

## ➔ where now ROME

### Dining amid the ruins

by Tiffany Parks

In Rome, you don't have to go far to find ancient ruins. Everywhere you turn you'll stumble upon crumbling temples, villas and arenas, millennia old: they don't call it the Eternal City for nothing! But if a morning exploring the Colosseum or an afternoon trek on the Palatine Hill still hasn't satisfied you, you can carry on your archeological studies over a steaming plate of pasta! Many of Rome's best restaurants provide glorious views of ancient ruins, or better yet, give you the chance to dine up-close and personal with history itself. Here are a few of our favorite spots for what we call archeo-dining.

#### Roof Garden, Hotel Forum



❑ Just around the corner from Campo de' Fiori, **Da Pancrazio** (Via del Biscione, 92. Tel 066861246) is a traditional Roman restaurant located atop the ruins of Pompey's magnificent and richly decorated theatre, built in the 1st century BC (also the site of the assassination of Julius Caesar.) Ask to be seated in the grotto, and you'll be dining inside one of the most historic sites in the city.

❑ **Giggetto** (Via Portico d'Ottavia, 21a. Tel 066861105), famous for its mouth-watering Jewish Cuisine, occupies a prime spot, right next door to the evocative Portico of Octavia. This towering structure, built by Emperor Augustus, was originally a cultural center and later the site of a bustling fish market in the middle ages. Score a table outside and gaze up at the mysterious ruins while sampling their specialty: *carciofi alla giudia*, deep-fried artichokes!

❑ On a narrow alleyway in Trastevere, elegant **Spirito di Vino** (Via dei Genovesi, 31. Tel 065896689) occupies the site of a 10th-century synagogue, complete with a medieval façade and Hebrew letters etched onto



Da Pancrazio

the outside columns. Ask to visit the 1st century wine cellar, where the ancient Roman sculpture the Apoxyomenos (now in the Vatican Museums) was discovered in 1849.

❑ The eerie and evocative setting of **Hostaria Antica Roma** (Via Appia Antica, 87. Tel 065132888) is the perfect place for a romantic, candlelit dinner. This award-winning restaurant is located along the ancient Appian Way, called the Queen of Roads by proud Romans. Dishes are served in the lush setting of the Archeological Park; a 1st century columbarium, containing niches that once housed funerary urns, provides a dramatic backdrop.

❑ If you prefer to gaze at ruins from a lofty height, opt for the **Roof Garden** restaurant at the **Hotel Forum** (Via Tor de' Conti, 25. Tel 066792446). The spacious terrace offers sweeping views of the one and only Roman Forum that will make your *ravioli* all the more delicious. Not far away, **Massenzio** (Largo Corrado Ricci, 2. Tel 066790706) sits across the street from the towering Basilica of Maxentius, one of the most impressive and best-preserved structures in the Forum.



Hostaria Antica Roma