimate experience for travellers seeking a more personal touch. This family-run hostel will make you feel part of the family. The charming decor and communal areas encourage relaxation as well as conversation. With a great location near public transport options, it's an easy home base for exploring Rome.

Generator Rome

Via Principe Amedeo,
251, 00185 Esquilino,
staygenerator.com/
hostels/rome

Generator Rome stands out with its urban, eclectic interior design and comfortable rooms. The hostel features a rooftop terrace with stunning city views, perfect for unwinding after a day of exploring. With a mix of dorm rooms and private options, it caters to different preferences and budgets. The on-site bar and restaurant create a lively atmosphere.

↓ MAMA SHELTER



Horti 14

Via di San Francesco di
Sales, 14, 00165 Trastevere,
horti14.com

Hotel Horti 14 combines the rustic charm of Trastevere with a clean, sleek, modern, luxurious interior. If you are looking to stay in an oasis in the city, this hotel really hits the spot. All rooms overlook the botanical gardens, while you still have major sites and monuments at a stone's throw.

Mama Shelter

Via Luigi Rizzo, 20,
00136 Prati,
mamashelter.com/roma

Playful and bold, Mama Shelter Rome is a vibrant hotel with a funky decor and youthful spirit. It features a rooftop bar, communal spaces, and lively restaurants, making it perfect for social travellers or anyone who is working while travelling. Located in the vibrant Prati neighbourhood, it's close to the Vatican and well-connected to the city centre with metro A.



GOOD TO KNOW

Non basta una vita

Rome, the eternal city where ancient monuments meet modern life, with layers and layers (and more layers) of history in between. There is simply too much to see. *Non basta una vita*: a lifetime is not enough. Just don't worry about seeing it all. Savour Rome at your own pace, as every corner has a story to tell. Even if your time in Rome is limited, don't rush. But whatever you do, never skip the Pantheon, enjoy the view of the Forum from the Capitoline Hill, and the stunning Bernini sculptures in the Galleria Borghese. Have some artichokes in the Jewish Ghetto, sip on a spritz in Monti, and stroll through Piazza Navona. Rome is beautiful everywhere, and on every corner, you'll find a new

church or a charming street. Soak in the beauty and try to relax despite the impossible task ahead. After all, when in Rome ...

Tickets

If you're planning to visit major attractions like the Colosseum, Vatican Museums, or Galleria Borghese, it's essential to book your tickets as early as possible. Tickets for Galleria Borghese are released sixty days in advance on their official website, and the same applies to the Colosseum. Tickets to the Colosseum are issued in your name, and you'll need to show photo ID at the entrance to verify your booking. To avoid any issues, make sure the name on your ticket matches your ID. Buying tickets for the Vatican can be challenging.

Once time slots are released, they are often quickly snapped up by third-party ticket agencies. Unfortunately, you might have no choice but to purchase tickets through a reseller, often at an increased price.

First Sunday of the Month

On the first Sunday of each month, many of Rome's museums and archaeological sites offer free entry, allowing visitors to explore cultural landmarks like the Colosseum, Roman Forum, and Capitoline Museums. However, free entry results in (much) longer queues, so come early and be prepared to wait. Some sites may have restrictions on opening hours or special services, so check ahead to avoid unexpected delays.

Churches

Rome is home to over 900 churches, many of which house stunning masterpieces by artists like Michelangelo,

Raphael, Caravaggio, and Bernini. Churches also offer a peaceful refuge and a cool spot in summer but remember to dress appropriately – knees and shoulders must be covered. Many churches in Rome close for lunch, typically between 1.30pm and 3pm. Most church websites aren't regularly updated, but the opening times on Google maps usually are correct.

Coffee!

Since espresso is the default, that's what you'll get when ordering a *caffè*. It is usually cheaper to drink your coffee standing at the bar, and there is definitely some charm in sipping your *caffè* like a local. In summer, try a *caffè freddo* (cold espresso) or *caffè shakerato* (shaken espresso with ice). Don't hesitate to order a cappuccino during *merenda* around 4pm – it's perfectly acceptable here, despite the 'no cappuccinos after breakfast' myth. But beware, ordering a cappuccino right after



lunch or (the horror!) after dinner is definitely frowned upon.

What time?

Timing is key and Romans do not like to eat 'whenever'. Lunch is typically served between 12.30pm and 2pm, after which many restaurants close for a break. They reopen around 7.30pm to start gearing up for dinner, which usually begins no earlier than 8pm. Restaurants that

open before 7.30pm are not necessarily the most authentic.

Gelato

Eating or drinking around Trevi Fountain is prohibited. Sitting on the Spanish Steps is not allowed either. So make sure to take your gelato elsewhere. Speaking of which, avoid brightly coloured ice creams, as those are often artificial. Real *gelato artigianale* has natural colours; banana is a creamy white, and pistachio

has a subtle, greyish-green hue. Also, quality gelato won't be piled on like a mountain but will have a lid or be level with its container.

Going out

Rome is not a city you would visit specifically for its nightlife, but you can find bars and clubs that won't disappoint. The club scene is mainly located outside the city centre. Before diving into Rome's nightlife, it is essential to go out for dinner first. You'll see groups of friends catching up over a plate of *spaghetti al carbonara* before hitting the clubs, instead of gobbling up some greasy fast food after. Clubs only really start to come alive (well) after midnight. At some venues and at certain times, you might have to queue for a table, but that's just part of the experience – and nobody seems to mind.

Safety

I have personally never felt unsafe in Rome – except, perhaps when cycling through Roman traffic on those cobbled streets. This is probably because usually people are out and about until very late at night, especially in the city centre. That said, like in any major city, there are a few things to watch out for – particularly pickpockets. Be extra mindful of your bag, pockets, and surroundings on crowded buses, on the metro, and near major tourist attractions. The usual tourist scams also crop up in Rome. And as for those charming watercolour paintings, you might see artists 'finishing' right before your eyes ... many of them aren't quite as artisanal as they appear. You'll likely spot the same 'unique' painting for sale several times during your stay in Rome.



WHEN TO TRAVEL

