

MAY 2014  
WHERE TRAVELER.COM

Rome

# where®

RECOMMENDED BY YOUR CONCIERGE



ANNO 20 - N.41551LE POSTE ITALIANE SPA S.P.A. S.P.E.D. D. L. 359/03 - ROMA

## THE GREAT BEAUTY

Recreate this Oscar-Winning Film  
with our Special Itinerary

## Shopping for Art

Find a Modern Masterpiece to  
Bring Back Home with You

## PLUS

> A PERFECT MOTHER'S DAY > JAN LISIECKI PLAYS CHOPIN > ANDY WARHOL HITS THE CITY





# Rome's Great Beauty



By Tiffany Parks

If you're going to make a film in which the city it's set in plays a starring role, and you're going to call that film *The Great Beauty*, the city in question had better be Rome. Call us biased, but we at *WHERE* think that Rome is hands-down the most beautiful city in the world. Only Rome could be your home for your entire life, and still offer you endless sights to discover. Only Rome could stop your heart every time you walk out your front door (especially if you live across the street from the Colosseum, like the film's protagonist, Jep Gambardella). Only Rome has the power to enchant, to surprise, to delight, again and again.

Paolo Sorrentino's *The Great Beauty* (or *La Grande Bellezza*, its original title), winner of this year's Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film, takes the viewer on a nostalgic tour of the Eternal City's most iconic and recognizable sights, as well as its lesser-known gems. But the film is not only an ode to the breathtaking splendors of this nearly 3000-year-old city. Beneath its glossy exterior, the film shows a city, a country, a lifestyle in decline, just like *La Dolce Vita* did half a century earlier. The film's poignant subtext reminds us that, despite







its undeniable beauty, Rome's glory days are all in the past, just like those of the film's aging protagonist.

To go on your own *Great Beauty* tour, visit these visually arresting sights that cinematographer Luca Bigazzi captured so exquisitely in the film.

The **Fontanone** (above) (Via Garibaldi) – literally the “big fountain” – on the Gianicolo Hill opens the film. This massive fountain, second only to the Trevi for size, is a towering work of Baroque grandeur and is fed by water from the Acqua



## WHERE NOW | SIGHTSEEING



Paola aqueduct. The fountain overlooks a sweeping view of the entire historic center; the best time to visit is daybreak, when the city is bathed in a warm pink glow. On your way back down the hill, stop at Bramante's **Tempietto** (previous page), a sublime work of Renaissance architecture located inside the courtyard of San Pietro in Montorio church (Piazza San Pietro in Montorio, 2). The tiny shrine is just 15 feet in diameter, and with its symmetry, slender Tuscan columns, and Doric entablature, it is considered a work of architectural perfection. Next, take a walk along the **Tiber River** for an alternative perspective on Rome's many bridges.

For lunch, pack a picnic and hop a cab over to the sprawling **Aqueduct Park** (Via Lemonia, 256). Rent bikes at Fuori di Rota (Via Lemonia, 31) and explore the park while marveling at Aqua Claudia and Aqua Felix (previous page), the best preserved of Rome's ancient aqueducts. You may not be able to traipse through the city's greatest museums by candlelight like Jep and his girlfriend do, but not to worry: they are every bit as impressive by daylight. Admire elegant sculptures like the *Capitoline Venus* and *Marforio* in the **Capitoline Museums' Palazzo Nuovo** (Piazza del Campidoglio, 1), marvel at Borromini's Forced Perspective at **Galleria Spada** (right) (Piazza Capo di Ferro, 13), then head to **Palazzo Barberini** (Via delle Quattro Fontane, 13) where you can gaze as long as you like at the portrait of Raphael's muse, *La Fornarina*

*"At my age, beauty isn't enough."* —Jep Gambardella in *The Great Beauty*

(*The Baker Girl*). You might not find a giraffe strolling its ancient corridors, but a trip to the crumbling **Baths of Caracalla** (p57) is a must if you want the full *Grande Bellezza* experience. The 3rd-century AD bath complex is the second largest in the city, and was once decorated with precious polychrome marbles and mosaics.

At sunset, take an easy hike up the Aventine Hill. After strolling through the **Orange Garden** (above) (Via di Santa Sabina) and capturing some shots of St. Peter's in the distance, be sure to venture a little further to the **Villa of the Priory of the Knights of Malta** (right) (Piazza dei Cavalieri di Malta). You may not have the key to fit the lock, but a peep

through the keyhole will be no less thrilling without it. **Piazza Navona** (previous page) is the perfect spot for an early evening stroll; admire Borromini's glorious Sant'Agnese in Agone church and Bernini's Fountain of the Four Rivers.

Just in case you're not staying in an apartment with a terrace practically on top of the Colosseum, like Jep's, you can pretend that you are, at least for one special evening. Book a table at **Aroma** (Via Labicana, 125), a world-class restaurant with one of the best Colosseum views in town. And last but not least, a day in Rome inspired by *La Grande Bellezza* wouldn't be complete without some late-night dancing at an exclusive nightclub. Located in the EUR district, **Jet Set** (Piazza Umberto Elia Terracini) is a sophisticated club and a fabulous place to see and be seen.



## » Meet the Director

Paolo Sorrentino was born and raised in Naples, and started his career young, writing and directing his first feature film by the age of 30. He first received international attention in 2004 with his thriller *The Consequences of Love*, and has continued to garner acclaim ever since with his sometimes brutally honest examinations of Italy's society and politics. If your eyes are getting tired from all the subtitles, check out *This Must be the Place* (2011) starring Sean Penn, Sorrentino's first English-language film. His masterwork *The Great Beauty* is the first Italian film to win the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film since Roberto Benigni's *Life is Beautiful* in 1998.

