

NOVEMBER 2014
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TOP 10 TIPS

For making the
most of your
trip to Rome

Get to Know
Garbatella

Spend the day in
this vibrant
neighborhood

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> NORMAN ROCKWELL, THE ARTIST OF THE PEOPLE

TOP 10 INSIDER TIPS

Don't leave your visit to the Eternal City to chance.

1 Plan Ahead

In a city with as many must-see sights as Rome has, it's essential that you do a little planning. First off, don't expect to be able to see it all (some say a lifetime isn't enough!). Do your research, and then pick your favorites. Keep in mind that some attractions should be booked in advance, including the **Borghese Gallery** (p54) and the **Vatican Museums** (p53). At the Borghese, reservations are obligatory and they won't let you in without them. While rocking up at the Vatican Museums is technically possible, it isn't advisable—unless you enjoy waiting in line for over an hour, that is. In both cases, you'll need to book at least a few days in advance.



Tiffany Parks shares ten ways to get the most out of your trip.

2 Get Out of the Past

Rome's heyday may be a good two thousand years in the past, but that doesn't mean it lacks a thriving contemporary art scene. The city's most important new museum, the **MAXXI** (pictured above) (p54), showcases the work of the best artists of the 21st century, in Italy and around the globe, and the **MACRO** (p54) and **MACRO Testaccio** (p54) put on first-rate exhibitions of the work of contemporary artists. Modern architecture is a bit trickier to find, as all town planning must be carried out with respect for the many archaeological sites and the complex historic and artistic fabric of the city. Nevertheless, every so often an innovative designer manages to unveil a bold new creation, and—generally speaking—they are met with enthusiasm by residents. A few examples are the **Ara Pacis Museum** (p53), architect Richard Meier's minimalist structure built to house the 2000-year-old temple, and his arresting **Church of Sails** (Largo Terzo Millennio, 8).



3 Go Underground

Just as two-thirds of the Earth's mountains are underwater, so over half of Rome's ancient sights are underground, and if you don't explore them, you're missing out on a defining aspect of the city. Some of the most mysterious underground sites in Rome are the **Catacombs** (p53). In ancient Rome, burial was not permitted within the city walls, so the catacombs are dotted around the outskirts of the city, up to 40 in total. Many were early burials sites for the city's Christian population, and contain frescoes and other artwork that shed light on the traditions and iconography of the then-budding religion. **San Clemente** (Via Labicana, 95) is another fascinating underground site. In Rome's greatest example of multi-layered history, the 11th-century church was built on top of a 4th-century church, which was in turn built on top of two ancient Roman buildings.



4 Go Off the Map

You probably picked up a handy map from the tourist office or your hotel upon arrival. While this is an essential tool for navigating the city, don't assume that if something's not on the map that it's not worth seeing. Many neighborhoods skirting the historic center are vibrant centers for alternative art or culinary excellence and it's a shame to skip them entirely. **Pigneto** is Rome's current "it" neighborhood, where funky bars, communal restaurants, and repurposed industrial sites draw young people. **Testaccio** is one of the city's culinary meccas, and also home to dozens of nightclubs. **Ponte Milvio** in the sophisticated northern area of town is another buzzing area full of places to grab aperitivo with the locals. Southeast of center, the **EUR** district (pictured above) is a shrine to Fascist architecture and offers a completely different side to the city. **Garbatella** may be the most unique neighborhood off all; read all about it on pp18–19.

5 Brave Back Alleys

After a long day of museum hopping or exploring ancient ruins, hunger can creep up fast. It's tempting to grab a table at the nearest restaurant, especially if it offers plenty of empty tables, a menu conveniently translated into English, and friendly wait staff urging you to come inside. But this is the exact type of place you should avoid! Restaurants catering to tourists won't have the same high standard of cuisine, since they don't rely on locals coming back for more—and they're more likely to be overpriced! Instead, do what the Romans do and head down narrow side streets and back alleys. The quieter the street, and the more unassuming the

restaurant (a closed door and a discreet sign are both excellent indicators), the more likely the place is to be excellent. A few of our favorite back-street gems are **La Campana** (Vicolo della Campana, 8), **Osteria La Gensola** (pictured) (p48), **Il Convivio Troiani** (p35), and **Felice a Testaccio** (p47).



6 Get Out of Town

Despite the many things there are to do and see in the Eternal City, be sure to set aside a day to foray into the surrounding countryside, as it too is rich with archeological and artistic treasures. **Ostia Antica** is an extremely well preserved ancient port city, featuring countless mosaics, preserved homes, and a Greek-style amphitheater. It's just a 30-minute train ride from the center. **Tivoli** is another town that makes for an easy day trip, and with both the sprawling and ancient Hadrian's Villa and the sumptuous Renaissance Villa d'Este, you might have a hard time seeing it all in one day. For a day of pure pampering, head to the thermal bath complex Terme dei Papi in **Viterbo** (pictured below), or for medieval marvels, visit the hilltop town of **Subiaco** and its 800-year-old monasteries.



7 Eat In-season

It's no secret that Italians are passionate about food. And while many visitors to the *bel paese* jump at the chance to sample as much of the delectable cuisine as possible, many forget the importance of seasonal produce. Wherever possible, Italian chefs and grandmas alike cook with only the freshest local ingredients, providing more intensely flavorful dishes. Filling the markets during the month of November are radicchio, Porcini mushrooms, broccoli, and chicory, so look for these veggies when selecting a dish at an authentic Roman eatery. Or better yet, indulge in some black or white truffles, one of Italy's proudest local products. At snack time, help yourself to a cone of roasted chestnuts, or grab a persimmon or pomegranate to savor on the go. And don't even think about having breakfast without a glass of *spremuta*, made from juicy blood oranges from Sicily.



8 Just Hang

To soak up the authentic flavor of the city, sometimes you have to clear your sightseeing itinerary, grab a table at an outdoor café, and just watch life go by. Rome's piazzas provide ample opportunity to do just that. **Piazza San Lorenzo in Lucina** is a posh square where well-heeled Romans sip Campari while hiding behind oversized designer sunglasses. **Piazza Madonna dei Monti** (pictured)



has a slightly more alternative vibe, and students and young professionals alike flock to the cafés that look out onto the picturesque fountain. To hear some of the best buskers in town, grab a prime seat on the steps of the fountain in **Piazza Santa Maria in Trastevere**.

9 Shop Local

Italy may be famous for haute couture, but labels like Prada, Gucci, and Armani can be found in nearly every major city in the world. To take home a *true* souvenir of your Roman holiday, chose something that can't be found elsewhere.



Rome is home to hundreds of local designers and boutiques, crafting original clothing, accessories, and design objects.

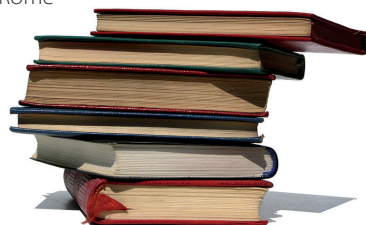
Our favorites are **Antica Manifattura Cappelli** (pictured left) (Via degli Scipioni, 46), **Le Tartarughe** (Via Piè di Marmo, 17), and **Verso Sud** (p24).

Browse the handmade creations of female Rome-based artisans at **Le Artigiane** (p23), or go window-shopping on **Via del Governo Vecchio**, **Via del Pellegrino**, or **Via degli Zingari**, three streets teeming with independent boutiques and quirky vintage shops.



10 Read a Book

For centuries, Rome has been a bottomless well of inspiration for writers. Goethe, Keats, Shelley, and Lord Byron all lived and worked here, and the city left an indelible mark on their work, not to mention the Roman writers who used their native city as a muse to craft their masterworks. Dig deeper into the Rome of today and yesterday, as well as the Italian culture and psyche, by picking up a book set here. Visit the English-language **Almost Corner Bookshop** (Via del Moro, 45) for suggestions for a fantastic Rome-based read.



DON'T MISS THE MASTERPIECES

Besides the obvious "must-see" sights, here are seven works of art no visitor to Rome should miss:

Bernini's *Apollo and Daphne* (Galleria Borghese)

Caravaggio's *The Calling of St. Matthew* (San Luigi dei Francesi)

Raphael's *Transfiguration* (Pinacoteca, Vatican Museums)

Borromini's Perspective (Galleria Spada) (left)

Michelangelo's *Moses* (San Pietro in Vincoli) (right)

Medieval frescos at Santi Quattro Coronati

San Zenone Chapel mosaics (Santa Prassede)

