

Rome & Lazio



All roads lead to Rome. And once arrived, travellers may just as well echo Julius Caesar at the Rubicon and acknowledge that the die is cast – for this city gets into the bloodstream like no other, making future visits inevitable.

The Romans left town to conquer and populate territories as far-flung as Spain and Syria, but everyone else has done the reverse. Rome was the apogee of the Grand Tour, the city that beckoned the European nobility before the days of mass travel and won the hearts of jet-setting Americans in the 1950s and '60s. It was here that Nero fiddled, Napoleon strutted and Anita Ekberg famously frolicked. It's one hell of a town.

In many ways, Marcello Mastroianni's character in Fellini's *La dolce vita* (The Sweet Life) got it right when he said, 'I adore Rome; it's a sort of jungle'. The chaotic traffic and street noise, extremes of wealth and poverty, and contradiction between Catholic conservatism and big-city hedonism make for an intoxicating mix – one that can sometimes be overwhelming. When this happens, the best antidote is to spend a day out of town. Lazio is blessed with an abundance of historical towns and sites, some lovely beaches and many places of religious significance – there's sure to be somewhere that tickles your fancy.

So, do as the Romans do – seize the day by throwing yourself wholeheartedly into the life of the city. Walk the cobbled streets and teeming boulevards, drink too much coffee and wine, eat a surfeit of pasta and gelato, and shop the streets around the Piazza di Spagna till you drop. After all, that's what *la dolce vita* is all about.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Be overwhelmed by the grandeur of **St Peter's Basilica** (p124) and the **Vatican Museums** (p125)
- Dream of ancient glories at the **Roman Forum** (p109), **Palatine** (p108) and **Colosseum** (p107)
- See how ancient Roman villas were decorated at the **Museo Nazionale Romano: Palazzo Massimo alle Terme** (p120)
- Rhapsodise over the Renaissance artworks at the **Museo e Galleria Borghese** (p119) and **Galleria Doria Pamphilj** (p113)
- Do as Hadrian did and escape to the charming town of **Tivoli** (p173)



■ POPULATION: Rome city 2.6 million;
Lazio 5.2 million

■ AREA: Lazio 17,202 sq km

ROME

HISTORY

Rome's origins date to that nether period when myth had not yet become history. The story of the she-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus is a nice legend, but few historians accept it as historical fact. What they do acknowledge is that Romulus became the first king of Rome (Roma) on 21 April 753 BC and that the city was an amalgamation of Etruscan, Latin and Sabine settlements on the Palatine (Palatino), Esquiline (Esquilino) and Quirinal (Quirinale) Hills. Archaeological discoveries have confirmed the existence of a settlement on the Palatine in that period.

The Roman Republic was founded in 509 BC and was the major power in the Western world until internal rivalries led to civil war. Julius Caesar went to war with his erstwhile partner Pompey, leaving Mark Antony and Octavian to fight for the top job after Caesar was murdered in 44 BC. Octavian prevailed and, with the blessing of the Senate, became Augustus, the first Roman emperor.

One of the more sensible Roman emperors, he ruled well and the city enjoyed a period of political stability and artistic achievement. Successive rulers such as Tiberius, Caligula and Nero, as well as events such as the Great Fire of AD 64, combined to leave Rome in tatters, but the city bounced back. By 100, it had a population of 1.5 million and was the undisputed *Caput Mundi* (Capital of the World). But it couldn't last and when, in 330, Constantine moved his power base to Byzantium, Rome's glory days were numbered. In 455 it was routed by the Vandals and in 476 the last emperor of the Western Roman Empire, Romulus Augustulus, was deposed.

By now Rome's Christian roots had taken firm hold. Christianity had been spreading since the 1st century AD thanks to the underground efforts of apostles Peter and Paul and under Constantine it received official recognition. Pope Gregory I (590–604) did much to strengthen the Church's grip over the city and, in 774, Rome's place as centre of the Christian world was cemented when Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne as Holy Roman Emperor.

The medieval period was marked by continuous fighting by just about anyone capable of raising an army. In the thick of things, the

Papal States fought their corner as ruthlessly as anyone.

In 1309, however, Pope Clement V decided enough was enough and upped sticks to Avignon, leaving the powerful Colonna and Orsini families to contest control of the city. Once the waters had calmed, Pope Gregory XI returned to Rome in 1377 and, finding the city close to ruins, set up home in the fortified Vatican.

Out of the ruins grew the Rome of the Renaissance. At the behest of the great papal dynasties – the Barberini, Farnese and Pamphilj among others – the leading artists of the 15th and 16th centuries were summoned to work on projects such as the Sistine Chapel and St Peter's Basilica. But the enemy was never far away, and in 1527 Pope Clement VII took refuge in Castel Sant'Angelo as Charles V's Spanish forces ransacked Rome.

Once again Rome needed rebuilding and it was to the 17th-century baroque masters Bernini and Borromini that the city's patrons turned. With their exuberant churches, fountains and *palazzi* (mansions), these two bitter rivals changed the face of the city. The building boom following the unification of Italy and the declaration of Rome as its capital also profoundly influenced the look of the city, as did Mussolini and hasty post-WWII expansion.

ORIENTATION

Rome is a sprawling city, but most sights lie within the *centro storico* (historical centre; comprising the areas around the Piazza Navona, Campo de' Fiori, Pantheon, Ghetto, Capitoline, Piazza Barberini, Trevi and Tridente). Vatican City and Trastevere are over the water on the west bank of the Tiber. Distances are not huge and walking is the best way to get around the city.

The city's major transport hub, Stazione Termini (its full name is Stazione Centrale-Roma Termini) is a useful, if unattractive, point of reference. The majority of the city's budget hotels and *pensioni* (small hotels or guesthouses) are in this area and the main city bus terminus is on Piazza Cinquecento, in front of the train station.

From Piazza Cinquecento, Via Cavour leads directly down to the Roman Forum, while from Piazza della Repubblica, a short walk to the west of Stazione Termini, Via Nazionale heads down towards Piazza Venezia.

Running north from Piazza Venezia, Via del Corso leads up to Piazza del Popolo and the Villa Borghese. On the east side of Via del Corso you will find the tourist-heavy areas of the Trevi Fountain and Piazza di Spagna; to the west lie the Pantheon, Piazza Navona and the Campo de' Fiori.

To reach the Vatican from Piazza Venezia head west to Largo di Torre Argentina and continue along Corso Vittorio Emanuele II. Cross the river Tiber, turn left into Via delle Conciliazione and you'll see St Peter's Basilica directly in front of you. The upmarket residential area of Prati is a short walk north-east of the basilica, very close to the Vatican Museums.

To get to the atmospheric quarter of Trastevere walk down Via Arenula (where the tram line is) to the Tiber and cross either the Ponte Sisto or the Ponte Garibaldi.

The student enclave of San Lorenzo is southeast of Stazione Termini and the nightclub hub of Testaccio is south of the Aventine Hill, on the opposite side of the Tiber to Trastevere.

For travelling further afield, national and international trains terminate at Stazione Termini. Intercity buses, however, use Stazione Tiburtina to the east of the city centre. From

Termini take Metro Line B in the direction of Rebibbia. Regional buses serving towns in Lazio depart from various points throughout the city, usually corresponding with metro stops.

For further information on getting from Leonardo da Vinci Airport (commonly known as Fiumicino) to the city centre, see p167.

Maps

The Rome Tourist Board (p90) publishes an excellent pocket-sized city map, *Roma*, which is freely available at the tourist office in Via Parigi. Tourist information kiosks around town also hand out *Charta Roma*, an A3-sized stylised map with the major sights and their opening hours. Plenty of maps are also available at newsstands and bookshops.

Lonely Planet's *Rome City Map* indicates all principal landmarks, as well as museums, shops and information points, and has a street index.

Editrice Lozzi publishes various city maps: the basic version, *Roma* (€5), lists all major streets and bus/tram routes; *Rome Today* (€5.50) comprises a city map, a map of the province of Rome and an enlarged plan of the city centre; and the *Roma Metro-Bus* (€6) map details the city's main transport routes.

ROME IN...

Two Days

Visit **St Peter's Basilica** (p124), the **Vatican Museums** (p125) and the **Sistine Chapel** (p127). Lunch around **Piazza Navona** (p114), before popping into the **Pantheon** (p113), en route to the **Colosseum** (p107) and the **Roman Forum** (p109). Make a night of it in vibrant **Trastevere** (p122).

After a leisurely breakfast wander over to the **Trevi Fountain** (p117) and **Piazza di Spagna** (p117), where the **Spanish Steps** (p117) provide excellent people-watching opportunities. In the nearby **Villa Borghese** (p119), the **Museo e Galleria Borghese** (p119) is a highlight of any visit.

At night, make your way to the **Campo de' Fiori** (p115) for a drink, eat somewhere in the centre and then perhaps go clubbing in **Testaccio** (see boxed text, p162).

Four Days

Once you've seen the greatest hits, stroll the streets: check out the designer shops on **Via dei Condotti** (p165), enjoy the quiet of the **Jewish Ghetto** (p116) and have a coffee in a café or two (p158).

Back on the museum trail, visit the **Capitoline Museums** (p112). After dark, join the student drinkers and fashionable diners in **San Lorenzo** (p160).

One Week

Venture out to **Via Appia Antica** (p130) and the **Catacombs of San Callisto** (p130), or take a day trip: choose between **Ostia Antica** (p171), **Tivoli** (p173) or the Etruscan treasures of **Cerveteri** (p174) or **Tarquinia** (p175).

For maps of ancient Rome try the Lozzi *Archaeo Map* (€4), which has a plan of the Roman Forum, Palatine and Colosseum, or *Ancient Rome* (€3.50), published by Electa.

The best road maps are the 1:12,500 *Pianta Roma* (€7) and *Lazio* (€7) published by the Touring Club Italiano.

INFORMATION

Bookshops

Almost Corner Bookshop (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 583 69 42; Via del Moro 45; ☎ 10am-1.30pm & 3.30-8pm Mon-Sat, 11am-1.30pm & 3.30-8pm Sun) A great range of English-language fiction (classics, literary fiction and contemporary bestsellers) and nonfiction.

Anglo-American Book Co (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 678 43 47; www.aab.it; Via della Vite 102) Literature, travel guides and reference books in English. Also has a kids' section.

Borri Books (Map p102; ☎ 06 482 84 22; Stazione Termini; ☎ 7am-11pm) There's a good selection of English-language books (including kids' and travel books) on the upstairs floor of this glass-fronted shop on the concourse at Stazione Termini.

Feltrinelli Bookstore (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 688 03 248; Via di Torre Argentina 11; ☎ 9am-9pm Mon-Fri, 9am-11pm Sat, 9am-8pm Sun) Centrally located store that stocks music, DVDs and a smallish collection of English-language novels and travel guides.

Feltrinelli International (Map p102; ☎ 06 482 78 78; Via VE Orlando 84-86; ☎ 9am-8pm Mon-Sat, 10am-1.30pm & 4-7.30pm Sun) Has a larger English-language stock than the Via di Torre Argentina store.

Lion Bookshop (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 326 50 437; Via dei Greci 33-6; ☎ 3.30-7.30pm Mon, 10am-7.30pm Tue-Sun) Long-standing English-language bookshop with a little café.

Emergency

Ambulance (☎ 118)

Emergency services (☎ 113)

Main police station (Questura; Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 46 86; Via San Vitale 11)

Ufficio Stranieri (Foreigners' Bureau; Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 468 63 216; Via Genova 2; ☎ 24hr) Thefts can be reported here; also come here for a *permesso di soggiorno* (permit; see p866).

Internet Access

Costs vary but are usually between €3 and €6 an hour, with hefty discounts if you take out a subscription. All of the laundries listed (see right) offer internet access.

Easy Internet Café (Map p102; Piazza Barberini 2; ☎ 8am-1am) Rates at this huge place depend on the time of day, but reckon on about €2 for 50 minutes.

Internet Café (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 445 49 53; Via dei Murrucini 12; per hr €3; ☎ 9.30am-1am Mon-Fri, 5pm-1am Sat & Sun) Much frequented by students in the San Lorenzo area, east of Termini.

Internet@Change (Map pp96-7; 42A Piazza di Spagna; per hr €3; ☎ 9.30am-5pm Mon-Sat) Only five terminals, but fast connections and a convenient location.

Internet Point (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 454 71 296; Largo Arenula 21; per hr €3; ☎ 9am-midnight) Just off Largo di Torre Argentina, with very fast connections.

Pantheon Internet (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 692 00 501; Via S Caterina da Siena 48; per hr €5.20; ☎ 10am-8.30pm Mon-Sat) Expensive, but conveniently located.

Yex Internet Point (Map pp96-7; Piazza di Sant'Andrea della Valle 1; per hr €4-6; ☎ 9am-10pm) Near Piazza Navona. All terminals have web-cams.

Internet Resources

The following websites are all in English:

Enjoy Rome (www.enjoyrome.com) Useful advice from an independent tourist agency.

Roma Turismo (www.romaturismo.it) Rome Tourist Board's comprehensive website. Lists all official accommodation options, upcoming events and much more.

Rome Buddy (www.romebuddy.com) An American site that provides down-to-earth advice with dry humour.

Vatican (www.vatican.va) Official site of the Vatican.

Laundry

There are several self-service laundries in the streets northeast of Stazione Termini (Map p102). *Lavasecco* (dry-cleaning) costs range from around €3 for a shirt to €6 for a jacket.

Bolle Blu (Map p102; ☎ 06 645 03 472; Via Milazzo 20b; ☎ 8am-10pm) As well as washing, Bolle Blu provides free Indian tea, internet access for €2 per hour (15 minutes free if you are doing laundry) and left-luggage facilities at €2 for five hours (€5 per 24 hours). It charges €6 to wash and dry a small load.

Bolle Blu 2 (Map p102; ☎ 06 446 58 04; Via Palestro 59-61; ☎ 8am-10pm) Offers an ironing service, dry-cleaning and internet access (€2 per hour). Luggage lockers are available at €2 for 12 hours. A small load costs €6 to wash and dry.

Il Mastell Lavanderia (Map pp104-5; Via di San Francesco a Ripa 62; ☎ 7am-11pm) Only €5.20 per 6kg load wash and dry, plus you can use the internet (€1.90 per hour) while you wait.

Splashnet (Map p102; ☎ 06 493 80 450; Via Varese 33; ☎ 8.30am-midnight) Charges €6 to wash and dry a load up to 7kg and €1.50 per hour for internet (15 minutes free if you are doing laundry). Also has luggage storage at €2 per day.

Wash & Dry Lavarapido Via della Pelliccia (Map pp104-5; ☎ 347 096 56 86; Via della Pelliccia 35; ☎ 8am-10pm); Via della Chiesa Nuova (Map pp96-7; Via della Chiesa Nuova 15-16; ☎ 8am-10pm) Wash and dry a standard load for €5.

Left Luggage

Near Stazione Termini three laundries provide luggage storage: Bolle Blu, Bolle Blu 2 and Splashnet. See p89 for details.

Fiumicino airport (1st 7hr €2, 7-24hr €3.50;

☎ 6.30am-11.30pm) In the international arrivals area on the ground floor.

Stazione Termini (Map p102; 1st 5hr €3.80, 6-12hr per hr €0.60, 13hr & more per hr €0.20; ☎ 6am-midnight) Lower-ground floor under platform 24.

Media

The following are all published in English:

Osservatore Romano (www.vatican.va) Weekly editions of the Vatican's official daily newspaper are published.

The Roman Forum (www.theromanforum.com in English) News about Rome and a useful classifieds section. Costs €3 on newsstands around town.

Wanted in Rome (www.wantedinrome.com) A free online version of this useful expat magazine is updated every alternate Wednesday and features classified ads, listings and reviews.

Medical Services

Night pharmacies in the city centre are listed at www.romaturismo.it, in daily newspapers and in pharmacy windows.

Pharmacy Piazza Cinquecento (Map p102; ☎ 06 488 00 19; Piazza Cinquecento 51; ☎ 24hr); Stazione Termini (Map p102; ☎ 7.30am-10pm) There is a 24-hour pharmacy on the western flank of Piazza Cinquecento. The Stazione Termini pharmacy is inside the station, on the lower-ground floor.

Ospedale Bambino Gesù (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 6 85 91, first aid for children 06 685 92 351; Piazza di Sant'Onofrio 4) Rome's paediatric hospital.

Ospedale di Odontoiatria G Eastman (Map p91; ☎ 06 84 48 31; Viale Regina Elena 287b) For emergency dental treatment.

Ospedale San Giacomo (Map pp92-3; ☎ 06 3 62 61; Via A Canova 29) Hospital near Piazza del Popolo.

Ospedale Santo Spirito (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 6 83 51; Lungotevere in Sassetta 1) Hospital near the Vatican; several languages spoken.

Policlinico Umberto I (Map p102; ☎ 06 4 99 71, first aid 06 499 79 501; Viale del Policlinico 155) Hospital near Stazione Termini.

Money

There's a bank, ATMs and several currency exchange booths at Stazione Termini (Map p102), Fiumicino airport and Ciampino airport. In town, there are numerous exchange booths, including:

American Express (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 6 76 41; Piazza di Spagna 38; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-12.30pm Sat)
Thomas Cook Travelex (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 420 20 150; Piazza Barberini 21a; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Sat, 9.30am-5pm Sun)

Post

There are post office branches at Piazza dei Capretti 69, Via Terme di Diocleziane 30 (Map p102), Via della Scrofa 61/63 (Map pp96-7), Stazione Termini (next to platform 24) and Via Arenula (Map pp96-7).

Main post office (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 679 50 44; Piazza di San Silvestro 20; ☎ 8.30am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-1pm Sat) Collect poste restante mail here.

Vatican post office (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 698 83 406; St Peter's Square; ☎ 8.30am-7pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-6pm Sat) Letters can be posted in blue Vatican post boxes only if they carry Vatican stamps.

Telephone & Fax

There are hundreds of public payphones dotted about town. Major post offices offer fax services; otherwise, there are numerous private services, usually in *tabacchi* (tobacconist's shops) and stationery stores.

Toilets

There are public toilets at:

The Colosseum (Map pp100-1; ☎ 8.30am-4.30pm) Behind the Colosseum, next to the walkway.

Piazza di San Silvestro (Map pp96-7; ☎ 10am-7.40pm)

Piazza di Spagna (Map pp96-7; ☎ 10am-7.40pm)

Stazione Termini (Map p102; admission downstairs €0.70, upstairs €0.60; ☎ 24 hr)

Tourist Information

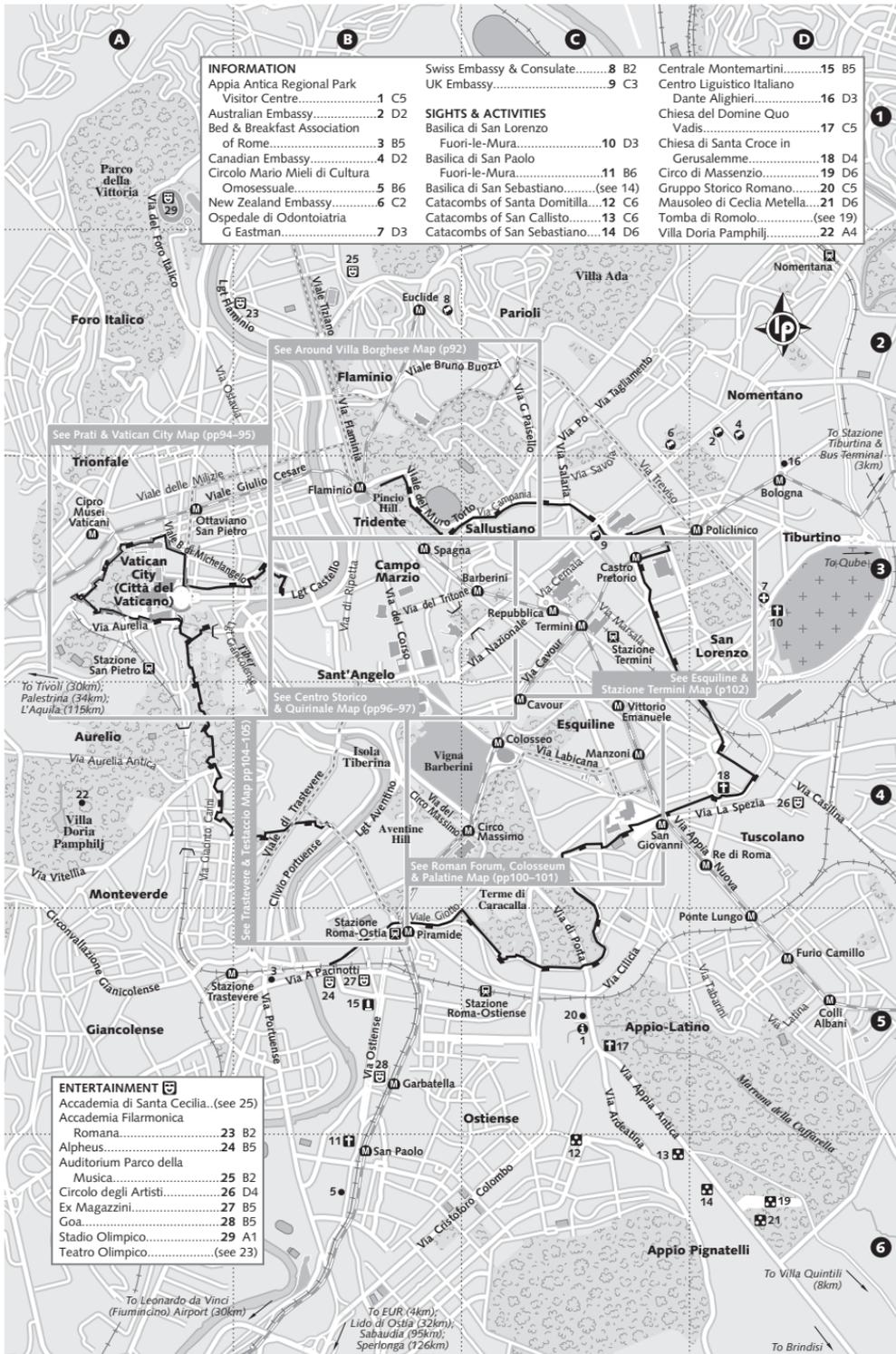
Enjoy Rome (Map p102; ☎ 06 445 18 43; www.enjoyrome.com; Via Marghera 8a; ☎ 8.30am-7pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-2pm Sat) An excellent private tourist office that publishes the free and useful *Enjoy Rome* city guide.

Rome Tourist Board (APT; Map p102; ☎ 06 488 99 212; www.romaturismo.it; Via Parigi 5; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Sat) Has loads of literature on accommodation, itineraries and activities. It also has an office at Fiumicino airport in Terminal B, International Arrivals (open from 8.15am to 7pm).

The Comune di Roma (city council) runs a multilingual **tourist information line** (☎ 06 820 59 127; ☎ 9.30am-7.30pm). If you need nontourist practical information, the city's free ☎ 06 06 06 number is incredibly useful. By calling it

(Continued on page 106)

INFORMATION	Swiss Embassy & Consulate.....	8 B2	Centrale Montemartini.....	15 B5
Appia Antica Regional Park	UK Embassy.....	9 C3	Centro Linguistico Italiano	16 D3
Visitor Centre.....	1 C5		Dante Alighieri.....	16 D3
Australian Embassy.....	2 D2		Chiesa del Domine Quo	17 C5
Bed & Breakfast Association	3 B5		Vadis.....	17 C5
of Rome.....	3 B5		Chiesa di Santa Croce in	18 D4
Canadian Embassy.....	4 D2		Gerusalemme.....	18 D4
Circolo Mario Mieli di Cultura	4 B2		Circo di Massenzio.....	19 D6
Omoseguale.....	5 B6		Gruppo Storico Romano.....	20 C5
New Zealand Embassy.....	6 C2		Mausoleo di Cecilia Metella.....	21 D6
Ospedale di Odontoiatria	7 D3		Catacombs of San Callisto.....	13 C6
G Eastman.....	7 D3		Catacombs of San Sebastiano.....	14 D6
			Catacombs of San Sebastiano.....	14 D6



ENTERTAINMENT

Accademia di Santa Cecilia... (see 25)	
Accademia Filarmonica	
Romana.....	23 B2
Alpheus.....	24 B5
Auditorium Parco della	
Musica.....	25 B2
Circolo degli Artisti.....	26 D4
Ex Magazzini.....	27 B5
Goa.....	28 B5
Stadio Olimpico.....	29 A1
Teatro Olimpico..... (see 23)	

To Leonardo da Vinci (Fiumicino) Airport (30km)

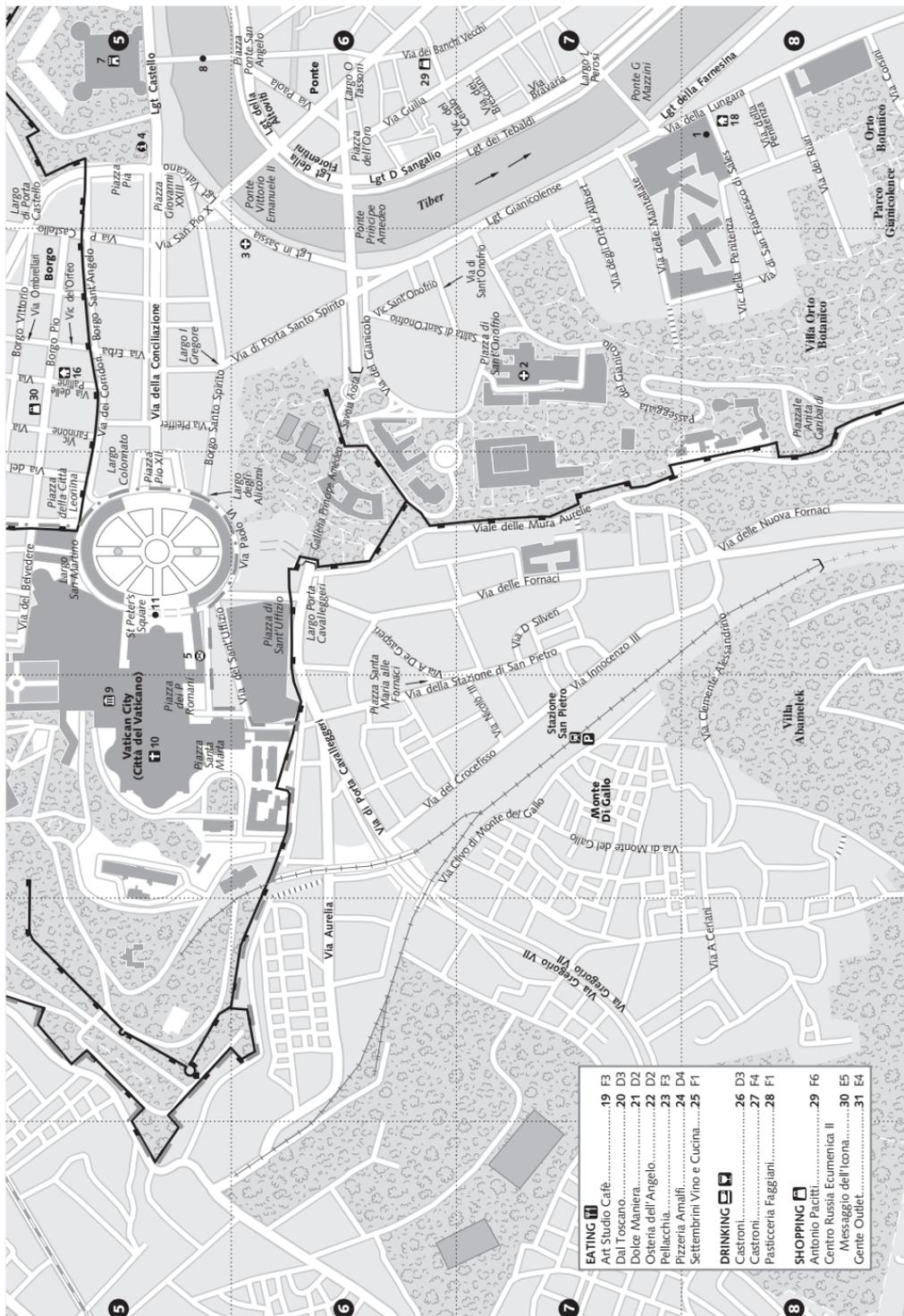
To EUR (4km), Lido di Ostia (32km), Sabaudia (95km), Sperlonga (126km)

To Brindisi

To Villa Quintili (8km)







EATING 🍴	Art Studio Café.....	19 F3
	Dal Toscano.....	20 D3
	Dolce Maniera.....	21 D2
	Osteria dell'Angelo.....	22 D2
	Pellacchia.....	23 F3
	Pizzeria Amalfi.....	24 D4
	Settembrini Vino e Cucina.....	25 F1
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	Castroli.....	27 F4
	Pasticceria Faggioli.....	28 F1
SHOPPING 🛍️	Antonio Paciti.....	29 F6
	Centro Russia Eucemica II.....	30 E5
	Gente Outlet.....	31 E4



See Roman Forum, Colosseum & Palatine Map (pp100-101)

INFORMATION

American Express.....	1 E2
Anglo-American Book Co.....	2 E2
Bed & Breakfast Italia.....	3 A4
CTS.....	4 A4
CTS.....	5 H4
Easy Internet Café.....	6 G2
Feltrinelli Bookstore.....	7 D5
French Embassy.....	(see 59)
Internet Point.....	8 C6
Internet Point.....	9 C5
Internet@Change.....	10 F2
Irish Embassy.....	11 D6
Libreria Babel.....	12 A4
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Pantheon Internet.....	16 D4
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Tourist Information Point.....	23 H4
Tourist Information Point.....	24 C3
Ufficio Stranieri.....	25 H3
US Embassy & Consulate.....	26 H1
Wash & Dry Lavarapido.....	27 A4
Yex Internet Point.....	28 C5

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Basilica Ulpia.....	(see 42)
Basilica di San Pietro in Vincoli.....	32 H6
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Chiesa del Gesù.....	34 D5
Chiesa di San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane.....	35 H3
Chiesa di San Luigi dei Francesi.....	36 C4
Chiesa di Sant'Agnese in Agone.....	37 B4
Chiesa di Sant'Agostino.....	38 C3
Chiesa di Sant'Andrea al Quirinale.....	39 G3
Chiesa di Santa Maria della Concezione.....	40 G2
Chiesa di Santa Maria Sopra Minerva.....	41 D4
Colonna di Traiano.....	42 F5
Elefantino.....	43 D4
Fontana dei Quattro Fiumi.....	44 B4
Fontana del Moro.....	45 B4
Fontana del Nettuno.....	46 B4
Fontana del Tritone.....	47 G2
Fontana delle Api.....	48 G2
Galleria Doria Pamphilj.....	(see 58)
Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica.....	(see 56)
International Wine Academy of Roma.....	(see 84)
Italiadea.....	49 F2
Keats-Shelley Memorial House.....	50 E1
Loyola's Rooms.....	(see 34)
Mausoleo di Augusto.....	51 D1
Mercati di Traiano.....	52 F5
Museo Nazionale del Palazzo Venezia.....	(see 62)
Museo di Roma.....	53 B5

Museo Nazionale Romano: Crypta Balbi.....	54 D6
Museo Nazionale Romano: Palazzo Altemps.....	55 B3
Palazzo Barberini.....	56 G2
Palazzo del Quirinale.....	57 F4
Palazzo Doria Pamphilj.....	58 E4
Palazzo Farnese.....	59 B6
Palazzo Pamphilj.....	60 B4
Palazzo Spada.....	61 B6
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Daphne B&B.....	75 G2
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Hotel Panda.....	80 E1
Hotel Portoghesi.....	81 C3
Hotel Raphaël.....	82 B4
Hotel Teatro di Pompeo.....	83 C5
Il Palazzetto.....	84 E1
Relais Palazzo Taverna.....	85 A3
Teatropace 33.....	86 B4

EATING 

'Gusto.....	87 C1
Al Moro.....	88 E3
Alberto Pico.....	89 C6
Alfredo e Ada.....	90 A4
Antico Forno.....	91 E3
Campo de' Fiori Market.....	92 B5
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Da Francesco.....	95 B4
Da Ricci.....	96 H4
Dal Pains.....	97 B4
DeSpar Supermarket.....	98 C4
Di per Di.....	99 D1
Ditrambo.....	100 B5
Enoteca Corsi.....	101 D5
Filetti di Baccalà.....	102 C6
Forno di Campo de' Fiori.....	103 B5
Forno di Campo de' Fiori.....	104 B5
Gelateria Pasqualetti.....	105 C4
Gelateria del Teatro.....	106 A3
Gina Eat & Drink.....	107 E1
Hostaria Costanza.....	108 C5
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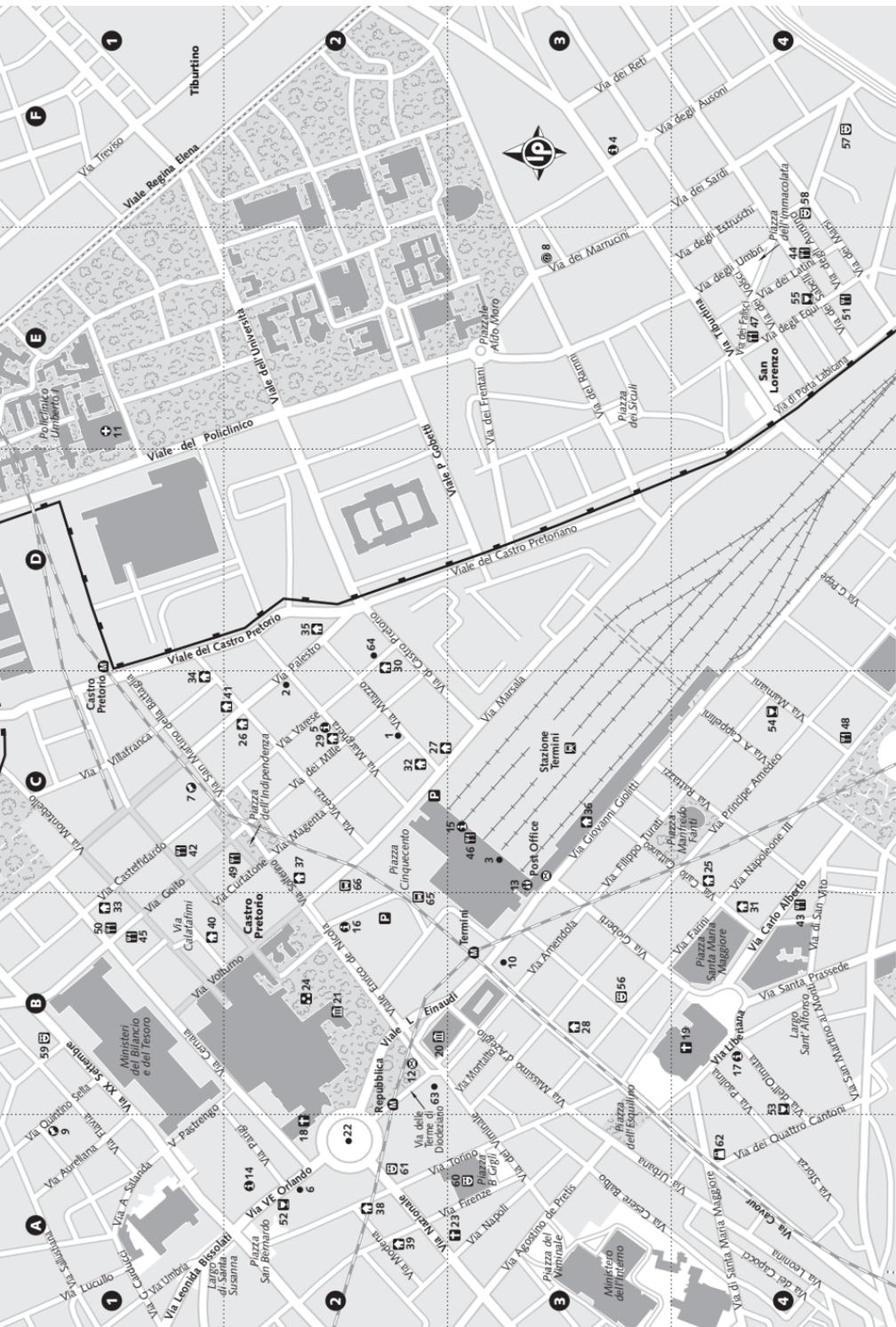
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you reach Comune di Roma call centre that's been set up to answer practical questions about anything to do with Comune-related services. The centre is staffed for 24 hours every day of the year and there are English-, French-, Arabic-, German-, Spanish-, Italian- and Chinese-speaking staff available between the hours of 4pm and 7pm. They can answer any question along the lines of: Where's the nearest hospital? Where am I allowed to park? When are the underground trains running? The Comune also publishes two useful monthly 'What's On' pamphlets: *Live in Roma* and *L'Evento*. These and other information (including maps) can be picked up at the following tourist information points:

Castel Sant'Angelo (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 688 09 707; Piazza Pia; 🕒 9.30am-7.30pm)

Fiumicino airport (Terminal C, International Arrivals; 🕒 9am-7pm)

Piazza Cinquecento (Map p102; 🕒 11am-6pm) In a glass pavilion in front of Stazione Termini.

Piazza Navona (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 688 09 240; 🕒 9.30am-7.30pm) Near Piazza delle Cinque Lune.

Piazza Santa Maria Maggiore (Map p102; ☎ 06 474 09 55; Via dell'Olmata; 🕒 9.30am-7.30pm)

Piazza Sonnino (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 583 33 457; 🕒 9.30am-7.30pm)

Stazione Termini (Map p102; 🕒 8am-9pm) Next to platform 24.

Trevi Fountain (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 678 29 88; Via Marco Minghetti; 🕒 9.30am-7.30pm) This tourist point is nearer to Via del Corso than the fountain.

Via dei Fori Imperiali (Map pp100-1; ☎ 06 699 24 307; Piazza del Tempio della Pace; 🕒 9.30am-7.30pm)

Via Nazionale (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 478 24 525; 🕒 9.30am-7.30pm)

Travel Agencies

CTS (www.cts.it in Italian) Corso Vittorio Emanuele II (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 687 26 72; Corso Vittorio Emanuele II 297); Via degli Ausoni (Map p102; ☎ 06 445 01 41; Via degli Ausoni 5) Near La Sapienza university; Via Genova (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 467 92 71; Via Genova 16) Italy's official student travel service offers discounted air, rail and bus tickets to students and travellers under 30. CTS also issues International Student Identity Cards (ISICs). If you're not a student, to get CTS fares you need a CTS card, which costs €28 and is valid for a year.

Enjoy Rome (Map p102; ☎ 06 445 18 43; www.enjoy.rome.com; Via Marghera 8a; 🕒 8.30am-7pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-2pm Sat) As well as booking accommodation, selling bus and train tickets and running walking tours, Enjoy Rome also runs a bus shuttle service to and from Pompeii (adult/under 26 €55/45) twice a week in summer. This leaves from the office at 7.30am and returns at 7pm on the same day. The trip takes three hours each way, meaning that you get a decent amount of time at the site. Bookings are essential.

DANGERS & ANNOYANCES

Rome is a relatively safe city but petty crime is rife. Pickpockets are active in and around Stazione Termini, at major sights such as the

MUSEUM DISCOUNT CARDS

There's a range of discount cards available for those visitors planning on doing some serious museum-going while in Rome. These include:

Appia Antica Card (€6, valid 3 days) For the Terme di Caracalla, Tomba di Cecilia Metella and Villa dei Quintili.

Museum Card (€9, valid 3 days) For entrance to all venues of the Museo Nazionale Romano: Palazzo Altemps, Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, Terme di Diocleziano and Crypta Balbi.

Roma Archaeologia Card (€22, valid 7 days) For entrance to the Colosseum, the Palatine, Terme di Caracalla, Palazzo Altemps, Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, Terme di Diocleziano, Crypta Balbi, Tomba di Cecilia Metella and Villa dei Quintili.

Roma Pass (€20, valid 3 days) Includes free admission to two museums or sites (choose from a list of 38) as well as reduced entry to extra sites, unlimited public transport within Rome and reduced price entry to other exhibitions and events. If you use this for more-expensive sights such as the Capitoline Museums and the Colosseum you'll save a considerable amount of money.

The cards can be purchased at any of the monuments or museums listed and the Roma Pass is also available at Comune di Roma (city council) tourist information points.

Note that EU citizens between the ages of 18 and 24 and over the age of 65 are entitled to significant discounts at most museums and galleries in Rome. Unfortunately, student discounts don't usually apply for citizens of non-EU countries.

Colosseum and around Piazza di Spagna. Watch out on crowded public transport (bus 64 from Stazione Termini to St Peter's is notorious). Bag-snatchers, particularly on scooters, are also a nuisance. Always carry bags away from the street side, slung across your body. Similarly, never leave cameras or valuables unguarded, even for a second.

Women travellers may experience unwanted attention, and groping on crowded buses is not unheard of. It's best to just ignore catcalls, but if you're the victim of wandering hands, make a fuss.

Italians obey road rules at their discretion so don't take it for granted that cars and scooters will stop at red lights. The only way to cross the road is to step confidently into the traffic and walk calmly across. It also helps to wait until locals cross and use them as human shields!

For more on dangers and annoyances, see p857.

SIGHTS

They say that a lifetime's not long enough for Rome – *Roma, non basta una vita!* There's simply too much to see. Rather than trying to do everything, you're better off choosing what you're most keen to see and leaving the rest for next time.

Colosseum & Palatine

Of all the monuments in Rome, it is the **Colosseum** (Colosseo; Map pp100-1; ☎ 06 399 67 700; www.pierreci.it; Piazza del Colosseo; incl Palatine adult/child €11/6.50, free for EU citizens aged 18-24; 🕒 8.30am-3.30pm, last exit 4.30pm) that thrills the most. It was here that gladiators met in mortal combat and condemned prisoners fought off hungry lions. The great symbol of eternal Rome still exerts a powerful hold, as you'll see from the size of the crowds waiting to get in. Don't let the always-lengthy queue put you off a visit: just pop down to the Palatine ticket office, buy your combined ticket there, and on returning march straight in. You can also beat the queues by joining a guided tour. These last 40 minutes and cost €3.50 plus the cost of the admission ticket. Be warned, though, that groups are large and the information given is often hard to hear – many visitors prefer to hire an audioguide (€4.50) instead.

Built by the emperor Vespasian (r AD 69–79) in the grounds of Nero's palatial Domus Aurea complex, the Colosseum was inaugu-

rated in AD 80. To mark the occasion, Vespasian's son and successor Titus (r 79–81) held games that lasted 100 days and nights, during which some 5000 animals were slaughtered. Trajan (r 98–117) later topped this, holding a marathon 117-day killing spree involving 9000 gladiators and 10,000 animals.

Originally known as the Flavian Amphitheatre, the 50,000-capacity stadium may have been ancient Rome's most fearful arena, but it wasn't the biggest – the Circo Massimo (see p130) could hold up to 200,000 people. The name Colosseum, when introduced in medieval times, was not, in fact, a reference to its size but to the Colosso di Nerone, a giant statue of Nero that stood nearby.

The outer walls of the Colosseum have three levels of arches, articulated by columns topped by capitals of the Ionic (at the bottom), Doric and Corinthian (at the top) orders. The external walls were originally covered in travertine, and marble statues once filled the niches on the 2nd and 3rd storeys. The upper level, punctuated by windows and slender Corinthian pilasters, had supports for 240 masts that held up a canvas awning over the arena, shielding the spectators from sun and rain. The 80 entrance arches, known as *vomitoria*, allowed the spectators to enter and be seated in a matter of minutes.

The Colosseum's interior was divided into three parts: the arena, *cavea* and podium. The **arena** had a wooden floor covered in sand to prevent the combatants from slipping and to soak up the blood. Trap doors led down to the underground chambers and passageways beneath the arena floor. Animals in cages and sets for the various battles were hoisted onto the arena by a very complicated system of pulleys. The **cavea**, for spectator seating, was divided into three tiers: knights sat in the lowest tier, wealthy citizens in the middle and the plebs in the highest tier. The **podium**, a broad terrace in front of the tiers of seats, was reserved for emperors, senators and VIPs.

With the fall of the empire in the 6th century, the Colosseum was abandoned. In the Middle Ages, it became a fortress occupied by two of the city's warrior families: the Frangipani and the Annibaldi. Its reputation as the symbol of Rome, the Eternal City, also dates to the Middle Ages, with Bede writing that 'while the Colosseum stands, Rome shall stand, but when the Colosseum falls, Rome shall fall – and when Rome falls, the world will end'.

Damaged several times by earthquakes, it was later used as a source of stone and marble for generations of builders. Pollution and the vibrations caused by traffic and the metro in modern times have also taken their toll.

On the western side of the Colosseum, the **Arco di Costantino** (Map pp100–1) was built to honour Constantine following his victory over rival Maxentius at the battle of the Milvian Bridge (northwest of Villa Borghese) in AD 312.

Just down the road, the **Palatine** (Map pp100-1; ☎ 06 399 67 700; entrances at Piazza di Santa Maria Nova & Via di San Gregorio VII 30; incl Colosseum adult/child €11/6.50, free for EU citizens aged 18-24; ☎ 9am-3.30pm, last exit 4.30pm) is where Romulus killed his brother Remus and founded Rome in 753 BC. Today it's a beautiful area of ruins and great views. There's a guided tour in English every day at noon (€3.50). Note that if tickets (which include admission to the Colosseum) are issued after 1.30pm, they are valid until 1.30pm the following day.

Overlooking the Roman Forum, the Palatine was ancient Rome's poshest neighbourhood; aristocrats sought to build houses here and successive emperors built increasingly opulent palaces. But after Rome's fall, the Palatine fell into disrepair and in the Middle Ages churches and castles were built over the ruins. During the Renaissance, members of wealthy families, most notably Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, established gardens on the hill.

Today, the largest part of the Palatine is covered by the ruins of Emperor Domitian's vast complex, which served as the main imperial palace for 300 years. Divided into the Domus Flavia (Imperial Palace), the Domus Augustana (the emperor's private residence) and a *stadio* (stadium), it was built by the architect Rabirius in the 1st century AD. To do so, Rabirius levelled a crest of land and buried many Republican-era houses; some have since been unearthed.

On entering from the Roman Forum follow the uphill path ahead to the ruins of the **Domus Augustana** (Map pp100–1). Originally this residence was built on two levels with rooms leading off a garden courtyard on each floor. You can't get down to the lower level but from above you can see the basin of a fountain and beyond it rooms that were paved with coloured marble. The palace had an elaborate colonnaded façade to the south, overlooking the Circo Massimo, from where you get the

clearest indication of the grand scale of the complex. Southeast of the Domus Augustana is the **stadio** (Map pp100–1), probably used by emperors for private games and events.

Next to the stadium are the scant remains of baths built by Septimius Severus, the **Terme di Settimio Severo** (Map pp100–1).

The big grey building (a former convent) between the Domus Augustana and the Domus Flavia houses the **Museo Palatino** (Map pp100-1; ☎ 9am to 2hr before sunset). Here you'll see a fabulous collection of artefacts found on the Palatine, some dating to the Palaeolithic period and Bronze Age. Highlights include a sculptured head of the emperor Nero sporting evenly cut hair and forelocks. After his death most statues of this sadistic and excessive emperor were destroyed in '*damnatio memoriae*' (damnation of memory); this is a rare survivor. The standout piece in the museum's collection is the beautiful sculptured head of Giovane Principessa, the daughter of Nero's successor Marcus Aurelius. It's considered to be a masterpiece of Antonine portraiture due to the softness of its contours. Both of these are on the top floor.

North of the museum is the **Domus Flavia** (Map pp100–1), once connected to the Domus Augustana. The palace comprised three large halls to the north (the central one of which was the emperor's throne room) and a large *triclinium* (banqueting hall) to the south, which was paved in coloured marble that can still be seen. The Domus Flavia was constructed over earlier edifices. One of these, which can sometimes be visited (ask at the Palatine entrance on Via di San Gregorio VII), is the **Casa dei Grifi** (House of the Griffins; Map pp100–1), so called because of a stucco relief of two griffins in one of the rooms. It is the oldest building on the Palatine and dates from the late 2nd or 1st century BC.

Among the best-preserved buildings on the Palatine is the **Casa di Livia** (Map pp100–1), home of Augustus' wife Livia. The nearby **Casa di Augusto** (Map pp100–1) was hubby's pile. Both of these houses are being restored.

Next to the Casa di Augusto is the **Capanne di Romolo** (House of Romulus; Map pp100–1), where it is thought Romulus and Remus were brought up after their discovery by the shepherd Faustulus. Excavations carried out in the 1940s revealed evidence of supports for wattle and daub huts dating from the 9th century BC.

The **Criptoportico** (Cryptoporticus; Map pp100–1) is southwest of the Casa di Livia. It's a 128m tunnel built by Nero to connect his Domus Aurea with the imperial palaces on the Palatine.

The area northeast of the Criptoportico was once the **Domus Tiberiana** (Tiberius's Palace; Map pp100–1), which Caligula extended further northwards to the Forum; today it is the site of the **Orti Farnesiani** (Map pp100–1), Alessandro Farnese's mid-16th-century gardens. Considered one of Europe's earliest botanical gardens, it's a lovely area of rose gardens and shady pines. Twin pavilions stand at the northern point of the garden, from where the view over the Forum is breathtaking. It was closed for works at the time of research.

Over the road from the Colosseum, the **Domus Aurea** (Golden House; Map pp100–1) was Nero's great gift to himself. It's currently closed for renovations after suffering serious water damage. A monumental exercise in vanity, the vast palace spread over the Palatine, Oppian (Oppio) and Caelian (Celio) Hills. Built after the fire of AD 64 and named after the gold that, with mother-of-pearl, covered its façade, it boasted frescoed banqueting halls, *nymphaeums* (grottos or caves for recreation and worship, often with water features), baths and terraces. Its grounds, which covered up to a third of the city, included a large artificial lake.

The Forums

In ancient Rome, a forum was a shopping mall, civic centre and religious complex all rolled into one. The original Roman Forum got too small around 46 BC and successive emperors built new ones (the Imperial Forums) as demand and vanity required. They were dramatic public spaces, richly decorated and grandly scaled.

As you walk up Via dei Fori Imperiali from the Colosseum you'll see the **Roman Forum** (Foro Romano; Map pp100–1; ☎ 06 399 67 700; entrances at Largo Romolo e Remo 5–6, Piazza di Santa Maria Nova 53 & Via di Monte Tarpeo; admission free; 🕒 8.30am to 1hr before sunset) on your left. Before going in you might want to fork out €4 for an audioguide or €3.50 for the daily 12.30pm tour in English. The tour departs from the Piazza di Santa Maria Nova entrance.

The oldest and most famous of the forums, the Roman Forum grew over the course of 900 years. Originally an Etruscan burial ground, it was first developed in the 7th century BC and

expanded to become the gleaming heart of the Roman Republic. Its importance declined after the 4th century until eventually the site was used as pasture land.

In the Middle Ages it was known as the *campo vaccino* (literally 'cow field') and was extensively plundered for its stone and marble. Note that it was the Romans, not invading barbarians, who dismantled the city in order to build their new palaces, churches and monuments.

During the Renaissance, with the renewed appreciation of all things classical, the Forum provided inspiration for artists and architects. The area was systematically excavated in the 18th and 19th centuries, and the excavations continue.

As you enter the Forum from Via dei Fori Imperiali (Largo Romolo e Remo entrance), ahead to your left you'll see the **Tempio di Antonino e Faustina** (Map pp100–1), erected in AD 141 by the Senate and dedicated to the empress Faustina and later to the emperor Antoninus Pius. It was transformed into a church in the 8th century, so the soaring columns now frame the **Chiesa di San Lorenzo in Miranda** (Map pp100–1). To your right the **Basilica Fulvia Aemilia** (Map pp100–1), built in 179 BC, was 100m long with a two-storey porticoed façade lined with shops.

At the end of this short path you come to the **Via Sacra**, which traverses the Roman Forum from northwest to southeast. Opposite the basilica stands the **Tempio di Giulio Cesare** (Temple of Julius Caesar; Map pp100–1), erected by Augustus in 29 BC on the site where Caesar's body had been cremated 15 years before. Head right up Via Sacra and you reach the **Curia** (Map pp100–1), the building on the right just after the Basilica Fulvia Aemilia. Once the meeting place of the Roman Senate, it was rebuilt successively by Julius Caesar, Augustus, Domitian and Diocletian, and was converted into a Christian church in the Middle Ages. What you see today is a 1937 reconstruction of Diocletian's Curia. The bronze doors are copies – the originals were used by Borromini for the Basilica di San Giovanni in Laterano (see p129).

In front of the Curia is the famous and poorly tended **Lapis Niger** (Map pp100–1), a large piece of black marble that covered a sacred area, which legend says was the tomb of Romulus. Down a short flight of stairs (closed to the public) under the Lapis Niger is the

oldest-known Latin inscription, dating from the 6th century BC.

At the end of Via Sacra stands the **Arco di Settimio Severo** (Arch of Septimus Severus; Map pp100–1). Erected in AD 203 to celebrate the Roman victory over the Parthians (from modern-day Iran), the arch is one of the finest examples of its type in Italy. Nearby, at the foot of the Tempio di Saturno, is the **Milliarium Aureum** (Map pp100–1); this marked the very centre of ancient Rome, from which distances to the city were measured. Built by Augustus in 20 BC, it was originally covered in gold.

On your left are the remains of the **Rostrum** (Map pp100–1), an elaborate podium for public speakers. It was here that Shakespeare's Mark Antony made his famous 'Friends, Romans, countrymen...' speech.

The eight granite columns that you see from here are all that remain of the **Tempio di Saturno** (Temple of Saturn; Map pp100–1), one of Rome's most important temples. Built in the early part of the 5th century AD, it was used as the state treasury and during Caesar's rule contained 13 tonnes of gold, 114 tonnes of silver and 30 million silver coins. Behind the temple and backing onto the Capitoline are (from north to south) the ruins of the **Tempio della Concordia** (Temple of Concord; Map pp100–1), the three remaining columns of **Tempio di Vespasiano** (Temple of Vespasian & Titus; Map pp100–1) and the **Portico degli Dei Consenti** (Map pp100–1).

Turning around to face southeast, you'll see the Piazza del Foro, the Forum's main market and meeting place during the Republican era, marked by the **Colonna di Foca** (Column of Phocus; Map pp100–1) in its centre. The last monument erected in the Roman Forum, it was built in AD 608 to honour Eastern Roman Emperor Phocus, who donated the Pantheon to the Church. South of the Colonna di Foca are the remains of the **Basilica Giulia** (Map pp100–1), begun by Julius Caesar and finished by Augustus.

At the end of the basilica is the **Tempio di Castore e Polluce** (Temple of Castor and Pollux; Map pp100–1), built in the beginning of the 5th century BC to mark the defeat of the Etruscan Tarquins in 489 BC and in honour of the Dioscuri (or Heavenly Twins) who miraculously appeared to the Roman troops during an important battle. Look out for the three Corinthian columns. Further south of the temple and closed to the public is the

Chiesa di Santa Maria Antiqua (Map pp100–1), the oldest Christian church in the Forum.

Back towards Via Sacra is the **Casa delle Vestali** (House of the Vestal Virgins; Map pp100–1), home of the virgins who tended the sacred flame in the adjoining **Tempio di Vesta** (Map pp100–1). The six priestesses were selected from patrician families when aged between six and 10. They had to serve in the temple for 30 years and were bound by a vow of chastity during this time. If the flame in the temple went out the priestess responsible would be flogged. If a priestess lost her virginity she was buried alive, since her blood was not to be spilled, and the offending man was flogged to death.

Once back on Via Sacra you'll see the **Tempio di Romolo** (Temple of Romulus; Map pp100–1). At its rear is the **Basilica di SS Cosma e Damiano** (Map pp100–1; ☎ 06 699 15 40; entrance at Via dei Fori Imperiali; ☞ 8am–1pm & 3–7pm), a 6th-century church best known for the vivid mosaics behind its altar. Depicting Jesus flanked by St Peter and St Paul against an electric blue background, they are among the most beautiful in Rome. In a room off the 17th-century cloisters is a vast Neapolitan **presepio** (Nativity scene; admission by donation €1; ☞ 10am–1pm & 3–6.30pm Apr–Oct, 10am–1pm Tue–Thu & 10am–1pm & 3–5.30pm Fri & Sat Nov–Mar) dating to the 18th century.

Continuing up Via Sacra past the Tempio di Romolo you come to the vast **Basilica di Costantino** (Map pp100–1), also known as the Basilica di Massenzio, on your left. Emperor Maxentius initiated work on the basilica and Constantine finished it in AD 315. A colossal statue of Constantine was unearthed at the site in 1487. Pieces of this statue – a head, hand and foot – are on display in the courtyard of the Palazzo dei Conservatori in the Capitoline Museums (see p112).

Continuing, you come to the **Arco di Tito** (Arch of Titus; Map pp100–1), built in AD 81 to celebrate Vespasian and Titus' victories against Jerusalem. In the past, Roman Jews would avoid passing under this arch, the historical symbol of the beginning of the Diaspora. You then exit to the Colosseum.

At the eastern end of the Forum, the 9th-century **Chiesa di Santa Francesca Romana** (Map pp100–1; ☎ 06 679 55 28; Piazza di Santa Francesca Romana; ☞ 9.30am–noon & 3–5pm) incorporates part of the **Tempio di Venere e Roma** (Temple of Venus and Rome; Map pp100–1). It was closed for restoration at the time of research.

On the other side of Via dei Fori Imperiali, the collection of forums known as the **Imperial Forums** was constructed by Trajan, Augustus, Caesar, Nerva and Vespasian between 42 BC and AD 112. Most of these forums are currently closed for renovation; the Mercati di Traiano is the only exception. The **Imperial Forums Visitor Centre** (Map pp100-1; ☎ 06 820 59 127; Via dei Fori Imperiali; ☎ 9.30am-7.30pm Mon-Sat summer, to 6.30pm winter) has a model of the Imperial Forum as it looked in its heyday, as well as a small café and clean (free) toilets.

Unfortunately, much of this area was buried in 1933 when Benito Mussolini built Via dei Fori Imperiali between the Colosseum and Piazza Venezia. The most extensively excavated of the Imperial Forums is **Trajan's Forum** (Foro di Traiano; Map pp96-7). Little remains of the vast 2nd-century precinct except for some pillars that once formed part of the **Basilica Ulpia** (Map pp96-7) and the **Colonna di Traiano** (Trajan's Column; Map pp96-7). The column was erected to mark Trajan's victories over the Dacians (from modern-day Romania) and is decorated with a spiral of reliefs depicting the battles against the Dacian armies. Minutely detailed, the reliefs are regarded as among the finest examples of ancient Roman sculpture. A golden statue of Trajan once topped the column but it was lost during the Middle Ages and replaced with a statue of St Peter instead.

Mercati di Traiano (Trajan's Markets; Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 679 00 48; adult/child €3.10/free; ☎ 9.30am-2pm Tue-Sun) comprises the vast semicircular construction that you see from the road. The ancient equivalent of the shopping mall, the markets were spread over three floors of shops and offices. The tall red-brick tower above the market buildings, the **Torre delle Milizie** (Militia Tower; Map pp96-7), was built in the 13th century.

Just to the southeast of Trajan's Forum and markets are the **Foro di Augusto** (Forum of Augustus; Map pp100-1) and **Foro di Nerva** (Forum of Nerva; Map pp100-1), although very little remains of either complex. The 30m-high wall behind the Foro di Augusto was built to protect it against the fires that frequently swept through the area.

On the other side of Via dei Fori Imperiali, three columns on a raised platform are all that remain of the **Foro di Cesare** (Forum of Caesar; Map pp100-1).

Centro Storico

CAPITOLINE HILL

Rising above the Roman Forum, the Capitoline Hill (Campidoglio) has been the seat of Rome's municipal government since ancient times. Topped by **Piazza del Campidoglio** (Map pp100-1), the hill boasts the world's oldest public museums and some great views.

The best way to approach the piazza is via the **Cordonata** (Map pp100-1), Michelangelo's graceful staircase that leads up from Piazza d'Aracoeli. It's guarded at the bottom by two ancient Egyptian granite lions and at the top by statues of Castor and Pollux, salvaged from the nearby Jewish Ghetto in the 16th century.

Designed by Michelangelo in 1538, Piazza del Campidoglio is bordered by three *palazzi*: Palazzo Nuovo to the left, Palazzo Senatorio straight ahead and Palazzo dei Conservatori on the right. Together, Palazzo Nuovo and Palazzo dei Conservatori house the Capitoline Museums (p112), while **Palazzo Senatorio** (admission free; ☎ 9am-4pm Sun) houses the city council (bring identification for entry).

In the centre of the square, the bronze equestrian **statue of Marcus Aurelius** (Map pp100-1) is a copy. The original, which dates from the 2nd century AD, was in the piazza from 1538 until 1981, when it was moved to a glass annex within Palazzo Nuovo to protect it from erosion. The fountain at the base of Palazzo Senatorio's double staircase features a 1st-century **statue of Minerva** in a central niche. On either side of her are statues of two laid-back men representing, on the right, the Tiber and, on the left, the Nile.

To the left of the Palazzo Senatorio is Via di San Pietro in Carcere and, down the stairs, the **Carcere Mamertino** (Mamertine Prison; Map pp100-1; ☎ 06 679 29 02; donation requested; ☎ 9am-12.30pm & 2.30-5.30pm summer, 9am-12.30pm & 2-5pm winter) where prisoners were put through a hole in the floor to starve to death. St Peter was believed to have been imprisoned here and to have created a miraculous stream of water to baptise his jailers. It's now a church.

Marking the highest point of the Capitoline Hill is the 6th-century **Chiesa di Santa Maria in Aracoeli** (Map pp100-1; ☎ 06 679 81 55; Piazza Santa Maria in Aracoeli; ☎ 9am-12.30pm & 2.30-5.30pm). Built on the site where, according to legend, the Tiburtine Sybil told Augustus of the coming birth of Christ, the church not only offers a quiet haven from the crowds outside but also a fresco by

Pinturicchio. The church is accessible from the piazza – go up the steps in the southeastern corner of the square – or more dramatically by way of the 14th-century Aracoeli staircase to the left of the Cordonata. The ruins you see to the left of the Aracoeli staircase as you ascend are the remains of a Roman apartment block, or **insula** (Map pp100–1), typically used to house the poor. The unexcavated ground-floor shops of this building are now 9m below the current road level.

The world's oldest national museums, the **Capitoline Museums** (Musei Capitolini; Map pp100–1; ☎ 06 399 67 800; Piazza del Campidoglio; adult/student/child €6.50/4.50/free, adult/student/child incl exhibition €8/6/free, incl Centrale Montemartini annexe & exhibition adult/student/child €10/8/free; ☒ 9am–8pm Tue–Sun, last admission 7pm) were founded in 1471 when Pope Sixtus IV donated a few bronze sculptures to the city. Today the collection includes some of ancient Rome's finest treasures, with the emphasis on sculpture. You can hire an audioguide for €5 (one person) or €6.30 (two people).

The main entrance to the museums is in **Palazzo dei Conservatori** (Map pp100–1). Of the sculpture on the 1st floor, the Etruscan *Lupa Capitolina* is the most famous. Standing in the Sala Della Lupe (Sala IV), the 5th-century BC bronze wolf stands over her suckling wards, Romulus and Remus. The statue was given to the Roman people in 1471 by Sixtus IV and, surprisingly, the twins were only added at this time. Other crowd-pleasers are the *Spinario* in Sala III, a delicate 1st-century-BC bronze of a boy removing a thorn from his foot, and Gian Lorenzo Bernini's head of Medusa in a salon off Sala V.

The inner courtyard contains the mammoth head, hand and foot of the 12m-high statue of Constantine that originally stood in the Basilica di Massenzio in the Roman Forum.

On the 2nd floor the Pinacoteca contains paintings by heavyweights such as Titian, Tintoretto, Reni, Van Dyck and Rubens. Look out for Giovanni Bellini's *Ritratto di Giovane* (1500), Garofalo's *Annunciation* (1528) and Titian's *Baptism of Christ* (1512). The Hall of Saint Petronella has a number of large canvases, including Caravaggio's *La buona ventura* (The Fortune Teller; 1595), which shows a gypsy pretending to read a young man's hand but actually stealing his ring. A bit like some of the contemporary female operators who work the surrounding streets, really...

A tunnel links Palazzo dei Conservatori to Palazzo Nuovo on the other side of the square via the **Tabularium**, ancient Rome's central archive, beneath Palazzo Senatorio.

Palazzo Nuovo (Map pp100–1) is crammed to its elegant rafters with classical sculpture. Highlights include the Sala dei Filosofi (Sala V), with its busts of various philosophers, poets and politicians; and the red-marble *Satiro ridente* (a satyr holding a bunch of grapes) in Sala VII, which was from Hadrian's Villa in Tivoli and which Nathaniel Hawthorne used for his novel *The Marble Faun*. Also from Hadrian's Villa is the exquisite *Mosaic of the Doves* in Sala II, made from tiny polychrome tesserae. The stars of the show, however, are in Sala VIII. These include the *Galata Morente* (Dying Gaul), a Roman copy of a 3rd-century-BC Greek original that movingly depicts the anguish of a dying Frenchman; the 5th-century-BC *Wounded Amazon*, created for a competition between the most famous sculptors of the time for the Sanctuary of Ephesus; and *Amoris and Psyche*, a delightful romantic group that's based on an original from the 2nd century BC.

AROUND PIAZZA VENEZIA

Bustling Piazza Venezia is dominated by Rome's most visible landmark, the **Vittoriano** (Map pp100–1; ☎ 06 699 17 18; ☒ 9.30am–6pm). Romans dismiss it as the 'wedding cake' or 'typewriter' but would never countenance the idea – often floated by foreign architects, archaeologists and tourists in jest – that it should be pulled down.

Built to commemorate Vittorio Emanuele II and a unified Italy, today it hosts the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. This means that you can't sit anywhere on the monument, a rule that the hawk-eyed guardians strictly enforce.

On its top floor is the **Museo Centrale del Risorgimento** (Map pp100–1; ☎ 06 678 06 64; Via di San Pietro in Carcere; admission free; ☒ 9.30am–6pm), which documents the history of Italian unification (in Italian only). Exhibits include the stretcher on which the wounded Garibaldi was placed at the battle of Aspromonte. There's a café on the rooftop where you can enjoy a panoramic view not dominated by this building – one of the few spots in the city where this applies.

On the western side of the piazza is the Renaissance **Palazzo Venezia** (Map pp96–7), where Mussolini had his official residence.

The best way to see the splendid interior is to visit the oft-overlooked **Museo Nazionale del Palazzo Venezia** (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 679 88 65; entrance at Via del Plebiscito 118; admission €4; 🕒 8.30am-7.30pm Tue-Sun) with its superb Byzantine and early Renaissance paintings and eclectic collection of jewellery, tapestries, ceramics, bronze figurines, arms and armour. Highlights include the early-15th-century *Madonna con Bambino angeli e santi* by Mariotto di Cristofano; the charming *Ritratto dei figli di Virginio Orsini*, a 16th-century work (artist unknown) that depicts the five sons of the Orsini family; and a gorgeous painted wooden statue of the Virgin Mary by Pietro Alemanno dating from the last quarter of the 15th century.

Actually part of Palazzo Venezia, but facing onto Piazza di San Marco, the **Basilica di San Marco** (Map pp96-7; Piazza di San Marco; 🕒 7am-1pm & 4-7pm) was founded in the 4th century in honour of St Mark the Evangelist. After undergoing several transformations, the church now has a Renaissance façade, a Romanesque bell tower and a largely baroque interior. The main attraction is the 9th-century mosaic in the apse, which depicts Christ with saints and Pope Gregory IV.

Just north of Piazza Venezia, on the major thoroughfare of Via del Corso, is the **Palazzo Doria Pamphilj** (Map pp96-7; cnr Via del Corso & Via del Plebiscito), home to the **Galleria Doria Pamphilj** (☎ 06 679 73 23; www.doriapamphilj.it in Italian; entrance at Piazza del Collegio Romano 2; admission €8; 🕒 10am-4.15pm Fri-Wed, last exit 5pm). This corker of a gallery is sadly often overlooked by tourists – don't make the same mistake. It's home to one of Rome's finest private art collections, including works by Raphael, Tintoretto, Brueghel and Titian. Elaborate picture galleries – and the stunning private apartments – are crammed from floor to ceiling with paintings, although the most famous of all, Velazquez's 1650 portrait of Innocent X, the founder of the collection, dazzles in its own chamber. Other highlights include Titian's *Salome*, Raphael's *Portrait of Andrea Navagero and Agostino*, Caravaggio's *Rest During the Flight to Egypt* and *Penitent Magdelene* (1598-99), and Jan van Scoral's exquisite *Portrait of Agatha van Schoonhoven* (1529). Best of all is the excellent audioguide, which is spoken by a member of the Pamphilj family and is included in the price. He gives loads of information about the collection, as well as recounting personal memories about growing up in the *palazzo*.

It's totally naff, but deep down everyone loves the **Time Elevator** (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 977 46 243; www.time-elevator.it; Via dei Santissimi Apostoli 20; adult/child under 12 €11/8; 🕒 10.30am-7.15pm), which is located on the opposite side of Via del Corso to Galleria Doria Pamphilj. There are three programmes, but the one to see is *Time Elevator Rome*, a 45-minute virtual journey through 3000 years of Roman history. Shows occur every hour and children and adults alike seem to love the panoramic screens, flight-simulator technology and a surround-sound system. Note that children under five aren't admitted and anyone who suffers motion sickness should probably give it a miss.

PANTHEON & AROUND

Ancient Rome's best-preserved building, the **Pantheon** (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 683 00 230; Piazza della Rotonda; admission free; 🕒 9am-7.30pm Mon-Sat, to 5.30pm Sun) has been standing for nearly 2000 years. In its current form it dates to around AD 120 when the emperor Hadrian built the Pantheon over Marcus Agrippa's original temple (27 BC). For centuries, historians read the name Agrippa in the inscription on the pediment and thought that Hadrian's version was, in fact, the 1st-century-BC original. When excavations in the 19th century revealed traces of the earlier temple, they realised their mistake.

Although the Pantheon has been a Christian church since 608, Hadrian's temple was dedicated to the classical gods, hence the name Pantheon, a derivation of the Greek words *pan* (all) and *theos* (god). Today you'll find the tombs of kings Vittorio Emanuele II and Umberto I alongside the tomb of the artist Raphael.

From the outside you get no idea of the dimensions of the extraordinary dome that tops the building. Considered the Romans' most important architectural achievement, the dome – the largest masonry vault ever built – is a perfect semisphere (the diameter is equal to the interior height of 43.3m). Light is provided by the oculus – a 9m opening in the dome – and 22 small holes in the marble floor allow any rain that enters to drain away.

The imposing exterior has 16 Corinthian columns (each a single block of stone) supporting a triangular pediment. Rivets and holes in the brickwork indicate where the original marble-veneer panels have been removed.

Over the centuries the temple was consistently plundered and damaged. In the 17th century, for example, Pope Urban VIII had the bronze ceiling of the portico melted down to make the *baldachin* (canopy) over the main altar in St Peter's Basilica and 80 cannons for Castel Sant'Angelo. Thankfully, he left the original bronze doors.

Just south of the Pantheon, the Piazza della Minerva is home to Bernini's **Elefantino** (Map pp96-7), a curious and much-loved sculpture of an elephant supporting a 6th-century-BC Egyptian obelisk. On the eastern flank of the square is the 13th-century Dominican **Chiesa di Santa Maria Sopra Minerva** (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 679 39 26; Piazza della Minerva; 🕒 7am-7pm). Built on the site of an ancient temple to Minerva, this treasure-trove of a church is one of the few examples of Gothic architecture in Rome. Largely restored in the 19th century, it boasts two superb frescoes by Filippino Lippi in the Chapel of the Annunciation (aka Cappella Carafa; c 1489-92). The fresco on the right wall features the triumph of St Thomas Aquinas over heresy; look for the view of Rome in the background. The fresco on the main wall shows St Thomas presenting Cardinal Carafa, the patron of the work, to Our Lady of the Assumption. Left of the high altar is one of Michelangelo's lesser-known sculptures, *Christ Bearing the Cross* (c 1520). The body of Santa Caterina di Siena, minus her head (which is in Siena), lies under the high altar.

Equally, if not more, spectacular is the **Chiesa del Gesù** (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 69 70 01; Piazza del Gesù; 🕒 6.45am-12.45pm & 4-7.45pm), Rome's first Jesuit church. A magnificent example of Counter-Reformation architecture, it was built between 1551 and 1584 with money donated by Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, who was subsequently said to own the three most beautiful things in Rome: his family *palazzo*, his daughter and the Church of Gesù.

Although the façade by Giacomo della Porta is impressive, it is the amazing interior that is the real attraction. Designed by Giacomo Barozzi da Vignola, a pupil of Michelangelo, it's an amazing ensemble of gold and marble built to draw worshippers to the Jesuit fold. Works to look out for include the astounding vault fresco by Giovanni Battista Gaulli (who was known as Il Baciccio). His masterful use of perspective is evident as figures appear to tumble from the vault onto the coffered ceil-

ing. Baciccio also painted the cupola frescoes and designed the stucco decoration.

The Cappella di San Francesco Saverio, to the right of the main altar, was designed by the Tuscan master Pietro da Cortona. A silver gilt reliquary above the gold altar holds the saint's right forearm (with which he is said to have blessed, baptised and healed many).

Andrea Pozzo, one of the great baroque masters, designed the Cappella di Sant'Ignazio in the northern transept. The remains of St Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, are in an urn of gilded bronze, flanked by a painting (*Religion Lashing Heresy*) by Le Gros that, to be frank, makes one wonder what type of chap Loyola was.

The Spanish saint actually lived in this church from 1544 until his death in 1556. On the eastern side of the church you can visit **Loyola's rooms** (🕒 4-6pm Mon-Sat, 10am-noon Sun & holidays Sep-Jun, 4-6pm Mon-Sat, 9-11am Sun & holidays Jul & Aug), which contain a masterful trompe l'oeil perspective by Andrea del Pozzo.

Nearby is the **Museo Nazionale Romano: Crypta Balbi** (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 399 67 700; Via delle Botteghe Oscure 31; 🕒 9am-6.45pm Tue-Sun, last exit 7.45pm). Built over the ruins of medieval and Renaissance buildings, which themselves stand over the Theatre of Balbus (13 BC), the museum perfectly illustrates Rome's multilayered history. The artefacts on display include finds from the excavation of the *crypta* itself, as well as items taken from the forums, and the Oppian and Caelian Hills. Admission to the museum is by Museum Card – see boxed text, p106.

PIAZZA NAVONA & AROUND

Its baroque *palazzi*, magnificent fountains and sidewalk cafés make **Piazza Navona** (Map pp96-7) one of Rome's most captivating public spaces. Laid out on the ruins of an arena built by Domitian in AD 86, it was paved over in the 15th century and for almost 300 years was the city's main market.

Of the piazza's three fountains, it is Bernini's **Fontana dei Quattro Fiumi** (Fountain of the Four Rivers; Map pp96-7), depicting the Nile, Ganges, Danube and Plate, that grabs the most attention. Legend has it that the figure of the Nile is shielding his eyes from the **Chiesa di Sant'Agnese in Agone** (Map pp96-7; 🕒 10am-noon & 4-7pm Tue-Sun), designed by Bernini's bitter rival, Borromini. It's not true, though. Bernini completed his fountain two years before his contemporary started work on the façade and

the veiled gesture indicates that the source of the Nile was unknown at the time.

At the northern end of the piazza, the **Fontana del Nettuno** (Map pp96–7) is a 19th-century creation, while the **Fontana del Moro** (Map pp96–7) to the south was originally designed in 1576. The largest building in the square is the 17th-century **Palazzo Pamphilj** (Map pp96–7), built for Pope Innocent X and now home to the Brazilian embassy.

North of Piazza Navona, the **Museo Nazionale Romano: Palazzo Altemps** (Map pp96–7; ☎ 06 683 35 66; Piazza Sant'Apollinare 46; 🕒 9am–7pm Tue–Sun) houses the famous Ludovisi collection. Admission to the museum is by Museum Card – see boxed text, p106.

Cardinal Ludovico Ludovisi, a nephew of Pope Gregory XV, was a ravenous collector of ancient sculpture, which was regularly unearthed in the building boom of Counter-Reformation Rome. He employed leading sculptors – including Bernini and Alessandro Algardi – to repair and ‘enhance’ the works, replacing missing limbs and sticking new heads on headless torsos.

The museum’s prize exhibits (untouched by baroque hands) include the 5th-century-BC *Trono Ludovisi*, a carved marble throne that scholars think came from a Greek colony in southern Italy; the *Juno Ludovisi*, a head of Antonia Mina (mother of Germanicus, Livilla and Claudius), that was part of the nucleus of the cardinal’s collection; and the *Grande Ludovisi*, a sarcophagus featuring detailed battle scenes. This was found near the Tiburtina gate in 1621. The Egyptian collection of the Museo Nazionale Romano is also housed here.

Baroque frescoes provide a decorative backdrop throughout the museum. Landscapes and hunting scenes are seen through trompe l’oeil windows in the Sala delle Prospettive Dipinte (1st floor), and a 15th-century fresco by Melozzo da Forlì in the Sala della Piattaia – once the main reception room of the palazzo – displays a cupboard full of wedding gifts.

A short walk away are two churches that no art-lover should miss. The **Chiesa di Sant’Agostino** (Map pp96–7; ☎ 06 688 01 962; Piazza di Sant’Agostino; 🕒 7.45am–noon & 4–7.30pm) contains two outstanding works of art: Raphael’s 1512 fresco of Isaiah, and the *Madonna of the Pilgrims* (1604) by Caravaggio. Even more dramatic are Caravaggio’s three canvases in the **Chiesa di San Luigi dei Francesi** (Map pp96–7; ☎ 06 68 82 71; Piazza di San Luigi dei Francesi; 🕒 8.30am–12.30pm

& 3.30–7pm), the French national church. Collectively known as the St Matthew cycle, these canvases completely upstage the church’s opulent baroque interior, which dates to 1550–68. You’ll find them in the front chapel to the left of the altar. The best of the three is *The Vocation of St Matthew*, which shows a barefooted Jesus and St Peter in a customs office populated with men dressed as they would have been in Caravaggio’s time. St Matthew is counting coins and seems very hesitant while Jesus points to him using the same gesture as Adam in Michelangelo’s famous Sistine Chapel ceiling. Caravaggio’s use of chiaroscuro here is astounding; Jesus seems to be coming out of the darkness, both literally and metaphorically.

To the south of Piazza Navona, the baroque Palazzo Braschi houses the moderately interesting **Museo di Roma** (Map pp96–7; ☎ 06 820 77 304; www.museodiroma.comune.roma.it; Piazza di San Pantaleo 10; adult/child €6.50/free; 🕒 9am–6pm Tue–Sun, last exit 7pm), which is devoted to Rome’s history from the Middle Ages to the first half of the 20th century. The collection includes photographs, etchings, clothes, furniture and an extensive collection of paintings, most of which are portraits of popes and cardinals; look out for Raphael’s 1511 portrait of Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, the future Pope Paul III.

CAMPO DE’ FIORI & AROUND

Noisy and colourful **Campo de’ Fiori** (Il Campo; Map pp96–7) has two faces: in the morning it stages Rome’s most famous produce market, while at night it fills with drinkers of all ages. Towering over the square is the sinister form of Giordano Bruno, a monk who was burned at the stake for heresy in 1600.

Nearby, in the more tranquil Piazza Farnese, the **Palazzo Farnese** (Map pp96–7) is a magnificent Renaissance building. Started in 1514 by Antonio da Sangallo, continued by Michelangelo and finished by Giacomo della Porta, it is now the French embassy. The twin fountains in the square are enormous granite baths taken from the Terme di Caracalla.

South of Campo de’ Fiori and Piazza Farnese in the 16th-century **Palazzo Spada** (Map pp96–7; ☎ 06 683 24 09; Piazza Capo di Ferro 13; admission €5; 🕒 8.30am–2pm, guided tours at 3pm, 4.15pm & 5.30pm Tue–Sun) is Borromini’s famous perspective. What appears to be a 25m-long corridor lined with columns leading to a life-sized statue is, in fact, only 10m long. The sculpture, which

was a later addition, is actually hip-height and the columns diminish in size – not because of distance, but because they actually get shorter. Upstairs the small art gallery houses the Spada family art collection (acquired by the state in 1926), with works by Andrea del Sarto, Guido Reni, Guercino and Titian.

Between Campo de' Fiori and the Jewish Ghetto is the **Area Sacra di Largo Argentina** (Map pp96–7), more of a traffic hub (for buses and trams) than an historic monument. The ruins in the sunken centre of the traffic were uncovered in 1926; four temples are visible, all of which front onto a paved square. They date from the 4th century BC to the 2nd century BC. It was on this site (on the tram side) that Julius Caesar was assassinated on 15 March (The Ides of March) in 44 BC.

JEWISH GHETTO & ISOLA TIBERINA

Jews have lived in Rome since the 2nd century BC. In 1555 Pope Paul IV issued a papal bull ordering that they be confined to the Jewish Ghetto, a situation that more or less lasted until the end of the 19th century and was reinstated by the Nazis during WWII. Via del Portico d'Ottavia is the centre of this tightly packed though surprisingly tranquil area.

Housed in Rome's monumental synagogue, which was built in 1904, the **Museo Ebraico di Roma** (Jewish Museum of Rome; Map pp104–5; ☎ 06 684 00 661; www.museoebraico.roma.it in Italian; Via Catalana; adult/student/child under 11yr €7.50/3/free; ☎ 10am–7pm Sun–Thu, 9am–4pm Fri Jun–Sep, 10am–5pm Sun–Thu, 9am–2pm Fri Oct–May) chronicles the fascinating historical, cultural and artistic heritage of Rome's Jewish community. You can also organise to take a one-hour guided walking tour of the former Ghetto; these usually leave the museum at 1pm and 5pm Monday to Thursday and on Sunday, and at 1.15pm on Friday, though the schedule can be inconsistent. The cost is €7 for adults and €5 for children and you must book your ticket at least 30 minutes in advance. There must be at least three adults booked for the tour to occur.

To the east of the Ghetto is the **Area Archeologica del Teatro di Marcello e del Portico d'Ottavia** (Map pp104–5; Via del Teatro di Marcello; ☎ 9am–7pm winter, 9am–6pm summer). The Teatro di Marcello was planned by Julius Caesar and built by Augustus around 13 BC. In the 16th century a *palazzo* was built onto the original building; today this houses apartments occupied by wealthy Romans. You can walk past the

theatre to the **Portico d'Ottavia**, the oldest *quadriporto* (four-sided porch) in Rome. Originally constructed in the southern part of a Marzio field in 146 BC, it was reconstructed by Augustus in honour of his sister Ottavia between 27 and 23 BC. The right columns of the façade were replaced by an arch in the Middle Ages and some of its columns were incorporated into the nearby Church of Sant'Angelo in Pescheria, which takes its name from a fish market that was once located here.

Follow Via del Teatro di Marcello round as it becomes Via L Petroselli and you eventually come to Piazza Bocca della Verità, where you'll find one of Rome's most famous curiosities: the **Bocca della Verità** (Mouth of Truth; Map pp104–5). Legend has it that if you put your right hand in the mouth of this mask-shaped disk while telling a lie the mouth will snap shut and bite your hand off.

The mouth lives in the portico of one of Rome's finest medieval churches. The **Chiesa di Santa Maria in Cosmedin** (Map pp104–5; ☎ 06 678 14 19; Piazza Bocca della Verità 18; ☎ 9am–1pm & 2.30–6pm) dates to the 8th century, although it was a 12th-century face-lift that gave it its current look. Highlights to look out for include the seven-storey bell tower, the frescoes in the aisles and the beautiful floor heavily decorated with inlaid marble.

Opposite the church are two tiny Roman temples: the round **Tempio di Ercole Vincitore** (Map pp104–5) and the **Tempio di Portunus** (Map pp104–5). Just off the piazza, the **Arco di Giano** (Arch of Janus; Map pp104–5) is a four-sided Roman arch that once covered a crossroads.

To reach the **Isola Tiberina** (Map pp104–5), the world's smallest inhabited island, double back up the river to the **Ponte Fabricio** (Map pp104–5), itself a record-breaker: it dates to 62 BC and is Rome's oldest-standing bridge. The Isola Tiberina has been associated with healing since the 3rd century BC, when the Romans adopted Aesculapius, the Greek god of healing, as their own and erected a temple to him on the island. Today it's the site of the **Ospedale Fatebenefratelli** (Map pp104–5). The **Chiesa di San Bartolomeo** (Map pp104–5; ☎ 9am–12.30pm & 3.30–6pm) was built on the island in the 10th century on the ruins of the Roman temple. It has a Romanesque bell tower and a marble wellhead, believed to have been built over the same spring that provided healing waters for the temple. The **Ponte Cestio** (Map

pp104–5), built in 46 BC, connects the island with Trastevere to the south. It was rebuilt in the late 19th century. Also to the south of the island are the remains of the **Ponte Rotto** (Broken Bridge; Map pp104–5), ancient Rome's first stone bridge.

TREVI FOUNTAIN TO THE QUIRINAL

Immortalised by Anita Ekberg's midnight dip in *La dolce vita*, the **Trevi Fountain** (Fontana di Trevi; Map pp96–7) is Rome's most famous fountain. The baroque bonanza was designed by Nicola Salvi in 1732 and depicts Neptune's chariot being led by Tritons with sea horses – one wild, one docile – representing the various moods of the sea. The water comes from one of the city's earliest aqueducts and the name 'Trevi' refers to the *'tre vie'* (three roads) that converge at the fountain. Throwing in a coin to ensure a return visit to Rome – as Maggie McNamara, Dorothy McGuire and Jean Peters did in Jean Negulesco's 1955 film *Three Coins in the Fountain* – is a corny but mandatory activity while in Rome.

At the top of the Quirinal (Quirinale) Hill, the **Palazzo del Quirinale** (Map pp96–7; ☎ 06 4 69 91; www.quirinale.it; Piazza del Quirinale; admission €5; ☞ 8.30am–noon Sun, but often closed for holidays or official functions) is the official residence of the president of the republic. Built and added to from 1574 to the early 18th century, it was the summer residence of the popes until 1870, when it became the royal palace of the kings of Italy. When the royals were booted out of Italy in 1946, it passed to the president of the new republic.

Along Via del Quirinale are two excellent examples of baroque architecture: the **Chiesa di Sant'Andrea al Quirinale** (Map pp96–7; ☎ 06 489 03 187; Via del Quirinale 29; ☞ 9am–noon & 4–7pm Mon–Fri, 9am–noon Sat), designed by Bernini, and the **Chiesa di San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane** (Map pp96–7; ☎ 06 488 32 61; Via del Quirinale 23; ☞ 10am–1pm & 3–6pm Mon–Fri & Sun, 10am–1pm Sat), by Borromini.

PIAZZA BARBERINI & AROUND

There's nothing special about the 17th-century **Chiesa di Santa Maria della Concezione** (Map pp96–7; ☎ 06 487 11 85; Via Vittorio Veneto 27; admission by donation; ☞ 9am–noon & 3–6pm Fri–Wed) at the bottom of Via Vittorio Veneto, but dip into the Capuchin cemetery beneath (access is to the right of the church steps) and you'll be gobsmacked. Everything from the picture frames to the light fittings is made of human bones. Between 1528

and 1870 the Capuchin monks used the bones of 4000 of their departed brothers to create the mesmerising and macabre décor. The message in the last crypt provides food for thought: 'What you are now we used to be; what we are now you will be.'

In the centre of Piazza Barberini is the spectacular **Fontana del Tritone** (Fountain of the Triton; Map pp96–7), created by Bernini in 1643 for Pope Urban VIII, patriarch of the Barberini family. In the northeastern corner, the **Fontana delle Api** (Fountain of the Bees; Map pp96–7) was created by the same artist for the Barberini family, whose crest features three bees.

The grand 17th-century **Palazzo Barberini** (Map pp96–7) was commissioned by Urban VIII to celebrate the Barberini family's rise to papal power. Many high-profile baroque architects worked on it, including both Bernini and Borromini. Today it houses part of the **Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica** (Map pp96–7; ☎ 06 481 45 91; www.galleriaborghese.it; Via Quattro delle Fontane 13; adult/child €5/free; ☞ 8.30am–7.30pm Tue–Sun), which includes paintings by Raphael, Caravaggio, Guido Reni, Bernini, Filippo Lippi and Holbein. A highlight is the ceiling of the main salon, entitled the *Triumph of Divine Providence* and painted between 1632 and 1639 by Pietro da Cortona. Don't leave without viewing Hans Holbein's famous portrait of Henry VIII (c 1540) and Filippo Lippi's luminous *Annunciazione e due devoti*. Caravaggio fans will delight in his *St Francis in Meditation*, *Judith Beheading Holophernes* (c 1597–1600) and *Narcissus* (c 1571–1610). Don't miss Raphael's lovely *La Fornarina* (The Baker's Girl), a portrait of his mistress Margherita Luti, who worked in a bakery on Via di Santa Dorotea in Trastevere (now a restaurant called Romolo). Raphael was so smitten by the lovely Margherita that he neglected his commission to paint a fresco of Galatea for the wealthy Agostino Chigi, whose villa (now called the Villa Farnesina) was close to the bakery on Via della Lungara.

PIAZZA DI SPAGNA & THE SPANISH STEPS

The favourite flirting ground of Italian teenagers, **Piazza di Spagna** (Map pp96–7) and the famous **Spanish Steps** (Scalinata della Trinità dei Monti; Map pp96–7) have acted as magnets for visitors since the 18th century. The piazza was named after the Spanish Embassy to the Holy See, although the staircase, built

with a legacy from the French in 1725, leads to the French church **Trinità dei Monti** (Map pp96–7). At the foot of the steps, the fountain of a sinking boat, the **Barcaccia** (Map pp96–7), is believed to be by Pietro Bernini, father of the famous Gian Lorenzo.

To the right as you face the steps, the **Keats-Shelley Memorial House** (Map pp96–7; ☎ 06 678 42 35; www.keats-shelley-house.org; Piazza di Spagna 26; admission €3.50; ☎ 9am–1pm & 3–6pm Mon–Fri, 11am–2pm & 3–6pm Sat) is the house where Keats died in 1821. Now it's a small museum full of poetic memorabilia.

On the other side of the square, well-heeled shoppers make for the designer stores that line Rome's poshest shopping strip, Via dei Condotti. If you walk to its end, cross Via del Corso and continue down Via della F. Borghese, turning right at Via di Ripetta, you'll come to the **Ara Pacis Augustae** (Altar of Peace; Map pp96–7; ☎ 06 671 03 887; admission €6.50; ☎ 9am–7pm Tue–Sun), a monument to the peace that Augustus established both at home and abroad. One of the most important works in the history of ancient Roman sculpture, the reliefs date to 13 BC. Panels excavated from the 16th century onwards ended up in the Medici collection, the Vatican and the Louvre; in 1936, under Mussolini, the remaining parts were reassembled in the present location. This was a tricky procedure as they were approximately 7m beneath the modern street; to make sure that the panels stayed intact, the ground around them was frozen solid before being excavated. Now housed in the muscular glass and travertine **Ara Pacis pavilion** designed by architect Richard Meier, they are shown in all their original glory.

The Meier pavilion is a sore point with many Romans. The former mayor of Rome, Francesco Rutelli, commissioned the American architect without holding a competition, infuriating both the Italian architectural fraternity and the national Ministry of Culture. And many locals dislike Meier's pavilion, deeming it totally unsympathetic to its surrounds. It will be interesting to see the outcome of the current project to revitalise both the sorry-looking **Mausoleo di Augusto** (Mausoleum of Augustus; Map pp96–7), next to the Ara Pacis, and the surrounding area. The mausoleum, which was built by Augustus for himself and his family, was once one of Rome's greatest monuments. Greek geographer and historian Strabo described

it as '...a huge monumental rotunda rising on a gigantic square base, both of pure white marble, richly decorated and having over it an earthen mound landscaped with cypresses and surmounted by a colossal bronze statue of the emperor'. It was converted into a fortress during the Middle Ages and then restored by Mussolini in 1936. Learning from his predecessor's mistakes, the current mayor of Rome, Walter Veltroni, made sure that a competition was held to decide the architect of this project, and the Italian architect Francesco Cellini, a professor at Rome's main architecture school, won the commission. His scheme re-creates the original level of the street (5m below the current level) and closes the area to traffic between the Tiber and the mausoleum. Its scheduled completion date is 2011.

PIAZZA DEL POPOLO

This vast **piazza** (Map pp92–3) was laid out in 1538 at the convergence of the three roads – Via di Ripetta, Via del Corso and Via del Babuino – forming a trident at what was once Rome's northern entrance. Characterised by the two 17th-century baroque churches, **Chiesa di Santa Maria dei Miracoli** (Map pp92–3) and **Chiesa di Santa Maria in Montesanto** (Map pp92–3), it was redesigned in neoclassical style in 1823. In its centre is an obelisk brought by Augustus from Heliopolis, in ancient Greece, and moved here from the Circo Massimo in the mid-16th century. To the east is a ramp leading up to the Pincio Hill, which affords a great view of the city.

The **Chiesa di Santa Maria del Popolo** (Map pp92–3; ☎ 06 361 08 36; Piazza del Popolo; ☎ 7am–noon & 4–7pm Mon–Sat, 8am–1.30pm & 4.30–7.30pm Sun), next to the Porta del Popolo at the northern side of the piazza, is a magnificent repository of art. The first chapel was built here in 1099 to exorcise the ghost of Nero, who was buried on this spot and whose ghost was said to haunt the area. Later transformed in the 15th century, it boasts some superb 16th-century vault frescoes by Pinturicchio. In Raphael's *Capella Chigi* (most of which was completed by Bernini some 100 years later) you'll find a famous mosaic of a kneeling skeleton, while in the *Capella Cerasi*, to the left of the altar, hang two Caravaggio canvases: the *Conversion of St Paul* and the *Crucifixion of St Peter* (both 1600–01).

Close to the Piazza del Popolo is the modest **Casa di Goethe** (Map pp92–3; ☎ 06 326 50 412; www

.casadigoethe.it; Via del Corso 18; adult/student €4/3; ☎ 10am-5.30pm Tue-Sun), where the German writer lived between 1786 and 1788. Its collection includes some drawings and etchings by the great man as well as documents relating to his Italian sojourn.

Villa Borghese & Around

This beautiful **park** (Map pp92-3), located just northeast of Piazza del Popolo, was once the estate of Cardinal Scipione Borghese. You can enter from Piazzale Flaminio, from the top of Pincio Hill above the Spanish Steps or from the top of Via Vittorio Veneto. It's a good place to have a picnic or to take children for a run around. You can hire bikes (including helmets) for €4 per hour and a *riscio* (pedal carriage) for €10 per hour on weekdays and €15 per hour on weekends. There's also a silly motorised train that takes people from the Museo e Galleria Borghese to the Via Veneto exit for €2.50 per person.

Even in a country blessed with some of the world's finest art galleries, the collection at the **Museo e Galleria Borghese** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 06 328 10; www.ticketeria.it; Piazzale del Museo Borghese; admission €8.50; ☎ 8.30am-7.30pm Tue-Sun) stands head and shoulders above most of the competition. In fact, we'd go so far as to say that this gallery is more of a highlight than the Vatican Museum. Put simply, this is an absolute must-see; one that's well worth the slight hassle of the two-minute phone call you'll need to make to book a ticket. In order to limit numbers, visitors are admitted at two-hourly intervals (9am, 11am, 1pm, 3pm and 5pm), so after you've picked up your prebooked ticket you'll have to wait for your allocated entry time, and there's a maximum visit time of two hours.

The collection here was formed by Cardinal Scipione Borghese, the most passionate and knowledgeable art connoisseur of his day. He housed it in this purpose-designed 17th-century villa, which was purchased with its contents by the Italian state in 1902.

The collection is divided into two parts: the ground-floor museum with its superb sculptures, intricate Roman floor mosaics and over-the-top frescoes; and the upstairs Pinacoteca. On the ground floor, in Sala I, you immediately come across Antonio Canova's daring depiction of Napoleon's sister, Paolina Bonaparte Borghese, reclining topless as *Venera vincitrice* (Victorious Venus; 1805-08). But it's Bernini's spectacular carvings –

flamboyant depictions of pagan myths – that really take the breath away. Just look at Pluto's hand pressing into the soft flesh of Persephone's thigh in the *Ratto di Proserpina* (Rape of Persephone; 1621-22) in Sala IV or at Daphne's hands morphing into leaves in the swirling *Apollo e Dafne* (1622-25) in Sala III.

The Pinacoteca is full of masterpieces – far too many for us to list and rhapsodise about here. In Sala IX (aka the Room of the Three Graces) don't miss the chance to compare the darkly atmospheric *Madonna with Christ Child and San Giovannino* (c 1517-18) by Andrea del Sarto with Sandro Botticelli's totally different take on the same subject, *Madonna with Child, San Giovannino and Angel*. Equally impressive are Perugino's *San Sebastiano* and Ghirlandaio's *Ritratto do giovane*. Best of all, perhaps, are the Raphaels here: the extraordinary *Deposizione di Cristo* (Christ Being Taken Down from the Cross) and the utterly charming *Ritratto di giovane donna con unicorno* (c 1506).

Next door the Room of Hercules (Sala X) is notable for Ghirlandaio's *Leda*, complete with swan, and Cranach's *Venera e Amore che reca il favo do miele* (Venus and Cupid with Honeycomb), with its angel surrounded by bees.

Moving on, the Room of Venus (Sala XVIII) is home to two significant works by Rubens: *Pianto sul Cristo Morto* and *Susanna e i vecchi* (Susanna and the Elders). However, these almost seem to pale into significance when seen next to Titian's early masterpiece, *Amor Sacro e Amor Profano* (Sacred and Profane Love; 1514) in Sala XX.

Downstairs and towards the exit is the Room of the Sileno (Sala VIII), home to six Caravaggio paintings. These include a dissipated-looking *Bacchus* (1592-95), which is thought by some critics to have been a self-portrait; the strangely beautiful *La Madonna dei palafrenieri* (Madonna with Serpent; 1605-06); *San Giovanni Battista* (1609-10), probably Caravaggio's last work; and the much-loved portrait of a boy with a basket of fruit, *Giovane con canestro do frutta*, which dates from 1593-95.

The entrance hall houses Cardinal Scipione Borghese's quite extraordinary collection of Roman mosaics. Dating from the 4th century AD, these were discovered on a Borghese estate and subdivided into panels for display here.

For a complete change of period and style, the nearby **Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 06 323 40 00; www.gnam.arti.beniculturali.it; Viale delle Belle Arti 131; admission €6.50; ☎ 8.30am-7.30pm Tue-Sun, last admission 6.45pm) displays works by some of the most important exponents of modern Italian art. Its collection places 19th- and 20th-century Italian art in both a local and a European context, giving a great overview. Here you'll find everything from canvases by the *macchiaioli* (meaning 'dabbers' and referring to the Italian version of the impressionists) and the futurists (including Boccioni and Balla), to rooms dedicated to 1950s work by avant-garde artists such as Giuseppe Capogrossi. Highlights include major works by Modigliani and De Chirico. There's also a collection of works by international artists including Degas, Cezanne, Van Gogh, Duchamp and Monet. Many of these works are minor, but there is a totally extraordinary Gustave Klimt, *The Three Ages of Women* (1905), and a great Mondrian, *Grand Composition* (1919). Make sure you take the opportunity to have a coffee or *aperitivo* (happy hour) in the gallery's charming courtyard *café*.

A short walk down Viale delle Belle Arti leads to the 16th-century villa of Pope Julius III, home of the **Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia** (Map pp92-3; ☎ bookings 06 82 46 20; www.ticketeria.it; Piazzale di Villa Giulia 9; admission €4; ☎ 8.30am-7.30pm Tue-Sun). The villa was built by Pope Julius III and originally had private access to and from the Tiber via a special path through surrounding gardens and vineyards. Building commenced in 1551, a year after Julius became pope, but stopped in 1555 when he died. Vasari, Vignola and Michelangelo were all advisors on its construction. If you're at all interested in Etruscan history, you'll love it here. There are thousands of exhibits spanning everything from domestic objects, temple decorations and terracotta vases and amphorae. If you're planning on visiting Etruscan sites in Lazio, this is the ideal place to bone up on the subject before you go. Highlights include the late-classical and Hellenistic period jewellery in Sala 20; terracotta fragments from the Tempio di Apollo allo Scasato and the Tempio di Mercurio ai Sassi (Sali 31 & 32); the recently restored and strangely housed polychrome terracotta statue of *Apollo* found at Veio; and the endearing 6th-century BC *Sarcofago degli Sposi* (Sarcophagi of the Be-

trothed) taken from a tomb at Cerveteri and housed in Sala XI in the second building.

Piazza della Repubblica & Around

The area around **Piazza della Repubblica** (Map p102) is not immediately appealing, but it is here that you will find the bulk of the Museo Nazionale Romano's world-famous archaeological collection.

The complex of baths, libraries, concert halls and gardens that made up the **Terme di Diocleziano** (Diocletian's Baths; Map p102) was the largest of its kind in ancient Rome, covering about 13 hectares, with a capacity to hold 3000 people. Completed in the early 4th century, it fell into disrepair after the aqueduct that fed the baths was destroyed by invaders in about AD 536. Today the ruins constitute part of the **Museo Nazionale Romano: Terme di Diocleziano** (Map p102; ☎ 06 399 67 700; Viale Enrico di Nicola 79; ☎ 9am-6.45pm Tue-Sun, last exit 7.45pm). Exhibits on the ground and 1st floors include ancient epigraphs, vases, amphorae and household objects in terracotta and bronze. Upstairs you'll find burial objects from Italian protohistory (11th to 6th centuries BC), while the elegant Renaissance cloister is lined with classical sarcophagi, headless statues, and huge sculptured animal heads from Trajan's Forum. Admission is with a Museum Card – see boxed text, p106.

Michelangelo incorporated the main hall and *tepidarium* (warm bath) of Diocletian's Baths into the design of the **Basilica di Santa Maria degli Angeli** (Map p102; ☎ 06 488 08 12; Piazza della Repubblica; ☎ 7am-6.30pm Mon-Sat, 7am-7.30pm Sun), although only the great vaulted ceiling remains from his original plans.

Don't miss the **Museo Nazionale Romano: Palazzo Massimo alle Terme** (Map p102; ☎ 06 399 67 700; Largo di Villa Peretti 1; ☎ 9am-6.45pm Tue-Sun, last exit 7.45pm), home to some of the city's best examples of Roman art. Admission here is also with a Museum Card – see boxed text, p106.

The ground and 1st floors are given over to sculpture from the 2nd century BC to the 5th century AD. Rejecting realism for glorification, ancient artists presented emperors in various vainglorious poses – the depiction of Augustus as Pontifex Maximus in Sala V on the ground floor being a perfect example. In the same room, don't miss the marble frieze from the Roman Forum, which came from the entablature of the first interior order of the Basilica Fulvia Aemilia and which depicts

LIGHTS, CAMERA, LOCATION

One of the best ways to prepare for a holiday in Rome is to indulge in an orgy of film watching. Rome was the incubator for one of the great movements of 20th-century cinema – Italian neorealism – and in the 1960s the films shot in its famous Cinecittà studios were at the cutting edge of contemporary cinema.

Masterpieces of neorealism shot on location in the city include Roberto Rosselli's *Roma, città aperta* (*Rome, Open City*; 1945) and Vittorio De Sica's *Ladri di biciclette* (*The Bicycle Thieves*; 1948) and *Umberto D* (1952). Each is a wonderful example of what neorealism was known for – gritty depiction of the struggles of postwar working-class life, usually shot directly on the streets.

In the 1960s the style of local cinema changed, becoming less gritty and more visually stylised. The king of this movement was the great Federico Fellini, whose *La dolce vita* (*The Sweet Life*; 1960) is synonymous with the city and whose *Le notti di Cabiria* (*Nights of Cabiria*; 1957) has scenes set in the Via Veneto, Aventino and Terme di Caracalla. Fellini adored Rome – he even made a film about it (*Roma*; 1972). Other directors working in Rome at this time included Michelangelo Antonioni, whose *L'eclisse* (*The Eclipse*; 1962) is set in the *centro storico* (historic centre) and the EUR among other locations; Bernardo Bertolucci, who ended *Il conformista* (*The Conformist*; 1970) at the Colosseum and used the Terme di Caracalla for the final scenes in the oedipal *La luna* (1979); and Pierpaolo Pasolini, who cast the wonderful Anna Magnani in his film *Mamma Roma* (*Mother Rome*; 1962), some of which is set in Trastevere.

In recent years, film making in the city hasn't been as impressive. Director Nanni Moretti's idiosyncratic *Caro diario* (*Dear Diary*; 1993) is probably the most noteworthy example.

Many foreign directors have also set their films in the city's streets. The most famous are William Wyler's films *Roman Holiday* (1953; see Walking Tour, p132) and *Ben Hur* (1959), but there are many others worth watching, including Jean Negulesco's froth-and-bubble confection *Three Coins in the Fountain* (1954), Vincent Minelli's *Two Weeks in Another Town* (1962), Jean-Luc Godard's *Contempt* (1963), Jane Campion's *Portrait of a Lady* (1996), Peter Greenaway's *The Belly of an Architect* (1987) and Anthony Minghella's *The Talented Mr Ripley* (1999).

scenes from the origin of Rome. In Sala VI next door, there is a moving sculpture known as the *Niobide dagli Horti Sallustiani*, which dates from the 5th century BC. It depicts one of the 14 children of Niobe. Niobe insulted Leto, the mother of Apollo and Artemis, leading to Apollo and Artemis killing all of Niobe's children with arrows. Sala VII is home to two extraordinary bronze statues discovered in 1885 on the slope of the Quirinal Hill. Both date from the 2nd to 1st centuries BC.

More gems, including two sculptures from the Villa of Nero at Subiaco, are found on the 1st floor, but the highlights of the museum are the mosaics and wall paintings on the 2nd floor. These include wall paintings from the Villa Farnesina in Trastevere, excavated in the 19th century. Dating from the Augustan period, the villa was named after the 16th-century villa in whose grounds it was found. The richly coloured wall paintings from its *cubicula* (bedrooms) have religious, erotic and theatre subjects and are quite amazing, as are the paintings from the *triclinium* (dining room) that feature landscape scenes.

As amazing as the Villa Farnesina paintings are, they are almost overshadowed by the garden paintings (dating from 20–10 BC) from Villa Livia, one of the homes of Augustus' wife, Livia Drusilla. These stunning works depict an illusionary garden with plants in full bloom, and were excavated in the 19th century from a villa that was on the Via Flaminia near the modern-day suburb of Prima Porta. The paintings graced the walls of a large room that was partially underground and covered in a barrel vault, leading archaeologists to believe that it was a summer *triclinium*.

Esquiline & Celio

The largest and highest of Rome's seven hills, the **Esquiline** (Esquilino; Map p102) extends from the Colosseum to Stazione Termini, encompassing Via Cavour (a major traffic artery between Stazione Termini and Via dei Fori Imperiali), the charming residential area of Monti and the Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore. Much of the hill was covered with vineyards and gardens until the late 19th

century, when they were dug up to make way for grandiose apartment blocks.

Pilgrims and art-lovers flock to the **Basilica di San Pietro in Vincoli** (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 488 28 65; Piazza di San Pietro in Vincoli 4a; ☎ 8am-12.30pm & 3-6pm) for two reasons: to see St Peter's chains and to photograph Michelangelo's tomb of Pope Julius II. The church was built in the 5th century specially to house the chains that bound St Peter when he was imprisoned in the Carcere Mamertino (see p111). Some time after St Peter's death, the chains were sent to Constantinople for a period before returning to Rome as relics. They arrived in two pieces and legend has it that when they were reunited they miraculously joined together. They are now displayed under the altar.

To the right of the altar is Julius' monumental tomb. At the centre of the work is Michelangelo's extraordinary *Moses* (with two small horns sticking out of his head and a magnificent waist-length beard), flanked by statues of Leah and Rachel that were probably completed by Michelangelo's students. Despite its imposing scale, the tomb was never actually finished – Michelangelo had originally envisaged 40 statues but got sidetracked with the Sistine Chapel (p127); in the end, Pope Julius II was buried in St Peter's Basilica without the great tomb he had envisioned.

Access to the church is via a flight of steps through a low arch that leads up from Via Cavour.

One of Rome's four patriarchal basilicas (the others being St Peter's, San Giovanni in Laterano and San Paolo Fuori-le-Mura), the **Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore** (Map p102; ☎ 06 48 31 95; Piazza Santa Maria Maggiore; ☎ 7am-7pm) was built on the highest point of the Esquiline Hill in the 5th century. Much tampered with over the centuries, its main façade dates to the 18th century, although the interior is baroque and the bell tower is Romanesque. The original form of the vast interior remains intact and the most notable feature is the cycle of 5th-century mosaics in the triumphal arch and nave. The central mosaic shows the coronation of the Virgin. The sumptuously decorated Cappella Sistina, last on the right, was built in the 16th century and contains the tombs of popes Sixtus V and Pius V. Opposite is the Cappella Paolina Borghesiana, also full of elaborate decoration, erected in the 17th century by Pope Paul V. The *Madonna and Child* above the altar is believed to date

from the 12th to the 13th centuries. Through the bookshop on the right-hand side of the church is a **museum** (adult/child €4/2; ☎ 9am-6.30pm) that houses a somewhat motley collection of exhibits, including a few reliquaries, some huge gilt candlesticks and a painting of Mary Magdalene showing an indecorous amount of cleavage.

At the base of the Esquiline Hill, in the Celio neighbourhood behind the Colosseum, the **Basilica di San Clemente** (Map pp100-1; ☎ 06 704 51 018; Via di San Giovanni in Laterano; church/excavations free/€5; ☎ 9am-12.30pm & 3-6pm Mon-Fri, noon-6pm Sat & Sun) provides a fascinating glimpse into Rome's multilayered past. The 12th-century church at street level (enter through the medieval courtyard) was built over a 4th-century church that was, in turn, constructed over a 1st-century Roman house. A pagan 2nd-century temple was later added to the house, which is believed to stand over foundations dating to the Roman Republic.

The 12th-century mosaic in the apse of the medieval church depicts the *Triumph of the Cross*, with 12 doves symbolising the apostles. Figures around the cross include the Madonna and St John, as well as St John the Baptist and other saints. Though stunning, it's eclipsed by the Renaissance frescoes in the Chapel of St Catherine, to the left of the entrance. Don't miss them.

Most of the 4th-century church was destroyed by Norman invaders in 1084, but some faded 11th-century frescoes remain. These illustrate the life of San Clement. Look for the scene showing the saint miraculously saving a young child from the rising tide of the sea – commissioned by the child's parents, it was being restored at the time of writing. Descend further and you'll find yourself walking an ancient lane leading to the Roman house and dark temple of Mithras, which contains an altar depicting the god slaying a bull. Mithras was a men-only cult, and ritual banquets in his honour are thought to have been held here.

Trastevere

One of the most picturesque parts of Rome, Trastevere is over the river from the *centro storico*. Traditionally it was a poor working-class area but it's increasingly being taken over by wealthy foreigners attracted by the photogenic streetscapes and the abundance of bars, trattorias and cafés.

At the heart of Trastevere is the lovely **Piazza Santa Maria in Trastevere** (Map pp104–5). A prime people-watching spot, it becomes very animated at night when the street sellers are out in force and the crowds of tourists mingle with young locals out for a good time. The fountain in the centre of the square is a 17th-century restoration of the Roman original.

It would be easy to overlook the **Basilica di Santa Maria in Trastevere** (Map pp104–5; ☎ 06 581 48 02; Piazza Santa Maria in Trastevere; ☎ 7.30am–12.30pm & 3.30–7.30pm), which is nestled in the corner of the piazza, but to do so would be a mistake. Said to be the oldest church dedicated to the Virgin Mary in Rome, it boasts some stunning 12th-century mosaics. Originally built in AD 337, a major overhaul in 1138 saw the addition of the Romanesque bell tower and frescoed façade.

Inside it's the glittery gold mosaics in the apse that stand out. These depict the Madonna sitting at the right hand of Christ and flanked by various saints. Below this is a series of six 13th-century mosaics by Pietro Cavallini illustrating the life of the Virgin Mary. Also of note is the chapel to the left of the altar, which features an extraordinarily ornate ceiling mural showing cherubs holding up the dome. The building itself incorporates 21 ancient Roman columns, some taken from the Terme di Caracalla; its wooden ceiling dates to the 17th century.

From Piazza Santa Maria in Trastevere it's a short walk to Piazza Trilussa and the picturesque pedestrian bridge of **Ponte Sisto** (Map pp104–5), which leads back across the Tiber to Via Giulia and Campo de' Fiori.

On the other side of Trastevere, to the east of Viale di Trastevere (the large road on which tram 8 drops you off if coming from Largo di Torre Argentina), two churches are worth a visit. The last resting place of Santa Cecilia (the patron saint of music), the **Basilica di Santa Cecilia in Trastevere** (Map pp104–5; ☎ 06 589 92 89; Piazza di Santa Cecilia; church/Cavallini fresco free/€2; ☎ church 9.30am–12.30pm & 4–6.30pm, fresco 10.15am–12.15pm Mon–Fri, 11.15am–12.15pm Sat & Sun) features a stunning 13th-century fresco by Pietro Cavallini. To view the *Last Judgement* go through the convent to the nuns' choir. Beneath the church you can visit the **excavations** (admission €2.50 or by guided tour €5; ☎ 9.30am–12.30pm & 4–6.30pm) of Roman houses, one of which might have belonged to Santa Cecilia.

Nearby, towards the end of Via delle Luce, the **Chiesa di San Francesco a Ripa** (Map pp104–5; Piazza di San Francesco d'Assisi; ☎ 7am–1pm & 4–7.30pm Mon–Sat, 7am–noon & 4–7pm Sun) is home to one of Bernini's ecstasy sculptures, *Blessed Ludovica Albertoni*. It's in the fourth chapel on the left, towards the front of the church.

Janiculum

Rising up behind Trastevere, the **Janiculum Hill** (Gianicolo; Map pp104–5) offers breathtaking views over Rome's rooftops. Little ones will be happy playing on the merry-go-round, anchored just off Piazzale Giuseppe Garibaldi. There are also pony rides and a small bar. Puppet shows are often held here on Sundays.

The Janiculum Hill is also home to one of Italy's greatest works of architecture: Bramante's proportionally perfect **Tempio** (Map pp104–5; ☎ 9.30am–12.30pm & 4–6pm Tue–Sun summer, 9.30am–12.30pm & 2–4pm winter). Built in the courtyard of the Chiesa di San Pietro in Montorio, it was commissioned by Isabella and Ferdinand, the Catholic monarchs of Spain, and completed in 1508. The church, which was extensively damaged in WWII and subsequently restored, contains chapels designed by both Bernini and Vasari.

On foot it's quite a climb: from the Piazza Sant'Egidio walk up Vicolo del Cedro until you come to the winding Via di Porta San Pancrazio. San Pietro in Montorio is on the other side of the road up a set of stairs to your left. To get to Piazzale Giuseppe Garibaldi, you turn right and continue up the hill until you reach Passeggiata del Gianicolo – turn right here and the road goes straight to the *piazzale*. Alternatively, take bus 870 from Via Paola just off Corso Vittorio Emanuele II near the Tiber.

The bus will also take you within easy walking distance of the nearby **Villa Doria Pamphilj** (Map p91; Via Aurelia Antica; ☎ sunrise–sunset), Rome's largest park and a lovely spot for a walk and a picnic. The park was laid out in the 17th century for Prince Camillo Pamphilj, cousin of Pope Innocent X.

Vatican City

The world's smallest sovereign state, the **Vatican City** (Città del Vaticano; Map pp94–5) might cover an area of less than 1 sq km but it packs quite a punch. When the pope speaks, his word immediately becomes gospel for the world's one billion Catholics. And what the

Vatican City lacks in size it makes up for in wealth – the opulence of St Peter's and the vast collections of the Vatican Museums have to be seen to be believed.

The Vatican regained its independence in 1929 after 68 years as part of the Kingdom of Italy. Under the terms of the Lateran Treaty, signed by Mussolini and Pius XI, the pope was also given sovereignty over the basilicas of San Giovanni in Laterano (as well as the Palazzo Laterano), Santa Maria Maggiore and San Paolo Fuori-le-Mura.

The Vatican has its own postal service, currency, newspaper, radio station and train station (now used only for freight). It also has its own army of Swiss Guards, responsible for the pope's personal security. The corps was established in 1506 by Julius II to defend the Papal States against invading armies. The guards still wear the traditional eye-catching red, yellow and blue uniform and brandish unwieldy 15th-century pikes, but forget any idea that these are theatrical props – the guards are in fact highly trained soldiers.

The first pope to establish a fixed papal residence in the Vatican was Symmachus (498–514), although it wasn't until 1377 that the Vatican palace became the official residence of the pope. Before that pontiffs had lived at the Palazzo Laterano, adjacent to the Basilica di San Giovanni, and, for a short time in the 14th century, in Avignon.

The current look of the Vatican is the culmination of more than a thousand years of chipping and changing. The Leonine walls date to 846 when Leo IV had them put up after a series of Saracen raids, while the Vatican palace, now home to the Vatican Museums, was originally constructed by Eugenius III in the 12th century. Subsequent popes extended it, fortified it and decorated it according to their political and artistic needs.

ST PETER'S SQUARE

One of the world's great public spaces, Bernini's massive **St Peter's Square** (Piazza San Pietro; Map pp94–5) is a breathtaking work of baroque town planning. Laid out in the 17th century as a place for Christians to gather, the square was designed to open up before visitors as they escaped the jumble of narrow streets that originally surrounded the area. Mussolini, however, spoiled Bernini's effect when he built the long, straight approach road, Via della Conciliazione.

Looked at from above, the square resembles a giant keyhole: two semicircular colonnades, each of which is made up of four rows of Doric columns, bound a giant oval that straightens out towards the basilica. On the square there are two points from where you can see all the columns perfectly aligned. Look for the iron paving disks either side of the central obelisk. The ancient Egyptian obelisk was brought to Rome by Caligula from Heliopolis.

ST PETER'S BASILICA

You don't need to be religious to be bowled over by **St Peter's Basilica** (Basilica di San Pietro; Map pp94–5; ☎ 06 698 81 662; www.stpetersbasilica.org; St Peter's Sq; admission free; ☞ 7am–7pm Apr–Sep, to 6pm Oct–Mar, masses 8.30am, 10am, 11am, noon & 5pm Mon–Sat, 11.30am, 12.10pm, 1pm, 4pm & 5.30pm Sun & holidays, vespers 5pm Sun). The great basilica is not only huge, but also a monument to artistic genius. On a more prosaic note, remember to dress appropriately if you want to get in – that means no shorts, miniskirts or bare shoulders. Your excuses are unlikely to sway the sartorially splendid guardians stationed on the doors. If you want to hire an audioguide (€5), they're available at a desk in the cloakroom to the right of the entrance.

The first basilica was built here by Rome's first Christian emperor, Constantine, in the 4th century. Standing on the site of Nero's stadium, the Ager Vaticanus, where St Peter is said to have been martyred and buried between AD 64 and 67, it was consecrated in AD 326.

More than a thousand years later the basilica had fallen into disrepair. In the mid-15th century Nicholas V took a stab at its reconstruction but it was not until 1506, when Julius II employed Bramante, that serious work began. Bramante designed a new basilica on a Greek cross plan, with a central dome and four smaller domes. He also oversaw the demolition of much of the old basilica and attracted great criticism for the unnecessary destruction of many of its most precious works of art.

It took more than 150 years to complete the new basilica, now the second biggest in the world (the largest is in Yamoussoukro on the Côte d'Ivoire). Bramante, Raphael, Antonio da Sangallo, Giacomo della Porta and Carlo Maderno all contributed, but it is generally held that St Peter's owes most to Michelangelo, who took over the project in

1547 at the age of 72 and was responsible for the design of the dome.

The façade and portico were designed by Maderno, who took over the project after Michelangelo's death. He was also instructed to lengthen the nave towards the piazza, effectively altering Bramante's original Greek cross plan to a Latin cross.

The cavernous interior (it's 187m long), decorated by Bernini and Giacomo della Porta, can hold up to 60,000 people and contains some spectacular works of art. Chief among them is Michelangelo's superb **Pietà**, at the beginning of the right aisle. Sculpted when he was only 25 years old, this is the only work to carry his signature (on the sash across the Madonna's breast).

Nearby, the **red porphyry disk** just inside the main door marks the spot where Charlemagne and later Holy Roman Emperors were crowned by the pope.

Dominating the centre of the church is Bernini's 29m-high baroque **baldachin**. Supported by four spiral columns and made with bronze taken from the Pantheon, it stands over the high altar, which itself sits on the site of St Peter's grave. The pope is the only priest permitted to serve at the high altar.

To the right as you face the high altar is a famous bronze **statue of St Peter**, believed to be a 13th-century work by Arnolfo di Cambio. The statue's right foot has been worn down by the kisses and touches of many pilgrims.

Michelangelo's **dome** (dome with/without lift €7/4; ☎ 8am-5.45pm Apr-Sep, to 4.45pm Oct-Mar) soars 119m above the high altar. Its balconies are decorated with reliefs depicting the *Reliquie Maggiori* (Major Relics): the lance of San Longino, which he used to pierce Christ's side; the cloth of Santa Veronica, which bears a miraculous image of Christ; and a piece of the True Cross, collected by St Helena, the mother of Emperor Constantine.

Entry to the dome is to the far right of the basilica – you'll recognise it by the queues outside. A small lift takes you halfway up but it's still a long climb to the top. Press on though and you'll be rewarded with some stunning views over Rome. It's well worth the effort, but it's also a long and tiring climb and not recommended for those who suffer from claustrophobia or vertigo.

Accessed from the left nave of the basilica, the **Museo Storico Artistico** (Treasury; adult/concession €6/4; ☎ 9am-6.15pm Apr-Sep, 9am-5.15pm Oct-Mar)

houses sacred relics and priceless artefacts, including a tabernacle by Donatello and the 6th-century Crux Vaticana, a cross studded with jewels that was a gift of the emperor Justinian II.

The **Vatican Grottoes** (Sacre Grotte Vaticane; admission €10; ☎ 7am-6pm Apr-Sep, to 5pm Oct-Mar) below the church contain the tombs of numerous popes, including John Paul II. The entrance (it changes) is accessed via the stairs at the St Longinus or St Andrew statues near the papal altar.

Officially, the **Tomb of St Peter and the Pre-Constantinian Necropolis** (Scavi; admission €10; ☎ 7am-6pm Apr-Sep, to 5pm Oct-Mar) under the grottoes can only be visited on a 90-minute guided tour. To book a spot contact the **Ufficio Scavi** (Excavations office; Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 698 85 318; scavi@fsp.va; 00120 Città del Vaticano; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri). If you haven't been able to make a booking, it is often worth queuing by the Arch of the Bells (to the left of the basilica, at the entrance to Vatican City). If the tours aren't already full, the guides will usually allow a few extra people to tag along.

Note that children must be aged 11 years and over to visit the grottoes or go on the Scavi tour.

VATICAN MUSEUMS

From St Peter's Square follow the walls of the Vatican northwards to the **Vatican Museums** (Musei Vaticani; Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 698 84 341; www.vatican.va; adult/concession €13/8, last Sun of month free; ☎ 10am-4.45pm Mon-Fri last admission 3.30pm, 10am-2.45pm Sat last admission 1.30pm mid-Mar–late Oct & late-Dec–Jan, 10am-1.45pm Mon-Sat last admission 12.30pm Jan-Mar & Nov–late Dec, 9am-1.45pm last admission 12.30pm last Sun of month). The complicated hours change regularly so it's always best to check ahead. You can book into a Vatican-run guided tour (€12 plus entry fee), which includes a visit to the Vatican Gardens, by faxing 06 698 85 100 or emailing visitegui.date.musei@scv.va. The *Guide to the Vatican: Museums and City*, on sale at the museum bookshop (€10), is a worthwhile investment. You can also hire CD audioguides (€5.50).

The museums are enormous and you'll never manage to see everything in one go – you'd need several hours just to see the highlights. To make navigation easier there are four colour-coded itineraries that take anything from 45 minutes to five hours. Each itinerary starts at the Quattro Cancelli area, near the entrance, and each one finishes up at the Sistine Chapel, so if you want you can

PAPAL CEREMONIES

At 11am on Wednesdays, the pope has audiences with his flock at the Vatican (in July and August he does so in the papal summer residence at Castel Gandolfo). For free tickets, go to the **Prefettura della Casa Pontificia** (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 698 84 631; fax 06 698 85 863, 06 698 83 865; 🕒 9am-1pm), through the Bronze Boor under the colonnade (where the Swiss Guards are standing) to the right of St Peter's as you face the basilica. You can apply on the Tuesday before the audience (or, at a push, on the morning of the audience). Alternatively, write to the Prefettura della Casa Pontificia, 00120 Città del Vaticano, or send a fax. Specify the date you'd like to attend, the number of tickets required and the address and contact details of the hotel at which you're staying so that an arrangement can be made regarding delivery or collection of your tickets.

The Prefettura della Casa Pontificia also handles ticket allocation for important and popular religious ceremonies such as Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve and vespers on New Year's Eve. Even if you're fortunate enough to score tickets for these ceremonies (you usually need to apply months beforehand), don't assume that your ticket assures you of a seat or even a standing spot with a view of proceedings. For this you'll need to start queuing in St Peter's Square from 5pm or 6pm on Christmas Eve and 2pm on New Year's Eve and run, not walk, as soon as you clear the security check. Bizarrely enough, you'll also have to deal with queue jumpers while you wait, some of whom can be absolutely brazen and don't seem to have any understanding of the spirit of the occasions.

When he is in Rome, the pope also blesses the crowd in St Peter's Square on Sundays at noon. No tickets are required.

walk straight there. However, bear in mind that you can't backtrack once you are there, so if you want to see, say, the Stanze di Raffaello make sure you do so first. Also be prepared to jostle for position in the chapel – it's almost always heaving and there's really not a lot you can do to avoid the crowds.

The Vatican Museums are well equipped for visitors with disabilities; there are four suggested itineraries, several lifts and specially fitted toilets. Wheelchairs can also be reserved in advance; call ☎ 06 698 83 860. Parents with young children can take strollers into the museums.

The buildings that house the Vatican Museums, known collectively as the Palazzo Apostolico Vaticano, cover an area of 5.5 hectares. Each gallery contains priceless treasures, but for a whistle-stop tour get to the Stanze di Raffaello, the Pinacoteca, the Gallerie delle Carte Geografiche (Map Gallery) and, of course, the Sistine Chapel. Unless the following are of particular interest, you could skim the Museo Gregoriano Profano (Gregorian Museum of Pagan Antiquities), Museo Pio-Cristiano (Pio Christian Museum) and Museo Missionario-Etnologico (Missionary and Ethnological Museum).

What follows is a brief description of some of the museum's major features and highlights.

Among the relatively small number of pictures in the **Pinacoteca**, you'll find Raphael's last work, *La Trasfigurazione* (1517–20), and paintings by Giotto, Bellini, Caravaggio and Leonardo da Vinci, whose *San Gerolamo* (c 1480) was never finished.

Founded by Gregory XVI in 1839, the **Museo Gregoriano Egizio** (Egyptian Museum) contains pieces taken from Egypt in Roman times. The collection is small but there are fascinating exhibits including the *Trono di Rameses II*, part of a statue of the seated king, and sarcophagi dating from around 1000 BC.

The Vatican's enormous collection of ancient sculpture is contained in a series of galleries. The long corridor that forms the **Museo Chiaramonti** contains hundreds of marble busts and statues, while off to the right, Pius VII's **Braccio Nuovo** (New Wing) contains some important works. These include a famous statue of Augustus, and a carving depicting the Nile as a reclining god with 16 babies (which are thought to represent the number of cubits the Nile rose when in flood) playing on him.

Housed in the late-15th-century Belvedere Pavillon, **Museo Pio-Clementino** is accessible through the Museo Gregoriano Egizio or from the Cortile Ottagono (Octagonal Courtyard), itself part of the museum. To the left as you enter the courtyard is the *Apollo Belvedere*, a 2nd-century Roman copy in marble of a 4th-

century BC Greek bronze, considered one of the great masterpieces of classical sculpture. A second unmissable piece is *Laocoön and His Sons*, depicting a Trojan priest of Apollo and his two sons in mortal struggle with two sea serpents. This statue was discovered in 1506 by men working in some vineyards on the Esquiline Hill. On hearing the news, Pope Julius II sent Michelangelo and Giuliano da Sangallo to evaluate the find. They confirmed that it was the same statue that had been cited by Pliny some 1500 years earlier.

In the **Sala delle Muse** (Room of Muses) is the *Torso Belvedere*, a Greek sculpture from the 1st century BC, which was found in the Campo de' Fiori around the same time as the *Laocoön* was unearthed. In the **Sala a Croce Greca** (Greek Cross Room) are the porphyry stone sarcophagi of Constantine's daughter, Constantia, and his mother, St Helena.

Up one flight of the Simonetti staircase is the **Museo Gregoriano Etrusco** (Etruscan Museum), containing artefacts from Etruscan tombs in southern Etruria. Of particular interest are the artefacts in Room II from the Regolini-Galassi tomb, discovered in 1836, south of Cerveteri. Those buried in the tomb included a princess, and among the finds on display are gold jewellery and a funeral carriage with a bronze bed and funeral couch.

Magnificent views of Rome can be had from the last room at the end of this wing (through the Sala delle Terracotte). From here you can also get a glimpse down the full drop of Bramante's spiral staircase, which was designed so that horses could be ridden up it.

Through the superb **Galleria delle Carte Geografiche** (Map Gallery) and the **Galleria degli Arazzi** (Tapestry Gallery) are the magnificent **Stanze di Raffaello**, the private apartments of Pope Julius II. Raphael himself painted the Stanza della Segnatura (1508–11) and the Stanza d'Elidoro (1512–14), while the Stanza dell'Incendio (1514–17) was painted by his students to his designs and the ceiling was painted by his master, Perugino.

In the **Stanza della Segnatura** lives one of Raphael's best-known masterpieces, *La Scuola d'Atene* (The School of Athens), featuring philosophers and scholars gathered around Plato and Aristotle. The lone figure in front of the steps is believed to be Michelangelo, who was painting the Sistine Chapel at the time, while the figure of Plato is said to be a portrait of Leonardo da Vinci, with Euclide (lower

right) as Bramante. Raphael also included a self-portrait in the lower right corner (he's the second figure from the right). Opposite is *La disputa del Sacramento* (Disputation on the Sacrament), also by Raphael.

In the **Stanza d'Elidoro** is another Raphael masterpiece, *Cacciata d'Elidoro* (Expulsion of Heliodorus from the Temple), on the main wall (to the right as you enter from the Sala dei Chiaroscuri), which symbolises Julius' military victory over foreign powers. To the left is *Mass of Bolsena*, showing Julius II paying homage to a relic from a 13th-century miracle in the lakeside town of Bolsena, near Viterbo. Next is *Leone X ferma l'invasione di Attila* (Leo X Repulsing Attila) by Raphael and his students. On the fourth wall is *Liberazione di San Pietro* (Liberation of St Peter), which depicts the saint being freed from prison, but is actually an allusion to Pope Leo's imprisonment after the battle of Ravenna (also the real subject of the Attila fresco).

Sistine Chapel

For many the real reason for visiting the museums is to view the remarkable **Sistine Chapel** (Capella Sistina; Map pp94–5). This is the room into which the papal conclave is locked to elect the next pope, although it's better known as home to the most famous works of art in the world: Michelangelo's **frescoes** on the barrel-vaulted ceiling (painted 1508–12), and **The Last Judgement** on the end wall (completed in 1541).

The chapel was originally built in 1484 for Pope Sixtus IV, after whom it is named, but it was actually Julius II who commissioned Michelangelo to decorate it. The great artist was reluctant to take on the job – he considered himself a sculptor not a painter – but started work in 1508.

The frescoes down the middle of the chapel represent nine scenes from the book of Genesis, including the *Division of Day from Night*, the *Creation of Adam*, the *Expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden* and the *Flood*. These main images are framed by the *Ignudi*, athletic male nudes; next to them, on the lower curved part of the vault, are large figures of Hebrew prophets and pagan sibyls. In the lunettes over the windows are the ancestors of Christ.

The walls of the chapel were also painted by important Renaissance artists, including Botticelli, Domenico Ghirlandaio, Pinturicchio

MICHELANGELO & THE POPES

Michelangelo Buonarroti came to work in Rome for Pope Julius II, who wanted him to create a grand marble tomb for his own burial. The tomb, which you can see in the Basilica di San Pietro in Vincoli (p122), preoccupied Michelangelo for most of his life, but was never completed.

Michelangelo's passion was sculpture and he was reluctant to take on the job for which he is now most famous – the painting of the Sistine Chapel. But when he finally accepted Julius II's commission in 1508, he set to work with passionate obsession, dismissing all assistance and working lying down on scaffolding lodged up high under the windows for four years, pushing himself to artistic and physical limits and bickering constantly with the pope, who wanted the job finished.

Despite his unhappiness as a Vatican-employed painter, Michelangelo returned to Rome almost 20 years later, at the age of 59, to work on another painting in the Sistine Chapel. This time it was at the request of Pope Clement VII, who wanted the Florentine artist to paint *The Last Judgement* on the altar wall.

When Clement died, his successor, Paul III, was determined to have Michelangelo work exclusively for him. He wanted the Sistine Chapel finished. In 1535 he appointed Michelangelo as chief architect, sculptor and painter to the Vatican.

When *The Last Judgement* was finally completed and unveiled in 1541, it caused quite a scandal. But though Pope Pius IV had Daniele da Volterra, one of Michelangelo's students, add fig leaves and loin cloths to the many nudes, Michelangelo's work was claimed by many to be one of his best, surpassing all the other paintings in the chapel, including his own ceiling frescoes.

The artist spent his last years working – unhappily (he felt that it was a penance from God) – on St Peter's Basilica. He disapproved of the plans that had been drawn up by Antonio da Sangallo the Younger before his death, claiming they deprived the basilica of light, and argued with Sangallo's assistants, who wanted to retain their master's designs. Instead Michelangelo created the magnificent light-filled dome, based on Brunelleschi's design for the cathedral in Florence, and a stately façade.

He continued to direct the work until his death on 18 February 1564. The dome and façade of St Peter's were completed to his designs by Vignola, Giacomo della Porta and Carlo Fontana.

and Luca Signorelli. Anywhere else these frescoes would be the star of the show, but here they're often passed over with little more than a glance. They are, however, magnificent late-15th-century works, depicting events in the lives of Moses and Christ. Botticelli's *Temptation of Christ* and the *Cleansing of the Leper* (the second fresco on the right) are particularly beautiful. The first frescoes in each cycle, the *Finding of Moses* and the *Birth of Christ* by Perugino, were destroyed to make way for *The Last Judgement* – a great controversy at the time.

The Last Judgement, with its dramatic, swirling mass of predominantly naked bodies, depicts the souls of the dead being torn from their graves to face the wrath of God. The subject was chosen by Pope Paul III as a warning to Catholics to toe the line during the Reformation, which was then sweeping Europe. A work of highly charged emotion, it is said to reflect Michelangelo's tormented faith.

Borgo

The area between the Vatican and the Tiber is known as Borgo. The major landmark here is **Castel Sant'Angelo** (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 681 91 11; Lungotevere Castello 50; admission €5; 🕒 9am-7pm Tue-Sun). Begun by Emperor Hadrian in AD 128 as a mausoleum for himself and his family, it was converted into a fortress for the popes in the 6th century AD. The curtain wall of the inner wall, the entrance and the round tower are original; additions such as the arched galleries date from the Renaissance. A statue of Hadrian driving a chariot originally topped the tower, later to be replaced by a bronze angel. When Aurelian built his great wall around Rome he made the mausoleum into a bridgehead, surrounding it with a wall strengthened by towers.

The fortress was named by Pope Gregory the Great in AD 590, after he saw a vision of an angel above the structure, which heralded the end of a plague in Rome. It was linked to the Vatican palaces in 1277 by a wall and

passageway, often used by popes to escape in times of threat. During the 16th-century sack of Rome by Emperor Charles V, hundreds of people lived in the fortress for months.

On the upper floors, check out the lavishly decorated Sala Paolina as well as the Camera del Perseo and Camera di Amore e Psiche, both with friezes by Perino del Vaga. The terrace, immortalised by Puccini in his opera *Tosca*, offers great views over Rome.

There's a pricey **café** on the lower terrace that offers indifferent food but wonderful views.

Opposite the castle, the **Ponte Sant'Angelo** (Map pp94–5) was built by Hadrian in AD 134 to provide an approach to his mausoleum. In the 17th century, Bernini and his pupils sculpted the figures of angels that now line this pedestrian-only bridge. The three central arches of the bridge are part of the original structure; the end arches were restored and enlarged between 1892 and 1894 during the construction of the Lungotevere embankments.

San Giovanni

Founded by Constantine in the 4th century, the **Basilica di San Giovanni in Laterano** (Map pp100–1; ☎ 06 698 73 112; Piazza di San Giovanni in Laterano 4; ☎ 7am–6.30pm) was the first Christian basilica built in Rome. It is Rome's cathedral and the pope's seat as bishop of Rome.

The basilica's most eye-catching feature is Alessandro Galilei's huge white façade. A mid-18th-century example of late-baroque classicism, it was designed big to convey the infinite authority of the Church. The **bronze doors** were moved here from the Curia in the Roman Forum, while to their right is the Holy Door that is only opened in jubilee years. Above the **portico** (built 1736) are 15 colossal statues representing Christ with St John the Baptist, as well as John the Evangelist and the 12 Apostles.

The interior has been done up on numerous occasions. In 1425 Martin V had the floor inlaid with stone and mosaic, while in 1646 Borromini turned his baroque talents to the job. His fingerprint is on the pillars in the nave and the sculptural frames around the funerary monuments in the aisles. A Gothic baldachin over the papal altar contains relics that include the heads of St Peter and St Paul.

To the left of the altar, the **cloister** (admission €2; ☎ 9am–6pm) was built by the Vassalletto

family in the 13th century. The columns were once completely covered with inlaid marble mosaics, remains of which can still be seen. On the western side of the cloister, there's a marble slab supported by four columns that Christians in the Middle Ages thought represented the height of Christ.

There's a second entrance into the basilica on Piazza di San Giovanni in Laterano. To the left of the door in Domenico Fontana's 16th-century façade is the **Palazzo Laterano** (Map pp100–1), which was the papal residence until the popes moved to Avignon early in the 14th century. It was largely destroyed by fire in 1308 and most of what remained was demolished in the 16th century. The present building houses offices of the diocese of Rome.

More interesting is the domed **baptistry** (Map pp100–1; ☎ 7.30am–12.30pm & 4–7.30pm) around the corner. Like the basilica it was built by Constantine and served as the prototype for later Christian churches and bell towers. Pope Sixtus III gave it its current octagonal shape. A basalt font rests in the centre, beneath a dome decorated with modern copies of frescoes by Andrea Sacchi. The Cappella di Santa Rufina is decorated with a faded 5th-century mosaic of vines and foliage, while the vault of Cappella di San Giovanni Evangelista has a mosaic of the Lamb of God surrounded by birds and flowers. Cappella di San Venanzio and its mosaics were added by Pope John IV in the 7th century.

At the opposite end of Piazza di San Giovanni in Laterano is the **Scala Santa** (Holy Staircase; Map pp100–1; admission free; ☎ 6.15am–noon & 3.30–6.45pm Apr–Sep, 6.15am–noon & 3–6.15pm Oct–Mar) and the **Sancta Sanctorum** (Holy of Holies; Map pp100–1; admission €3.50; ☎ 6.15am–noon & 3.30–6.45pm Apr–Sep, 3–6.15pm Oct–Mar). This is one of the few religious sites in Rome where the attraction is the spiritual atmosphere rather than the amazing art on display. The Scala Santa is said to be the staircase that Jesus walked up in Pontius Pilate's palace in Jerusalem. Consequently you can only climb it on your knees. At the top of the stairs, the Sancta Sanctorum was the popes' private chapel and contains spectacular 13th-century frescoes.

Caelian Hill

One of Rome's most impressive ruins, the **Terme di Caracalla** (Map pp100–1; ☎ 06 575 86 26; Viale della Terme di Caracalla 52; admission incl Mausoleo di Cecilia

Metella & Villa Quintili €6; ☎ 9am-3.30pm Tue-Sun, last exit 4.30pm, 9am-1pm Mon, last exit 2pm) are a striking reminder of the massive scale on which the Roman emperors liked to build. Covering 10 hectares, Caracalla's baths could hold 1600 people and had shops, gardens, libraries and entertainment. Between 6000 and 8000 people were thought to have used them every day. Begun by Antonius Caracalla and inaugurated in AD 216, the baths were used until the 6th century AD. Excavations in the 16th and 17th centuries unearthed important sculptures that found their way into the Farnese family collection, as well as mosaics featuring athletes that were moved to the Vatican Museum.

From the baths it's just a short walk to the **Circo Massimo** (Map pp100-1). What was once Rome's largest stadium is now a rather sorry stretch of grass used mainly by locals walking their dogs, but in its heyday it was truly magnificent. In Augustus' time there were over 300 racing days per year, with a daily schedule of 12 races (each race had seven laps); under Caligula, 40 years later, a typical day saw 24 races. There was a wooden dividing island in the centre of the course and lap indicators at either end – one end had a tall stanchion with seven huge white wooden eggs and the other end had a twin structure surrounded by seven carved wooden dolphins; an egg and a dolphin were lowered each time the chariots completed a circuit. The *circo* was also home to two obelisks from Heliopolis in Egypt; these are now in the Piazza del Popolo and the Piazza di San Giovanni in Laterano.

Via Appia Antica & the Catacombs

Known to the Romans as the *regina viarum* (queen of roads), **Via Appia Antica** (Appian Way; Map p91) once ran from the Via di Porta San Sebastiano, the continuation of Viale della Terme di Caracalla, to Brindisi on the eastern coast of Puglia. It takes its name from the original builder, Appius Claudius Caecus, who laid the first 90km section of the road in 312 BC. Considered revolutionary because it was almost perfectly straight, it was later extended to reach Brindisi in 190 BC.

An area rich in ancient history – this is where you'll find the catacombs – it's also a great place for a stroll. On Sundays a long section of the road is closed to traffic, but be warned that this is when locals and tourists arrive by the coach load. On weekdays there are fewer tourists, but walking or cycling along

the road can be dangerous due to the number of cars zooming past.

To get to Via Appia Antica and the catacombs, catch one of the following buses: bus 218 from Piazza di San Giovanni in Laterano; bus 660 from the Colli Albani stop on metro A; or bus 118 from the Piramide stop on metro B. Alternatively, the Archeobus (€8) departs from Termini every hour, followed by a second stop at Piazza Venezia (see p135).

If you're planning on really doing the sights, think about buying the Appia Antica Card (see boxed text, p106). Further information about the area is available at the **Appia Antica Regional Park Information Office** (Map p91; ☎ 06 513 53 16; www.parcappiaantica.org; Via Appia Antica 62; ☎ 9.30am-12.30pm & 2-5.30pm summer, to 4.30pm winter). You can also buy a map of the park here (€1) and hire bikes (€6 per hr, €10 per day). Every first Sunday of the month from March to June and September to November there is a free guided tour by bike (bike hire not included) into the Valle della Caffarella with a nature guide. This leaves from the office at 10.30am and takes between two and three hours.

Near the information office, the **Chiesa del Domine Quo Vadis** (Map p91; Via Appia Antica; ☎ 7.30am-12.30pm & 2.30-6.30pm Thu-Tue) is built at the point where St Peter, while fleeing Rome, is said to have met a vision of Jesus. Peter asked: '*Domine, quo vadis?*' ('Lord, where are you going?') When Jesus replied, '*Venio Roman iterum crucifigi*' ('I am coming to Rome to be crucified again'), Peter decided to join him and on his return to the city was immediately arrested and executed. In the centre of the church's aisle there are two footprints that supposedly belong to Christ.

The main attractions along Via Appia Antica are the catacombs – some 300km of tunnels carved out of the soft tufa rock (see boxed text, p132). Corpses were wrapped in simple white sheets and usually placed in rectangular niches carved into the tunnel walls, which were then closed with marble or terracotta slabs.

The largest, most famous and busiest of the catacombs are the **Catacombs of San Callisto** (Map p91; ☎ 06 513 01 581; www.catacombe.roma.it; Via Appia Antica 110; adult/child €5/3; ☎ 9am-noon & 2-5pm Thu-Tue, closed late Jan & most of Feb). The martyred patron saint of music, Santa Cecilia, was originally buried here, although her body was later removed to the Basilica di Santa Cecilia in

ROMAN UNDERWORLD

Rome's persecuted Christian community built an extensive network of communal subterranean burial grounds outside the city walls, as the laws of the time decreed.

During periods of persecution, martyrs were often buried in catacombs beside the fathers of the Church and the first popes. However, space was limited and became increasingly sought-after. A trade in tomb real estate developed, becoming increasingly cut-throat until Pope Gregory I abolished the sale of graves in 597. Christians had already started to abandon the catacombs as early as 313, however, when Constantine issued the Milan decree of religious tolerance.

Following the decree, Christians opted to bury their dead in catacombs near the churches and basilicas that were being built within the city walls (often above pagan temples). This became common practice under Theodosius, who made Christianity the state religion in 394.

In about 800, after frequent incursions by invaders, the bodies of the martyrs and first popes were transferred to the basilicas inside the city walls. The catacombs were abandoned and eventually many were forgotten. In the Middle Ages only three catacombs were known. Those of San Sebastiano were the most frequented as a place of pilgrimage, since they had earlier been the burial place of St Peter and St Paul.

From the mid-19th century onwards, scholars of Christian archaeology began a programme of scientific research and more than 30 catacombs in the Rome area have since been uncovered. Many have graves with touching inscriptions such as one in the Catacombs of Domitilla, erected by Aurelius Ampliatius and his son Gordianus to their wife and mother, Aurelia: 'An incomparable spouse, a truly chaste woman who lived 25 years, two months, three days and six hours.'

Esposizione Universale di Roma. Check the official website (www.romaeur.it in Italian) for more information.

To get to EUR take metro B for EUR Palasport. The area merits a visit for its Fascist architecture if nothing else. Check out, for example, the wonderful **Palazzo della Civiltà del Lavoro** (Palace of the Workers; Map p131), one of Rome's iconic buildings. If you arrived at Fiumicino airport you will probably have seen it on your trip into the centre. Designed by Guerrini, La Padula and Romano and built between 1938 and 1943, it's known as the 'Square Colosseum' and is the undoubted gem among the EUR building stock. It's currently undergoing a €9 million restoration and will house a media museum, a centre for Italian design, bars and a restaurant when it reopens. Close by is the Palazzo degli Uffici complex, designed by Gaetano Minnucci. Its most famous building is the **Salone delle Fontane** (Showroom of the Fountains; Map p131), designed between 1937 and 1939 as the ticket office for the exhibition. The building is home to **Caffè Palombini** (Map p131; ☎ 06 591 17 00; Piazza Adenauer Konrad 12), a popular café with original fittings from between 1939 and 1942 and 1960s furniture. This is a great spot for a coffee or *aperitivo*.

Other buildings of note at EUR are the almost brutalist **post office** (Map p131) dat-

ing from 1940 and designed by Studio BBPR; Arnaldo Foschini's monumental **Chiesa Santi Pietro e Paolo**, built from 1938 to 1955; and Nervi and Vitellozzi's futuristic **Palazzetto de Sport**, built in 1958 and now functioning as the PalaLottomatica, a venue for concerts and sport. Widely acknowledged as the second-most important building after the Palazzo della Civiltà del Lavoro, the wonderful **Palazzo dei Congressi** (Map p131), built between 1938 and 1954 and designed by Adalberto Libera, is a must-see, though it's hard to get inside.

WALKING TOUR

When discussing William Wyler's much-loved 1953 film *Roman Holiday*, noted film critic Molly Haskell suggested that it had three main characters: Joe Bradley (Gregory Peck), Princess Ann (Audrey Hepburn) and Rome itself. To relive the magic when you're in town, we've put together this full-day homage.

Start in **St Peter's Square** (1; p124), which featured in the film's opening sequence. After popping into **St Peter's Basilica** (2; p124), walk

WALK FACTS

Start St Peter's Square
Finish Bocca della Verità
Duration Six hours

down Via della Conciliazione until you get to **Castel Sant'Angelo** (3; p128). The river barge where Ann and Joe go dancing and get into a fight with the not-so-secret secret agents was moored just below here in the film. Cross the pedestrian-only **Ponte Sant'Angelo** (4; p129), turn left and follow the river until you reach the Ponte Cavour. Cross the road and walk down Via Tomacelli until you get to Via del Corso; if you cross the road you'll see Rome's most famous shopping street, Via Condotti, at the top of which are the **Spanish Steps** (5; p117). This is where Joe pretends to bump into a gelato-eating Ann by chance. With your back to the steps, turn right and walk down Via del Babuino until you come to Via Margutta on your right. Joe lived at No 51 (6); you can enter the courtyard, but the entrance doesn't look anything like it did in the film. Grab lunch at one of the chic eateries in the area and then backtrack to the Spanish Steps. Walk up the steps to Piazza Trinità dei Monti before turning right into Via Sistina. Follow this until you reach **Piazza Barberini** (7; p117); if you cross to the opposite side and then walk up Via delle Quattro Fontane you will reach **Palazzo Barberini** (8; p117). In the film this was the embassy that Ann sneaks out of late at night; it's now the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica. Cross Via delle Quattro Fontane and walk down Via Rasella (opposite the entrance to the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica); cross busy Via del Traforo near the tunnel entrance and walk down Via Scuderi until you reach the wonderful **Trevi Fountain** (9; p117). These days there are no barbers where you can have a fetching and cheap haircut as Ann did, and we strongly recommend against trying to nick a camera from a tourist, as Joe attempted to do. Next, take Via dei Crociferi and Via Sabini down to busy Via del Corso. Cross the road to Piazza Colonna and you enter the political core of the capital. Pass Palazzo Chigi, the official residence of the prime minister, on your right as you make for Piazza Montecitorio and the impressive seat of the Italian Chamber of Deputies, Palazzo Montecitorio. From the *palazzo* duck down Via della Guglia and veer right into Via dei Pastini until you emerge in the busy Piazza della Rotonda, where the **Pantheon** (10; p113) needs no introduction. In the film, the café where Joe and Ann meet up with Irving (Eddie Albert) was called Rocca's – unfortunately this was a stage set and never existed. Instead, you can enjoy a cof-

fee or *granita di caffè* (coffee with shaved ice and whipped cream) at one of Rome's most famous coffee stops, **La Tazza d'Oro** (11; p159). After your *caffè* hit, walk back to the Pantheon and take the street to its left, Via dei Cestari, passing by Bernini's cute-as-a-button **Elefantino** (12; p114), until you reach the major thoroughfare of Corso Vittorio Emanuele II. Turn left into Corso Vittorio Emanuele II and you'll eventually come to manic **Piazza Venezia** (13; p112), where Ann's downright dangerous Vespa-riding technique was forged. Down Via dei Fori Imperiali you'll see the Colosseum – on the way is the spot where Joe first comes across Ann, who is asleep on a bench in front of the Forum's **Arco di Settimo Severo** (14; p110). Finally, backtrack and follow Via del Teatro di Marcello from the right side of the massive **Vittoriano** (15; p112) and walk all the way to the Chiesa di Santa Maria in Cosmedin, home to the **Bocca della Verità** (16; p116). This place, where the most famous scene of the film was filmed, is the perfect spot to end your tour.

COURSES

Cooking

Cookery writer Diane Seed (*The Top One Hundred Pasta Sauces*) runs her **Roman Kitchen** (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 679 71 03; www.italiangourmet.com) four or five times a year from her kitchen in the Palazzo Doria Pamphilj. There are one-day, two-day, three-day and week-long courses costing €200 per day and €1000 per week.

Gladiator School

If the idea of dressing up in a short tunic and brandishing a sword turns you on, then the **Gruppo Storico Romano** (Map p91; ☎ 06 516 07 951; www.gsr-roma.com; Via Appia Antica 18) can help. An association of history enthusiasts, it has established Rome's first gladiator school. Workshops, open to men and women, are in English and last two hours. The cost is between €20 and €50 per person, depending on the size of the group, and includes a tunic for you to wear and take home.

Icon Painting

If the extraordinary array of religious art in Rome inspires you to create something in a similar vein, why not book into an icon painting workshop at the **Centro Russia Ecumenica il Messaggio dell'Icona** (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 687 93 55; www.russiaecumenica.it; Borgo Pio 141)? These small

classes (maximum 15 participants) are run by master iconographers. At the end of the six-day course (€520), you will have created your own original icon using materials such as gold leaf.

Language

There are hundreds of schools offering language courses in Rome. Costs vary from around €350 for a 40-hour, two-week course to around €3840 for a one-year course. Some schools also offer accommodation packages. Reputable schools:

Arco di Druso (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 397 50 984; www.arcodidruso.com; Via Tunisi 4)

Centro Linguistico Italiano Dante Alighieri

(Map p91; ☎ 06 442 31 400; www.cidante.it; Piazza Bologna 1)

Italiaidea (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 699 41 314; www.italiaidea.com; 1st fl, Via dei Due Macelli 47)

Torre di Babele Centro di Lingua e Cultura Italiana

(Map pp100-1; ☎ 06 700 84 34; www.torredibabele.com; Via Nino Bixio 74)

Mosaic Making

The Romans have been practising the art of mosaics for over two millennia, so they should know a thing or two about it. **Art Studio Café** (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 972 77 286; Via dei Gracchi 187a), an exhibition space, mosaics school and art 'laboratory', offers a range of classes that aim to impart the secret to successful mosaic work and help participants to create their own special mosaic to take home. One-day classes cost €120, two-day classes €240 and an intensive six-day course costs €800.

Wine Tasting

Refine your palate on one of the courses run by the **International Wine Academy of Roma** (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 699 08 78; www.wineacademyroma.com; Vicolo del Bottino 8). Learn about Italy's wine regions and tone up your tasting skills by signing up for the €180 half-day (two-hour) course, which includes lunch or dinner. For a more detailed look at the world of wine, go for the three-day €550 course, which includes a vineyard visit. There are also regular tastings (€30 to €50) on Thursdays and Saturdays. Bookings are essential.

TOURS

Boat

Battelli di Roma (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 678 93 61; www.battellidiroma.it) offers a number of different

cruises on the Tiber. These include a daily 70-minute trip (tickets €12) departing at 11am, 12.30pm, 4pm and 5.30pm from Ponte Sant'Angelo and covering the stretch down to the Isola Tiberina and then up to Ponte del Risorgimento. There are also dinner cruises (€54) at 9pm on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings that go for two hours and 15 minutes. Tickets are available online or at the city's tourist information points (see p90). The company also offers a round-trip service to Ostia Antica; see p173 for details.

Bus

Trambus (☎ 800 281 281; www.trambusopen.com; Piazza Cinquecento in front of Stazione Termini main entrance) operates two tour buses: the 110open and the Archeobus.

The **110open** (tickets €13; 🕒 tours every 15 min 8.40am-8.25pm) is an open-top double-decker bus that departs from the bus terminus outside Termini (platform C), and stops at the Quirinal, Colosseum, Bocca della Verità, Piazza Venezia, Piazza Navona, St Peter's, Piazza Cavour, Ara Pacis, Trevi Fountain and Via Veneto. Tickets, available on board or from the ticket office on platform D of Piazza Cinquecento, are valid for the day and allow you to hop off and on as you please. There's a multilingual hostess on board, as well as an audioguide in six languages. Journey time is two hours.

The **Archeobus** (tickets €8; 🕒 tours hourly 9.45am-4.45pm) is another stop-and-go bus. It takes sightseers down Via Appia Antica, stopping at 16 points of archaeological interest along the way. These include the Bocca della Verità, Circo Massimo, Terme di Caracalla, Porta di San Sebastiano, the Catacombs of San Callisto and San Sebastiano, the Mausoleo di Cecilia Metella, the Villa dei Quintili and the Parco degli Aquedotti. The ticket entitles you to a discount on the entry tickets to the Catacombs of San Sebastiano and San Callisto. There's a multilingual commentary on board, but this is sometimes played out of sequence. The bus departs from Termini bus station and Piazza Venezia and tickets are available on board or at the ticket office on platform D of Piazza Cinquecento.

You can purchase a joint ticket to both the 110open and Archeobus for €20 (valid two days). If you have a Roma Pass (see boxed text, p106) you receive a €1.50 discount on each of the bus tours.

Christian Rome (Roma Cristiana; 1-day ticket adult/child €13/5, 2-day ticket €20/10; 🚶 tours every 15 min from 8.30am-8pm) offers hop-on hop-off open buses leaving from Piazza Cinquecento just outside the main entrance to Stazione Termini. They stop at Santa Maria Maggiore, San Giovanni in Laterano, San Clemente, San Pietro in Vincoli, SS Cosma e Damiano at the Forum, Santa Maria in Cosmedin, San Marco, the Pantheon, Santa Maria in Vallicella, St Peter's, the Cancellaria at the Vatican, Santa Maria in Aracoeli, Santi XII Apostol and Santa Maria degli Angeli. There's a multilingual commentary and tickets are available on board the bus.

Rome Open Tour (☎ 06 977 45 404; www.romeopentour.com; adult/child €16/8; 🚶 tours every 15 min from 9am-7pm) buses are run by the same company that operates the Christian Rome service. It has nine stops: Stazione Termini, Piazza Venezia, the Colosseum, Circo Massimo, Isola Tiberina, St Peter's, Castel Sant'Angelo, Via Veneto and

Piazza Barberini. The bus stops for 25 minutes at each stop and there's a multilingual audioguide commentary. You can catch the bus from any stop and buy tickets on board.

It's worth noting that the 110open and Archeobus tickets are valid only for the date on which they're purchased, whereas the Open Tour and Christian Rome tickets are valid for a full 24 hours.

ArCult (☎ 06 703 92 846; www.arcult.it) offers excellent tours focusing on Rome's contemporary architecture and urban planning. Run by architects, the tours visit sites such as EUR, the Auditorium Parco della Musica, the Chiesa Dives in Misericordia (p148) and the Ara Pacis. Tours start at €8, and include entry fees. See p141 for more details.

Walking

Be warned that Rome is a noisy city, so it can sometimes be difficult to hear commentary

MAX'S ROME

An interview with Max Handsaker, age eight

There's good stuff in Rome, but there's a lot of boring stuff, too. Like way too many churches and museums. Mum and Dad were driving me crazy because they wanted to go into churches all of the time. Most of them are dark and have gross pictures of people being tortured; some of them really freaked me out. The catacombs were a bit scary, too. The museums were OK if you like that type of thing, but I preferred places like the Colosseum (p107). That's where the gladiators fought. There are guys outside there who dress as gladiators and want you to pay them money to have a photo taken with them. They're sort of cool and sort of dumb, too.

I really liked going to the Borghese Gardens (p119); you can go on rowing boats on the lake and you can also ride around in a little train or on a bike. There's a zoo there called **Bioparco** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 06 360 82 11; www.bioparco.it in Italian; Viale del Giardino Zoologico 1; adult/infant/child under 12yr €8.50/free/6.50; 🚶 9.30am-6pm 26 Mar-30 Oct, 9.30am-5pm 31 Oct-25 Mar), but it wasn't great. The best thing I did in Rome was go to the Time Elevator (p113) and see the film on the history of Rome. You have to wear 3D goggles and it was awesome, especially when I felt the rats at my feet and when we got wet from the fountains. That place **Explora** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 06 361 37 76; www.mdb.r.it; Via Flaminia 82; adult/child €6/7; 🚶 tours depart 9.30am, 11.30am, 3pm & 5pm Tue-Fri, 10am, noon, 3pm & 5pm Sat & Sun Oct-Jun, 10am, noon, 3pm & 5pm Tue-Sun Jul & Sep, noon, 3pm & 5pm Tue-Sun Aug, bookings advised on weekdays, essential on weekends) was pretty good too. You could play with lots of cool stuff there. We went on a weekend, which was pretty busy. Dad said it would be better to go on a school day next time.

Before we went to Rome I watched some films about gladiators and things. One (*Ben Hur*) had a good chariot race. And Mum made me watch a really embarrassing film about Rome called *The Lizzie McGuire Movie*. Girls would love it but it was gross for boys. There was kissing and stuff. I got some books about Rome from the shops at the museums there. They're pretty good stories about kids going back in time to when people like Julius Caesar were alive. And I read some good books about kids in those times (Caroline Lawrence's *Roman Mysteries* series).

Food-wise Rome was the best. I liked the *pizza rosso* the most; it's just plain tomato. And the gelato was much better than at home; vanilla is my favourite and I had a really good one at the place near the Sistine Chapel (Pellacchia; see boxed text, p152). We had to queue for about two hours to get into the museum so it was lucky I could listen to my iPod while we waited.

by guides on walking tours in the centre. Also note that for some parts of the city, specifically the Vatican and Ancient Rome, you may well find it more satisfying (and a lot cheaper) to navigate yourself using the maps in this book and hire audioguides at sites to provide commentary.

Context in Rome (Map pp100-1; ☎ 06 482 09 11; www.contextrome.com; Via Baccina 40) offers archaeological walks in small groups with expert guides, often American students specialising in art history and archaeology. Itineraries include a three-hour Architecture of Rome tour (€55), a three-hour visit to the Capitoline Museum (€65) and a five-hour visit to Ostia Antica (€75).

Enjoy Rome (Map p102; ☎ 06 445 68 90; www.enjoyrome.com; Via Marghera 8a) offers a number of choices. Its three-hour walking tours (under/over 26 years €18/24, reduced rates for children aged 12 and under) include Ancient Rome (by day or night – April to October), the Vatican, and Trastevere and the Ghetto. A tour to the catacombs and Via Appia Antica costs €35/40. Note that the Vatican tour does not cover entrance charges and the Ancient Rome tour does not enter the Colosseum. All guides are native or fluent English speakers and hold degrees in archaeology or related areas.

Icon Rome (☎ 334 333 09 27; www.icontours.com), advertising itself as offering ‘art and history walking adventures for hungry minds’, runs three 2½-hour tours: the Vatican; the Colosseum, Forum & Palatine; and Famous Fountains and Piazzas at Night. Each tour costs €30 for adults, €25 for students and is free for children aged 11 and under. Entry fees are not included.

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Rome’s calendar bursts with events ranging from colourful traditional celebrations with a religious and/or historical flavour, through to festivals of the performing arts, including opera, music and theatre. Check with the Rome Tourist Board (p90) for further details.

January

New Year (1 Jan) A candlelit procession in the catacombs.

March & April

Festa di San Giuseppe (Feast of St Joseph; 19 Mar) Celebrated in the Trionfale neighbourhood, between the

Vatican and Monte Mario. Little stalls are set up to serve *fritelle* (fried pastries) and there’s usually a special market set up near the church of San Giuseppe.

Settimana dei Beni Culturali (Mar/May) Public museums and galleries open free of charge during culture week.

Procession of the Cross (Easter) A candlelit procession to the Colosseum on Good Friday evening is led by the pope. At noon on Easter Sunday he gives his traditional blessing from the balcony in St Peter’s Square.

Mostra delle Azalee (Exhibition of Azaleas; late Mar/Apr) The Spanish Steps are decorated with masses of pink azaleas.

Rome’s Birthday (21 Apr) To celebrate its birthday, the City of Rome provides processions, fireworks and free entry to lots of museums.

May

Primo Maggio (1 May) Rome’s May Day rock festival attracts huge crowds and international performers to the traditional venue at the Basilica di San Giovanni in Laterano.

Festa di Primavera (end May-Jun) A festival of art, sport, music and theatre; for more information, check out www.provincia.roma.it.

June

Feast of San Pietro e Paolo (Feast of Sts Peter & Paul; 29 Jun) This feast, for the patron saints of the city, includes major celebrations at St Peter’s.

Birth of John the Baptist (23-24 Jun) Many celebrate the birth of St John the Baptist, particularly around the Basilica di San Giovanni in Laterano, where special market stalls are set up, and there’s lots of lovely *porchetta* (roast suckling pig) to eat.

Estate Romana (Jun-Oct) The big event in summer, this is a series of outdoor cultural events and activities for the few people who have remained in the capital – see www.romeuide.it/estate_romana for more info.

July

Festa de’Noantri (3rd week in Jul) Based around Trastevere, this traditional working-class festival, originally with food, wine and dancing, has become more of a tourist event in recent years.

August

Festa della Madonna della Neve (5 Aug) To celebrate the legendary snowfall that fell on 5 August 352, rose petals are showered on celebrants in the Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore.

September

RomaEuropa (www.romaeuropa.net in Italian; Sep-Nov) Top international artists take to the stage in Rome’s autumn festival of theatre, opera and dance.

December

Toy Fair (1st week in Dec) Christmas time in Rome sees a toy fair, with lots of handmade *presepi* (Nativity scenes), bagpipe players, bright lights and fun in Piazza Navona.

Feast of San Silvestro (31 Dec) The pope visits the Chiesa del Gesù and sings the *Te Deum*, while the mayor presents a chalice to the presiding priest.

Capodanno (31 Dec) Open-air concerts and fireworks mark the New Year.

SLEEPING

There's no getting around the fact that hotel rooms in Rome are expensive. While there are a decent number of midrange choices in and around the *centro storico*, there are very few budget options. If you're travelling on the cheap, you'll probably be forced to stay around Stazione Termini, which is not a great location. Although it has been spruced up a bit in recent years, some of the streets to the west of the station, particularly Via Giovanni Giolitti, can be positively unsafe at night and women in particular should be careful. That said, it is still possible to walk into the *centro storico* from Termini, and most other sights are only a convenient metro ride away.

If you've got the budget, you should aim to stay in the *centro storico*. There's also a lot to be said for bunking down somewhere in peaceful Prati, near the Vatican and on metro A. The streets here are relatively quiet and are home to some of the best eating and drinking places in the city. Trastevere is a great place to party, but isn't for light sleepers, particularly in summer.

Although Rome doesn't have a low season as such, the majority of hotels offer discounts in July and August (when many Italians head to the beach) and from November to March (excluding the Christmas and New Year period). Expect to pay top whack in spring and autumn and over the main holiday periods (Christmas, New Year and Easter). You should always book ahead if at all possible.

Arrive without a reservation, however, and all's not lost. There's a free **hotel reservation service** (Map p102; ☎ 06 699 10 00; Stazione Termini; ☹ 7am-10pm) at the main train station (opposite platform 21) and the nearby Enjoy Rome tourist office (p90) can also book a room for you. Don't follow the people hanging around at the train station who claim to be tourism officials and offer to find you a room. Chances are they'll lead you to some dump for which you'll end up paying way over the official rates.

Unless otherwise indicated, English is spoken at all of our listed places, and prices quoted include breakfast and all taxes.

Accommodation Options

BED & BREAKFASTS

B&B is becoming increasingly popular in Rome. Many of the newer places are effectively *pensioni*, meaning that you get your own keys and can come and go as you like. The Rome Tourist Board (p90) publishes a full list.

The following are agencies specialising in B&B accommodation and offering online booking services:

Bed & Breakfast Association of Rome (Map p91;

☎ 06 553 02 248; www.b-b.rm.it; Via A Pacinotti 73;

☹ 9am-1pm & 3-7pm Mon-Fri) Offers both rooms in B&Bs and short-term rentals of fully furnished flats.

Bed & Breakfast Italia (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 687 86

18; www.bbitalia.com; Corso Vittorio Emanuele II 282;

☹ 9am-6pm Mon-Fri) Rome's longest-established B&B network.

Cross Pollinate (www.cross-pollinate.com) An online agency.

HOSTELS

Associazione Italiana Alberghi per la Gioventù (AIG;

Map p102; ☎ 06 487 11 52; www.ostellionline.org; Via Cavour 44;

☹ 8am-5pm Mon-Fri) is an Italian youth hostel association that has information about all the youth hostels in Italy and will assist with bookings to stay at universities during summer. You can also join *Hostelling International* (HI) here.

RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

Not surprisingly Rome is well furnished with religious institutions, many of which offer cheap(ish) rooms for the night. Bear in mind, though, that all religious institutions have strict curfews and the accommodation, while clean, is mostly of the basic, no-frills variety. It's always wise to book well in advance. For a list of institutions, check out www.santasanna.org/comingToRome/convents.html.

RENTAL ACCOMMODATION

Apartments near the centre of Rome are not cheap (bank on around €900 per month for a studio apartment or a small one-bedroom place, with bills on top of that). For a longer stay, however, they can often work out cheaper than an extended hotel sojourn. For a mini-apartment in a hotel block, go online

at www.romaturismo.it and check out the section marked residences. It's also worth checking the following websites:

Flat in Rome (www.flatinrome.it)

Flats in Italy (www.flatsinitaly.com)

Italy Acom (www.italy-accom.com)

Leisure in Rome (www.leisureinrome.com)

Rental in Rome (www.rentalinrome.com)

Several of the English-language bookshops in Rome have notice boards where people looking for accommodation or offering a room on a short- or long-term basis place their messages. Another option is to check the classified ads in *Wanted in Rome* (published online fortnightly on Wednesday; www.wantedinrome.com).

Centro Storico

BUDGET & MIDRANGE

Hotel Panda (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 678 01 79; www.hotelpanda.it; Via della Croce 35; s/d without bathroom €68/78, with bathroom €80/108) Only 50m from the Spanish Steps, the Panda is one of the capital's best budget *pensionari*. The extremely clean rooms are smallish but have comfortable beds and attractive furnishings. The staff are friendly and the rates are a steal considering the location.

Fellini B&B (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 427 42 732; www.fellinibnb.com; Via Rasella 55; s €70-170, d €90-180, apt €100-255; ☒ ☑) Framed film posters on the hallway walls at this B&B pay homage to Italy's greatest film director, and we're sure Fellini himself would have approved of its location, which is just minutes away from the Trevi Fountain. The rooms are quiet and comfortable, though the décor lacks panache; all have satellite TV, good beds and well-equipped bathrooms. The standout option here is the knockout top-floor apartment, which has a huge terrace with a view and sleeps three.

ourpick Daphne B&B (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 478 23 529; www.daphne-rome.com; Via di San Basilio 55; d without bathroom €90-130, d with bathroom €120-200; ☒ ☑ ☒) In Roman mythology, Apollo fell in love with the nymph Daphne, and guests at this exceptionally fine boutique hotel are likely to experience a similar emotion. With its stylish and comfortable rooms, extremely helpful English-speaking staff and delicious breakfasts, the Daphne can rightly claim the accolade of Rome's best midrange sleeping option. There are 15 rooms in two locations: this one off Via Veneto and a second one at Via degli Avignonnesi 20, towards the Trevi Fountain.

Albergo del Sole (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 687 94 46; www.solealbiscione.it; Via del Biscione 76; s €90-120, d €120-160; ☒) The oldest hotel in Rome, this place dates to 1462. It's been done up since then, although the complex warren of corridors and low wood-beamed ceilings give credence to its medieval architecture. There's nothing special about the basic rooms although the 2nd-floor roof terrace is a definite plus. Credit cards aren't accepted.

Relais Palazzo Taverna (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 203 98 064; www.relaispalazzotaverna.com; Via dei Gabrielli 92; s €100-130, d €130-160; ☒ ☒) A boutique hotel in a sensational location, the Relais Palazzo Taverna has 11 chic rooms with modern fittings and loads of charm. It offers amenities such as plasma-screen satellite TVs, tea- and coffee-making facilities and good work desks. Breakfast is served in your room. At these prices, it's a total steal.

Teatropace 33 (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 687 90 75; www.hotelteatropace.com; Via del Teatro Pace 33; s €90-135, d €140-235; ☒ ☑) Another boutique hotel in a great location, Teatropace 33 has 23 rooms with amenities such as satellite TVs and tea- and coffee-making facilities. Housed in what was a cardinal's residence, rooms feature lovely parquet flooring, damask curtains and exposed wooden beams. A spiffing three-star choice.

Hotel Portoghesi (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 686 42 31; www.hotelportoghesiroma.com; Via dei Portoghesi 1; s €120-145, d €150-185; ☒ ☑ ☒) Located in a picturesque street near Piazza Navona, the Portoghesi extends a warm welcome. Rooms are comfortable and have amenities such as satellite TV and wi-fi, though some (particularly the singles) are very small. There's a pleasant roof terrace where you can escape the bustle of the *centro storico*.

Hotel Modigliani (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 428 15 226; www.hotelmodigliani.com; Via della Purificazione 42; s €120-160, d €155-193; ☒) A quick glance in the guest book at the Modigliani reveals recurring phrases such as 'loved this place' and 'charming staff'. Run by an artist and his musician partner, it deserves the accolades. The rooms are pleasant and if you trade up to a 'superior double' (€210 to €266), you'll get a view. There's an apartment that can sleep four or five (€335 to €422) and a quiet internal courtyard garden that's a lovely place for a drink.

Hotel Navona (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 686 42 03; www.hotelnavona.com; Via dei Sediari 8; s €100-120, d €155-250; ☒) The friendly Navona is a cut above

your average *pensione*. Rooms vary in quality; some are big and bright, others are very small, and the décor is largely ad hoc, with an antique desk here and a plastic lamp there. But what you're really paying for here is the location, which is a skip and a jump from Piazza Navona. The hotel also offers nearby apartments that sleep two for €155 to €250 per night including breakfast.

Casa Howard (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 699 24 555; www.casahoward.com; Via Sistina 149 & Via Capo le Case 18; s €150-210, d €160-240; 🚻 📺) Only 10 rooms and a location close to the Spanish Steps mean that this richly decorated boutique hotel, which is split between two nearby houses, is always busy. The French interior designer would seem to have got a bit carried away with the commission and the individually decorated rooms are certainly not for fans of the minimalist aesthetic. Three of the rooms have (private) bathrooms that are down the hall and all have amenities such as satellite TV and tea- and coffee-making facilities. Breakfast, which is served in the rooms, costs an extra €10 per person.

Hotel Teatro di Pompeo (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 687 28 12; www.hotelteatrodipompeo.it; Largo del Pallaro 8; s €135-160, d €180-205; 🚻) Built on top of a theatre that Pompey constructed in 55 BC (now the breakfast room), this family-run hotel is close to the Campo de' Fiori. The rooms are comfortable if a bit tired; those on the 3rd floor have sloping wood-beamed ceilings. Last-minute special deals are available.

TOP END

Hotel Campo de' Fiori (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 687 48 86; www.hotelcampodefiori.com; Via del Biscione 6; s €100-240, d €120-340, 2-person apt €90-180, 4-person apt €200-260; 📺 🚻 📺) This old favourite has recently undergone a total renovation. Rooms now sport a ritzy décor with richly coloured walls and bedspreads, chandeliers, swish bathrooms and flat-screen satellite TVs. There's wi-fi, and they'll even loan you a laptop if you need to use one. The location couldn't be more central, but noise isn't a problem due to double-glazed windows. The standout rooms are the three on the terrace, two of which have balconies with fabulous views. The hotel also offers 16 comfortable and well-equipped apartments in the surrounding area.

our pick **Il Palazetto** (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 699 34 301; www.wineacademyroma.com; Vicolo del Bottino 8; r €230-360; 📺 🚻) Run by the nearby Hassler Hotel

(where your breakfast is served; on Via Sistina at the top of the Spanish Stairs) and offering only four rooms, this absolutely gorgeous boutique hotel must be the most romantic accommodation in Rome. Three of the opulent rooms overlook the Spanish Steps, and all have every comfort imaginable. Guests have full access to services such as a business centre and gym at the Hassler.

Hotel Raphaël (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 68 28 31; Largo Febo 2; s €200-350, d €250-680; 📺 🚻 📺) Architect Richard Meier recently designed a renovation of the 3rd-floor rooms at this long-standing favourite. Just off the Piazza Navona, it has a foyer decorated with notable 20th-century art (eg Picasso ceramics and Miro lithographs), a fitness centre and a rooftop terrace restaurant that has fabulous views. The Meier-designed executive rooms are sleek and modern, whereas those on other floors have an old-fashioned 'gentlemen's club' aesthetic; all have top-end touches such as Bulgari toiletries in the bathrooms. Breakfast costs an extra €22 to €26. Hotel Raphaël is wheelchair-friendly.

Termini, Esquiline & Celio BUDGET

Yellow (Map p102; ☎ 06 493 82 682; www.the-yellow.com; Via Palestro 44; dm €18-36; 🚻 📺) A popular but very basic hostel, the Yellow is for hard-core, party-driven backpackers only. There are no hotel-style rooms here, just dorms sleeping between four and 12 people and barracks-style showers and toilets. You'll have to sleep on bunks and breakfast isn't included in the price. Internet is free, though, and the bar downstairs has pleasant outdoor tables where you can enjoy an afternoon beer or coffee.

Hotel Beautiful (Map p102; ☎ 06 447 03 927; www.beautiful.com; 4th fl, Via Milazzo 8; dm €15-29, d €50-89; 🚻 📺) A cross between a hostel and a hotel, this two-star place has 14 comfortable and clean rooms. There are doubles, triples and dorms, all with plenty of light, air-con and their own bathrooms. Breakfast is served in the rooms.

Alessandro Palace Hostel (Map p102; ☎ 06 446 19 58; www.hostelalessandro.com; Via Vicenza 42; dm €18-35, d €66-90; 🚻 📺 📺) It opened back in 1993, but this well-run hostel shows no sign of losing its popularity with budget travellers from around the world. It offers spick 'n' span hotel-style doubles, triples and quads, as well as dorms

(Continued on page 149)

(Continued from page 140)

that sleep from four to eight people. Every room has its own bathroom and all have air-con. Popular features include the downstairs bar, which serves free pizza each night at 8.30pm and has a satellite TV. The owners also run the more-basic Alessandro Downtown Hostel (Map p102; ☎ 06 443 40 147; Via Carlo Cattaneo 23; dorm €17 to €35).

Funny Palace (Map p102; ☎ 06 447 03 523; www.funnyhostel.com; 5th fl, Via Varese 31; dm €15-29, d without bathroom €70-75; ☒ ☑) Run by the friendly people from Splashnet laundry, this great little hostel has built a stellar reputation since it opened in 2005. There are doubles, triples and quads, all with a comfortable, homey feel. Thoughtful touches such as clean towels, a bottle of wine on arrival and vouchers for coffee and cornetto breakfasts in a nearby café make it a truly excellent choice.

M&J Hostel (Map p102; ☎ 06 446 28 02; www.mejplacehostel.com; Via Solferino 9; dm €17-37.50, s €50-70, d €70-100; ☒ ☑) A hostel that's been on the scene for more than a decade, the M&J is run by two well-travelled brothers and has recently undergone a major renovation, raising it from a backpackers-only place to a hostel-cum-hotel. There are a number of dorms, one of which is female-only and some of which have their own bathrooms. Rooms are decorated in a chic, minimalist style and have air-con (dorms don't). There's 24-hour reception, a communal kitchen with satellite TV and art by local artists. The owners operate the Living Room bar on the busy street under the hostel and this is where breakfast is served.

our pick Beehive (Map p102; ☎ 06 447 04 553; www.the-beehive.com; Via Marghera 8; dm €20-22, d without bathroom €70-75) This much-publicised place is the leading 'hip hostel' in Rome. Run by an American couple, it's brightly painted and features stylish furniture and fittings. Best of all are the on-site internet lounge, book exchange, vegetarian café (breakfast €5, dinner dish of the day €6.50), garden courtyard and yoga studio. Book well ahead because, not surprisingly, this place is very popular. The owners also rent out rooms in three apartments (€30 to €35 per person) on the west side of Termini, but these are nowhere as nice as the Beehive and their location is a bit dodgy.

Albergo Giusti (Map pp100-1; ☎ 06 704 53 462; s.annagiusti@tiscali.it; Via Giusti 5; s/d €45/78) Run by the sisters of Sant'Anna, this B&B option is in a

convent in the side streets near the Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore. The hospitable but rather stern nuns welcome families, groups and lone travellers. There's a 10.30pm curfew.

MIDRANGE & TOP END

Welrome Hotel (Map p102; ☎ 06 478 24 343; www.welrome.it; Via Calatafimi 15-19; s €55-100, d €65-110) The maternal owner of the Welrome has a personal mission to look after her guests: not only does she take huge pride in her small, spotless hotel but she enthusiastically points out the cheapest places to eat, tells you where not to waste your time and what's good to do. Families should go for the huge room named after Piazza di Spagna.

Hotel Castelfidardo (Map p102; ☎ 06 446 46 38; www.hotelcastelfidardo.com; Via Castelfidardo 31; s €40-90, d €60-120) One of Rome's most elegant one-star hotels, Castelfidardo is just off Piazza dell'Indipendenza. Gleaming halls lead to spacious rooms furnished with simple taste.

Hotel Gabriella (Map p102; ☎ 06 445 01 20; www.gabriellahotel.com; 1st fl, Via Palestro 88; r €80-160; ☒ ☑) A friendly, family-run place near Termini whose well-appointed and comfortable rooms offer good value. Rooms are small and can be a tad noisy.

Hotel des Artistes (Map p102; ☎ 06 445 43 65; www.hoteldesartistes.com; Via Villafranca 20; r €94-139; ☒ ☑ ☑) The rooms here are decked out in wood and gold with faux-antique furniture and three-star trappings such as satellite TV and decent bathrooms. It offers discounts for longer stays and/or cash payment.

Target Inn (Map p102; ☎ 06 474 53 99; www.targetinn.com; 3rd fl, Via Modena 5; s €80-125, d €95-150; ☒ ☑) It's rare to find a Roman hotel room that is clean, comfortable, stylish and well priced, but that's what's on offer at this popular B&B overlooking Piazza della Repubblica. The seven rooms, which feature parquet floors and a neutral colour scheme, come complete with sparkling modern bathrooms and plasma-screen satellite TV. There's also a suite sleeping four (€140 to €250) that's ideal for families.

Aphrodite Hotel (Map p102; ☎ 06 49 10 96; www.accommodationinrome.com; Via Marsala 90; s €90-110, d €110-160; ☒ ☑) Recently built, this midrange choice has an unfortunate location on a busy street next to Stazione Termini, but is worth listing for its clean, well-set-up rooms. These have double-glazed windows but differ in size, so ask to see a few. Knock 10% off the bill if you pay in cash.

Residenza Cellini (Map p102; ☎ 06 478 25 204; www.residenzaccellini.it; Via Modena 5; d €145-240, ste €165-260; ♿) Situated in a nondescript building near Piazza della Repubblica, this intimate and quite charming hotel offers six rooms with parquet floors, antique furniture, satellite TV and Jacuzzi or hydro-massage showers. There's wi-fi, too.

Hotel Capo d'Africa (Map pp100-1; ☎ 06 77 28 01; www.hotelpapodafrica.com; Via Capo d'Africa; s €300, d €320-400; ♿) In a quiet street near the Colosseum, this hotel is an excellent place to base yourself if you plan on spending time at the major sights. Rooms have a colourful, modern décor and are extremely comfortable; bathrooms are particularly impressive. Icing on the cake comes courtesy of a lavish breakfast, a gym and attentive staff. Check the website for special deals in the low season. Wheelchair-friendly.

Trastevere & Aventine

La Foresteria Orsa Maggiore (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 684 01 724; www.casainternazionaleledelldonne.org.in Italian; 2nd fl, Via San Francesco di Sales 1a; dm €24-26, s/d without bathroom €52/72, s/d with bathroom €75/110; ♿) This wheelchair-friendly, predominantly women-only guesthouse (boys aged 12 or younger are welcome to accompany their mothers) is housed in a restored 16th-century convent. It is run by the Casa Internazionale delle Donne (International Women's House) and offers safe and well-priced accommodation in a quiet corner of Trastevere. Rooms sleep two, four, five or eight. Most have exterior views (the majority look onto the attractive internal garden) and share institutional-style bathrooms. There's a 3am curfew.

Hotel Trastevere (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 581 47 13; www.hotltrastevere.net; Via Luciano Manara 24a-25; s €80, d €103-105; ♿) Overlooking the market square of Piazza San Cosimato (think noise), this run-down place offers rooms with clean bathrooms and slightly saggy beds. There are few frills here – in fact, everything's a bit musty – but the management is friendly and you won't find many cheaper options in Trastevere. Don't consider the apartments, though, as they're awful.

Hotel Antico Borgo Trastevere (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 588 39 24; www.hotelanticoborgo.it; Vicolo del Buco 7; s €85-95, d €110-140; ♿) Tucked away in a quiet corner of Trastevere, this quaint hotel is housed in a small *palazzo* dating from 1800. The attractive rooms are well maintained and

have comfortable beds, but they're tiny – anyone who suffers from even a touch of claustrophobia should steer clear. Breakfast is served in your room.

Villa della Fonte (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 580 37 97; www.villafonte.com; Via della Fonte dell'Olio 8; s €90-130, d €130-190; ♿) sometimes closed Aug; ♿) This gem of a hotel is tucked away in a 17th-century building in a street off Piazza Santa Maria in Trastevere. It only has five rooms, all of which are simply decorated but boast satellite TVs, good bathrooms and comfortable beds covered with lovely linen. The sunny garden terrace is a lovely place to enjoy breakfast or an afternoon read.

Hotel Santa Maria (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 589 46 26; www.hotelsantamaria.info; Vicolo del Piede 2; s €150-180, d €165-250; ♿) Pass through the green gate and you'll enter a tranquil haven. Housed in a spacious 17th-century cloister, the Santa Maria has 19 rooms around a delightful courtyard garden with orange trees and plenty of seating. Rooms are cool and comfortable (though a tad dark); their fussy décor won't be to everyone's taste, though this is mitigated by their excellent amenities. The English-speaking staff here are very professional and service levels are unusually high – it's an excellent midrange choice. Wheelchair-friendly.

Hotel Villa S Pio (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 574 52 31; www.aventinohotels.com; Via S Melania 19; s/d €130/220; ♿) You'll feel like breaking into strains of 'That's Amore' as soon as you check into this romantic hotel. An early-20th-century villa in a quiet residential area, it's recently been renovated and offers huge rooms, classical décor and swish marble bathrooms with Jacuzzis. Best of all is the leafy garden, where guests can enjoy breakfast. Another wheelchair-friendly option.

Vatican City, Borgo & Prati

Colors Hostel & Hotel (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 687 40 30; www.colorsotel.com; Via Boezio 31; dm €18-25, s €40-90, d €60/125; ♿) This well-run place started as a hostel and has recently morphed into a hostel and hotel combo. The hostel is a relaxed place with seven sunny dorms that can be very noisy when windows are left open. It has a fully equipped kitchen and spotlessly clean shared bathrooms. The 3rd-floor hotel offers rooms that are simple but attractive, with comfortable beds and modern bathrooms. For those who are looking for a location away

from the Termini area, the dorms here offer good value; we think the hotel rooms are overpriced.

Casa di Accoglienza Paolo VI (Piccolo Suore della Sacra Famiglia; Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 397 23 844; casapaolovi@tiscalinet.it; Viale Vaticano 92; s/d/€35/60/90; ☒ ☑) Everyone loves a bargain when it comes to accommodation, and the sisters certainly provide one at their lovely convent opposite the entrance to the Vatican Museums. Rooms are small, but are so clean they gleam. They're also full of light and have amenities such as air-con, modern private bathrooms and desks. You'll need to book a long way in advance to snaffle one. There's no breakfast, but you get a discount if you stay more than one night. There's a midnight curfew.

Hotel Al San Pietrino (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 370 01 32; www.sanpietrino.it; Via Giovanni Bettolo 43; s €75-95, d €90-105, s without bathroom €32-50, d without bathroom €70-85; ☒ ☑) There's a lot to be said for staying in quiet Prati, particularly in a hotel that offers great value and is conveniently located near a metro station. The San Pietrino offers both of these selling points and more. Though on the small side, its 16 rooms are pleasantly decorated and extremely clean. Added extras are the comfortable beds, wi-fi and very helpful staff.

Hotel Lady (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 324 21 12; www.hotelladyroma.it; 4th fl, Via Germanico 198; d €115-145; ☒) A homey old-school *pensione* located in an attractive residential apartment block, the Hotel Lady is a warm, quiet and inviting place. The rooms are on the small side, but they're comfortable, well maintained and spotlessly clean. Those without private bathroom (singles €60 to €80, doubles €85 to €100) have their own sinks. The eccentric owner and his wife don't speak English, but will merrily chat to you in Italian and serve you breakfast (€10) in their attractive salon.

Hotel Bramante (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 688 06 426; www.hotellbramante.com; Via delle Palline 24-25; s €100-160, d €150-220; ☑) Tucked away in an atmospheric side street behind St Peter's, the 16th-century building in which the Bramante is housed was designed by the Swiss architect Domenico Fontana, who lived in it until he was expelled from Rome by Pope Sixtus V. Rooms feature a simple but attractive classical décor and are well equipped with satellite TV, tea- and coffee-making facilities and well-set-up bathrooms. There's a small rear courtyard.

EATING

Rome has a wide selection of trattorias, *ristoranti* and pizzerias, as well as a growing number of trendy *enoteche* (wine bars serving food). The best places to eat are in the *centro storico* and Trastevere, but there are also excellent choices in Prati, Testaccio and San Lorenzo. Generally, the places around Stazione Termini are to be avoided.

Many restaurants close down for several weeks during the traditional summer holiday month of August, although council laws state that they must consult with local colleagues to ensure that a similar business is open no more than 300m away.

Rome has no shortage of *alimentari* (grocery stores) where you can normally get a *panino* (sandwich) made up for you for about €3. Alternatively, there are hundreds of *pizza al taglio* outlets for a takeaway slice of pizza (about €3 depending on the size and topping). Bars often serve *tramezzini* (premade refrigerated sandwiches; about €4), which will cost more if you sit down to eat.

Centro Storico BUDGET

Antico Forno (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 679 28 66; Via delle Muratte 8; ☎ 7am-9pm) A minisupermarket near the Trevi Fountain, this place has a well-stocked deli counter where you can choose a filling for your freshly baked *panini*. There's also a good selection of focaccia and pizza.

Forno di Campo de' Fiori (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 688 06 662; Campo de' Fiori 22; ☎ 7am-1.30pm & 5.30-8.30pm Mon-Wed, Fri & Sat) One of the capital's most famous and sweet-smelling bakeries, the Forno di Campo de' Fiori now operates two outlets. In one you'll find cakes, tarts and sweet nibbles; in the other you can stock up on bread of all shapes and sizes and delicious pizza by the slice.

Lo Zozzone (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 688 085 75; Via del Teatro Pace 32; ☎ Mon-Sat) 'The dirty one' (a nickname that unfortunately stuck) is one of the best *pizza al taglio* (pizza by the slice) joints in the city. Pay at the till for a regular or large *pizza bianca* ('white pizza', without a tomato base; €2.50/3) and then ask for it to be stuffed with your choice from the wide range of toppings.

Volpetti alla Scrofa (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 688 06 335; Via della Scrofa 31-32; ☎ Mon-Sat) As well as being an Aladdin's cave of delicacies, including Belgian beer, French champagne, Italian truffles,

sausage and cheese, this place is also a *tavola calda* (literally 'hot table') where you can enjoy a set menu of pasta, salad and fruit for under €10.

Dal Pains (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 681 35 140; Via di Parione 34a-35; pizzas €4-6, pastas €7) This palace is noteworthy for its cheap prices and raucous atmosphere. The chef works hard sliding the pizzas in and out of the wood-fired oven at front, and the patrons like nothing more than to down a Nastro Azzurro (€2.50) or two while devouring good pizzas or enormous plates of pasta.

Pizzeria al Leoncino (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 686 77 57; Via del Leoncino 28; pizzas €5-8.50; ☹ Thu-Tue) It can be difficult to source a cheap meal in upmarket Tridente, which is why the existence of Leoncino should be wholeheartedly celebrated. A boisterous neighbourhood pizzeria with a wood-fired oven, it has two small rooms, cheerful décor and gruff but efficient waiters who will serve you an excellent Roman-style pizza and ice-cold beer faster than you can say *'delizioso'*.

Da Francesco (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 686 40 09; Piazza del Fico 29; pizzas €6-9; ☹ closed lunch Tue) This city is blessed with so many great pizzerias that it's

hard to narrow down the available choices and recommend only a few. We had no trouble at all, however, nominating this bustling, family-friendly place. It also serves daily specials for people who have over-indulged on the crispy-crusteds disks: there's gnocchi on Thursdays, beans on Fridays and other pastas and specials throughout the week. Credit cards aren't accepted.

Pizzeria da Baffetto (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 686 16 17; Via del Governo Vecchio 114; pizzas €6-9; ☹ 6.30pm-midnight) For a pizza experience *alla romana* (Roman style), join the queue outside this famous pizzeria and wait to be squeezed into whatever table space is next available. The pizzas themselves are of the thin-crust Roman variety (as opposed to the deeper pan Neapolitan version) and are served bubbling hot from the wood-fired oven.

La Baguette (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 688 07 727; Via Tomacelli 22-25; tartines €6-9, salads €7-13; ☹ 9am-midnight Tue-Sun) Specialising in French baguettes, quiches and salads, this perennially popular place is great for enjoying breakfast or a light lunch.

Gina Eat & Drink (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 678 02 51; Via San Sebastianello 7a; salads €6-12, mains €6-8.50; ☹ lunch

GELATO AU GO GO

Rome and gelato were made for each other. Here you'll find there's a healthy rivalry among gelaterie *artigianale* (makers of handmade gelato), who all strive to outdo each other when it comes to creating the freshest ice cream using the most flavourful in-season ingredients. The best of this fraternity sell their creations on the day they make them; some give the customer an option of a crown of fresh cream on top, others opt for a pared-down gelato-only model. Here's our (extensively) road-tested guide to the best cones and cups in the city:

Alberto Pica (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 686 84 05; Via della Seggiola 12; ☹ 8am-1.30am Mon-Sat year-round, 4pm-2am Sun Apr-Sep, closed 2 weeks Aug) The original Mr Pica worked for Giolitti before opening his own shop, and this branch has been serving up its iced confections since 1960. It's particularly good in summer, when it offers flavours such as *fragolini de bosco* (wild strawberry) and *petali di rosa* (rose petal).

Gelateria Pasqualetti (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 687 89 40; Piazza della Maddalena 3a) Forget about the overhyped Giolitti and Della Palma gelaterie: the gelato served up in this tiny place around the corner from the Pantheon is infinitely superior. It doesn't matter if you opt for the milk-based or fruit-based options, as everything here is scrumptious.

Gelateria del Teatro (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 454 74 880; Via di San Simone 70; ☹ noon-11pm Tue-Sun) Off Via dei Coronari just near the Piazza Navona, this largely undiscovered gem of a gelateria churns out (sorry, couldn't help it) top-notch stuff. You can watch it being made and then opt for the flavour that's most tempting.

Pellacchia (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 321 08 07; Via Cola di Rienzo 103; ☹ 6am-1am Tue-Sun) Pellacchia has been perfecting the art of gelato making since first setting up shop off the Via Veneto in 1890. It has been at this Prati location since 1923 and all we can say is that, in this case, practice has certainly made perfect. The pistachio gelato here is without doubt the best we've sampled over 20 years of international ice-cream indulgence.

San Crispino (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 679 39 24; Via della Panetteria 42; ☹ noon-12.30am Mon, Wed, Thu & Sun, noon-1.30am Fri & Sat) There's no doubting that the gelato here is top-notch – it's just a shame that the serves are so small and that so many people find the staff to be rude. We love the *cioccolato* made with Valrhona chocolate, the *zabaione* VS and the *crema* with honey, but what's with the no-cone rule?

& dinner Tue-Sat, lunch Sun & Mon) Around the corner from the Spanish Steps, Gina's minimalist white décor and snack-heavy menu are more TriBeCa than Tridente, and the clientele is similarly sophisticated. It's great for a light lunch (soups, salads and sandwiches) and you can even get a gourmet picnic lunch (€35 for two) to eat in the Villa Borghese.

Gusto (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 322 62 73; Piazza Augusto Imperatore 9; pizzas €7-11) A huge warehouse-style complex with a restaurant, pizzeria, wine bar and kitchenware emporium, 'Gusto was one of the first designer restaurants to appear in Rome and shows no sign of surrendering its claim to hosting one of the city's trendiest scenes. Ignore the overpriced and underwhelming fare served in the restaurant, and instead nosh on the huge Neapolitan-style pizzas served downstairs. Style on a budget; we love it.

Da Ricci (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 488 11 07; Via Genova 32; pizzas €8; ☎ 7pm-midnight Tue-Sun) Also known as Est! Est!! Est!!!, this place started up as a wine shop in 1905 and began serving thick-crust Neapolitan-style pizzas shortly afterwards. A century on, it's still run by the same family and continues its tradition of serving pizza and wine to hoards of fans.

Filetti di Baccalà (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 686 40 18; Largo dei Librai 88; meals €18; ☎ dinner Mon-Sat) For a slab of fried *baccalà* (salted cod), head to Rome's best-loved fish and chipper (without the chips, but with alternatives such as *puntarella* – chicory – salad or crisp-fried zucchini flowers).

Enoteca Corsi (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 679 08 21; Via del Gesù 88; meals €20; ☎ Mon-Sat) It's not expensive, it's not elegant and the food is never going to win any Michelin stars. But for a genuine Roman eatery you'd have to look long and hard to beat this bustling, no-frills trattoria. Locals flock here at lunchtime to nosh on simple dishes accompanied by decent house wine and good bread.

MIDRANGE

Alfredo e Ada (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 687 88 42; Via dei Banchi Nuovo 14; meals €20; ☎ Mon-Fri) Once you've found a seat at this tiny, unmarked trattoria, all you need to do is wait. You don't need to bother with a menu, as you'll get what Ada puts in front of you. This will probably be something simple such as pasta with tomato sauce followed by sausage and lentils, or beef and red bean stew. No credit cards.

Trattoria der Pallaro (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 688 01 488; Largo del Pallaro 15; menu €22.50; ☎ Tue-Sun) The senora who runs the kitchen in this long-running local trattoria sure knows how to cook. She's also pretty good at keeping customers happy – largely because the menu is gigantic and wine is included, but also because she and her staff are genuinely nice people.

Sora Margherita (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 687 42 16; Piazza delle Cinque Scole 30; meals €28; ☎ lunch Tue-Sun, dinner Fri & Sat) If you want hearty pasta and delicious Jewish fare at excellent prices, get down to Sora's in the Ghetto. The service is pure Roman – brusque but not quite unfriendly – and the queue is inevitable.

Da Armando al Pantheon (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 688 03 034; Salita dei Crescenzi 31; meals €35; ☎ lunch & dinner Mon-Fri, lunch Sat) A warm, family-run trattoria within a stone's throw of the Pantheon, Armando's is a traditional place that serves excellent Roman cuisine. Kick off with a simple dish such as *spaghetti alla verde* (spaghetti with lemon, rocket and garlic; €8) and you'll have enough room for a hearty *secondi* (second course) such as *trippa alla romana* (Roman-style tripe; €12.50). You'd be mad if you left without eating the *torta antica Roma* (Roman-style cake), which is utterly delicious.

La Buca di Ripetta (Map pp92-3; ☎ 06 321 93 91; Via di Ripetta 36; meals €35; ☎ Tue-Sun) Rome and robust cuisine are as obvious a combination as Donatella Versace and fake tan. And the dishes at this diminutive trattoria, which is conveniently located near the Piazza del Popolo, just go to prove this point. Try the *zuppa rustica con crostini do pane aromatizzati* (country-style soup with rosemary-scented bread; €9) or the *matolino do latte al forno alle erbe con patate* (baked suckling pork with potatoes; €15) and you'll find out what we mean.

La Carbonara (Map pp96-7; Campo de' Fiori 23; meals €35; ☎ Wed-Mon) Smack-bang on the Campo de' Fiori, La Carbonara has been serving up classic *cucina romana* (Roman-style cuisine) for decades. Its old-fashioned interior is welcoming, but the choice tables here are on the piazza (summer only). There's an excellent antipasti spread that vegetarians will adore (€10) and an array of the usual suspects when it comes to *primi* (first course) and *secondi*.

Maccheroni (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 683 07 895; Via delle Coppelle 44; meals €35) A casual but classy trattoria serving excellent pasta dishes, Maccheroni is as popular with locals as it is with tourists. Famous for its *amatriciana* (a spicy sauce of

tomato, *pecorino* cheese and *guanciale*, or pigs' cheeks; €8) and its *crostata di ricotta e cioccolata* (tart with ricotta and chocolate; €6), it also offers indulgences such as *trofie al tartufo nero* (handmade pasta with black truffle sauce; €13) in season. Yum.

Matricianella (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 683 21 00; Via del Leone 2/4; meals €35; 🍷 Mon-Sat, closed Aug) Both the food and the décor at this tranquil trattoria off pretty Piazza Lucina are typically Roman. And Romans themselves love it to bits, making booking essential.

Palatium (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 692 02 132; Via Frattina 94; meals €35; 🍷 Mon-Sat) Conceived as a showcase of Lazio's bountiful produce, this sleek *enoteca* serves excellent pasta dishes and is a great place to enjoy a well-priced lunch. Top marks go to the knowledgeable waiters and the well-priced wine list; a few are lost due to the uninspired mains. It's also a great place for an *aperitivo*.

Ristorante Settimio (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 678 96 51; Via della Colonnelle 14; meals €35) This small place is a popular haunt for journalists and politicians who know how good the simple Roman dishes can be. Specialties include *baccalà al forno* (oven-baked cod fish; €13) and seasonal dishes such as *tagliolini al tartufo* (pasta with truffles; €20). Members of the same family run Osteria del Sostegno (☎ 06 679 38 42), a few doors down, which offers a similar menu and a picturesque terrace on which to eat it.

Ditirambo (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 687 16 26; Piazza della Cancelleria 74-75; meals €40; 🍷 Tue-Sun) Just off Campo de' Fiori, Ditirambo is known for its casual atmosphere, excellent wine list and innovative, seasonally driven cuisine. The menu changes every three to four weeks and the chef uses organic artisan products whenever possible. Dishes can be inconsistent in quality – at a recent meal we enjoyed a fabulous pasta dish but our main course was incinerated and inedible. The place itself is unpretentious and very popular, so make sure you book ahead.

ourpick Hostaria Costanza (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 686 17 17; Piazza del Paradiso 63-65; meals €40; 🍷 Mon-Sat) This is old-school Roman dining at its best. Located in the basement of Pompey's Theatre, Costanza serves up simple and wonderfully cooked food such as creamy *riso con fiori di zucca* (risotto with zucchini flowers; €8), perfectly cooked *ravioli di carciofi* (ravioli with artichokes; €8) and a simply delicious *filetto di manzo al barolo* (fillet of beef with barolo

wine sauce; €17). The waiters are friendly, the house wine is eminently quaffable and the prices are remarkably reasonable for what's on offer. Bookings essential.

Il Chianti (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 678 75 50; Via del Lavatore 81-82; meals €40; 🍷 Mon-Sat) As a general rule the restaurants around the Trevi Fountain dish up overpriced tourist fare, but this pretty ivy-clad wine bar is an exception. Its simple dishes are particularly good – opt for a steak, salad or pasta.

Al Moro (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 678 34 95; Vicolo delle Bollette 13; meals €45; 🍷 Mon-Sat) Once host to the Cinecittà crowd – Fellini was a regular – the clientele of this historic trattoria behind the Trevi Fountain is now predominantly elderly and moneyed, joined by businessmen and a scattering of tourists who have been lured by the Moro's reputation for serving excellent traditional food. Specialties of the house are uncompromisingly Roman – try the *spaghetti alla carbonara* (€14).

Colline Emiliane (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 481 75 38; Via degli Avignonesi 22; meals €45; 🍷 Sat-Thu) This welcoming trattoria just off Piazza Barberini flies the flag for Emilia-Romagna, the Italian province that has gifted the world with Parmesan, balsamic vinegar, bolognese sauce and Parma ham. The food here bears no resemblance to the healthy offerings of the Mediterranean diet. Instead it's all about cream, veal, homemade pasta and rich pasta fillings.

Il Margutta (Map pp92-3; ☎ 06 326 50 577; Via Margutta 118; meals €45; 🍷 Mon-Sat) Vegetarian restaurants are as rare today in Rome as celibate cardinals were during the Renaissance, which is why this upmarket art gallery/vegetarian restaurant is worthy of a listing. Known for its 'Green Brunches' (€15 or €25), where 70% of ingredients used are organic, all pasta and desserts are homemade and it also offers a four-course vegan menu (€30).

ourpick Piperno (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 688 06 629; Via Monte de' Cenci 9; meals €50; 🍷 Tue-Sat, lunch Sun) It's a novel experience to ask a waiter to bring you his *palle del Nonno* (Grandpa's balls). But the ricotta and chocolate puffs (€7) are one of the signature dishes of this historic restaurant. Specialising in Roman-Jewish cuisine, it's turned deep-frying into an art form. For proof, try the *filetti di baccalà* (two fried fillets of cod fish; €14), *carciofi alla Guidia* (Jewish-style artichokes; €14) or *fiori di zucca ripieni e fritti* (cheese-and-anchovy stuffed zucchini flowers; €14). The homemade pasta is excellent, too.

TOP END

our pick Ristorante La Baguette (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 688 07 727; Via Tomacelli 22-25; meals €55; 🍷 dinner daily, lunch & dinner Sat & Sun) Next to the busy café of the same name, this fabulous rooftop restaurant is one of the best in the city. Top-quality ingredients are transformed into beautifully presented modern Italian dishes by chefs who really know their stuff. Try a simple *primo* such as the carpaccio with ginger-perfumed wild arugula (€15), followed by a sophisticated *secondo* such as *tagliata di tonno al pistachio con salsa al Moscato do pantelleria* (pistachio-encrusted tuna steak with Pantelleria Moscato wine sauce; €20). The setting is as comfortable as it is classy, the wine list is excellent and the service is exemplary.

Il Pagiaccio (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 688 09 595; Via dei Banchi Vecchi 59; meals €70; 🍷 dinner Mon-Sat, lunch Wed-Sat) It may be named after the clown, but this high-profile *ristorante* near the Campo de' Fiori serves up food that's more likely to make you applaud than laugh. If you need a tag, 'Italian fusion' will do, but that almost seems to sell the food short. You can order à la carte or the seasonal *degustazione* menu (€50).

Termini, Esquiline & Celio**BUDGET**

Casa del Pane (Map p102; ☎ 06 495 83 37; Via Goito 9; 🍷 7am-2.30pm & 4.30-7.30pm, closed Sat afternoon) In the Termini area, this swish bakery rustles up a mean slice of pizza, as well as some mighty fine bread.

Pizza & Mortadella (Map pp100-1; ☎ 06 489 04 328; Via Cavour 279-283) There aren't many cheap eateries around the Colosseum, so it's useful to know about this deli-cum-pizza *al taglio* joint. A hefty slice of its pizza or *torta di ricotta* (ricotta tart) at lunch should keep you going for the rest of the afternoon.

Indian Fast Food (Kabir Fast Food; Map p102; ☎ 06 446 07 92; Via Mamiani 11; curries €7.50; 🍷 11am-4pm & 5-10.30pm) A genuine Indian takeaway just off Piazza Vittorio Emanuele, this no-frills place has cheerful staff, good food and blaring Indian music videos. The samosas (€1) and pakoras (€0.75) are delicious and the curries are perfectly acceptable. You can even enjoy your choices accompanied by a beer (€2.25).

Cavour 313 (Map pp100-1; ☎ 06 678 54 96; Via Cavour 313; 🍷 10am-2.30pm & 7.30pm-12.30am) Close to the Colosseum and Forum, Cavour 313 is one of the oldest wine bars in Rome and is a great place to enjoy a simple lunch or predinner drink. Try the soup (€7) or plate of the day

(€12). You can accompany your meal or cheese board (€8) with a glass or bottle of wine from the more than 1200 labels on offer.

Café Café (Map pp100-1; ☎ 06 700 87 43; Via dei SS Quattro 44; 🍷 closed Wed in winter & 2 weeks Aug) A new and extremely popular lunch spot close to the Colosseum, this is exactly what its emphatic name implies: a casual place for a coffee or a salad, soup or pasta (€8 to €15).

Africa (Map p102; ☎ 06 494 10 77; Via Gaeta 26-28; meals €20; 🍷 Tue-Sun) In the multicultural area around Stazione Termini, Africa is an Ethiopian and Eritrean restaurant favoured by expats and curious Romans. Use your fingers to dig into falafel and *sambusa* (a cross between a spring roll and a samosa; €3) and scoop up *spriss* (beef cubes sautéed with onion, green pepper and hot *berbere* sauce; €9) with soft, spongy *injera* bread. There are loads of vegetarian choices, including a mixed vegetarian plate (€8). A beer to wash it all down costs €3.50.

MIDRANGE & TOP END

Trimani Wine Bar (Map p102; ☎ 06 446 96 30; Via Cernaia 37b; meals €32; 🍷 Mon-Sat) There aren't too many places around Termini where you can enjoy a top-quality lunch, but this stylish wine bar is one of them. The menu changes daily and might include delicious concoctions such as *spaghetti di gragnano con asparagi, pancetta e profumo di timo* (spaghetti with asparagus, bacon and thyme; €8) or *tonno fresco con fagioli, verdolini di sarconi* (tuna carpaccio with beans and sprouts; €12). The smallish servings are best enjoyed with a glass of wine from the large and well-chosen range, as befits a place run by one of the city's major purveyors of fine wine.

Agata e Romeo (Map p102; ☎ 06 446 61 15; Via Carlo Alberto 45; menu €110, with wine €160; 🍷 Mon-Fri, closed 2 weeks Jan & Aug) One for true epicureans, this swish place does inspired refined Roman cuisine. Chef Agata Parisella designs and cooks menus that sound deceptively simple; in reality they're often complex and always perfectly balanced. The décor is luxe but not pretentious and service is unobtrusive. Bookings essential.

San Lorenzo

Formula 1 (Map p102; ☎ 06 445 38 66; Via degli Equi 13; pizzas from €6.50; 🍷 dinner to 1.30am Mon-Sat) The waiters at this place emulate the Ferrari F1 team and zoom around at a cracking pace. Always full of students fuelling up with bruschetta, fried zucchini flowers and classic thin-crust pizza, it's a great pit stop for a preclubbing refuel.

Arancia Blu (Map p102; ☎ 06 445 41 05; Via dei Latini 55-65; meals €30; 🍷 dinner Mon-Sat) In San Lorenzo, this stylish bistro has been flying the flag for high-quality vegetarian food for some years. Taking a contemporary approach, it offers dishes such as *spaghetti alla chitarra con tartufo nero e pecorino* (thick spaghetti with black truffle and spicy cheese) and a range of interesting salads and soups. There's also a great wine list.

Uno e Bino (Map p102; ☎ 06 446 07 02; Via degli Equi 58; meals €40; 🍷 Tue-Sun) This sophisticated place stands head and shoulders above the student-oriented eateries that dominate the San Lorenzo area. A regular name on the city's 'best restaurant' lists, it serves adventurous and exquisitely prepared dishes with a vaguely Sicilian slant. Booking is essential.

Trastevere

BUDGET

🍷 pick Pizzeria Sisini (Map pp104-5; Via di San Francesco a Ripa 137; 🍷 Mon-Sat, closed Aug) Locals know where to come for the best *pizza al taglio* in Trastevere, and you'll need to jostle with them to make it to the counter of this perennially packed place. Here, simple styles reign supreme – try the *marinara* (seafood pizza) and you'll see what we mean. It's also worth sampling the *suppli* (fried risotto balls) and roast chicken.

Forno la Renella (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 581 72 65; Via del Moro 15-16; 🍷 9am-9pm) The wood-fired ovens at this popular Trastevere bakery have been producing a delicious daily batch of thick pizza, bread and biscuits for decades. Pizza toppings are many and varied – opt for whatever vegetable is in season and you won't be disappointed.

Frontoni (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 581 24 36; Viale di Trastevere; 🍷 10am-1am Mon-Sat, 5am-midnight Sun) Frontoni offers a huge range of sandwich fillings that you can have with a simple *panino* or in *pizza bianca*. It also has good *pizza al taglio* with novel toppings such as ham and fig. For a choice of hot pastas, vegetable side dishes and salads (costing about €5), head upstairs to the restaurant.

Al Marmi (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 580 09 19; Viale di Trastevere 53; pizzas from €5.50; 🍷 Thu-Tue) Al Marmi is commonly known as *l'obitorio* (the morgue) because of its marble-slab tabletops, but thankfully the similarity stops there. It serves delicious paper-thin pizzas that should be gobbled down while they're piping hot.

Dar Poeta (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 588 05 16; Vicolo del Bologna 46; pizzas from €7; 🍷 dinner) Tucked away in an atmospheric side street, Dar Poeta is justly famous for its pizzas, which are a cross between the crisp Roman variety and the more doughy Neapolitan variety.

Da Augusto (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 580 37 98; Piazza de' Renzi 15; meals €20; 🍷 lunch & dinner Mon-Fri, lunch Sat Sep-Jul) For an old-fashioned Trastevere meal, plonk yourself at one of Augusto's well-worn tables and prepare to enjoy some true Mama-style cooking. The hard-working waiters dish out plates of *rigatoni all'amatriciana* and *straciatella* (clear broth with egg and Parmesan) among a host of Roman classics.

MIDRANGE & TOP END

Jaipur (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 580 39 92; Via di San Francesco a Ripa 56; meals €23; 🍷 Tue-Sun, dinner Mon) If you've been on the road for a while and can't countenance the idea of another pizza or pasta, this attractive North Indian restaurant might be just your cup of chai. The menu is enormous – there are 18 chicken mains alone – and it features oodles of vegetarian options.

Alle Fratte di Trastevere (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 583 57 75; Via delle Fratte di Trastevere 49-50; meals €25; 🍷 Thu-Tue) A successful trattoria has three fundamentals: a warm welcome, tasty food and prices that won't break the bank. Alle Fratte scores top marks for each of these. Friendly waiters dish out generous portions of *cucina romana*, as well as daily specials. The house wine is quaffable, the coffee is excellent and the mood is convivial. Great stuff.

Osteria della Gensola (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 581 63 12; Piazza della Gensola 15; meals €50; 🍷 closed Sun in summer) The type of friendly eatery that we'd all like to see in our home neighbourhoods, this place is one of Trastevere's great secrets. Charming surrounds complement the excellent food, which has an emphasis on seafood. If, like us, you opt for the five-course *menu di pesce* (fish degustation menu; €39), which comes complete with water and decent house *vino*, you'll be totally replete but very happy.

Paris (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 581 53 78; Piazza San Calisto 7a; meals €50; 🍷 Tue-Sat, lunch Sun) A Roman restaurant of the old school, Paris is still the best place outside the Ghetto to sample true Roman-Jewish cuisine. The delicate *fritto misto con baccalà* (deep-fried vegetables with salt cod; €14) and *carciofi alla giudia* (Jewish-style artichokes; €12) are memorable, as is the *minestra di arzilla ai broccoli* (skate soup with broccoli; €10.50).

Testaccio

Volpetti Più (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 574 43 06; Via A Volta 8) One of the few places in town where you can sit down and eat well for around €10, Volpetti Più is a sumptuous *tavola calda*. Here you'll find pizza, pasta, soup, meat, vegetables and fried nibbles. The quality is as impressive as the quantity.

Pizzeria Remo (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 574 62 70; Piazza Santa Maria Liberatrice 44; pizzas from €6; ☎ dinner Mon-Sat) Remo is said by many to serve the best Roman pizza in town. An institution in this neck of the woods, it's utterly without frills (you make your order by ticking your choices on a sheet of paper), incredibly noisy and loads of fun. You'll need to queue.

Trattoria da Bucatino (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 574 68 86; Via Luca della Robbia 84; meals €25; ☎ Tue-Sun) This intimate and extremely convivial place is hugely popular, and no wonder. The antipasto buffet is excellent and there's a good selection of tasty pasta dishes, which are served in huge portions.

Checchino dal 1887 (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 574 38 16; Via di Monte Testaccio 30; meals €60; ☎ Tue-Sun) Checchino is situated within a cow's tail of Rome's former abattoir, so it's no surprise to discover that offal – from calves' heads to pigs' trotters and sweetbreads – also dominates the menu here, though there are a number of less-demanding alternatives. Wash it all down with a wine from the well-stocked cellar.

Vatican City, Borgo & Prati

BUDGET

Dolce Maniera (Map pp94-5; Via Barletta 27) Good cheap takeaways are almost nonexistent near the Vatican, which is why this bakery in a basement next to the British School is such a find. It's easy to locate – just look for the people on the street who are happily scoffing their choices from the goodies on offer, which include *cornetti*, slabs of pizza, *panini* and an indulgent array of cakes.

Pizzeria Amalfi (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 397 33 165; Via dei Gracchi 12; pizzas €5-8.50) This neighbourhood pizzeria is so popular that it recently expanded into the next shopfront. The décor features murals of the Bay of Naples and other Neapolitan scenes, signalling that the house pizzas are the thick-crust variety.

Art Studio Café (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 972 77 286; Via dei Gracchi 187a; light mains €6-8.50; ☎ Mon-Sat) Whether you've been shopping up a storm on Via Cola di Rienzo or spending the morning at the

Vatican, a light lunch at this arty café will provide a perfect pit stop. The bright and airy loft-style interior is a cheerful setting in which to enjoy light meals such as tortillas, soups, antipasti and salads, topped off with the cake of the day (€4).

MIDRANGE

Osteria dell'Angelo (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 372 94 70; Via Giovanni Bettolo 24; meals €20, menus €25-30; ☎ lunch Tue-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat) This hugely popular neighbourhood trattoria in Prati is a 10-minute walk from the Vatican. Run by former rugby player Angelo, it's famous for its open grill, its unorthodox waiters (mostly former rugby players who are a bit rough around the edges) and its enormous set menu. This features a varied antipasti plate, a robust Roman-style pasta, salad and a choice of main courses including everything from tripe to beef to rabbit. To finish, you're offered lightly spiced biscuits to dunk in sweet dessert wine. Best of all, the price includes bread, wine and water. Credit cards are not accepted.

Dal Toscano (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 397 25 717; Via Germanico 58-60; meals €40; ☎ Tue-Sun) Embodying everyone's ideal of the traditional Italian *ristorante*, this old-fashioned place serves excellent Tuscan food, with a heavy emphasis on top-quality meat dishes. Try the melt-in-your-mouth *piccata di vitello* (veal scaloppini with lemon sauce; €11) or the excellent *bisteche alla Fiorentina* (Florentine-style steak; €40 per kg). Dal Toscano's always crammed with moneyed locals, so you'll need to book.

Settembrini Vino e Cucina (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 323 26 17; Via Luigi Settembrini 25; meals €40; ☎ Mon-Sat) One of a growing number of glam wine bars in the city, Settembrini offers a minimalist décor with good contemporary art on the walls, an excellent wine list and a limited but imaginative menu that includes vegetarian options. Join the many 40-something professionals living in the area who come to enjoy its *degustazione* menu (€45) or its new-wave rustic dishes.

Ristorante l'Arcangelo (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 321 09 92; Via Giuseppe Gioachino Belli 59-61; meals €45; ☎ closed lunch Sat & Sun) Prati is rapidly acquiring the reputation of being home to the largest concentration of top-quality *ristoranti* in the city, and l'Arcangelo was one of the first to place the suburb at the centre of the gastronomic stage. The classy old-fashioned interior here

matches the simple but perfectly executed cuisine – both ooze quality. There's also an excellent wine list.

Self-Catering

For deli supplies and wine, shop at *alimentari*, which are generally open 7am to 1.30pm and 5pm to 8pm every day except Thursday afternoons and Sundays (during the summer months they will often close on Saturday afternoons instead of Thursdays).

For fresh fruit and vegetables, there are hundreds of outdoor markets, notably:

Campo de' Fiori (Map pp96-7)

Piazza San Cosimato Market (Map pp104-5) In Trastevere.

Piazza Testaccio (Map pp104-5)

Piazza Vittorio Emanuele (Map pp100-1)

Via del Lavatore (Map pp96-7) Near the Trevi Fountain.

Supermarkets are few and far between but you can stock up at:

Conad (Map p102; Stazione Termini)

DeSpar (Map pp96-7; Via Giustiniani 18b-21) Near the Pantheon.

Di per Di (Map pp96-7; Via Vittoria) Near the Spanish Steps.

Sir (Map p102; Piazza dell'Indipendenza 28)

Todis (Map pp104-5; Via Natale del Grande 24) In Trastevere.

DRINKING

Rome has a well-developed bar and café culture, and a growing but still fairly small pub scene. For coffee connoisseurs there are any number of cafés, ranging from neon-lit hole-in-the-walls to painfully chic glamour hang-outs.

Much of the action is in the *centro storico*. Campo de' Fiori has always been popular with young revellers, but the action is increasingly moving to the alleyways around Piazza Navona. Trastevere is another pub-heavy area where locals and tourists mingle merrily, and San Lorenzo is a favourite of the city's university students. Here, drinks are relatively cheap and the bars are simple affairs (the happening areas are around Piazza del Mercato and Piazza dell'Immacolata).

Centro Storico

CAFÉS

Bella Napoli (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 687 70 48; Corso Vittorio Emanuele II 246a; ☎ Sun-Fri) When the original owner of this café first set up shop in 1920,

he placed ads in the Roman press that read 'Napoletana. Calda, Fragante. Cerca Compagnia.' (Neapolitan. Hot. Fragrant. Looking for company.) Locals assumed he was advertising a woman instead of his delectable *sfogliatelle* (ricotta-filled sweet pastries), and flocked to the advertised address. Fortunately, they've been happy with the company of the pastries ever since. Perfect with coffee at any time of the day.

Caffè Capitolino (Map pp100-1; ☎ 06 326 51 236; Capitoline Museums, Piazza del Campidoglio 19) This incredibly stylish café is a lovely spot to take a break from the wonders of the Capitoline Museums and relax with a drink or a light snack (*panini*, salads and pizza). There's an interior space and a rooftop terrace with stunning views of ancient Rome. Best of all is that you don't need a museum ticket; you can enter from the street entrance to the right of the Palazzo dei Conservatori.

our pick Caffè Farnese (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 395 61 03; Via dei Baullari 106) Goethe believed that Piazza Farnese was one of the world's most beautiful squares and we tend to agree. Judge for yourself from the vantage of a streetside table at this unassuming café, which is one of Rome's best spots for a mid-morning coffee. We wish the street musicians would decamp elsewhere, though.

Caffè Greco (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 679 17 00; Via dei Condotti 86) Keats and Casanova were among the early regulars at this historic café. It opened in 1760 and although still going strong, it's of more interest for its history than anything it serves. A coffee at the bar is the go here – table service is at stratospheric prices.

Caffè Sant'Eustachio (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 686 13 09; Piazza Sant'Eustachio 82) Famed throughout Rome for its coffee, this place does a great *gran caffè*, a creamy coffee made by beating the first drops of espresso and several teaspoons of sugar into a frothy paste, then adding the rest of the coffee on top. It has been serving both these and its excellent cappuccino since 1938, and the décor hasn't changed much since then. There are a few tables outside, but it's really a place for a caffeine hit on the run.

Gran Caffè la Caffettiera (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 679 81 47; Piazza di Pietra 65; ☎ closed Sun Jul-Sep) Overlooking the façade of Hadrian's Temple, this charming Art Nouveau café serves good coffee and excellent Neapolitan cakes at surprisingly reasonable prices.

Caffè Tazza d'Oro (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 678 97 92; Via degli Orfani 84; ☹ Mon-Sat) Regulars at this temple to coffee are among the choosiest in the capital. They know what a good coffee should taste like and they won't take anything less. The owners claim that the African beans they use are high in flavour (we'll attest to this), but lower than others in caffeine (hmm...).

BARS

Antico Caffè della Pace (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 686 12 16; Via della Pace 5; ☹ 10.30pm) The scene at the streetside tables here is one of chain-smoking locals striking poses over their Camparis. It's undoubtedly stylish, but we wish the quality of the drinks were better and that the waiters were friendlier.

Bar at Il Palazzetto (Map pp96-7; Piazza della Trinità dei Monti; ☹ 7.30pm-1am Tue-Sun) Accessed from Piazza della Trinità dei Monti and offering splendid views over the Spanish Steps, this summer-only terrace bar is a great spot to enjoy a glass of *prosecco* (€12) before dinner.

Etabri (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 687 14 99; Vicolo delle Vacche 9a; ☹ Tue-Sun) Another temple to the city's *aperitivo* cult, this barn-sized place is more sophisticated than the nearby Société Lutèce (and the nibbles are much better), but it's not quite as much fun.

Fluid (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 683 23 61; Via del Governo Vecchio 46-47; ☹ 6pm-2am) Roman bars don't come any more glam than this futuristic place. If you're able to snaffle one of the ice-cube-like seats, you'll be able to use it as a vantage point from which to view the arty film clips on the flat-screen TV, sip a cocktail and nibble from

the *aperitivo* spread. There's an in-house DJ every Thursday, and occasional live music and coffee painting (!) events.

Il Gocetto (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 686 42 68; Via dei Banchi Vecchi 14; ☹ closed Sun, 1 week in Jan & 3 weeks in Aug) An old-fashioned *enoteca* with a dark interior and bottles lining the wooden walls, Il Gocetto is an atmospheric spot for a drop. Join the regulars at the bar and choose from the 20 or so wines served by the glass.

Il Nolano (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 687 93 44; Campo de' Fiori 11) Taking its name from Giordano Bruno da Nola, the hooded monk statue in the square, Il Nolano is an arty wine bar that's often used for art exhibitions and book presentations. The nearby Vineria (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 688 03 268) is equally popular.

L'Antica Enoteca (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 679 08 96; Via della Croce 76) Bars in Tridente are often overpriced and overgilded, but this one bucks the trend. Locals and tourists alike prop at the 19th-century wooden bar to sample wines from the extensive local list and snack on a good range of antipasti. It's also possible to colonise one of the rear tables and order a simple and well-priced pasta, salad or meat dish.

ourpick Salotto 42 (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 678 58 04; Piazza di Pietra 42; ☹ Tue-Sun) Facing the façade of the monumental Temple of Hadrian, this is one of the best bars in the city. A small place run by a Swedish-Italian couple, it has a stylish interior and a top-quality *aperitivo* spread. It also offers a €10 buffet lunch from Monday to Friday and a €15 brunch on Sunday.

Shaki (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 679 16 94; Via Mario dei Fiori 29) Fashionistas rub shoulders with Armani-suited businessmen at this popular wine bar in the city's high-fashion enclave. The surrounds are mega-glam and the scene is great to watch. Have a botox shot before you go.

Société Lutèce (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 683 01 472; Piazza di Montevecchio 17; ☹ closed 2 weeks Aug) Half artsy, half grungy, this is the centre's most happening bar, largely due to the huge *aperitivo* spread. Fight your way to the bar to get a drink and then do as the rest of the hip, young clientele does and spill out into the piazza.

Stardust (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 686 89 86; Via Santa Maria dell'Anima 52; ☹ 8pm-2am Mon-Sat) Drinkers at this bar just off Piazza Navona hang out in the cobbled street as well as in the intimate red-and-black rooms inside. The music veers from Velvet Underground to Vivaldi and the feel is decidedly boho.

APERITIVO, ANYONE?

If there's one thing that today's young Romans love more than anything else, it would have to be the *aperitivo* (happy hour). A phenomenon that is generally acknowledged to have started in Milan, it sees bars offering a snack buffet from around 6pm to 9pm – usually free but sometimes with a special charge for a drink and food. On Friday and Saturday nights, most of the city's glam young things go out for the *aperitivo*, pop back home to Mama's for dinner and then hit the nightclub circuit. Sometimes, though, the buffets are so lavish that the trip back home for dinner isn't necessary at all.

Trinity College (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 678 64 72; Via del Collegio Romano 6) A big booming pub just off busy Via del Corso, Trinity College has a good selection of imported beers and excellent bar food. It gets packed to overflowing at weekends, so groups of single men might have trouble getting past the bouncers.

San Lorenzo, Termini & Esquiline

Dagnino (Map p102; ☎ 06 481 86 60; Galleria Esedra, Via Orlando 75) Situated in a marble-floored arcade off Via Orlando, this funky 1950s café serves delicious pastries such as *cannolo Siciliana*, but the rest of the food is disappointing. There are tables in the arcade where you can sit without being stung for waiter service.

Fiddler's Elbow (Map p102; ☎ 06 487 21 10; Via dell'Olmata 43) Near the Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore, this was one of the first wave of Irish pubs to open in Rome some 20 years ago. It attracts a mixture of international residents and Romans.

Radisson SAS (Map p102; ☎ 06 44 48 41; Via Filippo Turati 171) We can't in good faith recommend the Radisson as a sleeping choice as its location is totally incompatible with its high prices. However, having a drink here is another story. The hotel's interior was designed by uberslick hotel architects King and Roselli, and shows to best advantage on the rooftop, where the poolside bar and adjacent restaurant have the wow factor in spades.

Rive Gauche 2 (Map p102; ☎ 06 445 67 22; Via dei Sabelli 43) One of the most popular pubs in San Lorenzo, Rive Gauche is nearly always full of students, foreigners and assorted friends.

Trastevere & Testaccio

Bar San Calisto (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 589 56 78; Piazza San Calisto 3-5; ☎ Mon-Sat) This down-at-heel bar isn't immediately inviting. In fact, the posse of unsavoury characters that is ever-present can be downright off-putting. Nevertheless, students and arty types congregate here because it's dirt cheap, offers fabulous people-watching opportunities and serves a deservedly famous chocolate: drunk hot with cream in winter and eaten as gelato in summer.

Caffè della Scala (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 580 36 10; Via della Scala 4) This small, laid-back café is the sort of place you come for a quiet drink only to end up some hours later trying to remember how to walk. The mellow décor, low lighting and cool jazz on the sound system provide a dangerous cocoon, and the fact that the

drinks are affordable enhances the danger considerably.

ourpick Freni & Frizoni (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 583 34 210; Via del Politeama 4-6) In a former life, this hip bar/café was a garage, hence its name ('breaks and clutches' in English). The arty crowd flocks here for well-priced drinks and a generous *aperitivo* spread; most nights the crowd spills uncontrollably into the piazza out the front.

Friends Art Café (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 581 61 11; Piazza Trilussa 34; ☎ 7.30am-2am Mon-Sat, from 5.30pm Sun) Retro-glam rules at this happening café/bar. The young clientele enjoys everything from morning *cornetti* to evening cocktails.

Good Caffè (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 972 77 979; Via S Dorotea; ☎ 7am-2.30am Mon-Sat, 5pm-2.30am Sun) Always full of American students from nearby John Cabot University, who take full advantage of the free wi-fi offered until 6pm each day, this café/wine bar is a perfect place to unwind after a day spent tramping Trastevere cobbles. Its marble-topped tables, atmospheric lighting and wine-stacked wooden shelves provide a great setting, and the DJ knows just the music to play to set the right mood.

Ombre Rosse (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 588 41 55; Piazza Sant'Egidio 12; ☎ 8am-2am Mon-Sat, 6pm-2am Sun, closed 1 week Aug) An old-guard Trastevere drinking den that also serves good salads, soups and *panini* during the day. Refreshingly attitude-free.

Caffè Emporio (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 575 45 32; Piazza dell'Emporio 1; ☎ 8pm-2am) Huge in both size and popularity, this noisy bar next to the Ponte Sublicio is close to the major nightclub enclave and is a great spot for a drink or two before hitting the clubs. It's chock-full of young Romans chatting over loud lounge music.

Vatican City, Borgo & Prati

Castroni (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 687 43 83; Via Cola di Rienzo 196) Near the Vatican, this busy shop has a bar where you can scoff a quick *cornetto* and coffee. There's also a good selection of gourmet foods, both packaged and fresh, to take away. It's a favourite with expats, who come here for its range of international products such as baked beans, Vegemite and Twinings tea. There are other branches at Via Ottaviano 55 (Map pp94-5) and Via Quattro Fontane 38 (Map pp96-7).

Pasticceria Faggiani (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 397 39 742; Via G Ferrari 23-29) Are these the best *cornetti* in Rome? If not, they certainly come close. This famous *pasticceria* just off Piazza Giuseppe

Mazzini serves a great cup of coffee and a range of truly excellent pastries for breakfast. There are a few tables on the street, but most customers get their daily fix at the bar.

ENTERTAINMENT

To entertain yourself in Rome it's often enough to park yourself at a streetside table and watch the world go by. But that's not to say that there's nothing else going on. The city's cultural calendar is well established and proposes a host of alternatives, particularly in the summer when the Estate Romana (see p137) festival sponsors hundreds of theatre, cinema, opera and music events. Many performances take place in parks, gardens and church courtyards, with classical ruins and Renaissance villas providing atmospheric backdrops. Autumn is also full of cultural activity, with specialised festivals dedicated to dance, drama and jazz.

Romac'è (www.romace.it in Italian; €1.20) is Rome's most comprehensive listings guide, and comes complete with a small English-language section; it's published every Wednesday. Another useful guide is *Trova Roma*, which comes as a free insert with *La Repubblica* every Thursday. The English-language magazine *Wanted in Rome* (www.wantedinrome.com) also contains listings of festivals, exhibitions, dance shows, classical-music events, operas and cinema releases. It's published every second Wednesday. Useful websites include www.romaturismo.it and www.comune.roma.it.

Classical Music

The city's abundance of atmospheric settings makes Rome a great place to catch a classical concert. The Auditorium Parco della Musica is a startlingly modern complex that combines architectural innovation with perfect acoustics. Free concerts are often held in many of Rome's churches, especially at Easter and around Christmas and New Year. Seats are available on a first-come, first-served basis and the programmes are generally excellent. Check newspapers and listings for programmes.

Rome's two major classical music organisations are the **Accademia di Santa Cecilia** (Map p91; ☎ 06 808 20 58; www.santacecilia.it; Viale Pietro de Coubertin 34) and the **Accademia Filarmonica Romana** (Map p91; ☎ 06 320 17 52; www.filarmonica.roma.org in Italian; Piazza Gentile da Fabriano 17). The

former organises a year-round programme, characterised by short festivals dedicated to a single composer. The Santa Cecilia orchestra is often joined by world-class international performers for concerts at the Auditorium Parco della Musica.

Auditorium Parco della Musica (Map p91; ☎ 06 802 42, box office 06 802 41 281, tickets 199 109 783; www.auditorium.com; Viale Pietro de Coubertin 34) Designed by Italy's top architect, Renzo Piano, the auditorium comprises three concert halls and a 3000-capacity open-air arena. Of the three halls, the largest, the 2800-seat Sala Santa Cecilia, is home to the Santa Cecilia orchestra. The auditorium hosts everything from Stravinsky symphonies to live performances by the Scissor Sisters, and it's well worth checking the website to see what's on during your visit. To get to the auditorium take tram 2 from Piazzale Flaminio or bus M from Stazione Termini, which departs every 15 minutes between 5pm and the end of the last performance.

Teatro Olimpico (Map p91; ☎ 06 320 17 52; www.teatroolimpico.it in Italian; Piazza Gentile da Fabriano 17) The Accademia Filarmonica Romana holds its season here. The programme features mainly chamber music, with some contemporary concerts and multimedia events.

Opera

Rome's opera season starts in December and continues until June.

Teatro dell'Opera di Roma (Map p102; ☎ 06 808 83 52, from overseas 39 06 480 78 400; www.operaroma.it in Italian; Piazza Beniamino Gigli; ☎ box office 9am-5pm Mon-Sat, 9am-1.30pm Sun) Often considered a poor cousin of La Scala in Milan or San Carlo in Naples, Rome's opera house may not blow you away with its acoustics but it certainly makes an impression. The Fascist-era façade hides a 19th-century frescoed interior with acres of stucco, red velvet and gilt. The theatre also hosts a number of ballet performances. Tickets for the ballet cost anywhere between €17 and €65; for the opera you'll be forking out between €23 and €130. First-night performances cost more.

In the summer, opera is performed outdoors, often at the Terme di Caracalla (see p129). Contact the Teatro dell'Opera di Roma for details.

Cinemas

Of Rome's 80-odd cinemas only a handful show films in the original language (marked

AN INSIDER GUIDE TO CLUBBING IN ROME *Benjamin Holmes & Federica 'Chicca' Snider*

The nightlife in Rome starts late and goes on till early morning, a good night finishing with a cappuccino and *cornetto* in one of the many coffee shops open for the early-morning crowd. Concerts are typically listed for 10pm, but don't kick off till around 11pm, and nightclubs usually don't warm up until well after 1am.

Some of the more popular nightclubs have an infuriatingly whimsical door policy, and single or groups of men will often find themselves turned away because they are, er, men. Drinks can also be expensive and of indifferent quality whether *mojito* or beer; €10 per drink is usual, but many places charge €15.

Centro Storico

La Maison (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 683 33 12; Vicolo dei Granari 4; 🕒 11pm-4am Wed-Sat, closed mid-June–end Sep) The apex of a golden triangle of clubs around Piazza Navona (the others being Modo and Bloom), La Maison offers dance and commercial music for the see and be-seen crowd. Entrance is free, if you can get past Agent Smith's friends at the door, but drinks are €10 to €15 a throw. There's no-one there before 2am but, as if by magic, it's chockers at 2.05am.

Bloom (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 688 02 029; www.roma.tonight.eu/locale/bloom; Via del Teatro Pace 30; 🕒 mid-night-4am Mon & Thu-Sat, closed Fri end Jun-end Sep) Bloom is in many senses La Maison's younger and smaller sister – the crowd is slightly younger and the door policy and music are slightly more bearable. Saturday nights are a little less like tinned sardines than at La Maison.

Modo (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 686 74 52; modo.roma.it; Vicolo del Fico 3; 🕒 7.30pm-2am Tue-Sun, closed Aug) Small and intimate, *il locale* is now Modo, with its shiny black-and-white interior and lounging live music followed by DJ sets.

Supperclub (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 688 07 207; www.supperclub.com; Via de'Nari 14; 🕒 8.30pm-2am, closed Wed & most of Aug) Most things that come from Amsterdam – be they tulips, beer or whatever – make life more bearable. Supperclub is no exception. An entertainment bonanza opened in 2002 for Rome's beautiful people, here you can recline on white divans, be violin-serenaded over dinner, then strut your designer-dressed stuff in the disco.

San Lorenzo

Lian Club (Map p91; ☎ 347 650 72 44; Via degli Enotri 6; 🕒 8.30pm-2am, closed Tue & mid-June–end Sep) Rome's students gravitate to San Lorenzo, and Lian is where they go to hear upcoming Roman rock groups; entrance is usually free and drinks are reasonably priced.

Locanda Atlantide (Map p102; ☎ 06 447 04 540; www.locandatlantide.it; Via dei Lucani 22b; 🕒 10pm-2am or 4am, closed end Jun-end Sep) In a dark and forgotten corner on the edge of San Lorenzo is the Locanda Atlantide, where the alternative music scene is fed with both obscure and less-obscure artists to a backdrop of recycling. Events include exhibitions, poetry readings, Greenpeace and Amnesty evenings, and street performers promoted for one night to the stage.

Trastevere

Lettere Caffè (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 645 61 916; www.letterecaffe.org; Via di San Francesco a Ripa 100-01; 🕒 3pm-2am, closed end Jun-start Sep) The Rome tradition of reading *café*s is experiencing a revival, and Lettere Caffè is at the forefront. You like books? You like blues and jazz? Then you'll love this place. Live music typically from 10pm, followed by DJ sets playing indie and new wave.

Big Mama (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 581 25 51; www.bigmama.it; Vicolo di San Francesco a Ripa 18; annual membership €13; 🕒 9.30pm-1.30am Tue-Sun, closed mid-May–mid-Sep) Aficionados of the blues will enjoy Big Mama. Since 1984 this Trastevere institution has been playing host to the world's top blues artists, although it also programmes rock, jazz and funk. Concerts start at 10.30pm.

Testaccio

Get down to Testaccio at midnight and saunter to the end of Via Galvani – in the square mile of the mount of Testaccio you'll find more clubs than at a Captain Caveman fancy-dress ball.

AKAB (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 572 50 585; www.akabcave.com; Via di Monte Testaccio 68-69; 🕒 11pm-4am Tue-Sat, closed end Jun-mid-Sep) On Saturday nights the two levels pulsate to R&B and the latest house music, while on Friday nights AKAB is returning to its roots with live music. Classically whimsical door policy confirms the place's popularity, and entrance is €15 for an obligatory drink.

Coyote (Map pp104-5; Via di Monte Testaccio 48b; 🕒 10.30pm-5am year-round) Probably the least-flashy club on the *via*, Coyote has one big plus: drinks cost only €5. Apart from this, the music is commercial and mainstream, and the place is kitted out in a kitsch, Wild West style. But the drinks *are* €5...

ETO (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 574 82 68; Via Galvani 46; 🕒 midnight-5am Wed-Sat, closed end May-end Sep) A shiny club on Via Galvani playing commercial, house and dance music; it's open till 5am, and the cocktails are good.

Radio Londra (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 575 00 44; Via di Monte Testaccio 65b; admission incl drink €15; 🕒 9pm-3am, closed Tue & Jul-Aug) The name recalls the Allies' radio broadcasts to occupied Europe and the décor is reminiscent of an air-raid shelter. Fortunately, the sounds are decidedly more modern – typically house and dance music.

Ostiense

Alpheus (Map p91; ☎ 06 574 78 26; www.alpheus.it; Via del Commercio 36; 🕒 10pm-4am Tue-Sun, closed end Jun-end Sep) Alpheus defies most labels. Its five halls host everything from Argentine tango on Sundays to house, hip-hop, rock and soul. Saturday is Gorgeous, the gay night.

Ex-Magazzini (Map p91; ☎ 06 575 80 40; Via Magazzini Generali 8; 🕒 6pm-4am Tue-Sun) This is a huge and very trendy disco bar in a converted warehouse full of stylish Romans dancing to trance, pop and break-beat downstairs. Upstairs, the exhausted darlings chill out on plush sofas. Expect to queue and hear occasional live performances.

Goa (Map p91; ☎ 06 574 82 77; Via Libetta 13; 🕒 11pm-4.30am Tue-Sun Oct-May) Trendsetting industrial décor, plasma screens and heavy-duty bouncers keep Goa at the forefront of Italian clubbing. Recent guest DJs include Sven Vät and LL Vega, while every Thursday Claudio Coccoluto spins house, electronic and experimental sounds. Last Sunday of each month it's lesbian night with 'Venus Rising'.

Elsewhere

Alexanderplatz (Map p91; ☎ 06 397 42 171; www.alexanderplatz.it; Via Ostia 9; 🕒 9pm-2am Sep-Jun) As befits its billing as Rome's top jazz joint, Alexanderplatz has live music most nights, often featuring big name performers, both Italian and foreign. In July and August the club moves to the grounds of Villa Celimontana (Map pp100-1) for Villa Celimontana Jazz, one of Rome's popular summer festivals.

Circolo degli Artisti (Map p91; ☎ 06 703 05 684; www.circoloartisti.it; Via Casilina Vecchia 42; 🕒 8pm-2am Tue-Thu, to 4am Fri-Sun, closed Aug) A high point here is Screamadela on Saturday nights, from Italy's alternative music oracle Fabio Luzzi. Friday night is Omogenic, the gay night. Look out for the alternative music concerts, with recent highlights BRMC and White Stripes. A large garden area is ideal for chilling out with a beer from the open-air bar, or in the summer an Argentine steak from the barbecue. Entrance price varies, but is usually modest.

Qube (☎ 06 438 5445; www.qubedisco.com; Via di Portonaccio 212; 🕒 10.30pm-5am Thu-Sat Oct-May) Rome's largest disco. Thursday is Radio Rock night; Friday is Muccassassina (Italy's top gay night); Saturday is UnderG.R.A.und, with hip-hop/R&B on the ground floor, disco revival on the 1st and minimal, electro and techno upstairs. Guest DJs include Trente Moller and Oliver Huntemann. Prices vary.

Summer Nights in Rome

From mid-June to mid-September, most of the city's clubs and music joints close. Some of the clubs move to Fregene or Ostia for a summer's dancing on the sand, but for the many Romans still in the city, the Estate Romana offers an extremely valid alternative. Check www.estateromana.comune.roma.it for listings and locations (both tend to be decided at the last minute). Some guaranteed events include **Roma Incontra il Mondo** (Rome Meets the World; www.villaada.org) in Villa Ada, with lashings of reggae; **Fiesta** (www.fiesta.it), a chaotic Latin-American dance feast on the Via Appia Antica; and the **Estate Romana** (www.romaeat.net) at the Imperial Forums near the Olympic football stadium.

VO or *versione originale* in listings). Expect to pay between €5 and €8, with many cinemas offering discounts on Wednesdays. The following cinemas always show some VO films:

Warner Village Moderno (Map p102; ☎ 06 477 79 202; Piazza della Repubblica 45) Film premieres are often held at this multiplex, which screens Hollywood blockbusters (both in English and Italian) and major release Italian films.

Metropolitan (Map pp92-3; ☎ 06 320 09 33; Via Del Corso 7) Near Piazza del Popolo.

Sport

A trip to Rome's impressive football stadium, the **Stadio Olimpico** (Map p91; ☎ 06 3 68 51; Foro Italic, Viale dei Gladiatori 2), provides a memorable experience. Throughout the season (September to May) there's a game on most Sundays involving one of the city's two teams: AS Roma, known as

the *gialloross* (yellow and reds; www.asromacalcio.it in Italian), or Lazio, the *biancazzur* (white and blue; www.sslazio.it in Italian). Tickets cost from €10 to €100 depending on the match and can be bought at Lottomatica (lottery centres), the stadium, ticket agencies, www.listicket.it or one of the many Roma or Lazio stores around the city. Try **AS Roma Store** (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 692 00 642; Piazza Colonna 360) or **Lazio Point** (Map p102; ☎ 06 648 26 688; Via Farini 34).

To get to the stadium take metro line A to Ottaviano and then bus 32.

SHOPPING

For top-of-the-range designer threads, head for the area around Piazza di Spagna (Map pp96-7). If you're looking for antiques or unusual gifts, try Via dei Coronari (Map pp96-7), Via dei Banchi Vecchi (Map pp96-7)

GAY & LESBIAN ROME

Rome is essentially a conservative city and although homosexuality is well tolerated, the gay scene is not a patch on that of many other international capitals.

Rome's main cultural and political gay organisation is the **Circolo Mario Mieli di Cultura Omosessuale** (Map p91; ☎ 06 541 39 85; www.mariomieli.it in Italian; Via Efeso 2a), off Via Ostiense near the Basilica di San Paolo Fuori-le-Mura, which organises debates, cultural events and social functions. It also runs free AIDS/HIV testing and a care centre. Its website has information and listings of forthcoming events, both social and political, including Rome Pride, which takes place every year in June. Mario Mieli also publishes a free monthly magazine *AUT*, available from gay bookshops and organisations.

The national organisation for lesbians is **Coordinamento Lesbiche Italiane** (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 686 42 01; cli_network@iol.it; cnr Via San Francesco di Sales & Via della Lungara, Trastevere), also known as the Buon Pastore Centre. The centre has a women-only hostel, La Foresteria Orsa Maggiore (p150).

Rome has several bars and discos for gay men and there is even a beach near Ostia. The lesbian scene is less active, although there are various associations that organise events.

Two good sources of information are the **Libreria Babele** (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 687 66 28; Via dei Banchi Vecchi 116), an exclusively gay and lesbian bookshop, and the lesbian **Libreria delle Donne: Al Tempo Ritrovato** (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 581 77 24; Via dei Fienaroli 31d), in Trastevere. Both carry details of forthcoming events.

Other useful listings guides are *Pride* (€3.10), a national monthly magazine, *AUT* (free) – both available at gay and lesbian organisations and in bookshops – and the international gay guide, *Spartacus*. You can also go online at www.gay.it/guida/Lazio/Roma (in Italian).

The city has a happening, if smallish, gay and lesbian nightclub and bar scene. Check out the following:

Coming Out (Map pp100-1; ☎ 06 700 98 71; www.comingout.it; Via di San Giovanni in Laterano 8; ☎ 10pm-2am) Relaxed, mainly young place. Tuesday is messaging night; Wednesday is Karaoke. It's outside on warm evenings.

Edoardo II (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 699 42 419; www.edoardosecondo.it; Vicolo Margana 13-14; ☎ 8pm-1am Wed-Sun) Restaurant/bar.

Hangar (Map pp100-1; ☎ 06 488 13 97; Via in Selci 69a; ☎ 10.30pm-2.30am, closed Tue & 2 weeks Aug) Men only. Porn-Video Mondays and Striptease Thursdays are popular.

L'Alibi (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 574 34 48; www.lalibi.it; Via di Monte Testaccio 44; ☎ midnight-5am Thu-Sun) Check out Tommy on Saturday night, or Gloss on Thursday.

or Via Margutta (Map pp92–3), where the shops often resemble art galleries and the prices exhibit no mercy.

If you can time your visit to coincide with the *saldi* (sales), you'll pick up some great bargains, although you'll need to be up for some bare-knuckle shopping. Winter sales run from early January to mid-February and the summer sales from July to early September.

Decorative Arts & Prints

Antonio Pacitti (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 688 06 391; Via dei Banchi Vecchi 59) An antique or reproduction print featuring a Roman scene can make a charming souvenir of your holiday, and this small store has a great selection of well-priced examples to choose from.

Centro Russia Ecumenica il Messaggio dell'Icona (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 689 66 37; Borgo Pio 141) Join the constant queue of nuns and priests from around the world who pop into this serene store to buy prints, postcards and prayer cards with religious themes, as well as original painted icons in many styles, some of which glint with real gold leaf.

Nardecchia (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 686 93 18; Piazza Navona 25) Check out Nardecchia for antique prints, including 18th-century etchings of Rome by Giovanni Battista Piranesi that have been reproduced from 19th-century glass-plate negatives by the Alinari brothers.

Clothing & Jewellery

The big designer names are here in force – see Map pp96–7: Armani, Bruno Magli, Gucci, La Perla and Valentino are on the Via dei Condotti; Dolce & Gabbana and Missoni are on Piazza di Spagna; Fendi and Moschino are on Via Borgognona; Emporio Armani and Etro are on Via del Babuino; Max Mara is on both Via Frattina and Via Condotti; Prada is on both Via dei Condotti and Via del Babuino; and Versace is on Via del Bocca di Leone.

Funkier fashions can be found on Via del Governo Vecchio near Piazza Navona; and it's always worth checking out Via Cola di Rienzo near the Vatican, which is home to labels such as Benetton and Diesel as well as loads of smaller speciality shops.

Angelo di Nepi (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 360 42 99; Via del Babuino 147) Rack upon rack of delectable clothes made from richly coloured fabric meet the eye on entering this popular store. Prices don't aim for the stratosphere and everything is extremely well made.

Il Baco da Seta (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 679 39 07; Via Vittoria 75) To emulate that supremely stylish casual look that Roman women of a certain age do so well, you'll need go no further than this store, which sells well-priced outfits made from all-natural fibres.

Josephine de Huertas & Co (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 687 65 86; Via del Governo Vecchio 68) For a quintessentially Italian creation from Missoni or superstylish numbers from a host of international designers, you need go no further than this chic boutique. There's another store around the corner at Via di Parione 19-20.

Gente Outlet (Map pp94-5; ☎ 06 689 26 72; Via Cola di Rienzo 246) If you covet the designer rags sold at Gente's main store in Via del Babuino but haven't the credit-card leverage to shop there, this outlet store may well be for you. Brands such as Chloe, Prada, Marni and Jill Sander are knocked down to almost half their original price. There's stuff for both men and women.

Scala Quattorolici (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 588 35 80; Via della Scala 13-14) Think Audrey Hepburn wearing Givenchy and you'll get an idea of what the classically tailored clothes created by Scala Quattorolici are like. These little numbers are all hand-stitched and made with quality fabrics, and they are wonderfully chic – *Charade*-like jackets, suits à la *Funny Face* and frocks straight out of *Breakfast at Tiffany's*. Pricy (a frock will set you back €600 or so) but oh so worth it.

Materie (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 679 31 99; Via del Gesù 73) This boutique sells original jewellery, bags and other accessories designed by local artisans. Everything is well priced and guaranteed to give you more than a modicum of Roman style.

Designer Goods & Homewares

Naka (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 679 19 96; Via del Corso 149) Spruce up your kitchen by taking home some stylish homewares from this crowded store. Its stock of Alessi products and Pavoni coffee machines is probably the largest in Rome.

TAD (Map pp92-3; ☎ 06 326 95 131; Via del Babuino 155a) To experience a totally different take on what a department store can be, pop into this formidably stylish showcase for international contemporary design. As well as clothes, shoes, homewares, books and music there's a Thai-Italian café where beautiful people regularly come to see and be seen.

Shoes & Leather Goods

Fausto Santini (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 678 41 14; Via Frattina 120) Here, Italy's best shoe designer showcases his creations, which are made with gloriously soft leather. Aficionados will pay any price to have their feet shod in these fabulous shoes, but bargain hunters should make their way to its outlet store, Giacomo Santini, which is found at Via Cavour 106 (Map p102). Stock here, from previous seasons, is marked down to half its original price. Both stores sell bags, too.

Furla (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 692 00 363; Piazza di Spagna 22) For well-priced and well-made bags, wallets, umbrellas and belts in colourful leather, you need go no further than this popular store. There's another branch at Via Cola di Rienzo 226.

Markets

Porta Portese flea market (Map pp104-5; Piazza Porta Portese) Sunday morning in Rome means this flea market. With thousands of stalls selling everything from rare books to spare bike parts, it gets extremely busy so beware of pickpockets.

Specialist Shops

Ai Monasteri (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 688 02 783; Corso del Rinascimento 72; ☎ 10am-1pm & 3-7.30pm) So this is how monks pay the rent...monasteries from across Italy send their products to be sold in this lovely shop. It stocks all-natural cosmetics, sweets, honeys, jams and wines; as well as naughty-but-nice grappas, wines and brandies.

Officina Profumo Farmaceutica di Santa Maria Novella (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 687 96 08; Corso del Rinas-

cimento 47; ☎ 9.30am-7.30pm Mon-Sat) This historic perfumery was established in Florence by Dominican friars in 1221 and has been concocting seductive scents and unguents ever since. Like Ai Monasteri, it sells all-natural perfumes, cosmetics, herbal infusions, teas, honeys, sweets and potpourri.

Stationery

Campo Marzio Design (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 688 07 877; Via di Campo Marzio 41) Campo Marzio's brightly coloured wares are now recognised throughout the world, but this is where it all started. Well-made leather-covered diaries, folios and journals make great gifts for those back home.

Fabiano (Map pp92-3; ☎ 06 326 00 361; Via del Babuino 173) Living up to its claim to 'celebrate the art of paper', this store stocks deeply desirable diaries, notebooks, art materials and cards, as well as an artful range of jewellery made from paper. Its attractive leather purses and wallets are also worth checking out.

Officina della Carta (Map pp104-5; ☎ 06 589 55 57; Via Benedetta 26b) If you're thinking of keeping a journal of your time in Rome, this is the place to buy one. This tiny store sells them with exquisite bindings and top-quality paper. It also stocks charming marionette theatres.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Air

Rome's main airport is **Leonardo da Vinci** (FCO; Map p172; ☎ 06 659 53 640; www.adr.it), commonly known as Fiumicino. The second smaller airport, **Giampino** (CIA; Map p172; ☎ 06 659 51; www.adr.it), is used by many low-cost airlines and charter flights. For details on getting to and from the airports, see opposite.

CLERICAL CHIC

Being the City of the Holy See, Rome is constantly full of clergy from around the world. In between their learning, worshipping and networking, these members of the church have something high on their 'must-do' lists when in town – namely, updating their wardrobes with the latest in clerical chic. Anyone who enjoyed the famous ecclesiastical fashion parade scene in Fellini's *Roma*, with its 'classical line of black satin for novices' and its roller-skating priests in red satin, is sure to appreciate two shops near the Pantheon: **Barbiconi** (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 679 49 85; www.barbiconi.it; Via Santa Caterina da Siena) and **De Ritis** (Map pp96-7; ☎ 06 326 50 838; Via dei Cestari 48). Here, priests and nuns purchase everything from undies to umbrellas, as well as trying on the latest lines in fetching bodyshirts and checking the 'swish factor' of ceremonial cloaks with their rich satin linings. The cloaks are perhaps not as trendy as the white satin puff jackets occasionally spotted on young priests around town (we kid you not), but are fabulous nonetheless. Best of all is the fact that nonclergy can shop at these places and the clothing is well priced, well made and often classically stylish. The wool pullovers and winter coats are particularly good buys.

Bus

Long-distance national and international buses use the bus terminus on Piazzale Tiburtina, in front of Stazione Tiburtina. Take metro line B from Stazione Termini to Tiburtina and turn right when you exit the station. The long-haul buses are beyond the overpass. From here, buses travel south to destinations such as Palermo (€39, 12 hours, three weekly) and Bari (€30, eight hours, four daily).

Cotral buses (☎ 800 15 00 08; www.cotralspa.it in Italian) serve the Lazio region and depart from numerous points throughout the city, depending on their destination. The company is linked with Rome's public transport system, which means that you can buy one *biglietto integrato regionale giornaliero* (BIRG) ticket that covers city buses, trams, metro and train lines, as well as regional buses and trains (see boxed text, p171).

Car & Motorcycle

Driving to the centre of Rome is not the easiest thing in the world to do. There are traffic restrictions, one-way systems, an almost total lack of street parking and a huge number of manic drivers.

Rome is circled by the Grande Raccordo Anulare (GRA) to which all major autostradas (motorways) and *strade statali* (SS; major state roads) connect. Approaching Rome from the north on the A1 autostrada, get off at the Roma Nord exit; from the south use Roma Sud. After a few kilometres, you'll find yourself nearing the GRA. From the GRA the most important roads are:

Via Cassia (SS2) From Ponte Milvio this runs northwest to Viterbo, Siena and Florence.

Via Flaminia (SS3) Parallels Via Cassia before forking off northeast to Terni, Foligno and over the Apennines into Le Marche, ending on the Adriatic coast at Fano.

Via Salaria (SS4) Heads north from near Porta Pia in central Rome to Rieti and into Le Marche, ending at Porto d'Ascoli on the Adriatic coast.

Via Tiburtina (SS5) Links Rome with Tivoli and Pescara, on the coast of Abruzzo.

Via Casilina (SS6) Heads southeast to Anagni and into Campania, terminating at Capua near Naples.

Via Appia Nuova (SS7) Heads south, via Ciampino airport and the Castelli Romani, into Campania, then crosses the Apennines into Basilicata, through Potenza and Matera to Taranto in Puglia and finally on to Brindisi.

Via Cristoforo Colombo Runs from near Porta San Sebastiano (the start of Via Appia Antica) south to EUR and then Ostia.

Via del Mare/Via Ostiense (SS8) Via del Mare heads southwest to Ostia; it becomes Via Ostiense on the city side of the GRA.

Via Aurelia (SS1) Heads northeast from the Vatican, following the Tyrrhenian coast to Pisa, Genoa and France.

From the GRA, take the autostrada Roma-Fiumicino for Leonardo da Vinci (Fiumicino) airport and the A24 autostrada for the Parco Nazionale d'Abruzzo, Lazio & Molise and Pescara.

Train

Almost all trains arrive at and depart from Stazione Termini (Map p102). There are regular connections to other European countries, all the major cities in Italy and many smaller towns.

The **train information office** (Map p102; ☎ 4hr) at Stazione Termini is very helpful, though it's often crowded and you have to take a ticket and wait your turn (English is spoken). It cannot, however, make reservations. These must be made at the main ticket and reservation windows in the front hall. Alternatively, go online at www.trenitalia.com or find one of the many travel agencies that has an FS or *biglietti treni* (train tickets) sign in the window. Another way to reserve or buy tickets is to use the automatic ticket machines, where you can pay with cash, credit or ATM card.

Note that at Stazione Termini, platforms 25 to 29 are a good 10-minute walk from the main concourse.

Remember to validate your train ticket in the yellow machines on the station platforms before you get on your train. If you don't you may be fined, and it's worth noting that claiming ignorance rarely works.

Rome's other principal train stations are Stazione Tiburtina, Stazione Roma-Ostiense (Map p91) and Stazione Trastevere (Map p91).

GETTING AROUND To/From the Airport

Fiumicino is about 30km southwest of the city centre and is well connected to it. Getting to and from Ciampino is more time-consuming by public transport despite it being only 15km southeast of the centre.

BUS

From 11.30pm to 6am (ie when the train isn't running), there's a night bus service from

Stazione Termini to Tiburtina station (40N from Piazza Cinquecento), from where you can catch a Cotral bus to Fiumicino. These leave at 12.30am, 1.15am, 2.30am and 3.45am; the trip from Tiburtina takes 30 minutes and costs €5. You can buy your ticket on the bus.

Buses to Ciampino leave from gate 1 of the bus station at Anagnina, which is accessible via metro line A. The service runs every 40 minutes from 6.30am until 11.10pm and costs €1 (you can purchase a ticket on the bus).

Another Ciampino option is the **SIT shuttle bus service** (☎ 06 591 78 44; www.sitbusshuttle.com), operated by National Express. This travels between Stazione Termini and Ciampino from 4.30am to 11.30pm (from Termini) and 8.30am to 12.30am (from Ciampino) daily. Tickets cost €6 each way (€10 return). The buses leave Rome from a stop on Via Marsala, opposite the Royal Santina hotel. You can purchase tickets on board.

CAR

If you've decided to hire a car (see opposite) and pick it up at Fiumicino, follow the signs for Rome out of the airport and onto the autostrada. Exit the autostrada at EUR, then follow the *centro* signs (they look like a bull's-eye) to reach Via Cristoforo Colombo, which will take you directly into the centre of Rome.

From Ciampino, it is easier: exit the airport, turn right onto Via Appia Nuova and follow it to the centre.

TAXI & SHUTTLE SERVICE

Official taxis registered by the Comune di Roma leave from outside the arrivals halls at Fiumicino and Ciampino. They are white and have a TAXI sign on their roof, as well as an identifying number on their doors. There are set rates from each airport to destinations within the Aurelian Walls in central Rome:

€40 from Fiumicino and €30 from Ciampino. These rates are inclusive of luggage and apply to fares coming from and going to the airports. For destinations outside the walls, taxis use their meters and will include a surcharge for luggage (€1.04 per bag). Note that taxis registered in Fiumicino charge a set fare of €60 to travel to the centre – make sure you catch a Comune di Roma taxi instead.

Several private companies run shuttle services. **Terravision** (☎ 06 659 58 646; www.terravision.it) has a service from Fiumicino to Stazione Termini costing €7 one-way and €12 return. It leaves every two hours between 8.30am and 8.30pm; for tickets go to the desk in the arrivals hall. **Airport Shuttle** (☎ 06 420 13 469; www.airportshuttle.it) offers transfers to your hotel in Rome from Fiumicino in a minivan for €35 for one person, then €6 for each additional passenger up to a maximum of eight. From Rome to Fiumicino the price is €28. To/from Ciampino costs €42, with €6 for each additional person. A 30% surcharge is added between 9pm and 7am. Again, you need to book in advance.

TRAIN

The airport at Fiumicino is easy to get to by train. The efficient Leonardo Express leaves from platform 24 at Stazione Termini and travels direct to the airport every 30 minutes from 5.52am until 10.52pm. It costs €11 (children under 12 years free) and takes about 30 minutes.

From Fiumicino, trains start at 6.35am and run half-hourly until 11.35pm. If you want to get to Termini, don't take the train for Orte or Fara Sabina. These slower trains stop at Trastevere, Ostiense and Tiburtina stations but not Termini. They cost €5 and run every 15 minutes (hourly on Sundays and public holidays) from 5.57am to 11.27pm, and from Tiburtina from 5.06am until 10.36pm.

TRAIN SERVICES TO MAJOR CITIES

From Stazione Termini you can catch trains to the following cities and many others.

Destination	Fare	Duration
Florence	€33 (fast train), €14.30 (slow train)	1hr 40 min (fast train), 3hr 40 min (slow train)
Milan	€51 (fast), €42 (medium)	4½hr (fast), 6hr (medium)
Naples	€37 (fast), €21 (medium) & €10.10 (slow)	1½hr (fast), 2hr (medium) & 2hr 40 min (slow)
Palermo	€52.70 (day train), €39.70 (night train)	11hr
Venice	€50 (fast), €42 (medium)	4½hr (fast), 6hr (medium)

Tickets for the Leonardo Express are available at Termini from *tabacchi* and newsstands in the station, at vending machines or at the ticket desk on the platform. At Fiumicino, get tickets from the vending machines or the ticket desks at the rail terminus.

Car & Motorcycle

Roman traffic is notorious and driving or riding here requires skills that aren't often taught in driving lessons. A cool head, nerves of steel and a primordial sense of survival also help. As a general rule, worry about what's in front of you, leaving those behind you to think about your rear!

Most of the *centro storico* is closed to normal traffic. You're not allowed to drive in the centre from 6.30am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 2pm to 6pm Saturday unless you're a resident or have special permission. You'll also need to watch out for the increasing number of no-traffic Sundays and days when circulation is limited to vehicles with odd/even numberplates.

All 22 streets accessing the 'Limited Traffic Zone' (ZTL) have been equipped with electronic-access detection devices. If you're staying in this zone, contact your hotel, which will fax the authorities with your number plate, thus saving you a €68.25 fine. For further information, check www.sta.roma.it (in Italian) or call ☎ 06 571 18 333 from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 2pm to 6pm Saturday.

Parking in the city is no fun. Blue lines denote pay-and-display spaces, with tickets available from meters (coins only) and *tabacchi*. Costs vary but in the centre expect to pay €1 per hour between 8am and 8pm (11pm in some parts). Traffic wardens are vigilant and fines of up to €68.25 are common. If you're really unlucky you could find your car's been clamped or towed away. If so, call the **traffic police** (☎ 06 676 91) who can tell you where to go to collect it. You'll have to pay about €100 to get it back, plus a hefty fine.

The city's most convenient car park is at Villa Borghese (Map pp92-3); entry is from Piazzale Brasile at the top of Via Vittorio Veneto. Between Monday and Saturday there are supervised car parks at metro and train stations including Stazione Ostiense (Map p91) and Stazione Tiburtina. These operate between 6am and 10pm and cost €1.50 per 12 hours.

CAR HIRE

The major car-rental companies all have representatives in Rome and at the airport arrivals halls.

Avis (☎ 24hr bookings 800 86 30 63; www.avisautonoleggio.it in Italian) Ciampino airport (☎ 06 793 40 195); Fiumicino airport (☎ 06 650 11 531); Stazione Termini (Map p102; ☎ 06 481 43 73)

Europcar (☎ central bookings 800 01 44 10; www.europcar.com) Ciampino airport (☎ 06 793 40 387); Fiumicino airport (☎ 06 650 10 287); Stazione Termini (Map p102; ☎ 06 488 28 54)

Hertz (www.hertz.com) Ciampino airport (☎ 06 650 10 256); Fiumicino airport (☎ 06 592 27 42); Stazione Termini (Map p102; ☎ 06 474 03 89)

Maggiore National (☎ central bookings 848 86 70 67; www.maggiore.it) Ciampino airport (☎ 06 793 40 368); Fiumicino airport (☎ 06 650 10 678); Stazione Termini (Map p102; ☎ 06 488 00 49)

Public Transport

Rome's public transport system includes buses, trams, metro and a suburban train network. Tickets are valid for all forms of transport and come in various forms. The simplest is the *biglietto integrato a tempo* (BIT), which costs €1 and is valid for 75 minutes. In that time you can use as many buses or trams as you like but take only one trip on the metro. Daily tickets (BIG) cost €4 (ask for a *biglietto giornaliero*) and give you unlimited trips; three-day tickets (BTI, *biglietto turistico integrato*) cost €11; and weekly tickets (CIS, *carta integrata settimanale*) cost €16. Children up to 1m tall, or under four years, travel free. Note that tickets do not include routes to Fiumicino airport.

You can buy tickets at *tabacchi*, at newsstands and at *biglietteria* (ticket offices) at metro, bus and train stations. They must be purchased before you get on the bus or train and then validated in the yellow machine once on board, or validated at the entrance gates for the metro. You risk a €52 fine if you're caught without a validated ticket.

BUS & TRAM

Rome's buses and trams are run by **ATAC** (☎ 800 43 17 84; www.atac.roma.it). The **main bus station** (Map p102; Piazza Cinquecento) is in front of Stazione Termini, where there's an **ATAC information booth** (☎ 7.30am-8pm) on the stand in the centre of the piazza. Largo di Torre Argentina, Piazza Venezia and Piazza San Silvestro are other important hubs. Buses generally run from

about 5.30am until midnight, with limited services throughout the night on some routes. Useful routes:

Bus H Stazione Termini, Via Nazionale, Piazza Venezia, Largo di Torre Argentina, Ponte Garibaldi, Viale Trastevere and into the western suburbs.

Bus 170 Stazione Termini, Via Nazionale, Piazza Venezia, Via del Teatro Marcello and Bocca della Verità (then south to Testaccio and EUR).

Bus 175 Stazione Termini, Piazza Barberini, Via del Corso, Teatro di Marcello, Aventine Hill and Stazione Ostiense.

Bus 23 Piazzale Clodio, Piazza Risorgimento, Ponte Vittorio Emanuele II, Lungotevere, Ponte Garibaldi, Via Marmorata (Testaccio), Piazzale Ostiense and Basilica di San Paolo.

Bus 40 Express Stazione Termini, Via Nazionale, Piazza Venezia, Largo di Torre Argentina, Chiesa Nuova, Piazza Pia (for Castel Sant'Angelo) and St Peter's Square.

Bus 492 Stazione Tiburtina, San Lorenzo, Stazione Termini, Piazza Barberini, Piazza Venezia, Corso Rinascimento, Piazza Cavour, Piazza Risorgimento and Cipro-Musei Vaticani (metro line A).

Bus 590 Follows the route of metro line A and has special facilities for disabled passengers.

Bus 64 Stazione Termini to St Peter's Square. It takes the same route as the 40 Express but is more crowded and has more stops.

Bus 660 Largo Colli Albani, Via Appia Nuova and Via Appia Antica (near Mausoleo di Cecilia Metella).

Bus 714 Stazione Termini, Piazza Santa Maria Maggiore, Piazza San Giovanni in Laterano and Viale della Terme di Caracalla (then south to EUR).

Tram 8 Largo di Torre Argentina, Trastevere, Stazione Trastevere and Monteverde Nuovo.

Bus 910 Stazione Termini, Piazza della Repubblica, Via Piemonte, Via Pincians (Villa Borghese), Piazza Euclide, Palazzetto de Sport and Piazza Mancini.

METRO & TRAIN

Rome's two metro lines, A and B, cross at Termini, the only point at which you can change from one line to the other. Trains run approximately every five to 10 minutes between 5.30am and 11.30pm (one hour later on Saturday). However, until 2008 or 2009, line A is closing for engineering works at 9pm every night. To replace it there are two temporary bus lines: MA1 from Battistini to Arco di Travertino and MA2 from Viale G Washington (off Piazzale Flaminio) to Anagnina.

All the metro stations on line B have wheelchair access, except for Circo Massimo, Colosseo and Cavour (direction Laurentina). On line A Cipro-Musei Vaticani station is one of the few stations equipped with such facilities.

Note that Manzoni station on line A is currently closed for works.

In addition to the metro, Rome has an overground rail network. It is useful only if you are heading out of town to the Castelli Romani (p180), the beaches at Lido di Ostia or the ruins at Ostia Antica (opposite).

NIGHT BUS

Rome's night bus service is pretty comprehensive: there are more than 20 lines, most of which pass Termini and/or Piazza Venezia. Departures usually occur every 30 minutes, with buses marked with an N after the number. Night bus stops have a blue owl symbol.

Scooter & Bicycle

Flying round Rome on a scooter is a memorable, if hair-raising, experience. If you'd prefer to cycle, be careful – Romans are not used to seeing bicycles on the roads. As a beginner you may be wise to venture forth on a Sunday, when much of central Rome is closed to traffic.

To hire a scooter you'll need a credit card and photo ID; for a bike, ID is usually sufficient. You may also have to leave a cash deposit. Reliable operators include:

Bici e Baci (Map p102; ☎ 06 482 84 43; www.bicibaci.com; Via del Viminale 5; bikes per day €9-11, scooters from €19, 500cc motorbikes €95)

Eco Move Rent (Map p102; ☎ 06 447 04 518; www.ecomoverent.com; Via Varese 48-50; bikes per day €11, scooters from €37) In the hostel enclave near Stazione Termini. Will usually give a 10% discount if asked.

Taxi

Rome's taxi drivers are no better or worse than in any other city. Some will try to fleece you, others won't. To minimise the risk, make sure your taxi is licensed and metered, and always go with the metered fare, never an arranged price (the set fares to and from the airports are an exception to this rule). Official rates are posted in the taxi.

If you have a problem, get the driver's name and licence number from the plaque on the inside of the rear door and call his/her taxi company, the number of which will be on the outside of the driver's door.

Hailing a cab doesn't work in Rome. You must either wait at a taxi rank or telephone for one. In the *centro storico* you can find these at: Largo di Torre Argentina, the Pantheon, Corso del Rinascimento and Piazza

Navona, Piazza di Spagna, Largo Goldoni, Piazza del Popolo, Piazza Venezia, the Colosseum, at Piazza GG Belli in Trastevere and near the Vatican at Piazza del Pio XII and Piazza Risorgimento. Remember, though, that when you call for a cab, the meter is switched on straight away and you pay for the cost of the journey from wherever the driver receives the call. To phone a taxi, try:

La Capitale (☎ 06 49 94)

Radio Taxi (☎ 06 35 70)

Samarconda (☎ 06 55 51)

LAZIO

With a capital like Rome, it's not surprising that the rest of Lazio is somewhat overshadowed. But get out of the city and you'll discover a region that's not only beautiful – hilly in the north, parched and rugged in the south – but also rich in history and culture.

OSTIA ANTICA

Founded by the Romans in the 4th century BC, Ostia (referring to the mouth or *ostium* of the Tiber) became a great port and later a strategic centre for defence and trade. Decline arrived in the 5th century AD when barbarian invasions and the outbreak of malaria led to the abandonment of the city, and then its slow burial – up to 2nd-floor level – in river silt, thanks to which it has survived so well. Pope Gregory IV re-established the town in the 9th century.

Sights

The wonderfully preserved **ruins** (Scavi Archeologici di Ostia Antica; ☎ 06 563 52 830; www.ostiantica.info; Viale dei Romagnoli 717; adult/child €4/free, car park €2.50; ☎ 8.30am–6pm Tue–Sun Apr–Oct, to 5pm Mar, to 4pm Nov–Feb) are spread out and you'll need a few hours to do them justice. You can purchase a handy map of the site from the ticket office for €2 or engage the services of one of the multilingual guides who roam the site; they usually charge €5 per person for a one-hour tour.

Ostia was a busy working port until 42 AD, and the clearly discernible ruins of restaurants, laundries, shops, houses and public meeting places give a good impression of what life must have been like when it was at its busiest. The main thoroughfare, the **Decumanus Maximus**, runs over 1km from the city's entrance (the Porta Romana) to the Porta Marina, which originally led to the sea.

At one stage, Ostia had 20 baths complexes, including the **Terme di Foro**, which were equipped with a roomful of stone toilets (the *forica*) that still remain pretty much intact. The most impressive mosaics on site are at the huge **Terme di Nettuno**, which occupied a whole block and date from Hadrian's renovation of the port. Make sure you climb the elevated platform and look at the three enormous mosaics here, including the stunning one of Neptune driving his sea-horse chariot, surrounded by sea monsters, mermaids and mermen. In the centre of the baths complex you'll find the remains of a large arcaded courtyard called the Palaestra, in which athletes used to train. There's an impressive mosaic here of four athletes engaged in boxing and wrestling.

Next to the baths is a good-sized **amphitheatre**, built by Agrippa and later enlarged to hold 3000 people. By climbing to its top and looking over the site, you'll get a good idea of the original layout of the port and how it would have functioned.

Behind the amphitheatre is the **Piazzale delle Corporazioni** (Forum of the Corporations), the offices of Ostia's merchant guilds, which sport well-preserved mosaics depicting the different interests of each business.

Further towards the Porta Marina is the **Thermopolium**, a shop that sold hot food and drink and which bears a striking resemblance to a modern bar. Check out the central bar counter, the kitchen to the right and the small courtyard at the rear, where customers would have sat next to the fountain and relaxed over a drink. Inside, it's still possible to discern remnants of a fresco advertising the bill of fare.

CHEAP BUS & TRAIN TICKETS

The best way to travel by public transport in Lazio is to arm yourself with a daily *biglietto integrato regionale giornaliero* (BIRG) ticket. These tickets allow unlimited travel on all city and regional transport, including buses, trams, the metro and trains (but not including Fiumicino airport services). They're priced according to zones: the most expensive, zone 7, costs €10.50; the cheapest, zone 1, costs €2.50. Tickets are available from *tabacchi*, some newsstands and *biglietteria* (ticket offices) at metro stations.

The site has a complex comprising a cafeteria/bar, toilets, gift shop and **museum** (☎ 9am-1.30pm & 2.15-6.30pm Tue-Sun Apr-Oct, 9am-5.30pm Tue-Sun Mar, 9am-4.30pm Tue-Sun Nov-Feb), which houses statues and sarcophagi excavated on site.

Near the entrance to the excavations is the **Castello di Giulio II** (☎ 06 563 58 024; Piazza della Rocca; ☎ free guided tours 10am & noon Tue-Sun), an impressive example of 15th-century military architecture.

Getting There & Away

From Rome, take metro line B to Piramide, then the Ostia Lido train from Stazione Porta San Paolo (next to the metro station). Trains leave about every half-hour and the trip takes approximately 25 minutes. It is covered by the standard BIT tickets (see p169). When you arrive at Ostia station, exit and walk over the pedestrian bridge. Go straight ahead and you'll see the castle to your right and the ruins straight ahead.

Battelli di Roma (☎ 06 678 93 61; www.battellidiroma.it) offers a return cruise from Rome to Ostia on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. It costs €13 and leaves Ponte Marconi at 10am, returning from Ostia at 2pm. Cruising time is two hours each way.

The ruins are also easy to reach by car. Take Via del Mare, which runs parallel to Via Ostiense, and follow the signs for the *scavi* (ruins).

TIVOLI

pop 50,900 / elev 225m

Pass through Rome's scruffy eastern suburbs and you soon come to the busy hilltop town of Tivoli. A Roman resort and summer playground for the Renaissance rich, it's best known for its two Unesco World Heritage sites: the monumental Villa Adriana and the 16th-century Villa d'Este. The latter is prettier and easier to get to, but the former is what makes a day trip here really worthwhile.

Information is available from the **tourist information point** (☎ 07 743 13 536; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Sun summer, to 3pm winter) on Piazza Garibaldi where the bus arrives.

Sights

VILLA ADRIANA

Emperor Hadrian's summer residence **Villa Adriana** (☎ 06 399 67 900; adult/child €6.50/3.25, car park €2; ☎ 9am-1hr before sunset), 5km outside Tivoli, is more a small town than a big villa. It was built

between AD 118 and 134, and even given the excess of the Roman Empire it set new standards of luxury. A model near the entrance gives you an idea of the scale of the original complex, which you'll need several hours to explore. Consider hiring an audioguide (€4), which gives a good overview. There's a small cafeteria next to the ticket office, but it's much nicer to bring a picnic lunch.

A great traveller and enthusiastic architect, Hadrian personally designed much of the complex, taking inspiration from buildings he'd seen around the world. The **pecile**, a large porticoed pool area where the emperor used to stroll after lunch, was a reproduction of a building in Athens. Similarly, the **canopo** is a copy of the sanctuary of Serapis near Alexandria, with a long canal of water, originally surrounded by Egyptian statues, representing the Nile.

To the east of the *pecile* is one of the highlights, Hadrian's private retreat, the **Teatro Marittimo**. Built on an island in an artificial pool, it was originally a minivilla accessible only by swing bridges, which the emperor would have raised when he felt like a dip. Nearby, the fish pond is encircled by an underground gallery where Hadrian liked to wander. There are also *nymphaeums*, temples and barracks, and a museum with the latest discoveries from ongoing excavations (often closed).

VILLA D'ESTE

More impressive outside than in, **Villa d'Este** (☎ 199 766 166; www.villadestetivoli.info in Italian; Piazza Trento; adult/child €6.50/free; ☎ from 8.30am Tue-Sun) is a former Benedictine convent that Lucrezia Borgia's son, Cardinal Ippolito d'Este, transformed into a sumptuous pleasure palace in 1550. From 1865 to 1886 it was home to Franz Liszt and inspired his composition *Fountains of the Villa d'Este*.

The mannerist frescoes in the villa are worth a fleeting glance but it's the elaborate garden that you come for: terraces with water-spouting gargoyles, shady pathways and spectacular fountains powered solely by gravitational force. One fountain (designed by Gianlorenzo Bernini) used its water pressure to play an organ concealed in the top part of its structure, another imitated the call of birds. One of the highlights is the 130m-long path of the Hundred Fountains, which joins the Fountain of Tivoli to the Fountain of Rome.

The villa is a two-minute walk north from Largo Garibaldi. Its closing hour varies according to the month; the earliest is 4pm (November to January) and the latest is 6.45pm (May to August). Picnics are forbidden, but there is a very stylish **café** with indoor and outdoor seating where you can enjoy a drink or lunch.

Getting There & Around

Tivoli is 30km east of Rome and is accessible by Cotral bus from outside the Ponte Mammolo station on metro line B. Buses depart at least every 20 minutes and the one-hour journey costs €1.60 (€3.20 return). Tivoli is covered by a Zone 3 BIRG ticket (€6).

To get to Villa Adriana from Tivoli's town centre, take the CAT bus 4 or 4X (€1, every 30 minutes Monday to Saturday, every 70 minutes Sunday) from Largo Garibaldi. The trip takes 10 minutes – ask the driver to stop at the entrance to the villa.

By car you can either take Via Tiburtina or, to save yourself some time, the Rome–L'Aquila autostrada (A24).

From Tivoli, buses to Rome leave from outside the decommissioned tourist information office on Piazza Garibaldi. It's also possible to catch a bus to Ponte Mammolo station from outside Villa Adriana (€1.60, Monday to Saturday). The stop is opposite the children's playground on the street outside the villa. These buses travel via Prenestina and can take a bit longer than the more direct bus from Tivoli itself.

ETRUSCAN SITES

The north of Lazio was an important Etruscan stronghold. Dating to around 800 BC, the Etruscans developed a highly cultured society using sophisticated architectural and artistic techniques that the Romans later adapted and claimed as their own. They were a major thorn in Roman flanks until the 3rd and 4th centuries BC, when successive waves of legionnaires swept aside the last Etruscan defences.

For the best Etruscan treasures, head to Tarquinia and Cerveteri, two of the major city-states in the Etruscan League.

Cerveteri

pop 32,100 / elev 81m

With its Unesco-listed Etruscan tombs and its excellent museum, Cerveteri makes a splendid day trip from Rome.

Cerveteri, or Kysry to the Etruscans and Caere to Latin-speakers, was one of the most important commercial centres in the Mediterranean from the 7th to the 5th centuries BC. As Roman power grew, however, so Cerveteri's fortunes faded, and in 358 BC the city was annexed by Rome.

The first half of the 19th century saw the first tentative archaeological explorations in the area and in 1911 systematic excavations began in earnest.

For information about the site, pay a visit to the extremely helpful **tourist information point** (☎ 06 995 52 637; Piazza Aldo Moro; 🕒 10am–12.30pm & 4.30–6.30pm summer, 10am–12.30pm winter). From here you can get an hourly shuttle bus to the **Necropoli di Banditaccia** (☎ 06 994 00 01; Via del Necropoli; admission €4, incl museum €6.50; 🕒 8.30am–6.30pm Tue–Sun summer, 8.30am–3.30pm Tue–Sun winter), the tomb complex 2km out of town. The bus leaves seven to nine times per day starting at 9am. The final shuttle is at 2.30pm between November and March and at 5pm from April to October. The trip takes five minutes and costs €0.80. Alternatively, you can follow the well-signposted road – it's a pleasant 20-minute walk.

The tombs at the necropolis are built into *tumoli* (mounds of earth with carved stone bases), laid out in the form of a town, with streets, squares and terraces of 'houses'. The result is a strange and haunting landscape. Signs indicate the path to follow and some of the major tombs, including the 6th-century-BC **Tomba dei Rilievi**, are decorated with painted reliefs of figures from the underworld, cooking implements and other household items.

Treasures taken from the tombs can be seen in Cerveteri's medieval town centre at the **Museo Nazionale di Cerveteri** (☎ 06 994 13 54; Piazza Santa Maria; admission €4, incl necropolis €6.50; 🕒 8.30am–6.30pm Tue–Sun). On the same square is the **Antica Locanda le Ginestre** (☎ 06 994 06 72; Piazza Santa Maria 5; meals €45; 🕒 Tue–Sun), a family-run restaurant that is considered to be one of the best in Lazio. The delicious food here is prepared with organically grown local produce and is served in the elegant dining room or flower-filled courtyard garden. You'll need to book if you want a table on a weekend or holiday. For a cheaper alternative, try **Cavallino Bianco** (Piazza Risorgimento; 🕒 Wed–Sun).

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Cerveteri is easily accessible from Rome by Cotral bus (€2.50, 65 to 90 minutes, half-

DH LAWRENCE'S ETRUSCAN PLACES

In 1927 the writer DH Lawrence spent a period travelling the Etruscan cities by foot and mule cart. Ill with the tuberculosis that would kill him three years later, Lawrence visited Tarquinia, Cerveteri, Vulci and Volterra, and wrote about his experiences in an essay titled *Etruscan Places*. In the essay, he muses about the meaning of life and conflict, and the relationship between religion and truth. After visiting the necropoli, he wrote that the Etruscans had a quality of '...ease, naturalness and an abundance of life, [with] no need to force the mind or the soul in any direction'. Death for them, he said, '...was a pleasant continuance of life, with jewels and wine and flutes playing for the dance'. With his health constantly worsening, he no doubt found a particular resonance – and perhaps comfort – in their way of thinking. The essay was published posthumously in 1932, and is still in print in a collection titled *DH Lawrence in Italy*.

hourly from 7.30am to 9pm) from outside the Cornelia metro stop on metro line A. When you arrive at Cornelia, go up the escalators and onto the main road – the stop is on the same side of the street a little way from the metro entrance (look for the Cotral sign). Buses leave Cerveteri for Rome from the main square, at the bottom of the staircase coming from the museum. The last bus is at 8.05pm.

By car, take either Via Aurelia (SS1) or the Civitavecchia autostrada (A12) and exit at Cerveteri-Ladispoli. The journey should take approximately 40 minutes.

Tarquinia

pop 15,900 / elev 169m

Further north up the coast, Tarquinia is the most famous of Lazio's Etruscan centres. It is well known for its beautiful painted tombs, but it also has the best Etruscan museum outside of Rome and an evocative medieval quarter. Legend suggests that the town was founded towards the end of the Bronze Age in the 12th century BC. Later home to the Tarquin kings of Rome before the creation of the Roman Republic, it reached its prime in the 4th century BC, before a century of struggle ended with surrender to Rome in 204 BC.

For information about the town and its sights, pop into the **tourist information office** (☎ 0766 84 92 82; info@tarquinia@apt.it; Piazza Cavour 1; 🕒 8am–2pm Mon–Sat), on your left as you walk through the town's medieval gate (Barriera San Giusto).

Close by is the beautiful 15th-century Palazzo Vitelleschi, which houses the **Museo Nazionale Tarquiniese** (☎ 0766 85 60 36; Piazza Cavour; adult/child €4/2, incl necropolis €6.50/3.25; 🕒 8.30am–7.30pm Tue–Sun). Highlights of its collection are a beautiful terracotta frieze of winged horses (the Cavalli Alati); a room full of painted friezes from tombs; displays of sarcophagi,

jewellery and amphorae; and some plates whose saucy illustrations would surely have put the Etruscans off their peas (they're in Sala VI on the ground floor). Also on the ground floor, in Sala IX, the *Sarcofago con cerbiatto* is a model of 4th-century BC workmanship, showing a half-naked reclining woman holding a plate from which a long-necked dog (the *cerbiatto*) is drinking. Unfortunately, staff shortages mean that the painted tombs room and the winged horses room are rarely open at the same time.

To see the famous painted tombs *in situ*, head for the **necropolis** (☎ 0766 85 63 08; adult/child €4/2, incl museum adult/child €6.50/3.25; 🕒 8.30am–6pm summer, last exit 7.30pm, 8.30am–12.30pm winter, last exit 2pm), just a 20-minute walk through the centre of town. Almost 6000 tombs, of which 60 are painted, have been excavated since the first digs in 1489. Now protected by Unesco, the tombs have suffered centuries of exposure and are maintained at constant temperatures, and are visible only through glass partitions. There are some beautiful hunting and fishing scenes in the Tomba della Caccia e della Pesca; scenes featuring dancers, she-lions and dolphins in the Tomba delle Leonesse; and a smutty Dionysian-influenced scene of a man whipping a woman in the Tomba della Fustigazione.

To get to the necropolis from the tourist office, walk up Corso Vittorio Emanuele and turn right at Piazza Nazionale into Via di Porta Tarquinia. Continue past the Chiesa di San Francesco and then down Via Ripagretta until you see the necropolis on your left. Alternatively, a shuttle bus leaves from outside the tourist office every 30 to 45 minutes from 9am to 10.50am and from 2pm to 4.40pm, returning to town five minutes after it arrives at the necropolis.

There are a number of decent lunch spots in town, including **Il Cavatappi** (☎ 07 668 42 303; Via dei Granari 19), which specialises in dishes made with local products, and the highly regarded but pricey **Re Tarquinio** (☎ 07 668 42 125; Alberata Dante Alighieri 10).

GETTING THERE & AWAY

From Rome, Cotral buses leave approximately every hour from the Saxa Rubra station on the Ferrovia Roma-Nord train line, arriving at the Barriera San Giusto. The 1½-hour journey costs €3.80. The last bus leaves Tarquinia for Rome at 8.35pm. Note that there are very few services on Sundays.

By train, catch the Pisa Centrale train from Termini (€5.60, 1¼ hours, every one to two hours from 10.08am). Buy a return ticket as the ticket office in Tarquinia only operates in the morning. After getting off at Tarquinia station, you'll need to catch the line BC shuttle bus to the centre of town. These leave every 30 to 50 minutes (every hour on Sundays) and cost €0.60. The last train leaves Tarquinia for Rome at 8.28pm.

By car, take the autostrada for Civitavecchia and then the Via Aurelia (SS1). Tarquinia is about 90km northwest of Rome.

CIVITAVECCHIA

pop 50,100

There's no compelling reason to come to Civitavecchia other than to take a ferry to Sardinia. It's not an unpleasant place; there's simply not much to do. Established by Emperor Trajan in AD 106, it was later conquered by the Saracens, but regained importance as a papal stronghold in the 16th century. The medieval town was almost completely destroyed by bombing during WWII.

The port is about a 400m walk from the train station. As you leave the station, turn right into Viale Garibaldi and follow the road along the seafront. Near the Michelangelo fortress at the western end of the seafront there's a helpful **tourist information point** (☎ 0766 253 48; Viale Garibaldi; ☎ 8.30am-1pm Mon-Sat, 3-6pm Tue & Fri in summer).

Getting There & Away

TO/FROM ROME

Trains run regularly between Stazione Termini in Rome and Civitavecchia (€4.50 regional service, €7.30 intercity service, 1¼ hours, every 30 minutes between 7.35am and 11.08pm),

with fewer services on Sunday. In Civitavecchia, the station is close to the port.

Cotral buses from Rome to Civitavecchia leave from outside the Cornelia station on metro line A approximately every 40 minutes from 6.20am to 10.30pm. When you arrive at Cornelia, go up the escalators and onto the main road – the stop is on the same side of the street a little way from the metro entrance (look for the Cotral sign). Journey time is nearly two hours and tickets cost €3.50. The bus stop in Civitavecchia is on Viale Guido Baccelli, in front of the Aurelia bar.

Civitavecchia is covered by a Zone 4 BIRG ticket (€9).

By car, take the A12 autostrada from Rome.

FERRIES TO/FROM SARDINIA

From Civitavecchia, ferries sail for Olbia (eight hours), Arbatax (10 hours) and Cagliari (14 to 17 hours) in Sardinia. Departure times and prices change every year, so you should always check ahead. All fares quoted are for a one-way ticket.

Tirrenia (☎ 892 123; www.tirrenia.it) sails to Olbia (low/high season €24/35), Arbatax (low/high season €23.50/31) and Cagliari (low/high season €28.50/38).

Moby (☎ 199 30 30 40; www.moby.it) has services to Olbia (low season €19 to €25, high season €17 to €40) between late March and late September.

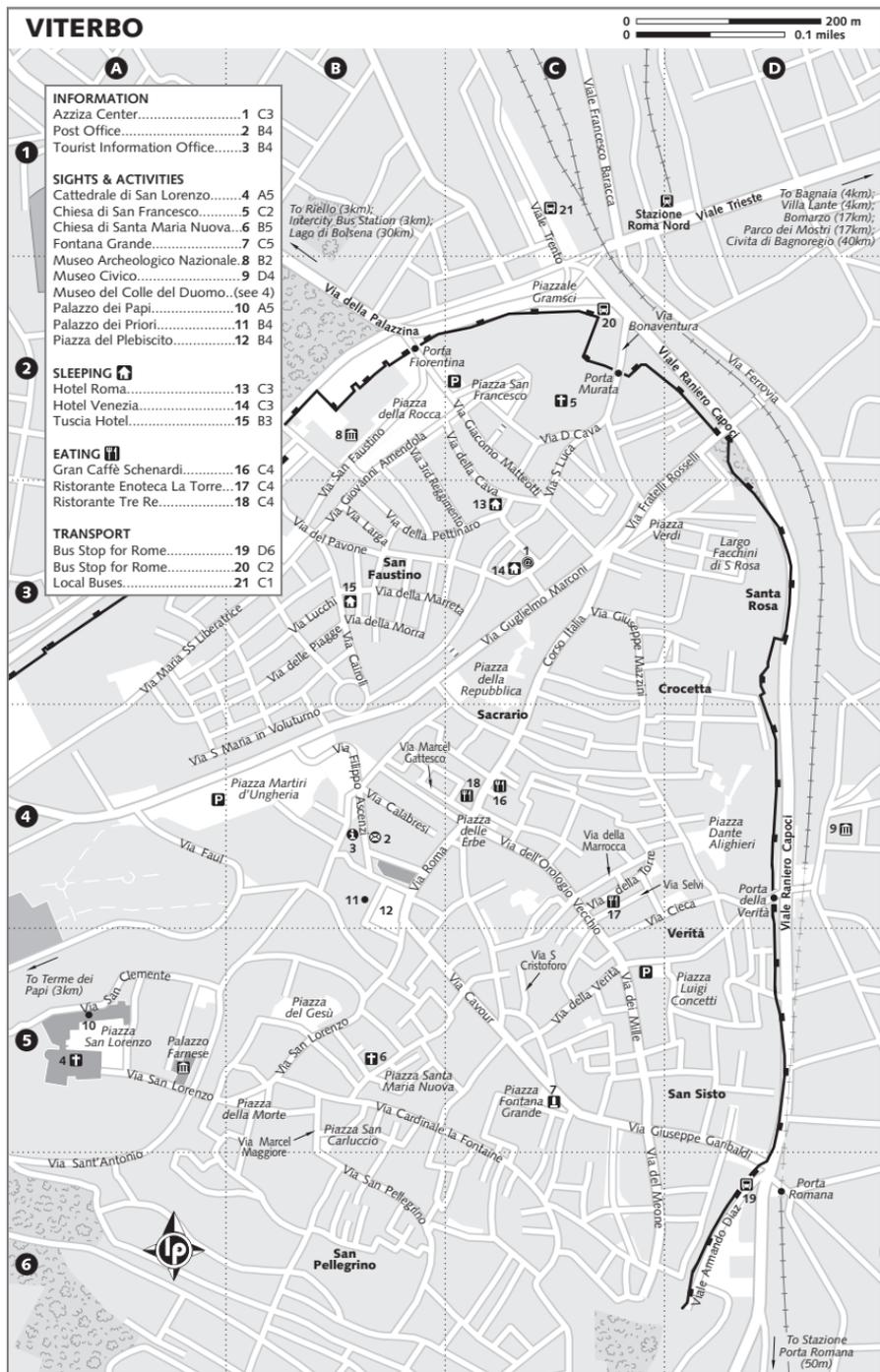
Tickets can be purchased at travel agencies and at the ferry terminal in Civitavecchia. If travelling in high season, be sure to book well in advance.

VITERBO

pop 60,600 / elev 327m

Despite sustaining heavy bomb damage in WWII, Viterbo is Lazio's best-preserved medieval town and makes a good base for exploring the region's hilly north. For travellers with less time, it's an easy and rewarding day trip from Rome.

Founded by the Etruscans and eventually taken over by Rome, Viterbo developed into an important medieval centre, and in the 13th century became the residence of the popes. Papal elections were held in the Gothic Palazzo dei Papi where, in 1271, the entire college of cardinals was briefly imprisoned. The story goes that after three years of deliberation the cardinals still hadn't elected a new pope. Mad with frustration, the Viterbesi locked the



dithering priests in a turreted hall and starved them into electing Pope Gregory X.

Apart from its historical appeal, Viterbo is famous for its therapeutic hot springs. The best known is the sulphurous Bulicame pool, mentioned by Dante in the *Divine Comedy*.

Orientation

Viterbo's walled *centro storico* is small and best covered on foot. From Stazione Porta Roma it's a short walk along Viale Armando Diaz to Porta Romana, one of the city's medieval gates. Go through the gate and follow Via Giuseppe Garibaldi down to Piazza Fontana Grande. Keep going along Via Cavour and you arrive at Piazza del Plebiscito, the core of the historic centre. Here you have three choices: turn right into Via Roma and its extension Corso Italia, an elegant shopping street; take Via San Lorenzo for the cathedral and Palazzo dei Papi; or continue down Via Filippo Ascenzi to Piazza Martiri d'Ungheria – most of the hotels are in the area northeast of this huge and unlovely square.

The intercity bus station is somewhat inconveniently located at Riello, which is a few kilometres out of town.

Information

Azziza Center (☎ 0761 30 93 73; Via del Pavone 21; per hr €2; ☎ 9am–2pm & 3–8.30pm) Internet access.

Post office (☎ 0761 30 48 06; Via Filippo Ascenzi) Opposite the tourist office.

Tourist information office (☎ 0761 32 59 92; www.provincia.vt.it in Italian; Via Filippo Ascenzi; ☎ 10am–1pm & 4–6pm Mon–Fri, 10am–1pm & 3.30–6.30pm Sat) Ask for the useful (and free) annual booklet *Ospitalità Tuscia*.

Sights

PIAZZA DEL PLEBISCITO

Flanked by elegant *palazzi*, this Renaissance piazza is dominated by the imposing **Palazzo dei Priori** (Piazza del Plebiscito; admission free; ☎ 10am–1pm & 3.30–6.30pm). Now home to the town council, it's worth a quick look for the 16th-century frescoes that colourfully depict Viterbo's ancient origins. You'll find the best in the Sala Regia on the 1st floor. Outside, the elegant courtyard and fountain were added two centuries after the *palazzo* was built in 1460.

PIAZZA SAN LORENZO

For an idea of how rich Viterbo once was, head to Piazza San Lorenzo, the religious heart of the medieval city. It was here that

the cardinals came to vote for their popes and pray in the 12th-century **Cattedrale di San Lorenzo** (☎ 0761 32 54 62; Piazza San Lorenzo). Built originally to a simple Romanesque design, it owes its current Gothic look to a 14th-century makeover. Next door, the **Museo del Colle del Duomo** (admission incl Sala del Conclave in Palazzo dei Papi €3; ☎ 9.30am–1pm & 3–8pm Tue–Sun summer, 10am–1pm & 3–6pm Tue–Sat, 9.30am–12.30pm & 3.30–6pm Sun winter) displays a small collection of religious artefacts.

On the northern side of the square, the 13th-century **Palazzo dei Papi** (☎ 0761 34 17 16) was built to entice the papacy away from Rome. Head up the stairs to the graceful Gothic *loggia* (colonnade) to peer into the **Sala del Conclave**, the hall where five popes were elected.

CHIESA DI SANTA MARIA NUOVA

The oldest church in Viterbo, the Romanesque **Chiesa di Santa Maria Nuova** (Piazza Santa Maria Nuova; ☎ 10am–1pm & 3–5pm) was restored to its original form after bomb damage in WWII. Of particular note are the cloisters, which are believed to date from an earlier period.

OTHER SIGHTS

For a shot of Etruscan culture, head to the **Museo Archeologico Nazionale** (☎ 0761 32 59 29; Piazza della Rocca; admission €4; ☎ 8.30am–7.30pm Tue–Sun), housed in an attractive *palazzo* by the northern entrance to the town. It's not a big place but it has an interesting collection of Etruscan artefacts taken from local digs and, on the 1st floor, an impressive series of statues dedicated to the Muses.

A short walk away from the museum is the **Chiesa di San Francesco** (☎ 0761 34 16 96; Piazza San Francesco; ☎ 7am–noon & 3.30–6.30pm), a Gothic church containing the tombs of two popes: Clement IV (d 1268) and Adrian V (d 1276). Both are attractively decorated, notably that of Adrian, which features Cosmati work (multicoloured marble and glass mosaics set into stone and white marble).

On the other side of town, the **Museo Civico** (☎ 0761 34 82 75; Piazza Crispi; admission €3; ☎ 9am–7pm Tue–Sun summer, to 6pm winter) features yet more Etruscan goodies and a small art gallery, the highlight of which is Sebastiano del Piombo's *Pietà*.

In the piazza of the same name, the unimaginatively titled **Fontana Grande** (Big Fountain) is the oldest and largest of Viterbo's Gothic fountains.

Sleeping & Eating

Hotel Roma (☎ 07 612 27 274; albergoromaviterbo@libero.it; Via della Cava 26; s/d €39/60; 📍) This rabbit warren of a hotel near Piazza della Rocca is the cheapest place in town, and has clean but extremely run-down rooms with beds that only just pass the sleepability test. We found staff can be very grumpy. Parking costs €8.

Hotel Venezia (☎ 07 613 03 356; hotelveneziaridese@libero.it; Via del Pavone 23; s/d €44/65; 📍 📺) The front rooms of this well-located hotel provide good value for money – they're large, freshly painted and have amenities such as satellite TV and fridge. The rear rooms are small and dark. The price includes free parking.

Tuscia Hotel (☎ 07 613 44 400; www.tusciahotel.com; Via Cairoli 41; s €49-56, d €74-82; 📍 📺) The best of the city's midrange options, this serviceable three-star place can easily justify its slightly higher prices. Leagues ahead of the competition in cleanliness and comfort, the rooms here are large and light, with amenities such as satellite TV. Nine rooms have air-con. Parking is available on request and costs an extra €7.

Gran Caffè Schenardi (☎ 07 613 45 860; Corso Italia 11-13) The Schenardi has been operating since 1818. Though the coffee and cakes are nothing to get excited about, the same can't be said of the ornate interior, which is quite wonderful.

our pick Ristorante Tre Re (☎ 0761 30 46 19; Via Macel Gattesco 3; meals €22; 📍 Fri-Wed) An historic Viterbo trattoria, the Tre Re dishes up steaming plates of tasty local specialities and seasonally driven dishes. None is more typical than the *pollo alla Viterbese*, excellent roast chicken stuffed with spiced potato and green olives. The food here is an enormous bargain considering its quality.

Ristorante Enoteca La Torre (☎ 0761 22 64 67; Via della Torre 5; meals €60; 📍) Lunch & dinner Tue-Sat, lunch Sun) Viterbo's best restaurant is known throughout Lazio for its expertise in matching top-quality food to excellent Italian wines. Dishes are presented in a slightly fussy *nouvelle cuisine* style that seems to contradict the menu's emphasis on top-quality local produce and the chef's obvious expertise in putting flavours and textures together. The sommelier here really knows his stuff, so we recommend asking him to match each course with a glass of wine (€2 to €8).

Getting There & Away

From Rome, Cotral buses (€3.30, 1½ to two hours, every 30 minutes) depart from the Saxa

Rubra station on the Ferrovia Roma-Nord train line. Catch the train (standard BIT) to Saxa Rubra from Piazzale Flaminio (just north of Piazza del Popolo). Viterbo is covered by a Zone 4 BIRG ticket (€9).

In Viterbo, make sure to get off at Porta Romana otherwise you'll find yourself at the intercity bus station at Riello, a few kilometres northwest of the town. If this happens, catch city bus 11 into town (€1). Returning to Rome, catch the bus from the Porta Romana or Piazzale Gramsci stops.

Trains depart hourly from Monday to Saturday and every two hours on Sundays from Rome's Valle Aurelia station (next to the metro station on line A), often changing at Cesano. The journey takes at least 1½ hours and costs €3.70 one way.

By car, Viterbo is about a 1½-hour straight drive up Via Cassia (SS2). Enter the old town through the Porta Romana onto Via Giuseppe Garibaldi, which becomes Via Cavour. The best bet for parking is either Piazza Martiri d'Ungheria or Piazza della Rocca.

AROUND VITERBO

Viterbo's thermal springs are about 3km west of town. The easiest to get to are the **Terme dei Papi** (☎ 07 61 35 01; www.termedeipapi.it in Italian; Strada Bagni 12; pool €12, Sun €15; 📍 Wed-Mon), where you can take a dip in the sulphurous pool, have an invigorating massage (€25 to €100) or treat yourself to a gloopy mud bath (about €60). Take city bus 2 (2F on Sundays) from Piazza Martiri d'Ungheria, aka Piazza dei Caduti. The ticket costs €1.

You won't find much mud in the magnificent gardens at **Villa Lante**, 4km northeast of Viterbo at Bagnaia. Considered among the finest Renaissance gardens in Italy, they form part of the large public **park** (☎ 07 612 88 008; admission €2; 📍 8.30am-1hr before sunset Tue-Sun) that surrounds the 16th-century villa. To get to Bagnaia from Viterbo, take city bus 4 or 6 (€1) from Piazza dei Caduti.

Similarly Renaissance in look and style is the grandiose **Palazzo Farnese** (☎ 07 616 46 052; admission €2; 📍 8.30am-6.45pm Tue-Sun) at Caprarola, southeast of Viterbo. Designed by Vignola and decorated by some of the finest mannerist artists of the day, it makes quite an impression. Don't miss the frescoes by Taddeo and Federico Zuccari in the Sala del Concilio di Trento. Eight buses daily leave from the Riello bus station just outside Viterbo for Caprarola;

the last bus returns at 6.30pm from Caprarola. Tickets cost €1.60.

At Bomarzo, 17km northeast of Viterbo, the **Parco dei Mostri** (☎ 07 619 24 029; admission €8; ☎ 8am-sunset) will entertain children and adults alike. The park of the 16th-century Palazzo Orsini is peopled by gigantic and grotesque sculptures, including an ogre, giant and even a dragon. From Viterbo, catch the Cotral bus from near Viale Trieste to Bomarzo (€1.60, eight daily from 9.20am), then follow the signs to Palazzo Orsini.

CASTELLI ROMANI

About 20km south of Rome, the Colli Albani (Alban Hills) and their 13 towns are collectively known as the Castelli Romani. Since early Roman days they've provided a green refuge from the city and today Romans still flock to the area on hot summer weekends. The most famous towns are Castel Gandolfo, where the pope has his summer residence, and Frascati, famous for its delicate white wine.

Frascati

An easy bus or train ride from Rome, Frascati makes a rewarding day trip. There's a helpful **tourist office** (☎ 06 942 54 88; iatfrascati@libero.it; Piazza Guglielmo Marconi 1; ☎ 8.30am-1pm Mon & Tue, 9am-1pm Thu, 9am-1pm & 3.30-7pm Wed, Fri & Sat summer, 9am-1pm Mon, Wed, Thu & Sat, 9am-1pm & 3-6pm Tue & Fri winter) in the main square where the main bus terminus is.

Just up from the tourist office is **Frascati Point** (☎ 06 940 15 378; ☎ 10am-7pm Mon-Sat, 10am-2pm Sun), where you can access information about local wines, vineyards and *cantinas* (wine cellars). The building is the former stables of the Villa Aldobrandini and was recently renovated to a design by Italy's hippest architect, Massimiliano Fuksas.

The large villa you see rising above the square is the 16th-century **Villa Aldobrandini**, designed by Giacomo della Porta and built by Carlo Maderno.

If you've got a car, head up to the ruins of ancient **Tusculum**. All that remains of this once imposing town is a small amphitheatre, a crumbling villa and a small stretch of road leading up to the city. The grassy hilltop, however, is a popular spot to do some walking and it commands some fine views.

Walks and ruins are all very well, but what people really come to Frascati for is the wine.

The area is famous for its white wine and there are plenty of places where you can try it and other local varieties. The best restaurant in town is generally agreed to be **Cacciani** (☎ 06 942 03 78; Via Al Diaz; meals €50; ☎ closed dinner Sun, lunch & dinner Mon & 2 weeks in Aug), but more fun is to be had in the town's famous rough-as-guts *cantinas*. Try Reggi Rita, Osteria dell'Olmo, Tertullo, Di Santino, Ceccarelli, Mancini e de Luca or Aimone. Most of these don't sell food, but won't mind BYO snacks – pick up a delicious slice of pizza from Fornaio di Orazio e Massa, a small bakery on the corner of Vicolo and Via dell'Olmo, or a *porchetta panini* from one of the stands that do a brisk weekend trade around Piazza del Mercato. For something in between these two experiences, we recommend **Pane e Tuttiapani** (☎ 06 941 66 37; Via Mentana 1; ☎ Tue-Sun), a charming *enoteca* that serves up plates of excellent and well-priced food. You can sample local cheeses and salamis (€7.50 to €12) with local wine or opt for a more substantial dish such as *ribollita* (Tuscan-style vegetable and bread soup; €7) or homemade pasta (€8). Best of all is the fact that after sampling the local tipples, you can buy a few bottles here to take away with you.

Castel Gandolfo & Around

A short drive away at **Grottaferrata** there's a 15th-century **abbey** (☎ 06 945 93 09; Viale San Nilo; ☎ 8.30am-12.30pm & 4-7.30pm summer, 8.30am-12.30pm & 3.30pm-1hr before sunset winter), founded in the 11th century and now home to a congregation of Greek monks and a small museum.

Continuing southwest brings you to **Castel Gandolfo**, a smart hilltop *borgo* overlooking Lago di Albano. Dominating the town is the pope's summer residence, where he holds audiences in July and August (see boxed text, p126).

The smaller of the two volcanic lakes in the Castelli Romani, **Lago di Nemi** has spawned numerous legends. In ancient times it was the centre of a cult to the goddess Diana and it was a favourite vacation spot of the emperor Caligula. The **Museo delle Navi Romane** (☎ 06 939 80 40; Via Diana; admission €2; ☎ 9am-6pm Tue-Sun) on the shore of the lake was built by Mussolini to house two Roman boats salvaged from the lake in 1932. These dated from Caligula's time but were tragically destroyed by fire in 1944 – what you see now are scale models of the originals. You can grab a bite to eat at the

clifftop **Trattoria la Sirena del Lago** (☎ 06 936 80 20; Via del Plebiscito 26; meals €22; ☹ closed Mon), where the local game and trout are excellent and the local wine refreshing.

Getting There & Around

To get to Frascati you can catch a bus (€1, 20 minutes, 35 per day weekdays, fewer on weekends) from the Anagnina station on metro line A. Alternatively, catch a train from Stazione Termini (€1.70, 30 minutes, every one to 1½ hours Monday to Saturday, every two hours Sunday).

To get from Frascati to Grottaferata (€1, 15 minutes, every 30 to 40 minutes), catch a Cotral bus from Piazza Guglielmo Marconi. To get to Lago di Nemi, catch a Velletri-headed bus and get off at Genzano di Roma (€1, 30 minutes, infrequent); from here you'll need to catch another bus to the lake (€1, 10 minutes, infrequent). To get to Castel Gandolfo (€1.70, 40 minutes, hourly) catch the Albano Laziale bus (€1.70, 50 minutes, hourly). You can catch a train from Rome's Stazione Termini to Castel Gandolfo, but it's not possible to catch a train between Frascati and Castel Gandolfo.

PALESTRINA

pop 18,100

Once an important Roman town, Palestrina stands on the slopes of Monte Ginestro, one of the foothills of the Apennines. For much of its Roman existence it was dominated by the **Santuario della Fortuna Primigenia**, a massive sanctuary dating back to the 2nd century BC. Originally built on six terraced levels and topped by a circular temple with a statue of the goddess Palestrina, it would have covered much of what is now the town's *centro storico*. The sanctuary, however, has largely been built over and in the 17th century the **Palazzo Colonna Barberini** was built on its highest point. The *palazzo* today houses the excellent **Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Palestrina** (☎ 06 953 81 00; Piazza della Cortina; admission €3; ☹ 9am-7pm). Highlights of its collection include the Hellenistic sculpture from the city of Praeneste; the wonderful sculpture of Jupiter, Juno and Minerva with an owl, peacock and eagle at their feet; and the spectacular Nile mosaic, a masterpiece of Hellenistic art, which dates from the end of the 2nd century BC. The remains of the sanctuary can be visited on the museum ticket and are open from 9am until one hour before sunset.

There are two **tourist offices** (www.comune.palestrina.rm.it; ☎ 9am-1pm & 4-7pm) in town; the one on Piazza Santa Maria degli Angeli near the cathedral is much more helpful than the one next to the museum. The best spot for lunch is **Ristorante Stella** (☎ 06 953 81 72; Piazza della Liberazione 3; meals €20) in the 1960s hotel of the same name just down from the cathedral. It serves delicious dishes such as *pappardelle alla lepre* (egg noodle-pasta with hare and tomato sauce; €8) and *risotto al tartufo* (risotto with truffles; €10).

Palestrina is accessible from Rome by Cotral bus (€2, one to 1½ hours, half-hourly from 6.40am, every two hours on Sundays) from the Anagnina stop on metro line A. It is covered by a Zone 3 BIRG ticket (€6). When you arrive in Palestrina, get off at the second stop along the main street and walk up the very steep stairs and narrow roads to reach the museum, which is high on the hill above the cathedral.

By car it's a straightforward 39km along Via Prenestina (SS155).

ALONG THE COAST

If you're after bumper-to-bumper traffic jams, polluted water and crowds of posers on the pull, you'll be happy with Fregene and the Lido di Ostia, the two beaches nearest Rome. If this doesn't appeal, the coast further south is a much nicer prospect.

Sabaudia

Not a particularly attractive place in itself, Sabaudia is the centre of the **Parco Nazionale del Circeo** (www.parcocirceo.it in Italian; Via Carlo Alberto 107; ☎ 9.30am-1pm & 5-7pm), an 800-hectare area of sand dunes, rocky coastline, forest and wetlands. The **visitor centre** (☎ 0773 51 13 85) can provide details on activities available in the area including fishing, bird-watching, walking and cycling.

Cotral buses leave from outside the Laurentina station on metro line B heading for Terracina and pass by Sabaudia en route (€3.80, two to three hours depending on traffic). Ask the driver to drop you on the highway so that you can walk into town.

Sperlonga

The small coastal town of Sperlonga is almost entirely given over to tourism. That shouldn't necessarily put you off, though, as the white-washed *centro storico* is a trendy spot in which to hang out (in summer, at least) and

there are two inviting, sandy beaches either side of a rocky promontory. There's a small **tourist office** (☎ 07 715 21 082; info@litoralepontino.it; Corso San Leone 22; 🕒 8am-2pm Mon-Fri, 2.30-5.30pm Tue & Thu) behind the church at the top of the hill.

Other than the beach, the town's main attraction is the **Museo Archeologico di Sperlonga** (☎ 07 715 48 028; Via Flacca, km 1.6; admission €2;

🕒 8.30am-7.30pm), home to sculptures dating from the 2nd century BC and a cave with a circular pool used by the emperor Tiberius. The remains of his villa are in front of the cave.

Hotel Mayor (☎ 0771 54 92 45; Via 1 Romita 4; www.hotelmayor.it; s €60-170, d €70-180; 📍 🚗 🚲), just off the main seafarot road into town, has decent-enough rooms and excellent facilities

BLAZE THE BENEDICTINE TRAIL

It's a strange but appropriate fact that St Benedict is the patron saint of speleologists. Appropriate because the father of Western monasticism actually spent three years holed up in a cave in Subiaco, a small town 63km east of Rome. Fleeing the vice that had so disgusted him as a student in Rome, he sought the gloom of the grotto to meditate and pray. During this time he attracted a large local following that eventually provoked the ire of his fellow friars and forced him onto the road.

There are two monasteries that make the hike to Subiaco worthwhile. The first and most important is the spectacular **Monastery of St Benedict** (☎ 07 748 50 39; 🕒 9am-12.30pm & 3-6.30pm), carved into the rock over the famous cave. Apart from its stunning setting, described by Petrarch as 'the edge of Paradise', the monastery boasts some amazingly colourful 13th- to 15th-century frescoes. Halfway down the hill from St Benedict is the **Monastery of St Scholastica** (☎ 07 748 55 25; 🕒 9am-12.30pm & 3.30-7pm), the only one of the 13 monasteries built by St Benedict still standing in the Valley of the Amiene. It has a restaurant offering set menus at lunch and dinner for €15 and €21. If you decide to stay the night, its **Foresteria** (☎ 07 748 55 69; foresteria@benedettini-subiaco.it; per person B&B €35, half board €43, full board €48) is a great place to spend a comfortable and contemplative night. It's best to book ahead, as Benedictine clergy from around the world often make the pilgrimage here to work in the monastery's famous **library** and **archive** (🕒 Mon-Fri, mornings Sat).

Subiaco's **tourist office** (☎ 07 748 22 013; iatsubiaco@libero.it; Via Cadorna 59; 🕒 8am-2pm Mon, Wed-Thu & Sat, 8am-2pm & 3-6pm Tue & Fri) is just up the hill from the bus station and can provide you with directions and information about the surrounding area.

From Subiaco, St Benedict headed south until, it's said, three ravens led him to the top of Monte Cassino. Here, in 529 AD, he founded the abbey that was to be his home until he died in 547 AD. One of the medieval world's most important Christian centres, the monumental **abbey** (☎ 0776 31 15 29; parking €2; 🕒 9am-12.30pm & 3.30-5pm) has been destroyed and rebuilt several times throughout its history, most recently in 1953. During WWII the abbey was central to German efforts to stop the Allied push north. After almost six months of bitter fighting, the Allies finally bombed the abbey in May 1944 in a desperate attempt to break through.

To get to the monasteries in Subiaco from Rome by public transport, take a Cotral bus to the Subiaco bus station (€3.10, 50 minutes to 1¼ hours, every 45 minutes Monday to Friday from 5.55am, every 2½ hours on weekends) from Ponte Mammolo on metro line B. The shorter trip takes the A24; the longer trip is via Tivoli. If you catch the 8.45am bus from Ponte Mammolo you might arrive in Subiaco in time to catch the 10am bus to Vallepietra, which stops at the Monastery of St Benedict en route. There's another bus at 2pm (3.30pm on Sundays). Outside these times you'll have to brave the demanding but scenic 5km (50-minute) walk to St Scholastica. It's a further 20 minutes uphill to St Benedict. The last bus returns to Rome at 10.30pm from Monday to Saturday and 9.40pm on Sundays.

For Cassino, take a train from Stazione Termini (regional €6.70, intercity €11.90, two hours, 23 daily) and then one of the infrequent shuttle buses (€0.70) from Piazza San Benedetto up to the abbey. These leave at 9.40am, 11.40am and 5pm Monday to Saturday and at 9.45am, 12.15pm and 5pm on Sundays. There are extra services at 3.30pm in summer. If you choose to walk, it will take around two hours to get up the hill and 1½ hours to walk back down.

for beach bunnies: tone up on your tan in the solarium before heading to the hotel's private beach area.

To treat yourself to seafood so fresh it virtually wriggles off the plate, head to **Gli Archi** (☎ 0771 5 43 00; Via Ottaviano 17; meals €35), up in the medieval quarter. Signature dishes include a tantalising *linguine agli scampi* (long pasta with scampi) and *zuppa di cozze* (mussel soup). Many of the cafés and restaurants in town serve dishes featuring fresh buffalo mozzarella – this is because there are many producers in the area. We highly recommend you try it.

To get to Sperlonga from Rome, take a regional train (not the intercity) from Stazione Termini to Fondi (€5.60, 1¼ hours, about 20 daily). From the Fondi train station, you can catch the connecting **Piazzoli Giorgio** (☎ 07715 19 067) bus to Sperlonga (€1, 15 minutes, six daily). Returning from Sperlonga, the bus to Fondi leaves from the main road in the lower town.

Sperlonga is 120km from Rome by car. Take the Via Pontina (SS148) and follow signs to Terracina and then Sperlonga.

ISOLE PONTINE

Although not exactly a secret, this group of small islands between Rome and Naples is largely overlooked by international tourists. Things are changing, however, and increasing numbers of foreigners are joining the hordes of Italian visitors who holiday on Ponza and Ventotene – the only two inhabited islands. Prices are not cheap, though, and budget travellers would do well to avoid the peak summer months of July and August. Note that many places shut down in winter.

The history of the islands goes back a long way. Homer refers to Ponza in the *Odyssey*, while in Roman times they were a favourite retreat for emperors and courtiers. But as the Roman Empire declined, the islands were left vulnerable to violent attacks by the Saracens and by groups from mainland Italy and the nearby Aeolian Islands. Unfaithful wives, promiscuous daughters and persecuted Christians counted among the large number of people exiled to the islands at this time.

A golden age came in the 18th century, but commerce flourished at the expense of the natural habitat, which was largely destroyed in the locals' rush to build and cultivate. Today Ponza is ecologically still in pretty poor shape: there's a lot of erosion caused by terraced farming and bird-hunting is virtually an obsession (migrating birds pass over on their journey between Europe and Africa). Fortunately, the islands are now under national park protection.

For online information about Ponza, check www.aplatinatourismo.it and www.ponza.it.

Sleeping

Many of the locals rent out individual rooms to tourists; you'll find them touting at the port. Otherwise, check the tourist information office's website for an authorised list. The following places are on Ponza.

Villa Ersilia (☎ 0771 800 97; www.villaersilia.it) This company rents out a variety of rooms, studios and apartments. Prices range from €35 to €100 per person per night.

Grand Hotel Santa Domitilla (☎ 0771 80 99 51; www.santadomitilla.com; Via Panoramica; d €180-370; ☒ ☕ ☎ ☎) If you're coming to Ponza, you may as well do as the beautiful people do and book into at this swish four-star hotel. With three pools (one an ancient Roman saltwater pool), it's worth the splurge.

Getting There & Around

Ponza and Ventotene are accessible by car ferry or hydrofoil from Anzio, Terracina, Naples and Formia. Some services run year-round but others run only from late June to the start of September. The major companies are **SNAP** (www.snapnavigazione.it), **Caremar** (www.caremar.it) and **Vetor** (www.vetor.it). Timetable information is available from the websites, from most travel agents and, in summer, from the Rome section of *Il Messaggero* and *Il Tempo* newspapers. Prices vary according to the point of departure and whether you're on a hydrofoil or ferry – from Terracina to Ponza the 2½-hour daily ferry crossing costs from €20 (return).

Cars and large motorbikes are forbidden on Ponza in summer, but there's a good local bus service (tickets €1). Otherwise, you can rent a scooter at the port for about €40 per day.

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