

Prati:

Prati is the area of Rome directly north of the Vatican Area.

The *Osservatorio Astronomico* is one of the 12 Astronomical Observatories in Italy. It is situated in the Monte Mario, the natural beauty of this little hill makes it a popular place among Romans for taking a walk. Monte Mario also has a 140 metre high transmission tower built of lattice steel for FM, TV and directional radio services.

In the north of this neighbourhood is the *Farnesina*, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Mussolini-conceived Foro Italico sports complex north of the city was built starting from the late 20s, until 1960, the year of Olympic Games held in Rome. It houses the *Olympic Stadium* where Rome's football teams A.S. Roma and S.S. Lazio play and the *Stadio dei Marmi*.



Parioli / Borghese:

The *Parioli* area at the north side of Villa Borghese and to the east of Flaminio is a residential area much loved by Roman high society. It has beautiful majestic palazzo's and a lot of embassies are located in this very posh area of Rome that is fast becoming one of the hottest streets in town. Go here also for celebrity spotting.

Villa Glori is a rather artificial looking park to the north-west of Parioli. In the 1920s the architect Raffaele De Vico was asked to create the Parco della Rimembranza from a small hill that had been given to peasants for cultivating. The park contains a lot of olive trees.

At 300 metres from the Villa Glori is the *Stadium Flaminio* with a capacity of 42000 spectators, home stadium to the Italian National Rugby team. Six Nations rugby matches are played here every year.

Villa Borghese is the second largest public park in Rome (80 hectares or 148 acres) after that of the Villa Doria Pamphili. The Spanish Steps lead up to this park, and there is another entrance on Piazza del Popolo. The most romantic place on the villa grounds is undoubtedly the lake with its little island dominated by the Temple of Aesculapius.



Trieste:

Villa Torlonia was designed for the rich banker Giovanni Torlonia by the neo-Classic architect Giuseppe Valadier in 1806 and finished for his son Alessandro. After a period of disuse this was the state residence of Mussolini in the 1920s. Villa Torlonia, the most famous "English landscape" garden in Italy, became a part of the public park system of Rome in 1978. The villa is characterized by 13 constructions simulating

mysterious, fantastic, fairy-like creations. One of which the *Casina delle Civette* (The House of little Owls). Villa Ada is named after the wife of the Swiss Count Tellfner who, as well as King Vittorio Emanuele II, was one of its many owners. *Villa Ada* is the former residence and hunting estate of the royal family. Among holm oaks, grassland and pine trees it offers an itinerary of beautiful landscapes and constitutes an important historical legacy. The park is very large with ample grounds in which to run... or relax. There are cycle paths and skate tracks. Sports lovers come here to train. There are many entrances to the park on Via Salaria, one of these is next to the Catacombs of Saint Priscilla

The *Quartiere Coppedè*, just off Piazza Buenos Aires, is a gothic-style collection of buildings commissioned to Gino Coppedè. A very curious style, sometimes monstrous: it is a mixture of Liberty and Baroque style. It is well worth a visit and a rather unknown attraction of Rome. Most famous are the Palazzo del Ragno (Spider's Palace), the Fontana delle Rane (Fountain of the Frogs) in piazza Mincio and the *Villino delle Fate* (The Villa of Fairies).



Vatican:

Vatican City is an autonomous State governed directly by the Pontificate. It's one of the smallest countries in the world, this enclave in the middle of Rome measures 0.44 sq. km with 3.2 km of boundaries. Its population is 921, as of July 2005.

Vatican City is home to the largest church in the world, the *Basilica of St. Peter's* with the magnificent *St. Peter's Square* designed by Bernini.

The Vatican Museums are located just around the corner and they house one of the largest collections in the world, among which the Sistine Chapel with Michelangelo's *Last Judgement*

Towards the Tevere river lies the beautiful *Castel Sant'Angelo*, the ex- tomb / bridgehead / vatican annexe / prison turned museum.



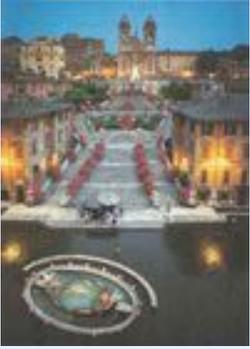
Spagna:

The actual aspect of one of the most monumental squares of Rome, the Spanish Square or *Piazza di Spagna*, took shape during the centuries, its characteristic butterfly shape identifies one of the most known squares in the world. Beyond the Barcaccia Fountain rise the beautiful Scalinata della Trinita' dei Monti, or the Spanish Steps. The staircase consists of 138 steps of travertine stone rising in three successive flights.

The lively back streets of Piazza di Spagna are renowned for their effortless style, fantastic food and shopping. The Via del Corso leads to Piazza Venezia on the south side, and the splendid and enormous *Piazza del Popolo* on the north side, with the the 23.9-metre-high obelisk dating from the 14th century

BC in the centre and the two apparently twin churches S. Maria di Montesanto and S. Maria dei Miracoli.

The *Mausoleum of Augustus*, one of the most representatives of the past, retraces the model of the Etruscan tombs, located over a small hill, which was a preferred place for the important burials, with a cylindrical basement. It was built between 28 and 23 BC.



Via Veneto:

Via Veneto, "twinned" with Fifth Avenue in New York, is the symbol of the Dolce Vita of the 50s and 60s. The elegant street, celebrated by Federico Fellini, was the hang out of politicians, intellectuals, entertainers and journalists, often immortalised by the ever-present paparazzi. Renowned the world over are its luxurious hotels and its famous cafes. Across from the American Embassy is the Hard Rock Cafe. The entire area was created between the late 1800s and the early 1900s.

After *Via del Tritone* and *Via Veneto* were opened into Piazza Barberini, the square took on its present aspect. During the 17th century, it was named after the noble Barberini family that owned a large palace here with gardens that has now become the National Gallery of Ancient Art. The Barberini were also celebrated by two fountains by Bernini commissioned by Pope Urban VIII, the *Triton fountain* in the middle of the square and the Bee fountain by the *Via Veneto* entrance; the latter bears the family's coat of arms.



Navona:

This area on the East bank of the Tiber river holds the beautiful Piazza Navona, marked by the presence of the three fountains. The middle *Fountain of the Four Rivers* was designed by Gian Lorenzo Bernini between 1648 and 1651.

The nearby *Campo de' Fiori* once the site of executions during the Inquisition, has been home to a vibrant and colourful market since 1869. In the centre rises the monument to Giordano Bruno, who in 1600 was burned here for contending that the universe has no centre.

In the heart of the Jewish Ghetto lies the *Via Giulia*, designed by Bramante on the orders of Pope Julius II. It is almost a kilometre long, and flanked by magnificent palaces and churches dating from the 16th to the 18th centuries.



Pantheon:

This area between Navona and Trevi is home to the best-preserved monument of imperial Rome. The temple of the *Pantheon* in Rome was built in 27 before Christ. The most striking thing about the Pantheon is not its size, immense though it is (until 1960 the dome was the largest ever built); rather, it is the remarkable harmony of the building. The oculus, or opening in the ceiling, is meant to symbolize the all-seeing eye of heaven.

Closeby, in Piazza Montecitorio you will find the magnificent *Palazzo Montecitorio*, designed by Gian Lorenzo Bernini in 1653. The Chamber of Deputies is housed here.

The gracious *Piazza Minerva* is just behind the Pantheon, it hosts an enchanting monument representing a chubby small elephant, a marble sculpture by Ercole Ferrara designed by Gian Lorenzo Bernini.

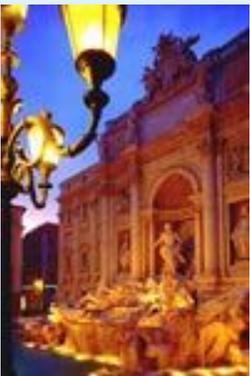


Trevi:

In 1732, Niccolò Salvi projected the most spectacular fountain of Rome, the *Trevi Fountain*. The artist unfortunately died before the fountain was finished, 20 years later. A scene of the movie "La Dolce Vita" of Federico Fellini, which became part of the history of Cinema, was shot in the fountain in 1960.

Just off Piazza di Trevi is the *Palazzo del Quirinale*. It was formerly the summer residence for the Pope, and since 1947 is the official residence of the President of the Republic of Italy. Paintings of many great artists such as Botticelli and Pietro da Cortona are housed in the halls of the Quirinale.

Around the corner, you'll find the lovely little church of *Sant'Andrea al Quirinale*, a jewel of the sacred baroque architecture by Gian Lorenzo Bernini. The church, rich of polychromatic marbles and stuccos has an elliptical plant.



Termini / Marsala:

The area to the north of Termini Station is full of hotels because it is an ideal base from which to explore the city. Close to everything and not as expensive as the centro storico.

Termini Station was built in the 1930s by Angelo Mazzoni, a well-known railway design engineer who belonged to the Italian modernist movement which was prominent between the two World Wars. In 1998 the station was completely renovated and houses Rome's main railway station, underground station, a big shopping center as well as *GATE*, Termini's art gallery.



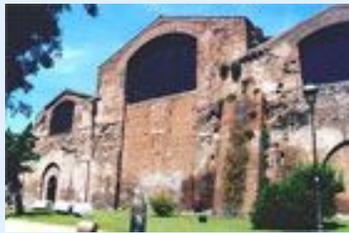
Termini / Repubblica:

This area to the north / north west of Termini station has a lot to offer.

The breathtaking Piazza della Repubblica was formerly known as Piazza Esedra and many Romans still call it that. The piazza is home to the spectacular *Fontana delle Naiadi* (Fountain of the Nymphs) that was built in 1901 and caused quite a stir because of the naked nymphs that have a somewhat ambiguous look because of the halo created when the fountain water hits them.

Just off Piazza della Repubblica are the *Baths of Diocletian*. Emperor Diocletian, who never even visited Rome commissioned the largest and most gorgeous bathing establishment the world had ever seen. It could accommodate 3000 bathers simultaneously, about twice as many as the Baths of Caracalla, and had the full panoply of changing rooms, gymnasiums, libraries, meeting rooms, theatres, concert halls, sculpture gardens, vast basins for hot, lukewarm and cold plunges, as well as mosaic floors and marble facades. Fragments of the Baths' core were incorporated into the Renaissance Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli and are part of the Museo Nazionale Romano.

To the south west of Termini Station is one of the 5 major Basilica's of Rome. The Basilica of *Santa Maria Maggiore* (St. Mary Major) is the only Roman basilica that retained the core of its original structure, left intact despite several additional construction projects and damage from the earthquake of 1348.



San Lorenzo / Università:

Located just east of the Termini area, along the Via Tiburtina from the ancient city walls to the Verano cemetery, San Lorenzo and the University district is virtually unpenetrated by tourists and is known for its youthful and vibrant atmosphere and pace. You will find an incredible number of cheap restaurants and bars. The greatest concentration of night life is around Via dei Reti.

The Basilica of San Lorenzo fuori le Mura, or St. Lawrence outside the Walls, next to the Verano cemetery, is one of the seven pilgrimage churches of Rome. *San Lorenzo* was the only church in Rome to suffer serious damage during WWII, when it was nearly destroyed in an American air raid in 1943. It took five years to rebuild the church.

The Città Universitaria (University City) is the immense complex of the University of Rome "*La Sapienza*". La Sapienza was founded in 1303 by Pope Boniface VIII, it now offers 21 faculties to its 147,000 students and is the largest university in Western Europe. It has 55 locations in Rome, but the Città Universitaria is the main one, occupying 439,000 square metres. Most of the 155 libraries and 21 museums plus 39 of the 90 buildings the university owns are located here.



Trastevere:

The area of Trastevere is ideal for a walk through narrow streets, squares and colours that still maintain an authentic Roman character. Trastevere was the first district established on the right bank of the Tiber and was inhabited by artisans, fishermen and merchants. Trastevere offers a great variety of restaurants and bars for a fun evening.

Trastevere is home to one of the most famous piazzas in Rome: the Piazza and Basilica of *Santa Maria in Trastevere*.

Gianicolo Hill is located in Trastevere, towards the Tiber river. It is a preferred meeting place for lovers because of its romantic and enchanting atmosphere. It offers spectacular panoramas of Rome.



Colosseum / Forum Romanum:

There are so many interesting things to see in this area that it would be impossible to describe them all, so here's our favourites:

The *Colosseum* was built in bricks and clad of travertine in a valley among the Palatine, Esquilino and Celio hills. Originally known as the Flavian Amphitheatre, it was capable of seating 50,000 spectators that were rather enthusiastic about the gladiator and wild animal fights that took place here.

Piazza Venezia is dominated by the *Vittoriano*, or the Monument to Victor Emmanuel II, the first king of a united Italy. Referred to by many Romans as the "Wedding Cake" or "Type writer", this monument is very controversial.

The Roman Forum and Palatine Hill are the most ancient parts of Rome. This is where, according to legend, the city was founded by Remus and Romulus on Palatine Hill. The *Forum Romanum* was the centre of political, commercial and religious life as far back as the 7th century BC



Esquilino:

The Esquiline Hill is one of the famous seven hills of Rome. It gets its name from all the squirrels which used to live there before it was fortified in 510 BC.

Piazza Vittorio Emanuele II, or just Piazza Vittorio, was constructed in 1870 and takes its name from the

first king of united Italy. The gardens of *Piazza Vittorio* are home to the largest open-air food market in Rome Monday through Saturday. The market has little to tempt die-hard shoppers, but it's great for taking in the Roman moment.

Strolling from *Piazza Vittorio* through *Via Principe Eugenio* will take you to *Porta Maggiore*. The "Porta" (gate) is one of the first examples of architectural recycling, in fact the two arches were not originally part of the city walls but belonged to an aqueduct that Emperor Claudius had built in 52 AD where *Via Labicana* and *Via Prenestina* met. Later, the two arches were incorporated into the city walls and were given the name *Porta Prenestina*. Only later did it become known as *Porta Maggiore* as a result of its proximity to the church of *Santa Maria Maggiore*.



Monte Verde:

Monteverde is the area south-west of Trastevere.

It's home to the biggest public park in Rome, the *Villa Doria Pamphilj*. It has become a favourite place for jogging and dog owners. The original nucleus was created in the mid-17th century by Camillo Pamphilj, the nephew of Pope Innocent X. The new villa was built between 1644 and 1652 by Algardi and Grimaldi when Innocent X Pamphilj was Pope.



Porta Portese:

On Sundays from 7am to 1.30pm, every peddler from Trastevere and the surrounding *Castelli Romani* sets up a temporary shop at the sprawling *Porta Portese* open-air flea market south of Trastevere. It's probably the longest market ever, so to help skip half a kilometer of the junkier stalls, we recommend you arrive at *Via Ippolito Nievo*. Don't forget to barter!



Testaccio & Aventine Hill:

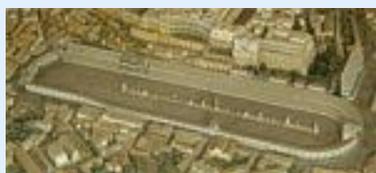
Built in the 6th century BC during the time of the Tarquins, the *Circus Maximus*, between the Palatine Hill

and the Aventine Hill, was a track used primarily for chariot racing. It could seat 250,000 spectators. When the dark days of the 5th and 6th centuries fell, the Circus Maximus seemed symbolic of Rome's complete ruin. The last games were held in AD 549. The Circus Maximus was never used as a sports venue again, and the demand for building materials reduced it, like so much of Rome, to a great dusty field. The recent Live8 concert was held here.

The *Terme di Caracalla* were built between 211 and 216 and were one of the most beautiful and luxurious public bath complexes in Rome. Equipped with sophisticated plumbing systems, the complex could hold up to 1,600 bathers. These baths were still in use in the VI century until the invasion of the Goths in 537 who destroyed their feeding aqueduct.

The *Pyramid of Caius Cestius* was built during the reign of the emperor Augustus, probably between 18 and 12 BC. It is a remarkable monument, made of white Carrara marble and exactly 100 Roman feet (30 meters) high. The peculiar concept of a pyramid in Rome must be linked to the fact that Rome had conquered Egypt a few years before, in 30 BC, and the ancient culture of the new province became fashionable for a while. In the third century the monument was incorporated in the Aurelian Walls.

Orange Garden (Giardino degli Aranci or Parco Savello) offers one of Rome's most picturesque gardens, with a beautiful view over the city. The citrus fruit plants in it were placed here in 1932 in commemoration of the Spanish orange tree brought to Rome by St. Dominic in 1220. This tree, according to tradition the first planted in Italy, still miraculously exists in the garden of the monastery of Santa Sabina and can be seen through a hole in the wall of the church portico.



San Giovanni:

The Church of *San Giovanni in Laterano* (St. John in Lateran) is the Cathedral of Rome. The facade with five passages characterised by the 15 statues of Christ surrounded by Saints, is a project of Alessandro Galilei dating back to 1734.

Opposite the church is the *Scala Santa*, or Holy Stairs, brought from Judea by St. Helena in the 4th century AD and said to be the stairs that Christ climbed in Pontius Pilate's House. The faithful climb the stairs on their knees while saying prayers on each step.

The *Basilica of San Clemente* is one of the most extraordinary archaeological sites in Rome. In the 4th century AD, a church was built over a secular house from the 1st century, beside which stood a pagan temple dedicated to Mithras (God of the sun). Down in the eerie grottoes you'll discover well-preserved frescoes from the 9th to the 11th centuries.

