

# ROME

## customize your visit



### **FIRST DAY – Piazza del Popolo**

This Piazza (Square) is magically situated at the foot of the Pincio, as part of the city's Baroque urbanistic renovation, in an effort to modernize routes frequently travelled by the upper classes. Its present layout, along with the ramps leading up to the Pincio, were designed by G. Valadier at the beginning of the 19th century. Elliptical in shape, on the lesser axis are two ornate 'essedre' (semicircles), decorated with richly sculptured fountains; and at the far end, four statues depicting the seasons. At the center of the north end is the 'Porta del Popolo' (people's gate) and its three openings, with interior designs by Bernini. The exterior was built by Nanni di Baccio Bigi, from a presumed design of Michelangelo. On the south end of the plaza, near the famous 'tridente' exit, rather, the convergence of Via del Babuino, Via del Corso, and Via di Ripetta (set back a bit from the other two), rise the two twin churches of Santa Maria de Montesanto and Santa Maria dei Miracoli; both splendid examples of Baroque architecture. The Egyptian obelisk, true focal point of the piazza, from which all points may be observed; at one time decorated the Circus Maximus, and was brought to the piazza by Pope Sixtus V.

### **The Borghese Gardens – Via Veneto – Piazza Barberini**

Stretching from above Piazza del Popolo to the top of Via Veneto, Villa Borghese crowns Rome in a glorious canopy of Green. Despite the onward march of the years and extensive developmental changes to Rome, Villa Borghese has remained a green and pleasant space, diluting the impact of an otherwise ever expanding urban Metropolis.

Villa Borghese is literally a breath of fresh air for those who visit it. There are museums, a theatre, a bio park, a lake, a winter ice skating piste, rollerblade and skateboarders space as well as numerous fountains dotted throughout.

The Park was originally a private vineyard, redesigned and enlarged in 1605 to grandiose proportions for pope Paul V's nephew, the Cardinal Scipione Borghese. However, it was named after the Borghese family on the condition that it boasted the most luxurious and magnificent dwelling in Rome.

### **Trinità de' Monti and Spanish Square (Piazza di Spagna)**

Spanish Steps (Scalinata della Trinità dei Monti) are a set of steps, climbing a steep slope between the Piazza di Spagna at the base and Piazza Trinità dei Monti, dominated by the Trinità dei Monti church at the top. The Scalinata is the widest staircase in Europe.

With its characteristic butterfly plan, the Piazza di Spagna is one of the most famous images in the world, as well as being one of the most majestic urban monuments of Roman Baroque style. In the Renaissance period, the square was the most popular tourist attraction in the city: it attracted artists and writers alike and was full of elegant hotels, inns and residences.

At the end of the seventeenth century, it was called Trinità dei Monti, after the church that dominates the square from above, but it was later given the name we know today after the Spanish Ambassador who lived there.

At the foot of the stairs, you will find the famous Barcaccia Fountain, the work of Pietro Bernini and his son, Gian Lorenzo. The latter went on to become the creator of some of the most important masterpieces of Baroque art in the city, including the renowned baldachino of St. Peter's Basilica. With its characteristic form of a sinking ship, the fountain recalls the historic flood of the River Tiber in 1598 and refers to a folk legend whereby a fishing boat carried away by the flood of the river was found at this exact spot. In reality, the sinking boat was ably invented by Bernini to overcome a technical problem due to low water pressure. The sun and bee ornamentation is a symbol of the Barberini family and a reference to Pope Urban VIII who commissioned the work. However, the main attraction of the square has to be the spectacular staircase of Trinità dei Monti.

### **TREVI FOUNTAIN**

will not find any other place in the world that celebrates the ever-mutating and incredible power of water like Rome. The Trevi Fountain is a fantastic work of art that is much more than a mere sculpture. This triumphant example of Baroque art with its soft, natural lines and fantasy creatures embodies movement as the soul of the world. The fountain is a true wonder, a jewel of water and stone that is nestled between the palaces of the historic centre of the city.

Its origins go back to Roman times and it was the terminal point of the Aqua Virgo aqueduct commissioned by Augustus, which was used to provide water for the thermal baths. The water that flows here has two names: Virgin Waters and Trevi. The first refers to an ancient legend about a young Roman girl who showed the source of the

spring to some thirsty soldiers; whereas Trevi derives from the old name for the area, which was originally called Trebium.

### **Tour will then proceed passing by Colonna Square and via del Corso to the Pantheon and Navona Square**

**The Pantheon** in Rome is the Roman monument with the greatest number of records: the best preserved, with the biggest brick dome in the history of architecture and is considered the forerunner of all modern places of worship. It is the most copied and imitated of all ancient works.

Michelangelo felt it was the work of angels, not men.

Where it stands was not chosen by chance, but is a legendary place in the city's history. According to Roman legend, it is the place where the founder of Rome, Romulus, at his death was seized by an eagle and taken off into the skies with the Gods.

**Piazza Navona (Navona Square)** It is built on the site of the Stadium of Domitian, built in 1st century AD, and follows the form of the open space of the stadium. The ancient Romans came there to watch the agones ("games"), and hence it was known as 'Circus Agonalis' (competition arena). It is believed that over time the name changed to 'in agone' to 'navone' and eventually to 'navona'

**Suggestion: don't miss a visit to the underground part of the Stadium of Domitian**

**Campo dè Fiori**, a little enchanting square with its traditional market.

### **SECOND DAY - Venice Square – Capitol Hill – Coliseum – St. Peter's in Chain – Circus Maximus – St Mary in Cosmedin – view over Palatine Hill – Caracalla Baths – Aventine**

The Roman Forum is situated in the area between Piazza Venezia and the Colosseum is one of the most important archaeological sites in the world. Three thousand years ago, this valley between Capitol hill and the Quirinal, which was to become the future social and political centre of one of the greatest empires of ancient times, was submerged in marshland. By an incredible invention of engineering, which was commissioned by the last two Etruscan kings, the so-called Cloaca Maxima, a canal that is still in function to this very day, allowed for the drainage of the land. The area soon began to develop and already at the end of the 7th century BC, it was home to many markets and a hive of social activity.

Forum was the name that the Romans gave to the central square of the urban settlement and we must try to imagine this busy, crowded place as the pulsing centre of a modern city. Here the masses would flock to see the meetings of the orators, attend criminal trials and discuss internal politics or the latest military campaigns, or quite simply to comment on the games or running races (an activity that the Romans particularly enjoyed).

In the area around the Forum, the city was also home to markets, shops and taverns. You could also find the typical Termopolia, which were the ancient equivalent of

today's fast food restaurants. In short, the Forum was the heart and soul of city life. It was in Caesar's time, when Rome has become the capital of a vast empire, that the Forum became a place for celebrations and in the Imperial era it was the symbol of the Empire.

The most incredible panoramic view of the entire Forum complex can be seen from the magnificent terraces of Campidoglio. Here you can observe the imposing ruins of Basilica Emilia, the only remaining Republican basilica, or the Curia, which was once the seat of the Senate. Nearby you will also note three trees, a vine, fig and olive tree, cited by Pliny the Elder, which were replanted in recent times.

**The Capitol**, citadel of ancient Rome, is a must for every visitor. A broad flight of steps (the Cordonata) leads up to Michelangelo's spectacular Piazza del Campidoglio. This is flanked by the Palazzo Nuovo and Palazzo dei Conservatori, housing the Capitoline Museum with their fine collections of sculptures and paintings.

**The Coliseum**, also known as the Flavian amphitheater after its initiator Vespasian, first of the Flavian emperors who had it built in the 1st century A.D. It is the largest amphitheater of the ancient world. Fifty thousand spectators could be seated in the stands to watch the hunts (venationes) and the gladiator fights (ludi gladiatorii).

**The Caracalla Baths** (Italian Terme di Caracalla), ancient (Latin) Thermae Antoninianae ("Antonine Baths"), public baths in ancient Rome begun by the emperor Septimius Severus in ad 206 and completed by his son the emperor Caracalla in 216. Among Rome's most beautiful and luxurious baths, designed to accommodate about 1,600 bathers, the Baths of Caracalla continued in use until the 6th century. The extant ruins, together with modern excavations and restorations (including conspicuous reconstructions), are the most extensive of any surviving Roman bathing establishments and consist centrally of a block of large vaulted bath chambers covering an area of 750 by 380 feet (230 by 115 metres), with courts and auxiliary rooms, surrounded by a garden with space used for exercise and games.

**The Basilica of Saint Clement** (Basilica di san Clemente), Discover 2000 years of history when you visit the Basilica of San Clemente. Admire the spectacular mosaics and frescoes. Travel back in time to explore the Basilica of the fourth century and then descend into the world of Rome in the first century where there is still a pagan temple. Centuries of art and history!

**THIRD DAY – The Basilica of St. John in Lateran, Old Appian way, The Basilica of St. Paul's outside the Walls, Trastevere District and the Basilica of St. Mary in Trastevere, Tiber River, Tiber Island, Gianicolo Hill, St. Peter's Basilica, St. Angel's Castle.**

St. Peter's Basilica stands on the traditional site where Peter – the apostle who is considered the first Pope – was crucified and buried. St. Peter's tomb is under the main altar and many other popes are buried in the basilica as well. Originally founded by Constantine in 324, St. Peter's Basilica was rebuilt in the 16th century by Renaissance masters including Bramante, Michelangelo and Bernini.

**The Mausoleum of Hadrian**, usually known as St. Angel Castle, is a towering

cylindrical building in Rome. It was initially commissioned by the Roman Emperor Hadrian as a mausoleum for himself and his family. The building was later used by the popes as a fortress and castle, and is now a museum. The top statue depicts the angel from whom the building derives its name.

**Gianicolo Hill**, Undoubtedly one of Rome's most romantic spots, the Gianicolo (Janiculum) Hill rises up behind Trastevere (once popular district) and reaches as far as the Basilica of St. Peter's. The panorama is here breathtaking: the view stretches over roofs, ancient ruins, monuments and baroque domes as far as the hills embracing the city.

**Tiber Island**, The island has been linked to the rest of Rome by two bridges since antiquity, and was once called *Insula Inter-Duos-Pontes* which means "the island between the two bridges". The Ponte Fabricio, the only original bridge in Rome, connects the island from the northeast to the Field of Mars in the rione Sant'Angelo (left bank). The Ponte Cestio, of which only some original parts survived, connects the island to Trastevere on the south (right bank).

There is a legend which says that after the fall of the hated tyrant Tarquinius Superbus (510 BC), the angry Romans threw his body into the Tiber. His body then settled onto the bottom where dirt and silt accumulated around it and eventually formed Tiber Island. Another version of the legend says that the people gathered up the wheat and grain of their despised ruler and threw it into the Tiber, where it eventually became the foundation of the island.

**Trastevere** is a picturesque medieval area located on the west bank of the Tiber. The area escaped the grand developments which changed the face of central Rome, and is a charming place to wander, eat or relax. Trastevere is named for its position 'over the Tiber'. Separated from the heart of central Rome by the river, the area retained its narrow lanes and working-class population when the rest of Rome began its nineteenth-century expansion.

Tourists are charmed by Trastevere, although they descend in numbers which slightly obscure the area's personality. From being the last surviving pocket of earthy medieval Rome, the neighbourhood has also become unique in Rome in attracting a crowd of young crusty-locked foreign beggars, buskers and alcoholics. Internet cafes are side-by-side with gloomy ancient premises of uncertain function, and you can choose from trendy bars and traditional chocolate shops. Still, despite the influx of foreign money, Trastevere still maintains a strong local identity.

The heart of Trastevere is Piazza di Santa Maria in Trastevere, a pedestrianised square piazza lined with restaurants and pricey bars, faded palazzi, and the church of Santa Maria in Trastevere. The steps surrounding the pretty central fountain are a popular hang-out spot for a non-typical crowd (watch out for unwashed jugglers).

Heading up the lane to the right of the church, and choosing one of the right-hand turnings, you enter into the maze of narrow lanes at Trastevere's heart. Plants scramble down walls from garden terraces, washing hangs out to dry, and chipped Virgin Marys look down from shrines on street corners.

The streets close to the river and south of Viale Trastevere are much quieter and there

are several unpretentious restaurants where you can enjoy a peaceful meal at an outdoors table. The church of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere is one of Rome's more interesting churches. The statue by the altar is based on the body of the patron saint of music, martyred St. Cecilia, which was found undecayed in her coffin in the sixteenth-century. From here, it's a short walk to visit the Isola Tiberina (Tiber Island).

**The Basilica of Santa Maria in Trastevere** may have originally been founded as early as the 3rd century by Pope Callixtus (217-22), but it was probably built around 350 AD under Pope Julius I (337-52). In this early period the church was known as titulus Callisti. It was partially destroyed by fire during the sack of Rome in 410, then repaired and rededicated to the Virgin Mary by Pope Celestine (422-32). Pope Gregory IV (827-44) added a crypt to hold the bodies of the popes Calixtus, Julius I and Cornelius that had been exhumed from the catacombs.

The church was totally rebuilt in the 12th century by Pope Innocent II (1130-43), using materials from the ancient Baths of Caracalla. Most of the present building dates from this era, with the portico and some other remodelling from the 19th century.

According to legend, on the day Christ was born a stream of pure oil flowed from the earth on the site of the church, signifying the coming of the grace of God. A column next to the altar marks the spot.

**FOR MORE INFORMATIONS AND QUOTATIONS PLEASE CONTACT:**

**[info@todra.com](mailto:info@todra.com)   [bruno.alegi@todra.com](mailto:bruno.alegi@todra.com)**

**Tel: 0039 06486447   Fax: 0039 06486995**