

APRIL 2014
WHERE TRAVELER.COM

Rome

where®

NEW
LOOK

RECOMMENDED BY
YOUR CONCIERGE

PARIS IN ROME

Give in to the Allure of France without
Setting a Foot outside Italy

PLUS

- > SHOPPING FOR POLKA DOTS
- > BLACK SWAN GRAND GALA
- > HOT NEW EXHIBITS

The Best of Brunch
Top 5 Spots to Indulge in Everyone's Favorite Meal

From PARIS with Love



They say,
“Italians do it better,”
but let’s not forget
about the French.
From food to wine to
fashion to art to sheer
gorgeousness,
the City of Lights gives
the Eternal City a run
for her money.
Why not have the best
of both worlds?
Tiffany Parks reveals
how to find a little bit
of Paris right here
in Rome.



CHECK
out the exhibit of
the bold works of
Simon Hantai at Villa
Medici (p58).



Get Your Culture On

Knowing the impeccable taste that Italy's neighbors to the north are famous for, it comes as no surprise that some of the most stunning buildings in Rome are now in French hands. Perched atop the Pincian hill, with arguably the most impressive view of the city, sits **Villa Medici** (p59) a mannerist villa built in the second half of the 16th century. Although designed for and by Italians, the villa has belonged to the French government since 1803 and is now the seat of the French Academy in Rome. Villa Medici's extensive grounds include manicured gardens, monumental fountains, an Egyptian obelisk, and numerous ancient statues and artifacts, many of which were found buried underground when the villa was built on the sight of the ancient Horti Sallustiani gardens. Guided tours in English of the gardens, interior, and permanent art collection run Tue–

Sun at noon. The villa also hosts temporary exhibitions of the work of important French artists and former fellows of the academy. This month, see the bold paintings of Simon Hantai, the Hungarian-born French artist who invented piage in the 1960s (see above).

If you've spent any time visiting or studying France, you'll know the fleur-de-lis was the symbol of the French monarchy, and continues to be an enduring emblem of this hexagon-shaped country. Then why can you find it all over Rome? The fleur-de-lis is also the symbol of the Farnese, one of Italy's most powerful Renaissance families. Their magnificent palace near Campo de' Fiori, **Palazzo Farnese** (in the eponymous piazza) was designed by Antonio da Sangallo and Michelangelo and frescoed within by Annibale Carracci. The palace passed from the Farnese to the Bourbon kings of Naples, and was eventually purchased by France in 1874,

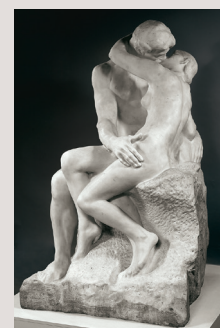
although it was ransomed by Mussolini in 1936. Today the palace technically still belongs to the Italian state, but the French government holds a 99-year lease and rents it for use as their embassy, paying a symbolic one euro per month. Visits can be booked at www.inventrrome.com, but keep in mind the Carracci Gallery is presently closed for restoration.

For some world-class art with no booking, waiting, or paying, step into the French national church, **San Luigi dei Francesi** (Via della Dogana Vecchia), just a few blocks from Piazza Navona. Between 1599 and 1600, Caravaggio painted three of his most celebrated masterpieces for the church's Contarelli Chapel. Although these three works depicting scenes from the life of St. Matthew are by far the biggest draw, the church is also decorated with paintings by Domenichino, Cavalier d'Arpino, Girolamo Siciolante da Sermoneta, and many other mannerist artists.

Being French is an Art



If it's French art you're craving, there's no need to hop on the first train to Paris. There's plenty of it right here. The National Roman Museum at the Baths of Diocletian (p57) is hosting the largest-ever exhibition of the marble sculptures of Auguste Rodin. In addition, 70 masterpieces from Paris's temple of Impressionism, the Musée d'Orsay, are on loan to the Vittoriano Complex (p59). If that's still not enough, visit the Parisian Museum of Rome (Via Cremona, 40), an intimate gallery with a collection of vintage posters, prints, watercolors, and illustrations that capture the allure of Paris at the turn of the last century.



J'Aime la Mode!

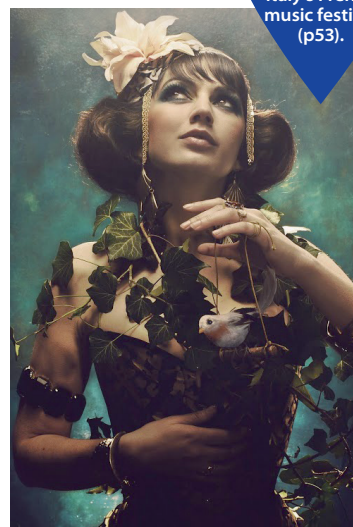
If you have the inclination (and deep enough pockets) to deck yourself out in the latest French styles, look no further than Via Condotti. Whether you're in the market for a head-turning evening gown by Dior (no. 1), a scarf that can double as a work of art by Hermès (no. 67), an iconic suitcase by Louis Vuitton (no. 13), a spectacular jewel by Cartier (no. 83), or a stylish writing tool by Montblanc (no. 70), you'll find it on this legendary street. Another fashion mecca not to miss is Degli Effetti (Piazza Capranica, 93) near the Pantheon, an exclusive boutique stocking luxe French brands like Givenchy, Lanvin, Céline, Poème Bohémien, and Robert Clergerie. And don't forget scent; it is a truth universally acknowledged that the best perfumes in the world come from France. Visit niche *profumeria* Campomarzio70 (Via Vittoria, 52) or a large department store like La Rinascente (Largo Chigi, 17) to find fragrances by Chanel, Guerlain, Jean Paul Gaultier, Thierry Mugler, Lancôme, Yves Saint Laurent, and many more. Dress your tot like a little Parisian too at Le Petit Bateau (Via del Babuino, 166) or Bonpoint (Piazza Lorenzo in Lucina, 25).



Eat, Drink, & Be Frenchy

Who needs the sidewalk cafés of the Champs-Élysées when Rome has several French restaurants – serving both haute cuisine and lighter bistro fare – situated in dazzling sun-soaked piazzas? La Baguette (Via Tomacelli, 24) is a charming *brasserie* near the Ara Pacis, perfect for brunch or a light lunch al fresco. In the Garbatella district, Le Bistrot dal 1987 (Via delle Sette Chiese, 160) serves French favorites like chestnut crêpes and onion soup with escargots. La Maison de l'Entrecôte (Piazza del Gazometro, 1) in Ostiense serves both Italian and French specialties but the atmosphere is pure Paris. Step back in time to 1920s Paris at Josephine Bistrot (Via Bissolati, 34) near Piazza Barberini where you can listen to live jazz while supping on classic French dishes. Indulge in haute cuisine at L'Eau Vive (Via Monterone, 85), which serves rich, exotic dishes in a historic frescoed palace near Piazza Navona. Madame Baguette (Via Boncompagni, 81) is a French bakery just off Via Veneto that specializes in inventive baguette sandwiches, and Babette (Via Margutta, 1) at the foot of the Pincian Hill creates dishes that fuse Italian and French cuisine, served in a dining room full of so much art that it doubles as a contemporary art gallery.

See Cleo T.
perform as part of
Suona Francese,
Italy's French
music festival
(p53).



SUR LA TABLE

It's rich, it's extravagant, and it's not for everyone. But those who adore French cuisine swear the rest of the world has nothing to rival it (although Italians might disagree). What are the classic dishes? Escargots (snails) are one of the most famous appetizers, and they've been eaten in France since pre-historic times. Steak *tartare* (minced beef served raw) is not for the faint of heart, and non-meat-eaters can opt instead for *ratatouille*, a stewed vegetable dish from Provence. Fish-lovers can indulge in Plateau Royal, a platter of raw shellfish, and Quiche Lorraine's light butter crust and bacon, Gruyère cheese, and *crème fraîche* filling make it a bistro favorite. Be

sure to wash it all down with a bottle of Champagne. Comptoir de France (Via Vitelleschi, 20) in Prati is a specialty French food store and the best place to purchase ingredients or ready-made delicacies for creating your own feast *à la française*. And for dessert? We have three suggestions: macarons, macarons, and macarons. These candy-colored

meringue-based confections are delicate, excessively sweet, and the perfect companion for a pot of Mariage Frère tea. There's only one place in the city to get the real thing: Ladurée (Via Borgognona, 4) near the Spanish Steps, a shop that delights the eye as much as the palate.

