

TRANSPORT

Rome is an easy place to get to. It's served by direct flights from across the world and hundreds of European connections. Once you're in the city, there's a comprehensive public transport system which makes getting around pretty simple.

Flights, tours, tickets and the like can be booked online at www.lonelyplanet.com/travel_services.

AIR Airlines

Rome is served by most of the world's major international airlines and by a growing number of low-cost operators. Most airlines have counters in the departure hall at Fiumicino airport (Leonardo da Vinci Airport; p282) and some have ticket offices in the city centre, usually on or around central Via Barberini.

Most domestic flights are operated by Italy's national carrier, **Alitalia** (% 06 22 22; www.alitalia.it), although **Air One** (Map pp90–1; % 199 20 70 80; www.flyairone.it; Via Sardegna 14) and **Meridiana** (Map pp90–1; % 89 29 28; www.meridiana.it; Via Barberini 67) fly a number of routes.

International airlines with direct connections to Rome:

Air Berlin (AB; % 848 39 00 54; www.airberlin.com)

Air Canada (AC; % 800 871 27 786; www.aircanada.com)

Air France (AF; % 848 88 44 66; www.airfrance.com)

Alitalia (AZ; % 06 22 22; www.alitalia.it)

American Airlines (AA; % 06 660 53 169; www.aa.com)

British Airways (BA; % 199 71 22 66; www.britishairways.com)

Brussels Airlines (SN; % 899 80 09 03; www.brusselsairlines.com)

Delta Air Lines (DL; % 848 78 03 76; www.delta.com)

EasyJet (U2; % 899 67 67 89; www.easyjet.com)

Emirates (EK; % 06 452 06 060; www.emirates.com)

Lufthansa (LH; % 199 40 00 44; www.lufthansa.com)

Malaysia Airlines (MH; % 06 421 54 371; www.malaysiaairlines.com)

Qantas (QF; % 848 35 00 10; www.qantas.com)

Ryanair (FR; % 899 67 89 10; www.ryanair.com)

Singapore Airlines (SQ; % 06 478 55 360; www.singaporeair.com)

Thai Air (TG; % 06 47 81 31; www.thaiair.com)

CLIMATE CHANGE & TRAVEL

Climate change is a serious threat to the ecosystems that humans rely upon, and air travel is the fastest-growing contributor to the problem. Lonely Planet regards travel, overall, as a global benefit, but believes we all have a responsibility to limit our personal impact on global warming.

Flying & Climate Change

Pretty much every form of motorised travel generates CO₂ (the main cause of human-induced climate change) but planes are far and away the worst offenders, not just because of the sheer distances they allow us to travel, but because they release greenhouse gases high into the atmosphere. The statistics are frightening: two people taking a return flight between Europe and the US will contribute as much to climate change as an average household's gas and electricity consumption over a whole year.

Carbon Offset Schemes

Climatecare.org and other websites use 'carbon calculators' that allow travellers to offset the level of greenhouse gases they are responsible for with financial contributions to sustainable travel schemes that reduce global warming – including projects in India, Honduras, Kazakhstan and Uganda.

Lonely Planet, together with Rough Guides and other concerned partners in the travel industry, supports the carbon offset scheme run by climatecare.org. Lonely Planet offsets all of its staff and author travel.

For more information check out our website: www.lonelyplanet.com.

Travel websites worth checking for tickets:

Cheap Tickets (www.cheaptickets.co.uk)

Ebookers (www.ebookers.com)

Expedia (www.expedia.com)

Opodo (www.opodo.com)

Airports

Rome is served by two airports: the main international airport **Leonardo da Vinci** (FCO; % 06 659 51; www.adr.it), better known as Fiumicino, and **Ciampino airport** (CIA; % 06 659 51; www.adr.it).

Thirty kilometres from the centre of town, Leonardo da Vinci is divided into three terminals: Terminal A (for domestic flights), Terminal B (for domestic and international flights to Schengen countries) and Terminal C (for all other international flights). The terminals are within easy walking distance of each other in the main airport building.

Facilities at the airport include a post office, internet access (in Terminal A's Atahotel Executive Centre), some 140 shops, and a **left-luggage office** (h 7am-11pm) on the ground floor of Terminal C. To leave a bag costs €2 for up to seven hours and €3.50 for seven to 24 hours; luggage over 110cm long, or weighing more than 55kg, costs €6 per day. Make sure you

have your passport handy, as a photocopy will be made when you leave your luggage.

Ciampino, 15km southeast of the city centre, is used by low-cost airlines and charter operators. It's not a big airport but there's a steady flow of traffic and at peak times it can get extremely busy. Facilities are limited but you will find a post office and Banca di Roma.

BICYCLE

The centre of Rome doesn't lend itself to cycling: there are steep hills, treacherous cobbled roads, and the traffic is terrible. Things improve on Sundays when much of the city centre (and Via Appia Antica) is usually closed to traffic.

If you want to pedal around town, pick up *andiamo in Bici a Roma* (€7.50), a useful map published by Lozzi & Rossi Editore, which details Rome's main cycle paths.

On Sunday, and weekdays after 9pm, you can take your bike on metro line B and the Lido di Ostia train (front carriage only), although you'll have to buy a separate ticket for it.

You can also carry bikes on some regional trains, paying a €3.50 supplement. On Inter-city and Eurocity/Euronight services the supplement is €5 on national routes and €10 on international journeys.

GETTING INTO TOWN

Fiumicino

The easiest way to get to and from Fiumicino is to take the 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 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 marked Orte or Fara Sabina. These slower trains stop at Trastevere, Ostiense and Tiburtina stations but not Termini. They cost €5.50 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. Journey time is 30 minutes to Ostiense and 45 minutes to Tiburtina.

Train tickets can be bought from vending machines in the arrivals hall and train station, from ticket offices, and from *tabacchi* (newsagents').

From outside the airport arrivals hall, **Terravision** (Map pp90-1; % 06 454 41 345; www.terravision.eu) buses depart every two hours between 8.30am and 8.30pm, arriving at Via Marsala outside Stazione Termini. Going the other way buses run between 6.30am and 6.30pm. Tickets (single/return €7/12) are available online, on board, or from **Agenzia 365** (h 8am-8pm) at Stazione Termini.

During the night, **Cotral** (% 800 15 00 08; www.cotralspa.it in Italian) runs a bus from Stazione Tiburtina via Stazione Termini to Fiumicino. It departs Tiburtina at 12.30am, 1.15am, 2.30am and 3.45am, returning at 1.15am, 2.15am, 3.30am and 5am. Tickets, available on the bus, cost €7. Note that Tiburtina is not a safe place to hang around at night.

By car, follow signs for Roma out of the airport complex and onto the autostrada. Exit at EUR, following signs for the *centro*, to link up with Via Cristoforo Colombo, which will take you directly into the centre.

Official white or yellow taxis leave from outside the arrivals hall. The set fare to the city centre is €40, which is valid for up to four passengers and includes luggage.

Hire

To rent a bike you'll have to leave a photo ID in lieu of a cash deposit or, in some cases, a credit card number. Reliable operators:

Appia Antica Regional Park Information Point (Map pp108-9; % 06 513 53 16; Via Appia Antica 58-60; per hr/day €3/10)

Bici e Baci (Map pp90-1; % 06 482 84 43; www.bicibaci.com; Via del Viminale 5; per hr/day €3/9)

Cyclob (Map pp90-1; % 06 481 56 69; www.scooterhire.it; Via Cavour 80; per day €10)

Treno e Scooter (Map pp90-1; % 06 489 05 823; www.trenoescooter.191.it; Piazza dei Cinquecento; per hr/day €5/10) Show a train ticket and you get a 20% discount on the first day's rental.

Villa Borghese (Map pp150-1; Largo Picasso; per hr €3)

BUS & TRAM

Rome's buses and trams are run by **ATAC** (% 800 43 17 84; www.atac.roma.it). The **main bus station** (Map pp90-1) is in front of Stazione Termini on Piazza dei Cinquecento, where there's an **information booth** (h 7.30am-8pm). Other important hubs are at Largo di Torre Argentina, Piazza Venezia and Piazza San Silvestro. Buses generally run from about 5.30am until midnight,

with limited services throughout the night on some routes.

Useful routes:

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

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

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

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

64 Stazione Termini to St Peter's. It takes the same route as the 40 Express but is slower and usually more crowded.

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

175 Stazione Termini, Piazza Barberini, Via del Corso, Piazza Venezia, Via dei Fori Imperiali, Via di San Gregorio, Circo Massimo and Stazione Ostiense.

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

Several private companies run shuttle services. **Airport Connection Services** (off Map pp130-1; % 06 338 32 21; www.airportconnection.it; Via Angelo Fava 28) charges €39 for one or two people, €59 for four. **Airport Shuttle** (off Map pp130-1; % 06 420 14 507; www.airportshuttle.it; Piazza Imerio 67) operates minibus transfers to/from Fiumicino for €28/35 one way for one person then €6 for each additional passenger up to a maximum of eight.

All major car-hire companies are present at Fiumicino.

Ciampino

For Ciampino your best bet is to take a shuttle bus. **Terravision** (Map pp90-1; % 06 454 41 345; www.terravision.eu) buses depart from Via Marsala outside Stazione Termini two hours before each scheduled flight and from Ciampino soon after the arrival of flights. Buy your tickets (single/return €8/14) from **Agenzia 365** (h 8am-8pm) at Stazione Termini or at Ciampino airport. Alternatively, **SIT** (% 06 591 78 44; www.sitbusshuttle.com) covers the same route, with regular departures from Termini between 4.30am and 11.30pm, and from Ciampino between 8.30am and 12.30am. Buy tickets (single/return €6/10) on board.

Schiaffini (www.schiaffini.com) runs two night services: from Termini at 4.30am and 4.50am, and from Ciampino at midnight and 12.30am. Get tickets (€5) on the bus.

Otherwise you can take one of the regular Cotral buses to the Anagnina metro station (about 15 minutes, €1), and then jump on the metro to Stazione Termini. Local orange buses run to Ciampino train station from where regular trains connect with Termini. **Airport Connection Services** (off Map pp130-1; % 06 338 32 21; www.airportconnection.it; Via Angelo Fava 28) and **Airport Shuttle** (off Map pp130-1; % 06 420 14 507; www.airportshuttle.it; Piazza Imerio 67) also operate transfers. With the former you'll pay €39 for up to two people and €59 for four; with the latter €42 for two people, then €6 for each extra passenger.

By taxi the set rate to or from Ciampino is €30.

To hire a car you'll find all the major rental companies in the arrivals hall.

TICKETS, PLEASE

Public transport tickets are valid on all Rome's bus, tram, metro lines, except for routes to Fiumicino airport. They come in various forms:

BIT (*biglietto integrato a tempo*, a single ticket valid for 75 minutes and one metro ride) €1

BIG (*biglietto integrato giornaliero*, a daily ticket) €4

BTI (*biglietto turistico integrato*, a three-day ticket) €11

CIS (*carta integrata settimanale*, a weekly ticket) €16

Abbonamento mensile (a monthly pass) €30

Children under 10 travel free.

To travel in Lazio your best bet is a daily BIRG (*biglietto integrato regionale giornaliero*) ticket. This allows unlimited travel on all city and regional transport, including buses, trains, trams and, in Rome, the metro. It's priced according to zones: the most expensive, zone 7, costs €10.50; the cheapest, zone 1, €2.50.

You can buy tickets at *tabacchi*, at newsstands and from vending machines 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 at the entrance gates for the metro. You risk a €52 fine if you're caught without a validated ticket.

Note that the **Roma Pass** (p288) comes with a three-day travel pass valid on all transport (except for Cotral buses and national trains) within the city boundaries.

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

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

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

910 Stazione Termini, Piazza della Repubblica, Via Piemonte, Via Pinciana (Villa Borghese), Piazza Euclide, Palazzetto dello Sport and Piazza Mancini.

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

The most useful routes:

29N Piramide (Piazzale Ostiense), Ponte Vittorio Emanuele II, Piazza Risorgimento, Viale Belle Arti, Piazza Ungheria, Viale Regina Margherita, Piazza Porta Maggiore, Piazza Porta San Giovanni, Via Labicana and Piramide.

40N Follows the route of metro line B.

55N Follows the route of metro line A.

78N Piazzale Clodio, Piazzale Flaminio, Piazza Cavour, Corso Rinascimento, Largo di Torre Argentina, Piazza Venezia, Via Nazionale and Stazione Termini.

Long-distance national and international buses arrive at and depart from Stazione Tiburtina.

National companies serving Rome:

ARPA (% 0862 41 28 08; www.arpaonline.it in Italian) For L'Aquila and Abruzzo.

Bargagli (% 057 778 62 23; www.bargagliautolinee.it in Italian) To/from Orvieto.

Cotral (% 800 15 00 08; www.cotralspa.it in Italian) For destinations in Lazio.

Sulga (% 0862 41 28 08; www.sulga.it in Italian) Runs to/from Perugia and Assisi.

CAR & MOTORCYCLE

Driving

Driving in Rome is a special experience: it's exhilarating, terrifying, fun and often pointless (gridlock is the norm in central Rome). Riding a scooter is hairier but gives you greater freedom and makes parking easier.

Most of the *centro storico* (historic centre) 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. All 22 streets accessing the 'Limited Traffic Zones' (ZTL) are equipped with electronic-access detection devices. If you're staying in this zone, contact your hotel, which will fax your numberplate to the authorities, thus saving you a €68.25 fine. For further information, check www.sta.roma.it (in Italian) or call % 06 571 18 333.

Driving out of town can be costly. Tolls apply on autostradas and the price of petrol is high.

All EU driving licences are valid in Italy, except for the old-style green UK licences. If you have one of these, or a licence from a non-EU country, you'll need an International Driving Permit (IDP). Valid for a year, they're available from national motoring associations.

To ride a moped, motorcycle or scooter up to 125cc, the minimum age is 16 and a licence (a car licence will do) is required. For anything over 125cc you need a motorcycle licence. Helmets are compulsory.

Remember to drive on the right and overtake on the left, to wear seat belts and turn your headlights on outside of built-up areas. It's also compulsory to carry a warning triangle and fluorescent waistcoat in case of breakdown. The blood alcohol limit is 0.05%.

A good source of information is the **Auto-mobile Club d'Italia** (ACI; www.aci.it in Italian), Italy's national motoring organisation.

Hire

CAR

There's no point renting a car unless you're planning to get out of Rome, but if you want wheels you'll find all the major car-rental companies:

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

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

Hertz (www.hertz.it) Ciampino airport (% 06 793 40 616); Fiumicino airport (% 06 793 40 616); Stazione Termini (% 06 793 40 095)

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

MOTORCYCLE & MOPED

Average prices range from €50 per day for 125cc scooters to €95 for a 500cc motorcycle. Agencies include:

Bici e Baci (Map pp90–1; % 06 482 84 43; www.bicibaci.com; Via del Viminale 5)

Cycto (Map pp90–1; % 06 481 56 69; www.scooterhire.it; Via Cavour 80)

I Bike (Map pp150–1; % 06 322 52 40; Villa Borghese underground car park, 3rd sector, Via Vittorio Veneto 156)

Treno e Scooter (Map pp90–1; % 06 489 05 823; www.trenoescooter.191.it; Piazza dei Cinquecento) Show a train ticket and you get a 20% discount on the first day's rental.

Parking

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 at least €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 6 76 91) who can tell you where to collect it. You'll have to pay about €100 to get it back, plus a hefty fine.

The most convenient car park is at Villa Borghese (Map pp150–1); entry is from Piazzale Brasile at the top of Via Vittorio Veneto. There are also supervised car parks at Stazione Termini (Map pp90–1); at Piazzale dei Partigiani, just outside Stazione Roma-Ostiense (Map pp108–9); and at Stazione Tiburtina.

Expect to pay between €1.30 and €2.50 for the first three to four hours and roughly €16 per day.

METRO

Rome's metro system is of limited value to visitors, with the two lines, A and B, bypassing much of the *centro storico*. The two lines traverse the city in an X-shape, crossing at Stazione 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 to Anagnina.

For ticket details see the boxed text, Tickets Please, *opposite*.

For information on facilities for disabled travellers see p299.

TAXI

Rome's taxi drivers are no better or worse than those in any other city. Some will try to fleece you, others won't. To minimise the

risk, make sure your taxi is licensed (it'll be white or yellow with the letters SPQR on the front door), 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 and on www.romaturismo.it (click on Rome Welcomes You, Transportation, When in Town, Taxi).

Hailing a passing taxi doesn't work in Rome. You must either wait at a taxi rank or telephone for one. In the centre you'll find ranks at Stazione Termini, Largo di Torre Argentina, the Pantheon, Corso Rinascimento, Piazza Navona, Piazza di Spagna, Largo Goldoni, Piazza del Popolo, Piazza Venezia, the Colosseum, Piazza GG Belli in Trastevere and near the Vatican at Piazza Pio XII and Piazza Risorgimento. To book a taxi by phone, try the following:

Cosmos (☎ 06 8 81 77)

La Capitale (☎ 06 49 94)

Pronto Taxi (☎ 06 66 45)

Radio Taxi (☎ 06 35 70)

Samarcanda (☎ 06 55 51)

Tevere (☎ 06 41 57)

Note that if you phone for a taxi, the meter is switched on immediately and you pay from wherever the driver receives the call.

TRAIN

Rome's main train station and transport hub is **Stazione Termini** (Map pp90–1; ☎ 06 473 06 599; Piazza dei Cinquecento), from where there are regular trains to other European countries, all major Italian cities and many smaller towns.

On the main concourse, the **train information office** (Map pp90–1; h 7am–9.45pm) is helpful (English is spoken) but often very busy. To avoid the queues, you can get information online at www.trenitalia.com (accessible through the Link option on the home page of www.ferrovia dellostato.it) or, if you speak Italian, by calling ☎ 89 20 21.

The station has the usual assortment of shops, snack bars and ATMs. In the hall parallel to platform 24 you'll find the tourist office and a hotel reservation service (see p246). The **left-luggage office** (h 6am–midnight) is on the lower ground floor under platform 24. To leave an item costs €3.80 for the first five hours, then €0.60 per hour for each additional hour.

Rome's second train station is **Stazione Tiburtina**, a short ride away on metro line B. Of the capital's eight other train stations, the most important are **Stazione Roma-Ostiense** (Map pp108–9) and **Stazione Trastevere** (Map pp108–9).

Apart from connections to Fiumicino airport, you'll probably only need Rome's overground rail network if you head out of town to the Castelli Romani (p278) or to Ostia (p266).

DIRECTORY

BUSINESS HOURS

Most shops in central Rome open between 9am and 7.30pm (or 9.30am and 8pm) Monday to Saturday. Some larger stores and supermarkets also open on Sundays, typically from 11am to 1pm and 4pm to 7pm. Many smaller, family-run shops stick to the traditional opening hours of 9am to 1pm and 3.30pm to 7.30pm (or 4pm to 8pm) Monday to Friday. Many food shops close on Thursday afternoons (winter) and Saturday afternoons (summer), while other shops tend to remain closed on Monday mornings. Many shops also close for two weeks in August.

Banks generally open from 8.30am to 1.30pm and from 2.45pm to 4.30pm Monday to Friday. In the centre some also open from 8.30am to 12.30pm on Saturday mornings. However, it's always possible to find an exchange office open (see p293).

Bars and cafés usually open from about 7.30am to 8pm. Some then stay open until 1am or 2am, catering to a nocturnal crowd. Many pubs open around noon for lunch and close at about 2am. Clubs (known as *discoteche* in Italian) open at about 10pm but the action rarely starts before midnight. Restaurants open noon to 3pm and 7.30pm to 11pm (later in summer). By law, restaurants are required to close for one day each week, although not all do.

Opening hours of the major sites vary enormously. Many of the big archaeological sites open from 9am until an hour before sunset. The big museums tend to open from around 9.30am to 7pm, although some might stay open later in summer or close earlier in winter (generally October to March). Note also that last admission to museums is generally an hour before the stated closing time and that many museums are closed on Mondays.

CHILDREN

Rome is not especially child-friendly, with few specific attractions and a dearth of amenities. That said, Romans love children and they'll be welcome everywhere. Restaurants, for example, are very laid-back when it comes to accommodating children and, even if few offer a kids' menu, most will happily serve a

mezza porzione (child's portion) and provide *seggioloni* (highchairs). Some hotels can supply a *culla* (cot) on request.

Rome's museums and galleries are not ideal for rampaging toddlers as most are hands-off, cultural heavyweights with little light-hearted distraction. There are some exceptions, though, and we've listed these in the Top Picks for Children boxed text (p113).

Museums, galleries and archaeological sites are generally free for EU citizens under 18, and children under 10 years old travel free on all public transport. Major car-rental firms can provide children's safety seats subject to prior reservation.

For information about children's events check out *Roma C'è* or *Trovaroma*, the Thursday supplement to *La Repubblica* newspaper.

You can buy baby formula and sterilising solutions at all pharmacies. Disposable nappies (*pannolini* in Italian) are available from supermarkets and pharmacies.

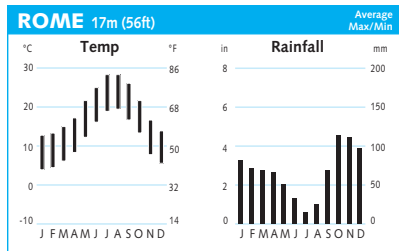
For more general information on how to keep the kids amused, see Lonely Planet's *Travel with Children* by Cathy Lanigan, or log on to www.travelwithyourkids.com.

Babysitting

Many top-end hotels provide child-minding facilities and most others can arrange babysitters. If you want an English-speaking sitter, contact **Angels** (Map p60; ☎ 06 678 28 77; staffinitaly@yahoo.co.uk; Via dei Fienili 98). It charges about €15 per hour plus an agency fee of €20. For longer-term residents, the English **All Saints Church** (Map pp90–1; ☎ 06 360 01 881; www.allsaintsrome.org; Via del Babuino 153) runs a parent–toddler group called Lady-birds. It meets on Wednesday mornings between 10am and noon.

CLIMATE

Rome enjoys a typically Mediterranean climate. Summers (from June to September) are hot and dry with temperatures often soaring to 37°C. High humidity is also common, particularly in July and August. Winter tends to be moderate, at least by northern European standards, with temperatures averaging around 10°C to 15°C between December and February. Snow, although not unheard of, is



extremely rare. Spring (March to June) and early autumn (September and October) are the best times to visit Rome, with lovely blue skies and mild temperatures. November and December are the two wettest months. For more on when to visit, see [p16](#).

COURSES

Rome is a popular destination for foreign students. But even if you're not reading for a degree in art or architecture, there are loads of courses available for enthusiastic amateurs.

Cooking

Cookery writer Diane Seed (*The Top One Hundred Pasta Sauces*) runs her [Roman Kitchen](#) (Map pp74-5; ☎ 06 679 71 03; www.italiangourmet.com) cooking courses four or five times a year from her kitchen in Palazzo Doria Pamphilj (p86). There are one-day, two-day, three-day and week-long courses costing €200 per day or €1000 per week.

The Italian gastronomic organisation Gambero Rosso organises a range of cooking courses at its Rome complex [Citta del Gusto](#) (Map pp108-9; ☎ 06 551 12 21; www.gamberorosso.it/portale/cdg/scuole; Via Enrico Fermi 161). Three- or six-hour courses (in Italian) focus on a particular dish or ingredient such as pasta, pizza or seafood. Lessons cost €75 for three hours.

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 include the following:

[Arco di Druso](#) (Map pp130-1; ☎ 06 397 50 984; www.arcodidruso.com; Via Tunisi 4)

[Berlitz](#) (Map pp74-5; ☎ 06 683 40 00; www.berlitz.it; Via di Torre Argentina 21)

[Centro Linguistico Italiano Dante Alighieri](#) (Map pp150-1; ☎ 06 442 31 400; www.cclidante.it; Piazza Bologna 1)

[Italiaidea](#) (Map pp90-1; ☎ 06 699 41 314; www.italiaidea.com; Via dei Due Macelli 47)

[Torre di Babele Centro di Lingua e Cultura Italiana](#) (Map pp150-1; ☎ 06 442 52 578; www.torredibabele.com; Via Cosenza 7)

Mosaic-Making

Turn your hand to mosaic-making at [Art Studio Café](#) (Map pp130-1; ☎ 06 972 77 286; www.artstudiocafe.com in Italian; Via dei Gracchi 187a), an exhibition space, mosaics school and art 'laboratory'. One-day classes cost €120, two-day classes €240 and an intensive six-day course €800.

Wine Tasting

Refine your palate a course run by the [International Wine Academy of Roma](#) (Map pp90-1; ☎ 06 699 08 78; www.wineacademyroma.com; Vicolo del Bottino 8). Learn about Italy's wine regions and tone up your tasting skills on the €180 half-day (two-hour) course, which includes lunch or dinner. There are also one-day tours (€360) to local vineyards and tastings (€30 to €50) on Thursdays and Saturdays. Bookings essential.

CUSTOMS REGULATIONS

If entering Italy from another EU country you can bring, duty-free, 10L of spirits, 90L of wine and 800 cigarettes. If you're arriving from a non-EU country the limits are 1L of spirits, 2L of wine, 50mL of perfume, 250mL of *eau de toilette*, 200 cigarettes and other goods up to a total of €175.50; anything over this limit must be declared on arrival and duty paid. On leaving the EU, non-EU citizens can reclaim any value-added tax on expensive purchases (see p297). You can bring up to €10,000 into Italy.

DISCOUNT CARDS

There's a range of combination tickets available for serious sightseeing.

[Appia Antica Card](#) (adult/EU 18-24yr €6/3, valid 7 days) Entrance to the Terme di Caracalla, Mausoleo di Cecilia Metella and Villa dei Quintili.

[Museo Nazionale Romano Card](#) (adult/EU 18-24yr €7/3.50, valid 3 days) Entrance to all venues of the Museo Nazionale Romano: Palazzo Altemps, Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, Terme di Diocleziano and Crypta Balbi. If there's an exhibition on at any of the museums there's an additional €3 supplement.

[Roma Archaeologia Card](#) (€20, valid 7 days) Entrance to the Colosseum, the Palatino, Terme di Caracalla, Museo Nazionale Romano (Palazzo Altemps, Palazzo Massimo alle Terme, Terme di Diocleziano, Crypta Balbi), Mausoleo di Cecilia Metella and Villa dei Quintili.

[Roma Pass](#) (www.romapass.it; €20, valid 3 days) Includes free admission to two museums or sites (you choose from a list of 38) as well as reduced entry to extra sites, unlimited public transport (although it's not valid on trains to the airport), and reduced 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. The Roma Pass is also available at tourist information points.

Note that EU citizens aged between 18 and 24 or 25 generally qualify for a discount (usually half the normal fee) at most galleries and museums, while those under 18 and over 65 often get in free. In both cases you'll need proof of your age, ideally a passport or ID card.

ELECTRICITY

The standard voltage in Italy is 220V, 50Hz, although some older buildings still use 125V. Power points have two or three holes and do not have their own switches; plugs have two or three round pins. Adaptors are available from electrical shops. For further electrical information log onto [www.kropla.com](#), where you'll find loads of useful tips on plugs, adaptors, transformers and other gizmos.

EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

[Australia](#) (Map pp150-1; ☎ 06 85 27 21, toll-free emergency number 800 87 77 90; www.italy.embassy.gov.au; Via Antonio Bosio 5; h 9am-5pm Mon-Fri)

[Austria](#) Embassy (Map pp150-1; ☎ 06 844 01 41; www.austria.it; Via Pergolesi 3); Consulate (Map pp150-1; ☎ 06 855 28 80; Viale Liegi 32; h 9am-noon Mon-Fri)

[Canada](#) Embassy (Map pp150-1; ☎ 06 85 44 41; www.canada.it; Via Salaria 243); Consulate (Map pp150-1; ☎ 06 85 44 41; Via Zara 30; h 8.30am-noon & 2-4pm Mon-Fri)

[France](#) Embassy (Map pp74-5; ☎ 06 68 60 11; www.france-italia.it; Palazzo Farnese, Piazza Farnese); Consulate (Map pp74-5; ☎ 06 68 60 11; Via Giulia 251; h 9am-12.30pm Mon-Fri)

[Germany](#) (Map pp90-1; ☎ 06 49 21 31; www.rom.diplo.de; Via San Martino della Battaglia 4; h consular section 9am-noon Mon-Fri)

[Ireland](#) (Map pp74-5; ☎ 06 697 91 21; www.ambasciata-irlanda.it; Piazza Campitelli 3; h consular section 10am-12.30pm & 3-4.30pm Mon-Fri)

[Netherlands](#) (Map pp150-1; ☎ 06 322 86 001; www.olandait.it; Via Michele Mercati 8; h consular section 9am-noon Mon, Tue, Thu & Fri)

[New Zealand](#) (Map pp150-1; ☎ 06 441 71 71; www.nzembassy.com; Via Zara 28; h 8.30am-12.45pm & 1.45-5pm Mon-Fri)

[Switzerland](#) (Map pp150-1; ☎ 06 80 95 71; www.eda.admin.ch/roma; Via Barnaba Oriani 61; h consular section 9am-noon Mon-Fri)

[UK](#) (Map pp90-1; ☎ 06 422 00 001; www.britishembassy.gov.uk; Via XX Settembre 80a; h consular section 9.15am-1.30pm Mon-Fri)

[USA](#) (Map pp90-1; ☎ 06 4 67 41; www.usis.it; Via Vittorio Veneto 119-121; h consular section 8.30am-12.30pm Mon-Fri)

EMERGENCY

Ambulance (☎ 118)

Fire (☎ 115)

Police (☎ 113)

GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELLERS

At the start of 2007 it looked like it was going to be pink champagne all round. Italy had its first transsexual MP, Vladimir Luxuria, and gay rights were very much on the government's political agenda. Alas, little came of it. The Vatican thundered outrage at the prospect of legal rights for common-law couples (including same-sex couples) and the right-wing opposition loudly decried the death of family life. In the end the government wilted and the issue was dropped.

Fortunately, not all of Rome thinks like its politicians and priests. Homosexuality (legal over the age of 16) is well tolerated if rarely overt – public displays of affection are frowned upon and there's no openly gay part of town – and gay life thrives in Rome.

The main cultural and political organisation is the [Circolo Mario Mieli di Cultura Omosessuale](#) (Map pp108-9; ☎ 06 541 39 85; www.mariomieli.it in Italian; Via Efeso 2a), 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 the **Coordinamento Lesbiche Italiano** (CLI; [Map pp122–3](#); ☎ 06 686 42 01; [www.clrpb.it](#) in Italian; Buon Pastore Centre, cnr Via di San Francesco di Sales & Via della Lungara). Weekly political meetings of the Centro Femminista Separatista are held here, as well as conferences and literary evenings. There is also a women-only hostel, La Foresteria Orsa Maggiore (p260).

The lesbian bookshop **Libreria delle Donne: Al Tempo Ritrovato** ([Map pp122–3](#); ☎ 06 581 77 24; Via dei Fienaroli 31d) carries details of forthcoming events, as does the friendly **Libreria Babele** (p163), an excellent point of reference for gay and lesbian visitors.

Useful listings guides include *Pride* (€3.10), a national monthly magazine; the international gay guide *Spartacus*; and [GuidaGay.it](#) ([www.gay.it/guida/Lazio](#) in Italian) or [GayFriendlyItaly.com](#) ([www.gayfriendlyitaly.com/guide](#) in English), which carry listings for Rome and the Lazio region.

The following might also be of help:

Arcigay Roma ([Map pp90–1](#); ☎ 06 645 01 102; [www.arcigayroma.it](#); Via Goito 35b) The Roman branch of the national Arcigay organisation. Offers counselling, phone lines and general information.

Arcilesbica ([off Map pp90–1](#); ☎ 06 418 02 11; [www.arcilesbica.it](#); Viale Stefanini 15) Runs a help line (7pm to 9pm Monday evenings) and organises social get-togethers.

Zipper Travel Association ([Map pp90–1](#); ☎ 06 443 62 244; [www.zippertravel.it](#); Via del Castro Pretorio 30) A specialist gay and lesbian travel agency.

HOLIDAYS

Most Romans take their annual holiday in August. This means that many businesses and shops close for at least part of the month, particularly around Ferragosto (Feast of the Assumption) on 15 August. Surprisingly, though, August is not considered high season by Rome's hoteliers, many of whom offer discounts to avoid empty rooms.

Italian schools close for three months in summer (from mid-June to mid-September), for three weeks over Christmas (generally the last two weeks of December and the first week of January) and for a week at Easter.

Public holidays:

Capodanno (New Year's Day) 1 January

Epifania (Epiphany) 6 January

Pasquetta (Easter Monday) March/April

Giorno della Liberazione (Liberation Day) 25 April

Festa del Lavoro (Labour Day) 1 May

Festa della Repubblica (Republic Day) 2 June

Festa dei Santi Pietro e Paolo (Feast of St Peter & St Paul) 29 June

Ferragosto (Feast of the Assumption) 15 August

Festa di Ognisanti (All Saints' Day) 1 November

Festa dell'Immacolata Concezione (Feast of the Immaculate Conception) 8 December

Natale (Christmas Day) 25 December

Festa di Santo Stefano (Boxing Day) 26 December

For further details of Rome's holiday calendar see [p141](#) and [p16](#).

INTERNET ACCESS

The easiest way to access the internet is at an internet café. There are plenty to choose from, including the following:

Internet Café ([Map pp90–1](#); ☎ 06 478 23 051; Via Cavour 213; per hr €2-3; ⌚ 11am-1am Mon-Fri, 3pm-1am Sat & Sun) Rates vary according to the time of day; they're cheapest before 4pm.

Internet Café ([Map p103](#); ☎ 06 445 49 53; Via dei Marzucini 12; per hr €3; ⌚ 9.30am-1am Mon-Fri, 5pm-1am Sat & Sun) In San Lorenzo, east of Termini.

New Internet Point ([Map pp122–3](#); ☎ 06 583 33 316; Piazza Sonnino 27; per hr €4; ⌚ 8.30am-midnight) Over the road from the tourist information point in Trastevere.

Splashnet ([Map pp90–1](#); ☎ 06 493 82 073; Via Varese 33; per hr €1.50; ⌚ 8.30am-midnight) One of several laundrette-cum-internet points in the Termini area.

Tritone Internet Point ([Map pp90–1](#); ☎ 06 478 26 180; Via Zucchelli 1d; per hr €2.50; ⌚ 8am-2am) An international phone centre just off Via del Tritone.

Yex Internet Point ([Map pp74–5](#); Piazza Sant'Andrea della Valle 1; per hr €4.40; ⌚ 10am-midnight) Near Piazza Navona. All terminals have webcams.

Many hostels and budget hotels provide a computer for internet access.

Most travellers use free web-based email such as **Yahoo** ([www.yahoo.com](#)), **Hotmail** ([www.hotmail.com](#)) or **Google** ([www.google.com](#)), which can be accessed from any internet-connected computer in the world.

If you're bringing your own laptop or PDA, you shouldn't have many problems hooking up in your hotel room. Most midrange and top-end hotels now have dataports for

WI-FI ACCESS

Free wi-fi access is available in much of central Rome. Hot spots cover all the major parks as well as Piazza Navona, Campo de' Fiori, Piazza di Spagna, the Pantheon, Campidoglio, the Trevi Fountain and Largo di Torre Argentina. To log on is easy: open your browser and fill in the registration form that automatically appears. You'll have to provide a mobile telephone number and make a quick call so that the server can verify your number, but once that's done you're entitled to one hour's free internet use per day. For further details see [www.romawireless.com](#).

Many hotels also offer wi-fi access, although it's rarely free.

Telecom Italia ([www.187.it](#) in Italian) sells prepaid wi-fi cards for €3 (one hour), €5 (five hours), €15 (15 hours) and €40 (seven days). Once you have the card, activate it by going online at [www.wifiarea.it](#) and filling in the form. It's in Italian but basically asks for your name, address, nationality (select *estera* unless you're Italian), user ID and password (both on the back of your card).

customer use and those that don't will usually let you plug your modem into the phone line. You might need a power transformer (to convert from 110V to 220V if your laptop isn't set up for dual voltage), an RJ-11 telephone jack that works with your modem, and a plug adaptor. Most electrical shops in Rome sell adaptors that convert from RJ-11 to the local three-pinned plug variety; more modern phone lines take the RJ-11 jack directly.

If you need an Internet Service Provider (ISP) with local dial-up numbers, try **AOL** ([www.aol.com](#)), **AT&T** ([www.att.com](#)) or **CompuServe** ([www.compuserve.com](#)).

LEGAL MATTERS

The most likely reason for a brush with the law is to report a theft. If you do have something stolen and you want to claim it on insurance, you must make a statement to the police as insurance companies won't pay up without official proof of a crime.

The Italian **police** (☎ 113) is divided into three main bodies: the *polizia*, who wear navy-blue jackets; the *carabinieri*, in a black uniform with a red stripe; and the grey-clad *guardia di finanza* (fiscal police), responsible for fighting tax evasion and drug smuggling. If you run into trouble you're most likely to end up dealing with the *polizia* or *carabinieri*.

If you are detained for any alleged offence, you should be given verbal and written notice of the charges laid against you within 24 hours. You have no right to a phone call upon arrest but you can choose not to respond to questions without the presence of a lawyer. For serious crimes it is possible to be held without trial for up to two years.

Rome's **Questura** (police headquarters; [Map pp90–1](#); ☎ 06 4 68 61; Via San Vitale 15) is just off Via Nazionale. Around the corner, the **Ufficio Stranieri**

(Foreigners Bureau; [Map pp90–1](#); ☎ 06 468 63 216; Via Genova 2; ⌚ 24hr) is where you should go to report a theft or if you want to apply for a *permesso di soggiorno* (p300).

The voting age in Italy is 18, the age of consent is 16 (homosexual and heterosexual) and you can drive at 18. Minors under 16 can buy wine and beer but not *superalcolici* (spirits).

Drink & Drugs

In February 2006 the Italian parliament approved tough antidrugs laws that abolished the distinction between hard and soft drugs, effectively putting cannabis on the same legal footing as cocaine, heroin and ecstasy. If caught with what the police deem to be a dealable quantity (5g of cannabis or more), you risk fines of up to €260,000 or prison sentences of between six and 20 years. At the time of writing, elements within the government were pushing to liberalise these laws but nothing had been settled.

The legal limit for a driver's blood-alcohol reading is 0.05%. Following a spate of road fatalities in summer 2007, authorities are beginning to stamp down hard on drink driving.

MAPS

The Rome Tourist Board publishes an excellent pocket-sized city map, *Roma*, which is free at its **office** ([Map pp90–1](#); ☎ 06 48 89 91; Via Parigi 5; ⌚ 9am-7pm Mon-Sat). Tourist information kiosks around town also hand out *Charta Roma*, an A3-sized stylised map with the major sights and their opening hours. Otherwise there are plenty of maps 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 *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 *Roma Metro-Bus* (€6) details the city's main transport routes.

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

The best road map is the 1:12,500 *Pianta Roma* (€7), published by the Touring Club Italiano.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Italy has a public health system that is legally bound to provide emergency care to everyone. EU nationals are entitled to reduced-cost, sometimes free, medical care with a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), available from your home health authority; non-EU citizens should take out medical insurance.

For emergency treatment, go straight to the *pronto soccorso* (casualty) section of an *ospedale* (public hospital), where it's also possible to receive emergency dental treatment. For less serious ailments call the local Guardia Medica (ask at your hotel or nearest tourist office for the number). Pharmacists will serve prescriptions and can provide basic medical advice.

If you need an ambulance call % 118.

Emergency Rooms

The following hospitals offer emergency services.

Ospedale Bambino Gesù (Map pp130–1; % 06 6 85 91; Piazza di Sant'Onofrio 4) Rome's premier children's hospital; on the Gianicolo.

Ospedale Fatebenefratelli (Map pp74–5; % 06 6 83 71; Piazza Fatebenefratelli, Isola Tiberina)

Ospedale San Camillo Forlanini (off Map pp108–9; % 06 5 87 01; Circonvallazione Gianicolense 87)

Ospedale San Giacomo (Map pp150–1; % 06 3 62 61; Via A Canova 29) Off Via del Corso near Piazza del Popolo.

Ospedale San Giovanni (Map pp108–9; % 06 770 53 44; Via Amba Aradam 8) Near Piazza di San Giovanni in Laterano.

Ospedale Santo Spirito (Map pp130–1; % 06 6 83 51; Lungotevere in Sassa 1) Hospital near the Vatican; several languages spoken.

Policlinico Umberto I (Map p103; % 06 4 99 71, first aid 06 499 79 501; Viale del Policlinico 155) Rome's largest hospital, near Stazione Termini.

Specialist dental care is available at **Ospedale di Odontoiatria G Eastman** (Map p103; % 06 84 48 31; Viale Regina Elena 287b).

Pharmacies

Marked by a green cross, *farmacie* (pharmacies) open from 8.30am to 1pm and 4pm to 7.30pm Monday to Friday and on Saturday mornings. Outside of these hours they open on a rotation basis, and all are legally required to post a list of places open in the vicinity. Night pharmacies are listed in daily newspapers and on www.romaturismo.it.

If you think you'll need a prescription while in Rome, make sure you know the drug's generic name rather than the brand name.

There's a 24-hour **pharmacy** (Map pp90–1; % 06 488 00 19; Piazza dei Cinquecento 49) on the western flank of Piazza dei Cinquecento near Stazione Termini. In the station, you'll find a **pharmacy** (h 7.30am–10pm) on the lower-ground floor.

In the Vatican, the **Farmacia Vaticana** (Map pp130–1; % 06 698 83 422; h 8.30am–6pm Mon–Fri & 8.30am–1pm Sat), just inside the Porta Sant'Anna entrance, sells certain drugs that are not available in Italian pharmacies, and will fill foreign prescriptions (something local pharmacies can't do).

MONEY

Italy is a member of the euro zone, along with Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain. The seven euro notes come in denominations of €500, €200, €100, €50, €20, €10 and €5. The eight euro coins are in denominations of €2 and €1, and 50, 20, 10, five, two and one cents.

Exchange rates are given in the Quick Reference inside the front cover of this book. For the latest rates check out www.xe.com. For a guide to costs turn to p18.

ATMs

ATMs (known in Italy as *bancomat*) are widely available in Rome and most will accept cards tied into the Visa, MasterCard, Cirrus and Maestro systems. As a precaution, though, check that the appropriate logo is displayed on the ATM before inserting your card. The daily limit for cash withdrawal is €250.

Remember that every time you withdraw cash there will be a transaction surcharge. Check with your own bank to see how much this is.

If an ATM rejects your card, don't despair. Try a few more before assuming the problem lies with your card.

Changing Money

You can change your money in banks, at post offices or at a *cambio* (exchange office). There are exchange booths at Stazione Termini (Map pp90–1) and at Fiumicino and Ciampino airports. In the centre, there are numerous exchange booths, including the following:

American Express (Map pp90–1; % 06 6 76 41; Piazza di Spagna 38; h 9am–5.30pm Mon–Fri, 9am–12.30pm Sat)

Thomas Cook Travelex (Map pp90–1; % 06 420 20 150; Piazza Barberini 21a; h 9am–7pm Mon–Sat, 9.30am–5pm Sun)

Post offices and banks tend to offer the best rates. Commission fluctuates and depends on whether you're changing cash or cheques. A few banks also provide automatic exchange machines that accept notes from most major currencies. Exchange booths often advertise 'no commission' but offer worse rates.

Always make sure you have your passport, or some form of photo ID, at hand when exchanging money.

Credit Cards

Virtually all midrange and top-end hotels accept credit cards, as do most restaurants and large shops. You can also use them to obtain cash advances at some banks. Some of the cheaper *pensioni* (guesthouses), trattorias and pizzerias accept nothing but cash.

Major cards such as Visa, MasterCard, Eurocard, Cirrus and Eurocheques are widely accepted. Amex is also recognised although it's less common than Visa or MasterCard.

The Amex office (above) can issue customers with new cards, usually within 24 hours and sometimes immediately, if they have been lost or stolen.

If your card is lost, stolen or swallowed by an ATM, telephone toll-free to have an immediate stop put on its use:

Amex (% 800 91 49 12)

Diners Club (% 800 86 40 64)

MasterCard (% 800 87 08 66)

Visa (% 800 87 72 32)

Travellers Cheques

Increasingly overlooked by card-wielding travellers, travellers cheques are a dying breed. They are, however, an excellent form of backup, especially as you can claim a refund if they're stolen (provided, of course, that you've kept a separate record of their numbers).

American Express, Visa and Travelex cheques are the easiest to cash, particularly if in US dollars, British pounds or euros. Increasingly, though, banks are charging hefty commissions, even on cheques denominated in euros. Always take your passport as identification when cashing in travellers cheques.

If your cheques are lost or stolen, call the following:

Amex (% 800 91 49 12)

MasterCard (% 800 87 08 66)

Travelex (% 800 87 20 50)

Visa (% 800 87 41 55)

NEWSPAPERS & MAGAZINES

English

English-language newspapers and magazines are available from many city-centre newsstands. For magazines try Feltrinelli International (p175) or Messaggerie Musicali (p169), both of which have excellent selections.

British papers are generally available around lunchtime on the day of publication; for the Sunday papers you'll have to wait until Monday. Look for the *Guardian*, *Times*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Independent* and *Financial Times* as well as various tabloids and the *Economist*.

American publications usually appear a day after printing. You'll find the *International Herald Tribune* (Monday to Friday) with a four-page supplement, *Italy Daily*, *USA Today*, the *Wall Street Journal Europe*, *New York Times*, *Time* and *Newsweek*.

The major German, French and Spanish dailies and some Scandinavian papers can also be found.

Published in Rome, *Wanted in Rome* is a fortnightly English-language news and listings magazine aimed at Rome's foreign residents.

Italian

Italian newspapers are long on domestic politics and tend to assume the reader is well versed in current affairs. At the very least they require a thorough knowledge of Italian

acronyms, a working understanding of Italian law and an almost total command of bureaucratic procedures.

Il Messaggero, Rome's local broadsheet, is good for news about the capital and has a weekly listings supplement. *Metro*, Milan-based *Corriere della Sera* is Italy's leading broadsheet, with good foreign and political coverage. Its main competitor is Rome's slightly left-of-centre *La Repubblica*, which publishes an excellent listings guide, *Trovatura*, every Thursday. The voice of the Vatican, *L'Osservatore Romano*, is published daily in Italian with weekly editions in English (on Wednesdays) and other foreign languages.

Italy's biggest-selling weekly magazine is *Famiglia Cristiana*, a predictably conservative periodical published by a Catholic publishing house. The two top current-affairs magazines are *L'Espresso* and *Panorama*, both of which provide in-depth analysis of domestic and international affairs.

The best listings guide in Rome, *Roma C'è* (€1.20), comes out every Wednesday, while *Porta Portese* (€1), a newspaper full of classified ads, is the place to look if you're after a flat or a secondhand car. It comes out on Tuesdays and Fridays. These are available at newsstands across the city.

ORGANISED TOURS

Boat

BATELLI DI ROMA [Map pp130-1](#)

☎ 899 199 925; [www.battellidiroma.it](#); tickets €12; ⚓ departures 11am, 12.30pm, 4pm & 5.30pm mid-Mar-mid-Nov, 11am & 4pm mid-Nov-mid-Mar. This outfit runs daily boat tours along the Tiber. The 70-minute cruise departs from Ponte Sant'Angelo and covers the stretch down to the Isola Tiberina and then up to Ponte Risorgimento. There are also dinner cruises (€54, two hours 15 minutes) at 9pm on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays and, on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, a round-trip service to Ostia Antica (€13, two hours 20 minutes) at 10am. Tickets are available online or at tourist information points (p299).

Bus

ROMA CRISTIANA [Map pp130-1](#)

☎ 06 69 89 61; [www.romacristiana.orpn.net](#); 1-2/-3-day tickets adult €15/20/28, 7-12yr €7.50/10/14, under 6yr free; ⚓ every 30min 8.30am-7.30pm

Operated by the Vatican-sponsored Opera Romana Pellegrinaggi, this hop-on-and-off open bus service runs two lines, both departing from Via della Conciliazione. Line A (San Pietro) follows a circular route up to Stazione Termini and back by way of the major churches and sites, including Santa Maria del Popolo, Museo e Galleria Borghese, Santa Maria degli Angeli, Santa Maria Maggiore, San Pietro in Vincoli, SS Cosma e Damiano, Santa Sabina, Santa Maria in Cosmedin, San Marco, the Pantheon and Chiesa Nuova. Line B (San Paolo) stops off at 22 sites in Trastevere, the Gianicolo, Via Ostiense, Via Appia Antica and San Giovanni before returning to the Vatican.

There's a multilingual commentary and tickets are available on board the buses.

TRAMBUS [Map pp90-1](#)

☎ 800 281 281; [www.trambusopen.com](#); Piazza dei Cinquecento

Trambus operates two tour buses: the 110open and the Archeobus.

The **110open** (adult/under 5yr/6-12yr €16/free/7; ⚓ every 10min 8.40am-7.40pm) is an open-top double-decker bus that departs from the main bus station outside Stazione Termini (platform C) and stops at the Quirinale, Colosseum, Bocca della Verità, Piazza Venezia, Piazza Navona, St Peter's, Piazza Cavour, the Ara Pacis, Trevi Fountain and Via Vittorio Veneto. Tickets, available on board or from the ticket office on platform E of Piazza dei Cinquecento, are valid for the day and allow you to hop on and off as you please. There's a multilingual host on board as well as an audioguide in six languages. Journey time is two hours.

Archeobus (adult/under 5yr €10/free; ⚓ every 40min 9am-4pm) is another stop-and-go bus, which takes sightseers down Via Appia Antica, stopping at 16 points of archaeological interest along the way. These include Piazza Venezia, Bocca della Verità, Circo Massimo, Terme di Caracalla, Porta San Sebastiano, Catacombe di San Callisto and San Sebastiano, Mausoleo di Cecilia Metella and Villa dei Quintili. The bus departs from the main bus terminus at Stazione Termini and tickets are available as for the 110open service.

You can purchase a joint ticket for both the 110open and Archeobus for €24 (valid two days). If you have a Roma Pass (p289) you qualify for a €3 discount on the 110open service and €2 on the Archeobus.

Cycling

LANDIMENSION TRAVEL [Map pp108-9](#)

☎ 06 775 91 009; [www.landimensiontravel.it](#); Via Ostilia 10; per person 2/3 people €105/75, 4-5 people €62, 6-8 people €50

Landimension Travel's three-hour electric bike tours cover one of four itineraries: Trastevere and Environs, Ancient Rome, Appia Antica or Classical Rome. All groups are accompanied by experienced guides and equipment is provided.

Walking & Running

CONTEXT IN ROME [Map pp90-1](#)

☎ 06 482 09 11; [www.contexttravel.com](#); Via Baccina 40

Offering a long list of thematic walks, ranging from food and wine jollies to art and architecture tours, Context in Rome has most subjects covered. Walks are in small groups led by expert guides, often American students specialising in art history and archaeology. Prices vary but bank on about €55 per person for a three-hour walk, €65 for four hours. A private visit to the Vatican Museums costs €275 per person. Booking is essential.

DARK ROME [off Map pp150-1](#)

☎ 338 500 64 24; [www.darkrome.com](#); Via Seravalle 27; tours €18; ⚓ 9pm daily Mar-Oct, 9pm Sun, Tue, Wed, Fri & Sat Nov-Feb

Trawl through Rome's bloody underbelly on one of these original tours. You'll visit the sites of famous murders, miracles and supernatural mysteries. The 1½-hour night walks depart from Corso Vittorio Emanuele II.

ENJOY ROME [Map pp90-1](#)

☎ 06 445 18 43; [www.enjoyrome.com](#); Via Marghera 8

A friendly and efficient private tourist office, Enjoy Rome organises various walks for the budget traveller. Three-hour tours (under/over 26 €18/24) cover Ancient Rome (by day or night), the Vatican, Trastevere and the Jewish Ghetto. Tours to the catacombs and the Appian Way (€35/40) and the Vatican cost extra to cover entrance fees. All guides are native or fluent English speakers.

SIGHTJOGGING

☎ 347 335 31 85; [www.sightjogging.it](#)
If you're fit and in a hurry, sightjogging is for you. As the name suggests, it consists

of seeing the sights on the run. A trainer collects you from your hotel and runs you round one of 10 routes, each one centred on a specific area (eg St Peter's, Villa Borghese, Piazza Navona, Trastevere, Campidoglio). The routes are graded for difficulty and are all between 5.2 and 6.5 miles. Prices range from €84 per hour for a solo tour to €168 for a group of four. Booking is essential.

THROUGH ETERNITY CULTURAL ASSOCIATION [Map pp108-9](#)

☎ 06 700 93 36; [www.througheternity.com](#); Via Sinuessa 8

Another reliable operator, offering various itineraries led by English-speaking experts. Walks include a group twilight tour of Renaissance and baroque Rome (per person €25, 2½ hours), the Vatican Museums and St Peter's Basilica (per person €46, five hours), and a full-day Essence of Rome tour (per group €380, seven hours, groups of up to five people).

PHOTOGRAPHY

Rome's historic cityscape, bright light and hilly terrain make it a photographer's dream. Film and video equipment are widely available, but most people now use digital cameras. If you're shooting digitally check that you have enough memory to store your snaps – two 128MB cards will probably be enough. If you do run out your best bet is to burn your photos onto a CD, something that many processing labs and internet cafés will do for you.

As a general rule, the soft light in the late afternoon photographs better than the sharp glare in the morning. For more photo tips check out Lonely Planet's *Travel Photography* by Richard I'Anson.

Although you'd never know it from the flashes going off around you, flash photography is banned at most museums, galleries and churches.

POST

The butt of much criticism, *Poste Italiane* (☎ 803 160; [www.poste.it](#)) is not as reliable as it could be but has improved much in recent years. The Vatican postal system, on the other hand, has long enjoyed a reputation for efficiency. Note that to use the Vatican post you must use a Vatican stamp.

Stamps (*francobolli*) are available at post offices and authorised tobacconists (look for

the official *tabacchi* sign: a big 'T', usually white on black). Tobacconists keep regular shop hours.

Rome's **main post office** (Map pp90–1; ☎ 06 697 37 213; Piazza di San Silvestro 19; 8.30am–6.30pm Mon–Fri, 8.30am–1pm Sat) is the place to pick up *poste restante* (*fermo posta*) mail. This should be addressed to John Smith, c/o Ufficio Postale Centrale, Fermo Posta, Piazza di San Silvestro, 00187, Roma. Amex card or travellers cheque holders can also use the free client mail-holding service at the Amex office (p293). In both cases take your passport when you go to pick up mail.

There are local post offices in every district of the city. Opening hours vary but are typically 8.30am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 8.30am to 11.50am on Saturday. All post offices close two hours earlier than normal on the last business day of each month.

There's a **Vatican post office** (Map pp130–1; ☎ 06 698 83 406; Piazza San Pietro; 8.30am–7pm Mon–Fri, 8.30am–6pm Sat) on the southern side of Piazza San Pietro.

Rates

Standard postal rates depend on the weight and destination of the letter. Letters up to 20g cost €0.65 to Zone 1 (Europe and the Mediterranean Basin), €0.85 to Zone 2 (other countries in Africa, Asia and America) and €1 to Zone 3 (Australia and New Zealand). Delivery is guaranteed to Europe within three days and to the rest of the world within four to eight days.

For more important items, use registered mail (*raccomandata*), which costs €3.45 to Zone 1, €3.65 to Zone 2 and €3.80 to Zone 3.

RADIO

Italy's national broadcaster, RAI, has three stations: RAI 1 (1332AM or 89.7FM), RAI 2 (846AM or 91.7FM) and RAI 3 (1107AM or 93.7FM). They play a mix of chat shows, sport, news and music, particularly classical and jazz.

For a faster beat tune into one of the many commercial stations that jam the capital's airwaves. Popular outfits include Radio Centro Suono (101.3FM); Radio Kiss Kiss (97.2FM); Radio Città Futura (97.7FM), which broadcasts the BBC World Service for an hour at 10pm daily and then from 3am to 6am; and Radio Capital (95.8FM).

Vatican Radio (1530AM or 105FM; www.vaticanradio.org) is the official mouthpiece

of the Church, broadcasting online and in various languages, including English.

For an insight into current affairs, Italian speakers can log onto <http://repubblicaradio.it> and listen to the online radio station of newspaper *La Repubblica*.

RELOCATING

When you relocate to Rome there's a certain amount of paperwork you'll need to deal with. Exactly what depends on whether you're an EU citizen or not – it's best to check at an Italian consulate before travelling.

For information regarding visas and the *permesso di soggiorno* (permit to stay) see p300.

On arrival in Rome you'll need to get a tax number (*codice fiscale*). Surprisingly, these are very easy to get – simply go to your nearest tax office (*ufficio delle entrate*) with your passport and *permesso di soggiorno* and fill in a form. The number will then be issued within a few days.

To get residency (*certificato di residenza*), for which you'll need an address, take your passport and *permesso di soggiorno* to the registry office (*ufficio anagrafe*) at your local council office (*circoscrizione*) and complete a residency request form. A few days later you'll be visited by a traffic warden (*vigile urbano*) to check that you're living at your stated address.

If you're planning to drive you'll need to sort out your driver's licence. EU licence holders can use their home licence for a year, after which they'll need to convert it to an Italian licence. Holders of non-EU licences will need to get theirs converted straightaway and might have to sit a driving test. It's quite a process converting your licence, involving long queues at the traffic-control authority (*motorizzazione*) and plenty of head-scratching. Rather than go it alone, you'd be well advised to do it through an *ACI* (Automobile Club d'Italia; www.aci.it in Italian) branch office, although this does cost more.

Finding somewhere to live can be hard work. Rental accommodation is much in demand and competition for flats is fierce. The best way is through a friend or contact. If you don't have anyone who can help, look out for *affittasi* (to rent) signs or check out the local press. For more information see the Longer-Term Rentals section in the Sleeping chapter (p246).

For further tips check out www.justlanded.com, which has loads of concise and clear information.

STOP, THIEF

The greatest risk visitors face in Rome, and it is a very real risk, is from pickpockets and thieves. There's no reason for paranoia but you need to be aware that the problem exists.

Pickpockets follow the tourists, so watch out around the Colosseum, Piazza di Spagna, Piazza San Pietro and Stazione Termini, particularly the bus stops on Via Marsala, where thieves prey on disorientated travellers fresh in from Ciampino airport. Crowded public transport is another hot spot – the 64 Vatican bus is notorious. If travelling on the metro, try to use the end carriages, which are usually less crowded.

A money belt with your essentials (passport, cash, credit cards) is a good idea. However, to avoid delving into it in public, carry a wallet with a day's cash. Don't flaunt watches, cameras and other expensive goods. If you're carrying a bag or camera, wear the strap across your body and away from the road – moped thieves can swipe a bag and be gone in seconds. Be careful when you sit down at a street-side table – never drape your bag over an empty chair by the road or put it where you can't see it.

Beware of gangs of dishevelled-looking kids waving newspapers and demanding attention. In the blink of an eye, a wallet or camera can go missing. If you notice that you've been targeted, either take evasive action or shout '*va via!*' (go away!) in a loud, angry voice. Remember also that some of the best pickpockets are well dressed.

Cars, particularly those with foreign numberplates or rental-company stickers, also provide rich pickings for thieves. Try removing or covering the stickers or leaving a local newspaper on the seat. Never leave valuables in your car – in fact, try not to leave anything on display if you can help it and certainly not overnight. It's a good idea to pay extra to leave your car in supervised car parks.

A more insidious form of theft to watch out for is short-changing. One popular dodge goes as follows: you pay for a €4 *panino* (bread roll) with a €20 note. The cashier then distractedly gives you a €1 coin and a €5 note before turning away to carry on their conversation. If you just wait chances are that the €10 note you're owed will appear without a word being said.

In case of theft or loss, always report the incident to the police within 24 hours and ask for a statement, otherwise your travel-insurance company won't pay out.

SAFETY

Rome is not a dangerous city but petty crime is rife (see the boxed text, above).

Road safety is also an issue. The highway code is obeyed with discretion so don't take it for granted that cars and scooters will stop at pedestrian crossings, or even at red lights. The only way to cross the road is to step confidently into the traffic and walk across, ideally in a group, best of all with a nun.

For issues facing lone women travellers, see p300.

TAXES & REFUNDS

A value-added tax of around 20%, known as IVA (Imposta di Valore Aggiunto), is slapped on just about everything in Italy. If you are a non-EU resident and you spend more than €155 on a purchase, you can claim a refund when you leave the EU. The refund only applies to purchases from affiliated retail outlets that display a 'Tax Free for Tourists' sign. You have to complete a form at the point of sale, then get it stamped by Italian customs as you leave. At major airports you can then get an immediate cash refund; otherwise it will be refunded to your credit card. For more information pick

up a pamphlet on the scheme from participating stores.

Note also that under Italian tax law you are legally required to get a receipt for any purchase you make. Although it's highly unlikely, you could, in theory, be asked by an officer of the *guardia di finanza* (fiscal police) to produce a receipt immediately after you leave a shop. Without one, you face a fine of up to €155.

TELEPHONE

Domestic Calls

Rates, particularly for long-distance calls, are high. A local call from a public phone costs €0.10 every minute and 10 seconds. For a long-distance call within Italy you pay €0.10 when the call is answered and then €0.10 every 57 seconds. These peak rates apply from 8am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 1pm on Saturday.

Rome's area code is 06. Area codes are an integral part of all Italian phone numbers, meaning that you must always use them even when calling locally. Mobile-phone numbers begin with a three-digit prefix such as ☎ 330; toll-free numbers are known as *numeri verdi*

and usually start with % 800; national-rate numbers start with % 848, % 899, % 199 or % 166. Some six-digit national-rate numbers are also in use (such as those for Alitalia, rail and postal information).

For directory inquiries, dial % 892 412.

International Calls

Direct international calls can easily be made from public telephones by using a phone card. Dial % 00 to get out of Italy, then the relevant country and area codes, followed by the telephone number.

A three-minute call to a landline in most European countries and North America costs about €0.85, to Australasia €2.85. From a public payphone it costs more. You are better off using your country's direct-dialling services (such as AT&T in the USA and Telstra in Australia) paid for at home-country rates. Get the access numbers before you leave home. Alternatively, try making calls from cheap-rate call centres or using international calling cards, often on sale at newspaper stands.

To make a reverse-charges (collect) international call from a public telephone, dial % 170. All phone operators speak English. In Italy, the number for international directory inquiries is % 4176.

To call Rome from abroad dial the international access number (usually 00), Italy's country code (39) and then Rome's area code (06), including the leading 0.

Mobile Phones

Italy is one of the most mobile-saturated countries in the world. Phones operate on the GSM 900/1800 network, which is compatible with the rest of Europe and Australia but not with the North American GSM 1900 or Japanese systems (although some GSM 1900/900 phones do work here).

If you have a GSM dual- or tri-band phone that you can unlock (check with your service provider), it can cost as little as €10 to activate a prepaid (*prepagato*) SIM card in Italy. **TIM** (Telecom Italia Mobile; www.tim.it), **Wind** (www.wind.it) and **Vodafone** (www.vodafone.it) all offer SIM cards and have retail outlets across town. To recharge a card, simply pop into the nearest outlet or buy a charge card (*ricarica*) from a tobacconist. Per-minute call rates are typically about €0.35 to Italian fixed phones and €0.50 to Europe and the US. When you buy a card make sure you have your passport with you.

Public Phones

Telecom Italia is the largest telecom company in Italy and its silver public payphones are liberally scattered about town. Most work and most take telephone cards (*schede telefoniche*), although you'll still find some that accept coins or credit cards. You can buy phonecards (€5, €10 or €20) at post offices, tobacconists and newsstands. Before you use them you need to break off the top left-hand corner of the card.

There are cut-price call centres all over Rome. These are run by various companies and the rates are lower than Telecom payphones for international calls. Alternatively, ask about international calling cards at newsstands and tobacconists. They can be hit-and-miss but are sometimes good value.

Fax

Major post offices offer fax services; otherwise, there are numerous private services, usually in tobacconists and stationery stores.

TIME

Italy is in a single time zone, one hour ahead of GMT. Daylight-saving time, when clocks move forward one hour, starts on the last Sunday in March. Clocks are put back an hour on the last Sunday in October.

Italy operates on a 24-hour clock, so 6pm is written as 18:00.

TOILETS

Rome is not a good place to get caught short. Public toilets are not widespread; some estimates claim that there are fewer than 40 in the whole city. The best thing to do is to nip into a café or bar, all of which are required by law to have a loo. Very few, however, seem to supply loo paper. There are toilets at the following places:

Colosseum (Map p60; h 8.30am-4.30pm)

Piazza di San Silvestro (Map pp90-1; h 10am-7.40pm)

Piazza di Spagna (Map pp90-1; h 10am-7.40pm)

Stazione Termini (Map pp90-1; admission €0.70; h 24hr)

TOURIST INFORMATION

Tourist information is easy to come by in Rome and in most places you'll find someone who speaks English. The following are all helpful.

Centro Servizi Pellegrini e Turisti (Map pp130-1; % 06 698 81 662; Piazza San Pietro; h 8.30am-6.30pm Mon-Sat) The Vatican's official tourist office.

Enjoy Rome (Map pp90-1; % 06 445 18 43; www.enjoyrome.com; Via Marghera 8a; h 8.30am-7pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-2pm Sat) An excellent private tourist office that arranges guided tours, books accommodation and publishes the useful *Enjoy Rome* guide.

Meridiana Information Point (Map pp150-1; % 06 853 04 242; www.villaborghese.it; Viale dell'Uccelliera 35; h 9am-5pm daily year-round, until 7pm Fri-Sun Apr-Sep) For information on Villa Borghese.

Rome Tourist Board (APT) City (Map pp90-1; % 06 48 89 91; www.romaturismo.it; Via Parigi 5; h 9am-7pm Mon-Sat); Fiumicino Airport (Terminal B, International Arrivals; h 8.15am-7pm) Has loads of literature on accommodation, itineraries and activities.

The Comune di Roma runs a **multilingual tourist infoline** (% 06 820 59 127; h 9.30am-7.30pm) and publishes two useful monthly listings pamphlets: *Live in Roma* and *L'Evento*. These and other information (including maps) can be picked up at the *comune's* tourist information points:

Castel Sant'Angelo (Map pp130-1; % 06 688 09 707; Piazza Pia; h 9.30am-7.30pm)

Fiumicino Airport (% 06 659 54 471; Terminal C, International Arrivals; h 9am-7pm)

Piazza dei Cinquecento (Map pp90-1; % 06 478 25 194; h 11am-6pm) In a glass pavilion in front of Stazione Termini.

Piazza Navona (Map pp74-5; % 06 688 09 240; h 9.30am-7.30pm) Near Piazza delle Cinque Lune.

Piazza Santa Maria Maggiore (Map pp90-1; % 06 474 09 55; Via dell'Olmata; h 9.30am-7.30pm)

Stazione Termini (Map pp90-1; % 06 489 06 300; h 8am-9pm) In the hall that runs parallel to platform 24.

Trastevere (Map pp122-3; % 06 583 33 457; Piazza Sonnino; h 9.30am-7.30pm)

Trevi Fountain (Map pp90-1; % 06 678 29 88; Via Marco Minghetti; h 9.30am-7.30pm) Nearer Via del Corso than the fountain.

Via dei Fori Imperiali (Map p60; % 06 699 24 307; Piazza del Tempio della Pace; h 9.30am-7.30pm)

Via Nazionale (Map pp90-1; % 06 478 24 525; h 9.30am-7.30pm) In front of Palazzo delle Esposizioni.

If you need practical information, the **free call centre** (% 06 06 06) operated by the *comune* is

incredibly useful. The centre is staffed for 24 hours every day of the year and there are English, French, Arab, German, Spanish, Italian and Chinese speakers 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?' or 'when are the underground trains running?'.

TRAVELLERS WITH DISABILITIES

Rome is not an easy city for travellers with disabilities. Cobble streets, blocked pavements and tiny lifts make life difficult for the wheelchair-bound, while the relentless traffic can be disorientating for partially sighted travellers or those with hearing difficulties.

Getting around on public transport remains difficult, although efforts are being made to improve accessibility. On metro Line B all stations have disabled facilities except for Termini, Circo Massimo, Colosseo and Cavour. Metro Line A is pretty much off-limits, although bus 590 covers the same route and is wheelchair-accessible. Rome's newer buses and trams can generally accommodate wheelchairs.

If travelling by train, the **Centro di Assistenza Disabili** (Assistance Centre for the Disabled; Map pp90-1; % 06 488 17 26; h 7.30am-8.30pm) on the main concourse at Stazione Termini can provide information on wheelchair-accessible trains and help with transport in the station. Contact the office 24 hours ahead if you know you're going to need assistance. There's a similar office at **Stazione Tiburtina** (% 06 473 07 184).

Airline companies should be able to arrange assistance at airports if you notify them of your needs in advance.

Some taxis are equipped to carry passengers in wheelchairs; ask for a taxi for a *sedia a rotelle* (wheelchair). For contact numbers, see p285.

For information on public transport contact **ATAC** (% 800 154 451; www.atac.roma.it; h 9am-5pm Mon-Fri).

Museums, galleries and churches equipped for wheelchair-bound travellers are marked with a wheelchair icon (♿) in the Neighbourhoods chapter.

Organisations

The best point of reference is **Consorzio Cooperative Integrate** (COIN; % 06 712 90 11; www.coinsociale.it),

which can provide information about services for travellers with disabilities, including transport and museum access. It operates a toll-free telephone **help line** (% 800 27 10 27; h 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat).

Other useful organisations:

Museum (% 06 541 02 88; www.assmuseum.it) A voluntary group that organises visits to galleries and museums. On some of these visits you're allowed to touch the exhibits and Braille notes are provided.

Roma per Tutti (% 06 571 77 094; www.romaper tutti.it in Italian) A council-backed venture to provide assistance and free guided museum visits.

VISAS

EU citizens do not need a visa to enter Italy. Nationals of some other countries, including Australia, Brazil, Canada, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Switzerland and the USA, do not need visas for stays of up to 90 days in Italy, or in any Schengen country.

Italy is one of the 15 signatories of the Schengen Convention, an agreement whereby participating countries abolished customs checks at common borders. The Schengen countries are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Sweden.

The standard tourist visa for a Schengen country is valid for up to 90 days. As a rule, a Schengen visa issued by one Schengen country is valid for travel in other Schengen countries, although it's always worth checking as individual countries may impose additional restrictions on certain nationalities. You must apply for a Schengen visa in your country of residence and you can apply for no more than two in any 12-month period. They are not renewable inside Italy.

Technically all foreign visitors to Italy are supposed to register with the local police within eight days of arrival. However, if you're staying in a hotel you don't need to bother as the hotel does this for you – this is why they always take your passport details.

Up-to-date visa information is available on www.lonelyplanet.com – follow links through to the Italy destination guide.

Permesso di Soggiorno

A *permesso di soggiorno* (permit to stay) is needed if you plan to study, work (legally) or live in Italy. It's required by all non-EU

nationals who stay in Italy longer than three months. In theory non-EU citizens should apply for one within eight days of arriving in Italy, but in practice few people do. EU citizens do not require a *permesso di soggiorno*.

To get one you'll need a valid passport, containing a stamp with your date of entry into Italy (ask for this as it's not automatic); a photocopy of your passport; a study visa if necessary; four passport-style photographs; proof of your ability to support yourself financially (ideally a letter from an employer or school/university); and a €14.92 official stamp (formerly known as a *marca da bollo*, now called a *contrassegno telematico*), available from authorised tobacconists.

Although correct at the time of writing, the documentary requirements change periodically so always check before you join the inevitable queue.

You can apply at the **Ufficio Stranieri** (Foreigners Bureau; [Map pp90-1](#); % 06 468 63 216; Via Genova 2; h 24hr; at your nearest *commissariato* (police station); or at major post offices.

Study Visas

Non-EU citizens who want to study at a university or language school in Italy must have a study visa. These can be obtained at your nearest Italian embassy or consulate. You will normally require confirmation of your enrolment, proof of payment of fees and proof that you can support yourself financially. The visa covers only the period of the enrolment. This type of visa is renewable within Italy but, again, only with confirmation of ongoing enrolment and that you are still financially self-supporting (bank statements are preferred).

Work Visas

To work in Italy all non-EU citizens require a work visa. Apply to your nearest Italian embassy or consulate. You'll need a valid passport, proof of health insurance and a work permit. The work permit is obtained in Italy by your employer and then forwarded to you prior to your visa application. For more on work permits, see [opposite](#).

WOMEN TRAVELLERS

Rome is not a dangerous city for women, but those travelling alone should use their common sense. There are no particular no-go areas in the centre; even the notorious area around Termini is much improved in recent

years, although lone women might want to avoid it late at night.

The most common source of discomfort is harassment, which is sadly a real issue in Rome. Lone women may find it difficult to remain alone as local lotharios try it on with exasperating insistence. This might be flattering at the beginning but can soon become a real pain. The best response is to ignore unwanted approaches, but if that doesn't work politely tell your stalker that you are waiting for your husband (*marito*) or boyfriend (*fidanzato*) and, if necessary, walk away. Avoid becoming aggressive as this may result in an unpleasant confrontation.

Wandering hands can also be a problem, particularly on crowded public transport. If you feel someone touching you up, make a fuss; molesters are no more admired in Rome than anywhere else. A loud '*che schifo!*' (how disgusting!) should work. If a more serious incident occurs, make a report to the police, who are then required to press charges.

The *Handbook for Women Travellers* by Maggie and Gemma Goss (1995) is useful for women who travel solo.

WORK

Most EU citizens can legally work in Italy with nothing more than a tax number (*codice fiscale*; see [p296](#)). However, citizens of the new EU states and non-EU nationals need a work permit (*permesso di lavoro*).

If you're going to work for an Italian firm, the company will organise a permit and forward it to the Italian consulate in your country, enabling you to apply for the relevant work visa. If, however, you intend to work for a non-Italian company or plan to go freelance, you must organise the permit in your country of residence through an Italian consulate. This process is extremely complicated and can take many months.

In practice many foreigners don't bother with such formalities, preferring to work undeclared. Casual work is not always easy to find but you might strike it lucky in bars, in hostels, au pairing or tour-guiding. Teaching English is another option, although to secure a place at a reputable school you'll need a Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) certificate. It's best to apply for

teaching work in September, in time for the beginning of courses in October.

Teaching and other jobs are advertised in *Porta Portese* (weekly) and *Wanted in Rome* (fortnightly). You could also look in *Il Messaggero* and the *Herald Tribune* for job ads, and on the bulletin boards of English-language bookshops. A useful guide is *Living, Studying and Working in Italy* by Travis Neighbour Ward and Monica Larner (2003).

Online, you could try the following:

British School (www.britishschool.it) A private English-language organisation with various schools across Rome.

International House (www.ihromamz.it) One of Rome's best-known English language schools.

Recruit Italy (www.recruititaly.it) Provides links for graduates looking for longer-term employment.

Roma Au Pair (www.romaaupair.it) An organisation that arranges short-term positions for au pairs with Italian families.

Volunteer Abroad (www.volunteerabroad.com) Lists volunteer opportunities in Rome and Italy.

Doing Business

There are no special issues in doing business in Rome. However, an awareness of Italian business etiquette always helps. Some basic tips:

Contacts If you know someone who can help you, have no qualms about using them.

Formalities Courtesy counts and formalities are observed. Italian speakers should use the formal third person *lei* rather than the informal *tu*.

Punctuality It might not always be reciprocated, but punctuality is noticed and it is appreciated.

Socialising Expect to be invited to lunch or dinner; the host pays.

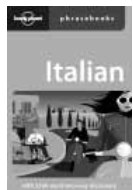
Many of the smarter hotels have business centres or secretarial assistance for guests. Otherwise try the following:

Executive Services Business Centres ([Map pp150-1](#); % 06 852 37 250; www.executivenetwork.it; Via Savoia 78) Secretarial services, video conferencing facilities, interpreters and other services.

World Translation Centre ([Map pp90-1](#); % 06 488 10 39; www.wtcsrl.com; Via Merulana 259) Can provide sworn translations for legal and corporate needs.

LANGUAGE

It's true – anyone can speak another language. Don't worry if you haven't studied languages before or that you studied a language at school for years and can't remember any of it. It doesn't even matter if you failed English grammar. After all, that's never affected your ability to speak English! And this is the key to picking up a language in another country. You just need to start speaking.



Learn a few key phrases before you go. Write them on pieces of paper and stick them on the fridge, by the bed or even on the computer – anywhere that you'll see them often.

You'll find that locals appreciate travellers trying their language, no matter how muddled you may think you sound. So don't just stand there, say something! If you want to learn more Italian than we've included here, pick up a copy of Lonely Planet's comprehensive but user-friendly *Italian Phrasebook* or *Fast Talk Italian*.

SOCIAL

Meeting People

Hello.
Buongiorno.
 Goodbye.
Arrivederci.
 Please.
Per favore.
 Thank you (very much).
(Mille) Grazie.
 Yes/No.
Sì/No.
 Do you speak English?
Parla inglese?
 Do you understand (me)?
(Mi) Capisce?
 Yes, I understand.
Sì, capisco.
 No, I don't understand.
No, non capisco.

Could you please ...?
Potrebbe ...?
 repeat that **ripeterlo**
 speak more **parlare più lentamente**
 slowly
 write it down **scriverlo**

Going Out

What's on ...?
Che c'è in programma ...?
 locally **in zona**
 this weekend **questo fine settimana**
 today **oggi**
 tonight **stasera**

Where are the ...?
Dove sono ...?
 clubs **dei club**
 gay venues **dei locali gay**
 places to eat **posti dove mangiare**
 pubs **dei pub**

Is there a local entertainment guide?
C'è una guida agli spettacoli in questa città?

PRACTICAL

Question Words

Who? **Chi?**
 What? **Che?**
 When? **Quando?**
 Where? **Dove?**
 How? **Come?**

Numbers & Amounts

1 **uno**
 2 **due**
 3 **tre**
 4 **quattro**
 5 **cinque**
 6 **sei**
 7 **sette**
 8 **otto**
 9 **nove**
 10 **dieci**
 11 **undici**
 12 **dodici**
 13 **tredici**
 14 **quattordici**
 15 **quindici**
 16 **sedici**

17 **diciasette**
 18 **diciotto**
 19 **diciannove**
 20 **venti**
 21 **ventuno**
 22 **ventidue**
 30 **trenta**
 40 **quaranta**
 50 **cinquanta**
 60 **sessanta**
 70 **settanta**
 80 **ottanta**
 90 **novanta**
 100 **cento**
 1000 **mille**
 2000 **duemila**

Days

Monday **lunedì**
 Tuesday **martedì**
 Wednesday **mercoledì**
 Thursday **giovedì**
 Friday **venerdì**
 Saturday **sabato**
 Sunday **domenica**

Banking

I'd like to ...
Vorrei ...
 cash a cheque **riscuotere un assegno**
 change money **cambiare denaro**
 change some **cambiare degli assegni**
 travellers cheques **di viaggio**

Where's the nearest ...?
Dov'è il ... più vicino?
 automatic teller **bancomat**
 machine
 foreign exchange **cambio**
 office

Post

Where is the post office?
Dov'è la posta?

I want to send a ...
Voglio spedire ...
 fax **un fax**
 parcel **un pacchetto**
 postcard **una cartolina**

I want to buy ...
Voglio comprare ...
 an aerogram **un aerogramma**
 an envelope **una busta**
 a postage stamp **un francobollo**

Phone & Mobile Phones

I want to buy a phonecard.
Voglio comprare una scheda telefonica.

I want to make ...
Voglio fare ...
 a call (to ...) **una chiamata (a ...)**
 reverse-charge/
 collect call **una chiamata a carico
 del destinatario**

Where can I find a/an ...?
Dove si trova ...
 I'd like a/an ...
Vorrei ...
 adaptor plug **un adattatore**
 charger for my **un caricabatterie**
 phone
 mobile/cell **un cellulare da**
 phone for hire **noleggiare**
 prepaid mobile/
 cell phone **un cellulare prepagato**
 SIM card for **un SIM card per vostra**
 your network **rete telefonica**

Internet

Where's the local internet café?
Dove si trova l'internet point?

I'd like to ...
Vorrei ...
 check my email **controllare le mie
 email**
 get online **collegarmi a internet**

Transport

What time does the ... leave?
A che ora parte ...?
 bus **l'autobus**
 plane **l'aereo**
 train **il treno**

What time's the ... bus/vaporetto?
A che ora passa ... autobus/batello?
 first **il primo**
 last **l'ultimo**
 next **il prossimo**

Are you free? (taxi)
È libero questo taxi?
 Please put the meter on.
Usa il tassametro, per favore.
 How much is it to ...?
Quant'è per ...?
 Please take me to (this address).
Mi porti a (questo indirizzo), per favore.

GLOSSARY

ACI – Automobile Club Italiano (Italian Automobile Association)
 alimentari – grocery shop
 alta moda – high fashion
 ATAC – Agenzia per i Trasporti Autoferrotranviari del Comune di Roma (Rome's public transport company)
 autostrada – motorway, highway
 baccalà – salted cod
 bancomat – ATM
 benzina senza piombo – unleaded petrol
 biancazzurri – 'white and blues'; Lazio fans and players
 biglietteria – box or ticket office
 biglietto – ticket
 birreria – pub
 calcio – football (soccer)
 cambio – exchange office
 cappella – chapel
 carabinieri – police with military and civil duties
 casa – house, home
 castello – castle
 catacomba – catacomb, underground tomb complex
 chiesa – church
 centro sociale – social club; organised squat
 centro storico – historic city centre
 cimitero – cemetery
 commissariato (di polizia) – police station
 comune – equivalent to a municipality; town or city council
 coperto – cover charge in most restaurants
 cornetto – a croissant filled with chocolate, marmalade or custard cream
 enoteca, enoteche (pl) – wine bar
 fornaio, forni (pl) – bakery
 gelato – ice cream
 gelateria – ice-cream parlour
 giallorossi – 'yellow and reds'; AS Roma fans and players
 IVA – Imposta di Valore Aggiunto (value-added tax)
 libreria – bookshop
 macchiaioli – 'dabbers'; the late-19th-century Italian version of the Impressionists
 mezza porzione – half or child's portion
 motorino – moped
 numero verde – toll-free number
 ospedale – public hospital
 osteria – neighbourhood inn
 palazzo – mansion
 panino – bread roll
 pasquinades – anonymous messages posted around 17th-century Rome
 pasticceria – cake/pastry shop

pensione – small hotel or guesthouse
 permesso di lavoro – work permit
 permesso di soggiorno – permit to stay in Italy for a nominated period
 piazza – square
 pinacoteca – art gallery
 piscina – pool
 pizza al taglio – pizza by the slice
 polizia – police
 ponte – bridge
 porta – city gate
 posta – post office
 primo – first course
 profumeria – perfume shop
 pronto soccorso – first aid; (*riparto di*) pronto soccorso is a casualty/emergency ward
 questura – police headquarters
 Risorgimento – late-19th-century movement led by Garibaldi and others to create a united, independent Italian state
 ristorante – restaurant
 romanesco – Roman dialect
 Romani – Romans
 sala – room in a museum or a gallery
 saldi – sales (ie with price reductions)
 secondo – second course
 sedia a rotelle – wheelchair
 seggiolone – child's highchair
 servizio – service charge in restaurants
 sindaco – mayor
 SPQR – Senatus Populusque Romanus (the Senate and People of Rome; symbol of the Roman Republic)
 stazione – station
 tabaccheria – tobacconist's shop
 tavola calda – literally 'hot table'; a cheap, self-service-style eatery
 teatro – theatre
 terme – baths, hot springs
 torre – tower
 trattoria – cheap restaurant
 ufficio postale – post office
 ufficio stranieri – foreigners bureau (in police station)
 via – street, road
 vicolo – alley, alleyway
 ZTL – Zone a Traffico Limitato (limited traffic zones)

FOOD

breakfast
 lunch
 dinner
 snack
 eat
 drink

prima colazione
 pranzo
 cena
 spuntino/merenda
 mangiare
 bere

Can you recommend a ...
 Potrebbe consigliare un ...?
 bar/pub
 café
 restaurant

bar/pub
 bar
 ristorante

Is service/cover charge included in the bill?
 Il servizio/coperto è compreso nel conto?

For more detailed information on food and dining out, see p181.

EMERGENCIES

It's an emergency!
 È un'emergenza!
 Could you please help me/us?
 Mi/Ci può aiutare, per favore?
 Call the police/a doctor/an ambulance!
 Chiami la polizia/un medico/
 un'ambulanza!

Where's the police station?

Dov'è la questura?

HEALTH

Where's the nearest ...?

Dov'è ...più vicino?

chemist (night)	la farmacia (di turno)
dentist	il dentista
doctor	il medico
hospital	l'ospedale

I need a doctor (who speaks English).

Ho bisogno di un medico (che parli inglese).

Symptoms

I have (a) ...

Ho ...

diarrhoea	la diarrea
fever	la febbre
headache	mal di testa
pain	un dolore

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